

A Conceptual Model Proposal for Co-Creation of Social Value: Insights from Social Entrepreneurs

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Abstract

This study suggests a conceptual model of collaboration the between business organizations and social entrepreneurs for the co-creation of social value. The study is based on a qualitative research. The data is obtained by semi-structured interviews with nine social entrepreneurs in Turkey. Deriving from the data, nine propositions are generated that identifies how these two distinct actors can collaborate. Findings reveal that social entrepreneurs can provide social mission, awareness of specific needs, a focus on various problems and innovative problem solving ability in this collaboration. On the other hand, organizations can ensure financial resource, business insight and recognition to the social entrepreneurs. Additionally, our findings show that the network platforms have facilitator role in this collaboration. The findings of the study reveal that the engagement of organizations and social entrepreneurs may eliminate each other's disadvantages and may provide long term social value.

Keywords: Social Entrepreneurship, Organizations, Collaboration, Social Value, Societal Problems

Sosyal Değerin Yaratılmasında İşletmeler ve Sosyal Girişimler Arasında Kavramsal Bir İşbirliği Modeli

Öz

Bu çalışma, sosyal değer yaratmak için işletmeler ile sosyal girişimciler arasında işbirliğine yönelik kavramsal bir model önermektedir. Nitel araştırmaya dayanan bu çalışmada veriler, Türkiye'deki dokuz sosyal girişimciyle gerçekleştirilen görüşmeler üzerinden elde edilmiştir. Verilerden yola çıkarak, bu iki aktörün nasıl işbirliği yapabileceğini belirleyen dokuz önerme geliştirilmiştir. Bulgular, sosyal girişimcilerin sosyal misyon, spesifik ihtiyaçların farkındalığı, çeşitli sorunlara odaklanabilme ve yenilikçi problem çözme becerileriyle bu işbirliğine katkı sağlayabileceğini ortaya koymaktadır. Diğer taraftan, bulgular işletmelerin de bu işbirliğini sosyal girişimcilere; finansal kaynak, yönetim iç görüşü ve tanınırlık sağlayarak destekleyebileceklerini



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göstermektedir. Ayrıca, network platformlarının da bu işbirliğinde kolaylaştırıcı rolü olduğu görülmektedir. Çalışmanın bulguları, işletmeler ve sosyal girişimcilerin işbirliğinin birbirlerinin dezavantajlarını ortadan kaldırayabileceğini ve uzun vadeli sosyal değer yaratabileceğini ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Girişimcilik, İşletmeler, İşbirliği, Sosyal Değer, Toplumsal Sorunlar

1. Introduction

In last decades generating a long term and permanent social value is in the agenda of various actors; such as governments, international organizations, civil society, NGOs, corporations etc. However, creating, maintaining and fostering social value is not easy. The multi-dimensional and complex structure of social issues prevents these actors to generate permanent solutions by go-alone initiatives. Governments, due to their scarce resources and bureaucratic structures, cannot fully reach the goals like welfare or employment. The projects of global organizations such as OECD, UN and World Bank may even fail to offer specific solutions especially for non-developed or developing countries having unique internal dynamics (Easterly, 2009:34). Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also face financial problems due to constantly decreasing financial support (i.e. supply of donations, grants etc.) Business organizations, with a strategic viewpoint show their awareness to future generations as well as their stakeholders by corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects and by creating shared value (CSV). However, efforts of organizations may not always reach a satisfactory level due to their business-related priorities and short-term interests (Bornstein, 2004; Carroll, 1991; Carroll, 2008; Dees, 1998; Mahajan & Daw, 2016; Porter & Kramer, 2011; Visser, 2012). On the other hand, social entrepreneurship, which is described as a process involving the innovative use of resources to address social needs and problems and to catalyze social change (Mair & Marti, 2006), have been identified as alternative and/or complementary to the initiatives of governments and organizations to address social issues. It is revealed that social entrepreneurs are often well ahead of these actors and reflect a "bottom up" understanding in discovering social needs and offering innovative solutions (Bornstein, 2004; Dacin et.al.,2010; Hellström et al., 2015; Korsgaard, 2011; Thompson, 2002). However, they may face various challenges such as funding, sustainability or scalability and have difficulties in maintaining their mission.

In recent years, considering their inadequacies, creating permanent social value seems to go beyond the independent activities of these distinct actors. The complexity of social needs and problems is fostering collaboration across various actors of society and there is growing awareness and evidence of the benefits of collaboration in eliminating inadequacies (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a, 2012b; Vangen & Huxham 2012). Moreover, criticisms of the idea of corporate commitment to social responsibility and the questionable benefits of a shared value model are contributing to the need for collaboration for tackling societal problems. Social alliances, as a special form of collaboration between business organizations and social enterprises, address social issues and tries to generate permanent solutions (Waddock, 1991). These alliances are inter-organizational efforts to address social needs and problems that are too complex to be solved by unilateral organizational action (Gray, 1985). In the related literature the needs, the process and the consequences of the collaboration (e.g. Austin, 2000; Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a, 2012b; Berger et al., 2004) have been studied. However, these studies were mostly conducted in developed country contexts and from the business organizations perspective (Sakarya et al., 2012).

Collaboration between business organizations and social entrepreneurs is an increasingly important phenomenon that deserves further study. Regarding this, our study focuses on a particular type of collaboration between organizations and social entrepreneurs and tries to identify the potential contributions of these two parties in the co-creation social value, from the social entrepreneurs' perspective in the Turkish context. We reveal that business organizations and social entrepreneurs complement each other in various ways, and we offer a conceptual model for the co-creation of social value. The paper continues with the theoretical background and introduces the research design. Accordingly, the findings and the conceptual model are presented. The paper concludes with the discussion and implications for further studies.

