



## Investigation of The Relationship of Entrepreneurship Tendency With Self-Efficacy And Personality Characteristics Among University Students

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### Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between university students' entrepreneurial tendencies, their personalities, and their self-efficacy. A total of 250 students voluntarily participated in the study, representing various departments of the university. Data collection tools included the entrepreneurship, proactive personality, and general self-efficacy scales. The entrepreneurship scale, consisting of 14 items, was developed by Girginer and Uçkun (2004). The "Short Proactive Personality Scale (SPPS)," developed by Bateman and Crant (1993) and adapted into Turkish with validity and reliability studies by Akın, Abacı, Kaya, and Arıcı (2011), was used. The "General Self-Efficacy Scale," developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem, originally consisting of 20 items but revised to 10 items in 1995, with two sub-dimensions of ability and confidence and effort and persistence, was employed. Data were analyzed using the SPSS program. The analysis revealed that the participants' scores on the scales were above the average scores. When comparing these scores by gender, it was found that, except for proactive personality scores, there were significant differences favoring males in other scale scores. No statistical difference was found when comparing scores based on the students' academic departments. The analysis of the relationships between the scale scores revealed that all scale scores were positively correlated with each other. Based on the research findings, it can be suggested that providing seminars, courses, or similar activities aimed at enhancing entrepreneurial traits and positively affecting general self-efficacy levels would contribute to the development of these characteristics.

**Keywords:** Student, Entrepreneurship, Proactive personality, Self-efficacy

## Üniversite Öğrencilerinde Girişimcilik Eğiliminin Öz-yeterlik ve Kişilik Özellikleriyle İlişkinin İncelenmesi

### Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı; üniversite öğrencilerinin girişimcilik eğilimleri ile kişilikleri ve öz yeterlilikleri arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektir. Araştırmaya üniversitenin farklı bölümlerinde öğrenim gören toplam 250 öğrenci gönüllü olarak katılmıştır. Veri toplama aracı olarak girişimcilik, proaktif kişilik ve genel öz yeterlilik ölçekleri kullanılmıştır. 14 ifadeden oluşan, Girginer ve Uçkun (2004) tarafından geliştirilen girişimcilik ölçeği bulunmaktadır. Bateman ve Crant (1993) tarafınca geliştirilen ve Akın, Abacı, Kaya ve Arıcı (2011) tarafından Türkçe 'ye uyarlama, geçerlik ve güvenilirlik çalışmaları gerçekleştirilen "Kısaltılmış Proaktif Kişilik Ölçeği (KPKÖ)" kullanılmıştır. Schwarzer ve Jerusalem'in geliştirdiği, ilk olarak 20 maddeden oluşan ancak 1995'te revizyonlar ile 10 madde haline getirilen, yetenek ve güven ve çaba ve direnç olarak iki alt boyuttan oluşan "Genel Öz-Yeterlik Ölçeği" kullanılmıştır. Verilerin analizinde SPSS programı kullanılmıştır. Analiz sonucunda katılımcıların ölçeklerden aldıkları puanların ortalama puanların üzerinde olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bu puanlar cinsiyete göre karşılaştırıldığında proaktif kişilik puanları dışında diğer ölçek puanlarının da erkekler lehine anlamlı farklılık yarattığı tespit edilmiştir. Katılımcıların okudukları bölümlere göre yapılan karşılaştırmada istatistiksel olarak bir fark bulunamamıştır. Ölçek puanları arasındaki ilişkilerin analizi sonucunda tüm ölçek puanlarının birbirleriyle pozitif yönde ilişkilere sahip olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Araştırma bulgularına dayalı olarak öğrencilere girişimcilik özelliklerini artıracak ve genel öz yeterlilik düzeylerine olumlu etki yapacak seminer, kurs vb. etkinliklerin sunulmasının bu özelliklerin geliştirilmesine katkı sağlayacağı söylenebilir.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Entrepreneurship is the basic motor that powers the engine of economies globally and the consequent growth as well as unemployment throughout the country. The prosperity of an entrepreneur is a function of many variables such as the particular personality traits of the man or woman, his or her self-efficacy and a certain inclination towards initiative, and therefore their capability of spotting opportunities, getting over obstacles and challenging authorities as also taking risks in the process. Building the link between certain personality attributes, the level of self-efficacy, entrepreneurial personality, and the apparent outcomes have been explored in many research studies involving especially entrepreneurs. Researchers also study how an entrepreneur's self-efficacy affects the intentions as well as behaviors of entrepreneurs. Wu et al. (2022) also found that self-efficacy can make youths to start their own business. Similarly, when Mei et al. (2020) conducted research among students, they obtained the result that self-efficacy caused entrepreneurial intention in students. In college students, research by Neneh (2022) also indicated that self-efficacy led to the enhancement of the intention to test entrepreneurship. Besides, the proactive personality would be the last facet that determines people's approach in running a new business industry. Research has, indeed, deemed the proactive personality a potential positive factor in the success of an entrepreneurial project. Luo et al. (2022) revealed a study that proactive personality played a moderately robust effect on entrepreneurial intentions. Much alike, Proactive Personality was also found liable to have a considerably positive effect on the success of entrepreneurs by, Li et al. (2020). A human research study among the students conducted by Naz et al, (2020) states that the individuals with proactive personality were more likely to be entrepreneurial compare to other students. A lot of research has scrutinized concurrently self-efficacy and proactive personality in entrepreneurial outcomes. Previous studies noted that self-efficacy and proactive personality had a greater impact on entrepreneurial behaviors and also intentions versus self-efficacy mediating the influence of proactive personality on entrepreneurial behaviors (Li et al. 2020; Naz et al. 2020). Moreover, the study done by Gultom et al. (2020) pointed out that the interaction between self-efficacy and proactive personality predictions of entrepreneurship behavior and intentions and that if someone is proactive then this impacts the relationship between self-efficacy and entrepreneurship intentions. The research undertaken by Lestari et al. (2022) demonstrated that self-efficacy and proactive attitude were the motivational factors to start up a business among Polish university students. A research noted that the self-efficacy and proactive personality might be connected and correlate strongly to the motivation to become an entrepreneur (Travis and Freeman, 2017).