2. Theoretical Background

Social value refers to the '*basic and long-standing needs of society*' (Certo & Miller, 2008). It is broadly defined as 'that which enhances well-being for the earth and its living organisms' (Brickson, 2007: 866). Social value refers to wider financial and non-financial impacts that include the wellbeing of individuals and communities, thus society. In recent years, there is an increasing awareness about social problems and a demand for solutions. In addition to this, organizations are increasingly perceived to be the cause of social, environmental, and economic problems and related challenges (Porter & Kramer, 2011). The relation between organizations and society has been discussed since the 1950s (Bowen, 1953; Jacoby, 1973; Davis, 1973; Davis & Frederick, 1984). Based upon their nested relations and broad impact, organizations have become one of the most powerful actors in the society (Davis, 1973). As Carroll and Brown (2018) emphasize; society today focuses more on organizations' power because of their visibility.

Social engagement of organizations shifted from philanthropy to CSR and is increasingly used with a strategic form of social investment (Wood, 1991; Carroll, 2002, 2008; Porter & Kramer, 2002). Today many organizations perform CSR activities and gain benefits such as good reputation, better corporate image, improved financial performance (i.e. Flammer, 2013; Orlitzky, Schmidt & Rynes, 2003; Porter & Kramer, 2006; Werther Jr. & Chandler, 2005). However, the effectiveness of CSR efforts in creating social value is questionable. CSR face with criticisms such as prioritizing business interests, being poorly directed, unfocused, having a short-term perspective and limited responsiveness and consequently ineffective in generating in social value and betterment (Banerjee, 2008; Blowfield & Frynas, 2005; Devinney, 2009; Doane, 2005, Visser, 2012). Mostly, CSR activities of organizations are criticized for being scattered uncoordinated, and standardized activities which reflect a top-down 'one size fits all' approach rather than focusing the real needs of society with a bottom-up approach aiming systemic change (Karim, Chase, Rangan & Friel, 2015; Visser, 2008; 2012).

As one of the strongest actors in society, it is obvious that organizations need to perform more than corporate social responsibility activities and should contribute to betterment of society in terms of social, economic, environmental, physical, psychological, political, and cultural issues (Banerjee, 2008; Blowfield & Frynas, 2005; Devinney, 2009; Doane, 2005, Visser, 2012). In this vein, it is discussed that a new approach for CSR is needed to create social value. Thus, socially responsible behavior of organizations should involve '*a dialogue with local stakeholders, be responsive to local needs and priorities and look for long-terms solutions that build capacity rather than offer a 'quick-fix'*' (Tracey, et.al. 2005).

In 2011, Porter and Kramer have offered "the big idea" and social engagement shifted again to a new form; "Creating Shared Value (CVS)". While CSR is described with good corporate citizenship with a compliance with community standards, CVS proposes a transformation social problems that are relevant to the organization into business

opportunities and at the same time contributing to the solution of critical societal challenges (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Although this framework has been widely accepted and adopted, it has been criticized also in some respects. For instance, Crane, et al., (2014) argue that CVS ignores the tensions between social and economic goals (Crane, et al., 2014:135). Also it is discussed that CSV continues the business centered framing and thus fails to grasp society's expectations that social needs and problems cannot be understood by relying on categories of utility (Beschorner & Hadjuck, 2017). In this context, the social responsible behavior of organizations need "*a shift in power from centralized to decentralized; a change in scale from few and big to many and small; and a change in application from single and exclusive to multiple and shared*" (Visser,2012:9). This shift is characterized by collaborative relationships and innovative partnerships which include diverse stakeholder integrations. The multi-dimensional and complex structure of societal problems, which is difficult to cope with alone for a single organization, is fostering collaboration across various actors of society in recent years. In this respect, social alliances are gained importance as a form of collaboration between organizations and social enterprises.

Social entrepreneurship differentiates from any other form of entrepreneurship by addressing the social problems and creating social value (El Ebrashi, 2013; Gedajlovic, Mair & Marti, 2006; Moss & Lumpkin; Neubaum, & Shulman, 2009; Peredo & McLean, 2006; Robinson et al., 2009; Short, 2009; Sullivan, 2017; Zahra et al., 2008). Focusing to fulfilling the social needs, social entrepreneurs employ a market-oriented income generation method that aims to achieve sustainability and serve as a catalyst for social change (Abu-Saifan, 2012, Lehner, 2011). Although their initiatives are small-scale in early stages, and their objectives are directed towards local problems, they have a desire to address broad social problems and scale up (Santos, 2012:335). In this sense, social entrepreneurship can be defined as a proactive activity of pioneering new methods, processes, products and services that address social problems (Austin, Stevenson, & Weiskillern, 2006; Chahine, 2016). Social entrepreneurs have been also described as change agents who seek and discover the opportunities that will create social change (Afacan-Fındıklı, 2017; Mair & Marti, 2006; Zahra et al., 2009; Jackson & Jackson, 2014; Groot & Dankbaar, 2014). Their commitment to society and their proactive approach provide new and original solutions to the long lasting problems of society and puts them one step forward comparing to the business organizations. (Dees, 1998, Sullivan Mort, Weerawardena, & Carnegie, 2003).

However, social entrepreneurs face with various challenges. First of all, the lack of funding forces them to start and sustain their social initiatives. Also, as social entrepreneurs work for society's good, they need to gain trust in order to be perceived legitimate and not to face with problems related to accountability and viability. Moreover, as social entrepreneurial activities are market-oriented to generate income, social entrepreneurs need business and marketing skills in order to manage their initiatives (Bessant & Tidd, 2015:60-62). Besides, in many countries, including Turkey, the context for social entrepreneurship is not ideal and the ecosystem is weak (i.e. the lack of legal framework and regulations for social entrepreneurship).

Although organizations and social entrepreneurs may address social problems separately, they may also choose to collaborate via social alliances to create social value due to their own shortages. In this respect, the capability and resource complementarities between organizations and social entrepreneurs make the collaboration meaningful. In such a collaboration, the two parties with different perspectives may offer different contributions to the collaboration for the solution of the same social issue. Previous research on collaboration and social alliances discussed various topics like the structural characteristics of the collaboration, the fit between partners, drivers and enablers, and

the consequences of collaborative alliances (e.g. Austin, 2000; Austin & Seitanidi; 2012a; 2012b; Berger et al., 2004; Brown et al., 2010; Sakarya et al., 2012). However, how business organizations and social entrepreneurs can collaborate for creating social value and what are the potential contributions of the two parties still need to be clarified.

3. Research Design

Based on the theoretical background above, this study seeks to address the research question: *"How organizations and social entrepreneurs can collaborate in order to create social value and what are the potential contributions of these two parties?"* In an effort to address this questions this study investigates the organizations and social entrepreneurs' partnership in order to suggest a conceptual model of the collaboration between these two actors for creating long termed social value.

A purposive sampling approach (Creswell, 2009) is adopted in this study. We contacted a well-known US based association which supports social entrepreneurship in Turkey, ASHOKA. This sampling technique allowed us to reach successful social entrepreneurs in Turkey. We reached seven ASHOKA members who voluntarily participated in our study. We also used snow ball technique where respondents were asked at the end of their interview to recommend other social entrepreneurs. As a result, nine social entrepreneurs were interviewed. The detail information about the social entrepreneurs in the sample and their social entrepreneurial initiatives are given below in Table 1.

The data collection is based on in-depth semi-structured interviews which allow the researchers to investigate the phenomenon in depth (Yin, 2009). The interviews were conducted based on an interview protocol. The open-ended questions were about social entrepreneurs' initiatives; their purpose, processes, difficulties they faced and the realized collaborations with organizations. Six of the social entrepreneurs were actively collaborating business organizations that helped us to understand the collaborative dynamics. Besides, three of them were not actively in collaboration which let us to reveal the difficulties they face. All the interviews were recorded during the data collection process and transcribed by researchers. The shortest interview lasted in 37 minutes and the longest one was 1 hr. 02 minutes. After data collection, all recorded interviews were transcribed.

The obtained data is analyzed by descriptive analysis. An open coding process was employed through reading and re-reading each interview transcript independently by the two authors of the study which allowed to concepts to emerge from the findings. After reviewing the data related propositions are derived through the participants' responses which are given as quotes in the paper. Based on the propositions and a conceptual model of collaboration is generated.

Several strategies were implemented to provide reliability and validity of the study. First of all, relevant documents and archival data about the social entrepreneurial initiatives and founders were collected and analyzed which allowed the researchers to make data triangulation to provide of thematic analysis. (Ambert et al., 1995). These included website documents, reports, brochures, and audiovisual materials related to the founders and their initiatives. The data collection period lasted for 18 months starting from April 2017. In addition, researchers followed several tactics such as using probes and alternative questions to improve the scientific rigor of the study)

Table 1: Sample of the Study

Social Entrepreneur	Social Entrepreneurial Initiative	Collaboration
Tülin Akın (TA)	TABİT-Tarımsal Pazarlama (Agricultural Marketing)	<i>Vodafone INTEL</i>
İbrahim Betil (İB)	Toplum Gönüllüleri (Community Volunteers) Eğitim Gönüllüleri (Education Volunteers)	<i>Coca-Cola UNDP GWC NEF Assoc.</i>
İtir Erhart (İE)	Adım Adım (Step by Step)	<i>New Balance EKER</i>
Serra Titiz (ST)	MİKADO Gelecek Daha Net (Future is Brighter)	<i>Unilever</i>
Ercan Tural (ET)	AYDER Dreams Kitchen	<i>Vodafone Koç Holding</i>
Tara Hopkins (TH)	Çöp(m)adam (Garbage Lady)	<i>Unilever Coca Cola</i>
Durukan Dudu (DD)	Anadolu Meraları (Anatolian Grasslands)	-
Gülcan Yayla (GY)	Kodluyoruz (We Code) Oy ve Ötesi (Vote and Beyond)	-
Çiğdem Yıldız (ÇY)	Doğada Hayat Var	-

4. Findings

This study focuses on the collaboration between social entrepreneurs and organizations in creating social value. Drawing on the findings obtained from social entrepreneurs, it is attempted to reveal the possible contributions of social entrepreneurs and organizations to the co-creation of the social value. The research findings are organized into three sections. Firstly, the potential contributions of the social entrepreneurs to the co-creation were determined and four propositions were generated. Then, the potential contributions of the organizations were tried to be identified three propositions were generated. Lastly, two propositions were shared related to the co-creation model in general, and the conceptual model is presented.

5. Contributions of Social Entrepreneurs

As Zahra et al. (2009:523) emphasize, many social needs are not discernable or may easily misunderstood as they require a bottom-up understanding to address them. At this point, it is accepted that the embeddedness of social entrepreneurs in their local communities may facilitate the discovery of the local social needs as natural opportunities (Seelos et al., 2011; Shaw and Carter, 2007). Analyzing the statements of respondents in these terms, it is seen that social entrepreneurs emphasize their ability for observing and discovering the specific problems and needs in the society. This is demonstrated in various statements such as;

"I believe that a social entrepreneur observes what is needed or what is lacking in a specific area." (DD)

In this vein, social entrepreneurs can be considered as the local change makers (Drayton, 2008) that recognize the unseen and unaddressed social needs with their localized focus and perception abilities. A respondent explained the motivation and desire to address the social needs and problems as follows;

"We, as social entrepreneurs, have roles such as being visionary, following the public's agenda, generating an understanding and seeing their real needs. I think that's the point what makes the social initiative meaningful." (ET)

As they target the specific needs and problems in the society, the embedded nature of social entrepreneurs within local communities becomes obvious. Their aim to address locally situated needs found a voice in one of the respondents' expressions as follows;

"I'm working with local farmers and I try to meet their special needs and create an agricultural awareness. I always observe and ask to myself; 'what I can do more for them?'" (TA)

It is evident from these statements that social entrepreneurs deploy a community-focused approach through addressing specific needs and problems. Their efforts in addressing the social needs are armed with local awareness and this is likely to be more effective than the efforts which do not have such an understanding. Extending this view, some of the respondents suggested that organizations have various limitations about realizing the specific needs and problems in the society. For instance;

"Honestly, people working in corporations are generally belong to the middle class and upper class. So, they do not focus and see the local needs effectively. Because it requires to be intertwined with them, speak the local language, I mean you have to understand their life, their needs. You have to touch them. I can communicate with them [local women] better than a corporation. I'm doing something they can't see." (TH)

Similarly, another participant also emphasized that social entrepreneurs are better than big organizations at scanning the specific problems and identifying the local needs that have to be overcome. He revealed:

"Being a social entrepreneur begins by discovering the needs of the society and trying to do something about them. When I visit the organizations that support our projects, I say them 'come and see with your own eyes', because they cannot see and understand the specific needs in the society as I do." (IB)

Drawing on the considerations above, as social entrepreneurs are in a relationship with their local social environment and have a better understanding of the social problems in comparison to the organizations, it is possible to assert that they are able to identify local social needs and problems. Thus, we proposed the following;

Proposition 1: Social entrepreneurs may contribute to the co-creation of social value by their awareness of local needs and specific problems of the society.

In the related literature, the purpose of existence and the business identities of social enterprises are often discussed because of their 'not for profit' structure which is combined with a concern of generating revenue (e.g. Dorado, 2006; Elkington and Hartigan, 2008; Fowler, 2000). This duality extends beyond vision, mission, and purpose to the construct of identity and even may create tensions that can be impediment to identity realization (Bruin, et al. 2017:581). For all that, our respondents provided very clear answers about the underlying reason that is central to their initiatives. One of them asserted:

"For me, the most important thing is creating value. I try to settle a barrier-free life and to provide the transformation of society an accessible life for all via sustainable projects." (ET)

This statement indicates that the primacy of the social mission over other objectives come to the forefront. Such that, acting as a change-maker and creating sustainable solutions stressed as a *raison d'être*. The sustainability emphasis is also highlighted in the statements given by another interviewee as follows:

"I think; the main purpose of a social entrepreneur is to provide sustainable solutions to social problems."(GY)

The findings also suggest that while pursuing their mission social entrepreneurs are driven by a very strong motivation to embrace and handle social problems of the society. One interviewee remarked:

"We work for people, together with people for matching existing resources with the needs of them. A social entrepreneur devotes her/his life to solve a social problem." (ST)

A similar emphasis on identifying a social problem and chasing for a solution found voice in another respondent as follows:

"The problem of society is my problem. And not limited to my country. I run after a need when I notice, even if it's outside the borders of the country. I try to act as pioneer of social transformation for long-lasting social benefit." (IB)

These statements show that social entrepreneurs are strongly motivated to create sustainable solutions for social problems by dedicating their selves to create social value. Hence, it is possible to assert that their social mission benefits the social betterment more than the non-sustainable and temporal solutions of CSR activities which generally aim to reduce the negative impacts of organizations. Indeed, business organizations cannot have a social mission because of their nature but they may support a social entrepreneur to realize his/her mission and broaden its impact. Thus, we generate the proposition below;

Proposition 2: Social entrepreneurs may contribute to the co-creation of social value by undertaking a social mission.

Current findings also reveal important evidence that social entrepreneurs place great emphasis on being innovative in their activities. The majority of them identified themselves as risk takers or chasing for different solutions. One social entrepreneur suggested;

"I, as a social entrepreneur, take risks in the field and I ask to myself what can I do differently for this problem." (DD)

Zahra et al., (2009) emphasize that social entrepreneurs recognize systemic problems of the society and address them by introducing revolutionary changes. In this vein, Ercan Tural who works for disability which is a problematic area in Turkey because of the structural problems, states the following;

"Actually, all the social entrepreneurs are social revolutionists in my opinion. All the projects we perform are revolutionary. Via AYDER we try to make a barrier-free life for disabled people." (ET)

In a similar vein, Tülin Akin in her "Smart Agriculture" project offer solutions for farmers using the opportunities of technology. The platform that she created provides early warning information via special SMS and applications; up-to-date information, know-how, while creating opportunities for them to reach alternative markets by bypassing traditional ways. She mentions about innovativeness as below;

"What we do as social entrepreneurs is taking the risks and developing new ideas for the solution of a problem. What I have done for farmers is a new generation rural living model." (TA)

Similarly, Serra Titiz through her initiative provides an online platform that is targeting youth unemployment and enables knowledge and experience sharing for youth to make more informed decisions about their education, career and life. The e-mentoring

module is a prominent tool developed to enable volunteers to meet and share professional expertise with students. She defines her own efforts as following;

"Social entrepreneur tries different ways to solve a problem, takes risks and creates difference with an innovative and proactive perspective. I try to make a difference for youth following this approach." (ST)

Statements of the respondents support the view that social entrepreneurs show serious efforts to solve complex societal problems with an innovative approach. They try to create and widen social impact by creating social value through innovative ways and social change. Their ability to recognize opportunities allows them to generate sustainable social value through innovation. Regarding to this, we offer the following;

Proposition 3: Social entrepreneurs may contribute to the co-creation of social value by offering innovative solutions to the specific needs or problems they observe.

Organizations' CSR activities generally focus on limited areas. Especially in Turkey, over the years, socially responsible activities are handled in terms of corporate philanthropy addressing limited areas like education, environment and sports (Alakavuklar, Kilicaslan & Ozturk, 2009). In practice, these activities often designated as a charity fund set aside by organizations to do some good in the local community, sponsoring or donating money (Saatçi & Urper, 2003:63). Although these projects aim to contribute to the social betterment, their impact tends to be limited. Additionally, a CSR projects generally are aligned specifically with the company's strategic goals, while a social enterprise chooses projects with a broad perspective. The variety of the social issues focused by social entrepreneurs is manifested by the interviewees as follows:

"Beyond providing social benefit to only a segment of society or a need group, entrepreneurial initiative has the ability to be diverse. All my friends focus on different social areas." (ET)

Addressing various social problems also functions as a source of motivation for social entrepreneurs which supports their social mission. One of the respondents explained:

"To reach different parts of the society and solve different problems of the society. This is the motivation for us." (DD)

Moreover, interviewees stress that they are focusing on the address unmet social needs that organizations or governmental actors do not address. In this vein, two remarkable statements are given below:

"Since I do not believe in the impossible for creating benefits for society, I have realized different projects in different areas which the government or the corporations do not focus". (IB)

"CSR activities generally focus on education or sports as sponsorships. I wanted to do something beyond CSR activities. They gave lots of money to these projects. But, I think there is a misunderstanding about the money they spend and the impact that they create. These are also important but this is very limited for social value, we need to do much more than that. There are other aspects of the society that need help". (TH)

Considering the focus of social entrepreneurs' initiatives in the sample (e.g. youth unemployment, disability, agriculture, women employment, waste recycling) and their statements above, it is possible to reveal that social entrepreneurial initiatives have a variety in addressing the unmet needs and problems of the society, which are not addressed by governments and CSR activities of organizations. Thus, we generate the following;

Proposition 4: Social entrepreneurs may contribute to the co-creation of social value by addressing a variety of needs and problems of society.

Contributions of Organizations

From a resource dependence perspective (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978), the nature, functioning of partnerships, collaborations, and alliances and the various reasons for such a cooperation (e.g. the lack of critical competencies, acquire expertise or access to critical resources) demonstrated well in the related literature. In this vein, the findings here reveal the contributions of organizations in the co-creation of social value. Social enterprises have been regarded as the financially stable organizations that generate social value (Mair and Marti, 2006; Robinson, 2006). However, financial stability for social enterprises is not so easy to ensure. According to the findings, the most challenging issue for social entrepreneurs that they need support is access to resources and funding. They emphasize the importance of the financial resource in order to start and maintain the entrepreneurial initiative. One of the interviewee explained:

"Our problem is financial. When an entrepreneurial initiative idea finds financial support, it is possible for our dreams and efforts to reach more people faster than we can achieve on our own". (ÇY)

It is seen that the lack of financial resources is also a great obstacle in scaling up the initiative and accomplish their mission. Moreover, social entrepreneurs prefer the "long term" relationships rather than donations of organizations. One of them commented on this preference as follows:

"Rather than short-term grants or aids, a double-sided contract should be signed. It should be considered as the long-term partnership and each side should work as a 'social problem partner'." (DD)

The successful partnerships of well-known organizations such as Koç Holding, Unilever, Vodafone that provides funding to the social enterprises are exemplified by the different social entrepreneurs as follows;

"Financial support is naturally required to successfully sustain these projects. A creative idea cannot be put into action unless it is financially supported. In this sense, we are carrying out projects with big organizations like Unilever, Vodafone, Koç Holding. The idea comes from the social entrepreneur and the company says that 'ok, I will finance this idea'. This cooperation is important for the sustainability of the enterprise." (ET)

"I first stumbled on my entrepreneurial initiative journey. Lack of capital, the lack of access to financial resources really forced me. But the partnership with Vodafone worked very well." (TA)

"Unilever, as a part of this collaboration, supported us financially; they paid our rent for several years. It was a very good way for us to start." (TH)

These statements clearly show that it is possible for a company to be a part of social value creation by providing financial support to a social entrepreneurial initiative. Addition to this, social entrepreneurs mention other ways of support apart from ensuring capital directly, such as being a customer of the social enterprise in order to provide income. One interviewee explained.

"If the social problem addressed by the social entrepreneur affects the organization negatively, it can generate income for the entrepreneurial initiative to solve this problem. Thus, the organization can become a customer of the entrepreneurial initiative." (GY)

Indeed, being a customer of the social enterprise seemed to be a successful way to support social enterprise. One of the interviewees explained such collaboration with a well-known brand Coca Cola in these words:

"The organization can be the customer of the entrepreneurial initiative by giving regular orders. Most of the organizations give useless corporate gifts. Instead of this, they can give our products. For example, we regularly receive orders from Coca Cola to be used both at Coca Cola stores in US and at their expositions and conferences so they became our customer. Coca Cola have kept my business alive for long years." (TH)

The same social entrepreneur also mentioned the collaboration with Unilever which provided material for her enterprise's production process and how it supported her social mission. She recalled:

"Unilever was our supporter during our four-year collaboration providing material for our bags, I mean they give us their waste materials and we use it as a raw material. At the end of the day, this support will sustain the entrepreneurial initiative and social value. Also, by supporting an entrepreneurial initiative corporation can foster its corporate image. But most of the organizations do not aware of this." (TH)

These statements reveal that acquiring to the resources is one of the most critical challenge for the social entrepreneurs in starting and maintain their initiative. Social entrepreneurs often search for innovative strategies to acquire resources and sustain their social missions which is very important for their survival. At this point, organizations can provide financial resource directly or indirectly in order to support the social initiative. This in turn, may ensure the creation and continuity of the social value. Regarding to these, we offer the following proposition;

Proposition 5: Organizations may contribute to the co-creation of social value by providing financial resource for the initiation and maintenance of the entrepreneurial initiative.

Scholars tend to regard social enterprises as the socially driven organizations that use business principles to reach their goals (e.g., Austin et al., 2006; Mair and Marti, 2006). However, social entrepreneurs in the sample reveal that their lack of business and management skills creates difficulties in sustaining their initiatives. This emphasis is clear in sample statements which are given below;

"My most important deficiency is poor management. This weakness can be eliminated by partner organizations to maintain the entrepreneurial initiative." (IB).

As most of the social entrepreneurs do not have a business education, they mention that dealing with business-related operational issues takes time and constitutes as an extra cost item. One of the interviewees explained how her collaboration with Unilever facilitated the process. She revealed:

"I, as a person do not have a business insight. I'm not very good at conducting a business. My business perspective is limited. For example, I was able to create the proper web-site design in the 6th version. It is time consuming and also additional cost for me. For example, Unilever gave me support with press services. I mean, the collaborations helped me to gain a business perspective to keep my enterprise alive" (TH).

Social entrepreneurs stress that organizations' corporate experiences may help them to handle the whole process from production to after-sales with professional business insight. One interviewee commented:

"From the creation of the product to its operation, to its sale, to the after-sales, an entrepreneur makes all this stuff him/herself. I mean we have to carry out a plan, marketing activities etc. like a business. Overcoming the difficulties in starting the initiative and then maintaining it, this gets really hard sometimes. It is easier to overcome them with the help of corporate experiences." (CY).

Moreover, social entrepreneurs reveal other benefits of collaboration with organizations such as sectoral knowledge or network possibilities. One of the interviewee explained:

"Benefitting from the company by taking the advantage of their sectoral knowledge of the company or gaining access to new connections is important for the continuity of the entrepreneurial initiative." (GY)

These statements show that, social entrepreneurs benefit from organizations through their business and management skills. Their sectoral experience, production capabilities, financial knowledge, marketing skills etc. help the social entrepreneurial initiative to maintain and provide continuance. It is obvious that the competencies and expertise of organizations ensure a business insight for social entrepreneurs. Based on this, we generate the following proposition.

Proposition 6: Organizations may contribute to the co-creation of social value by providing business insight for the initiation and maintenance of the entrepreneurial initiative.

Another challenge we identified that social entrepreneurs face has appeared to the recognizability issues. Especially those at the micro level initiatives have huge difficulties in their attempts to gain recognition. The enhanced recognition obtained through cooperation with established and well-reputed organizations can benefit the social enterprise in various ways. For instance, one social entrepreneur explained how she overcame this challenge with the help of big organizations:

"People like the idea but sometimes they do not want to pay for that because they do not know the brand. Creating awareness, creating recognition is difficult for me but when I work with Coca-Cola. My marketing skills are limited. Here, the collaboration with the corporations like Unilever, Coca Cola helps me. Their visibility helped me hugely. They focused on the advertising part." (TH)

The respondents also mentioned that they benefit from the organizations' legitimacy in order to introduce themselves to the society and to build identity. Moreover, they demonstrate the positive effects of collaboration on gaining scalability. One of the social entrepreneurs in the sample commented:

"It is not very easy for one person to introduce himself to the society as a social entrepreneur. Collaborations with organizations are therefore necessary. We need the power of the organizations to widen the initiative because a social entrepreneur cannot be as strong as a company. It is possible to scale up the initiative when the company shares its power with social entrepreneur." (ET)

In this vein, another social entrepreneur explained how Vodafone contributed her social initiative in broadening the social impact. She revealed:

"With the support of big corporations we can extend the benefits. Today, the business model we established in Aydin with the cooperation of Vodafone Club started to be implementing in Kenya, Ghana, New Zealand and India. If I was on my own, the impact wouldn't be this broad I think." (TA)

Based on the above, it is possible to assert that the power of organizations may help social entrepreneurs to build awareness and gain legitimacy in the eye of society. Additionally, organizations may also help them to overcome the negative effects of structural embeddedness limited to a local scale. A collaboration with a well-known company may maximize their social impact. Thus, we propose the following;

Proposition 7: Organizations may contribute to the co-creation of social value by providing recognition in expanding the social initiative's impact.

Framing of the Co-creation Model

Related literature highlights the supportive role of networking and considers it as a critical skill for success (e.g. Alvord, Brown & Letts 2004; Hockerts, 2006). Studies reveal the importance of building networks, especially for the long-term cooperation relationships and for the social initiatives' success (Marshall, 2011; Sharir & Lerner, 2006). However, it is discussed that social entrepreneurs may face difficulties in identifying and developing network relationships (Phillips, Lee, Ghobadian, O'Regan, & James, 2015). In this context, our respondents demonstrated the integrative role of network organizations such as Ashoka in order to create collaborations with organizations. One of them explained:

"A platform like Ashoka actually knows both the entrepreneur and the company and matches them in a correct way". (DD)

These network organizations not only provide a connection between the social entrepreneur and company, which is critically important for entrepreneurial development entrepreneurs, but also support them to acquire crucial resources provided by the organizations. One interviewee explained:

"Platforms like Ashoka aims to maximize the social and economic impacts of both sides by bringing organizations together with social entrepreneurs. While the organizations provide support to social entrepreneurs as knowledge, skills and financing, social entrepreneurs offer a unique source of new markets and target groups." (ST)

Based on these considerations about the facilitator role of the network organizations in the collaboration, we generate the following proposition;

Proposition 8: Network platforms have a connective role in the engagement of social entrepreneurs and organizations.

From the resource dependence perspective, organizations and social enterprises may establish a process of co-creation for social value in order to complement each other's needs and minimize the weaknesses. In this vein, the findings of the study highlight that organizations and social entrepreneurs have different point of views and therefore can play different roles in creating social value.

"I won't be corporate; I do not want be corporate. I'm doing something they can't see, and they are doing something I won't do. We hold different perspectives, so we can complete each other. I think these collaborations can be a model for creating sustainable social value and wellbeing. We already have 450 women working with us. All of them are uneducated and over 40. These women earn money, generate a sense of self confidence, gain an identity and grow as an individual through this way. And that translates into being happier and stronger. This is the real social value and social wellbeing I think."(TH)

Findings also demonstrate that the competencies of the organizations and the perspective of the social entrepreneurs complement each other in generating solutions to social problems. One interviewee exemplified this point as follows:

"We need organizations, organizations need us. We need them in terms of investment, they need us to reach new markets in particular and to touch society in general. However, this cannot be only with sponsorships or aids. This requires a long-term partnership. We are now contributing to Unilever's HR via "Future is Brighter" Youth Platform. Our aim is to overcome the problem of youth unemployment and to increase their

economic and social betterment. This is the social impact of "Future is Brighter" I think." (ST)

One of the social entrepreneurs explained how his collaboration with Koç Holding became permanent and long-termed partnership in these words:

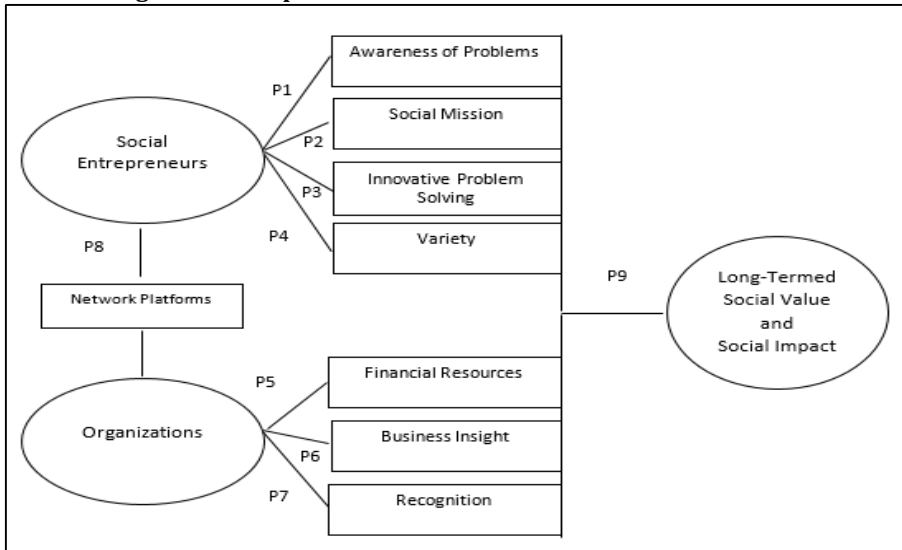
"When ideas for creating social benefit come together, each side takes on a part of the work like the pieces of the puzzle. For example, our initiative with Koç Holding is still continues. This initiative has settled into that company's DNA and has created incredible impact." (ET)

Analyzing these statements, it is possible to assert that when organizations and social entrepreneurs' efforts come together they can create a more permanent and broad social impact by providing different contributions in creating social value.

Proposition 9: Collaboration of organizations and social entrepreneurs is expected to create long-termed social value and social impact.

Based on the data and the identified propositions, we propose a conceptual model for the co-creation of social value which is given in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model for the Co-Creation of Social Value



6. Discussion

Today, society faces various multi-dimensional, deeply rooted and complex social problems that no party can tackle on its own which requires collaborative approach to generate a solution. (Wiseman & Brasher, 2008; Hellström et al., 2015). As a form of collaboration, voluntary collaborations between business organizations and social entrepreneurs address the societal problems that single parties find difficult to cope with alone.

Although more work is needed to reveal the causes, process, and results of collaboration for the co-creation of the social value in all aspects, this study contributes

to the literature in several ways. First, it reveals the potential contributions of organizations and social entrepreneurs for the co-creation of social value. Secondly, by advancing the understanding of the collaboration, it develops a conceptual framework and tries to offer a point of view for the parties that are considering to collaborate. Additionally, the study asserts a social entrepreneurs' perspective in a developing country context, which is an under-researched area.

Advancing understanding of the collaborative dynamic in the social value creation is central to developing knowledge of how social value can be long-termed and permanent. In this perspective, our conceptual model proposes that organizations and social entrepreneurs may provide different contributions to the co-creation of the social value, and thus complement each other. The findings show that social entrepreneurs, due to their embeddedness, may provide a more broad awareness of the local needs and the specific problems of the society compared to the organizations. Moreover, as they aim to find solutions to the long-lasting societal problems, they may provide a strong social mission and commitment which is not a prior goal for organizations cannot easily be ensured because of their business-oriented structure. Additionally, social entrepreneurs may focus on a variety of societal problems and needs which are not addressed in organizations philanthropy, CSR or CSV based activities. Lastly, with their change agent role, social entrepreneurs may seek, discover, and evaluate the opportunities create innovative solutions comparing to the traditional solutions of organizations (Devinney, 2009; Doane, 2005; Groot & Dankbaar, 2014; Jackson & Jackson, 2014; Mair & Marti, 2006; Visser, 2012; Zahra et al., 2009).

On the other hand, organizations may contribute to the co-creation mainly by providing funding and financial recourse to the entrepreneurial initiative in the initiation and the growing processes which is reported to be one of the most challenging limitation for social entrepreneurs. Besides, they may ensure a business insight such as managerial knowledge, sectoral experience, financial and marketing skills that social entrepreneurs may lack. Furthermore, organizations may enable recognition power to the social entrepreneurs in order to gain visibility and to generate a legitimate identity. The familiarity of organizations may help social entrepreneurs to enhance awareness which in turn helps to broaden the social impact they create (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012b, 2012b; Berger, et al, 2004; Sakarya et al, 2012).

Thus, collaborative arrangements may help social entrepreneurs to enhance the achievement of their social mission in terms of improving access to resources and funding, having business knowledge, building an identity, gaining legitimacy and sustaining the initiative. On the other hand, organizations can truly contribute to creating social value and establish themselves as good corporate citizens with a reinforced legitimacy. So the collaboration will enable them both to contribute to the solutions of social problems and to fulfill the important objectives. Addition to these, our findings showed that the network platforms like ASHOKA have a connective role in the collaboration of organizations and social entrepreneurs. They have an effect to align these two distinct parties toward a shared goal and facilitate the collaboration process. These established network platforms supports the two parties to find each other and ensure a fit for co-creation of social value. As a conclusion, the different strengths, and capabilities of organizations and social entrepreneurs can complement each other and may help the creation of permanent social value and broader social impact. This study may provide an insight not only for the decision makers of organizations but also for social entrepreneurs who have innovative solutions for deep-rooted problems of society but facing with challenges. From a practical perspective, the results of our study may be helpful for social entrepreneurs who can take the advantage of networking platforms and collaborations in order to benefit from the organizations capabilities to start and scale up their initiatives. Organizations also should

recognize the role of social entrepreneurs in creating long term social value which in turn transform the top down understanding into a bottom up understanding. Besides, they should take into account to broaden their social impact through such a collaboration which may also allow to foster their position and legitimacy in the society. The results of this study may encourage the organizations for collaborating with social entrepreneurs to create long term social value and social impact.

There are various limitations of this study. Our data is limited with nine social entrepreneurs. The interpretations and propositions are based on the limited data which do not include organizations' decision makers' perspectives. Thus, future studies can focus on the organizational actors' perspectives and propositions can be tested longitudinally in terms of the created social impact. Also, although the lack of supportive governmental regulations is emphasized by the respondents, it is not considered in study. Thus, future studies can include the role of governmental mechanisms.

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Özet

Bu çalışma, son yıllarda artan bir önemle global organizasyonlar, hükümetler, sivil toplum kuruluşları, işletmeler gibi aktörlerin ajandalarında yer alan toplum için sosyal değer yaratma konusuna odaklanmaktadır. Sayılan aktörlerin çeşitli çabalarına rağmen, toplumsal sorunların kalıcı şekilde çözülmesinin ve uzun süreli sosyal değer yaratılmasının kolay olmadığı bilinmektedir. Son yıllarda öne çıkan ve amacı toplumun problemlerine inovatif çözümler geliştirmek olan sosyal girişimcilik (Mair and Marti, 2006) faaliyetlerinin dahi ne kadar sürdürülebilir olduğu tartışmalıdır. Öyle ki, literatürde kökleşmiş toplumsal sorunların kalıcı şekilde çözülebilmesi için farklı aktörlerin tek başlarına hareket etmek yerine ortak çalışmaları gerekliliği vurgulanmaktadır. Bu noktadan hareketle, bu çalışmada toplum için uzun süreli ve kalıcı sosyal değer yaratmak amacıyla işletmeler ile sosyal girişimcilerin birlikte nasıl çalışabilecekleri incelenmektedir. İşletmelerin sosyal sorumluluk faaliyetlerinin, genellikle bağış ve sponsorluklar üzerinden kısa dönemli şekilde gerçekleşmesi ve çoğu zaman eğitim, spor gibi alanlara odaklanması ve elbette birincil amaçlarının sosyal yönelimli olmaması, işletmelerin yarattığı sosyal değerlerin de sınırlı olmasına neden olmaktadır (ör. Carroll, 2008; Visser, 2008; 2012). Diğer yandan, sosyal girişimciler ise sosyal misyon ile hareket etmelerine rağmen, sosyal girişimlerini başlatmak ve sürdürmek noktasında çeşitli problemler ile karşılaşmaktadırlar.

Bu çalışmada söz konusu noktalar dikkate alınarak sosyal değerin yaratılmasında işletmeler ile sosyal girişimciler arasında işbirliğine yönelik kavramsal bir model önermektedir. Nitel araştırmaya dayanan bu çalışmada veriler, Türkiye'deki dokuz sosyal girişimciyle gerçekleştirilen görüşmeler üzerinden elde edilmiştir. Verilerden yola çıkarak, bu iki aktörün nasıl işbirliği yapabileceğini belirleyen dokuz önerme geliştirilmiştir. Bulgular, sosyal girişimcilerin; işletmelerden farklı olarak sosyal misyona sahip olmak, toplumun spesifik ihtiyaçlarına ilişkin farkındalıklarının yüksek olması, işletmelerin sosyal sorumluluk faaliyetlerine kıyasla çok daha çeşitli sorunlara odaklanabilme ve bu sorunlara inovatif çözüm önerileri getirme becerileriyle bu işbirliğine katkı sağlayabileceğini ortaya koymaktadır. Diğer taraftan, işletmelerin de sosyal girişimcilerin en kritik problemi olan finansal kaynak sağlama, yönetim becerisi kazandırma ve sosyal girişimin büyümesi noktasında tanınırlık sağlama açısından söz konusu işbirliğini desteklemeleri mümkündür. Ayrıca network platformlarının da bu işbirliğinde kolaylaştırıcı rolü olduğu görülmektedir. Çalışma, işletmeler ve sosyal girişimcilerin işbirliği ile hareket etmeleri ile birbirlerini tamlamayabileceklerine ve bu sayede uzun vadeli sosyal değer yaratabilmenin mümkün olabileceğine ilişkin kavramsal bir model ortaya koymaktadır.