Nations teach people how to open their businesses as they increase the country's development. People who bring into play entrepreneurial personality traits are expected to promote different content. The following entrepreneurial dimensions need to be looked at by the entrepreneurial individuals; namely, openness, accountability, extroversion, is agreeableness, and emotional equality according to Ören and Biçkes (2011) model of "Five Factor Model," which has cognition component as well. Contrary to that, some of the entrepreneurial traits are approach of hard work, consistency, communication skills, efficiency of time, and the ability for creative thinking, loving your work, changing the same

mindset, and adaptability to challenges besides innovations and collaboration skills, suitability for teamwork, vision and persuasion. Available in strengths that can be tailored to the severity of the condition of patients (Yuksel, 2010). Data reveals that education as a part of career can advance people in their position. People can enjoy directly experiencing new business by such activities like: from starting small entrepreneurship to develop their communication skill via some animation realm about entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship education might give people the motivation to start their own business besides being insufficient for itself. Both seeking to operate as an entrepreneur and personality traits will influence the process of acting as an entrepreneur as evidence into the sources (Liñán et al., 2011; Maresch et al., 2016; Pihie and Akmaliah, 2009).

Simply put, there is not enough substantial evidence to prove that entrepreneurial inclinations are related to self-efficacy and proactivity personality. The university is widely recognized as the breeding ground of future leaders. Therefore, it is of high importance to study the level of entrepreneurship tendency among the students. This study aims to shed light on these issues due to the increasing economic hardships, unemployment, and employment problems in our country, along with a critical decrease in the number of new ventures and entrepreneurial tendencies. In this study, answers have been sought to the following hypotheses:

**HYPOTHESIS 1:** There is a positive relationship between proactive personality trait and entrepreneurial inclination.

**HYPOTHESIS 2:** There is a positive relationship between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial inclination.

**HYPOTHESIS 3:** Entrepreneurial inclination varies according to gender

### **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Entrepreneurship is well recognised as one of the key engines of economic growth at both the national and international level and therefore various studies have been directed at trying to discover those characteristics that make someone more predisposed to become an entrepreneur. The last couple of years have been characterized by investigations into personality traits and self-efficacy, among others. Such factors, namely personal traits as well as self-efficacy, can largely influence whether one is gearing to start a venture itself and expect to survive in business. Several researches have been focused on what is called "pushed factors", i.e. psychological factors and personality traits that underpin entrepreneurial tendency and entrepreneurialism. Characters or traits of a person are absolutely requisite in forming business sensibility of an individual. Recently, works have looked into the question of whether or not some personality features (e.g., openness to experience, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and extraversion) have some influence on people's intentions of becoming an entrepreneur.

The Bandura's self-efficacy conceptualization (1977) posits that an individual perceives him/herself to be fairly successful in carrying out specific tasks or to achieve desired results. In the process of entrepreneurship self-efficacy is a key factor. It happens because it affects entrepreneurial goals.

Proactive personality is a tendency to be focused on the work beforehand, give the risk a chance, and to maintain control over external milieu. The investigation has found that those with a proactive character are going to be the ones who will embrace self-employment and could be among those who will be able to succeed. A research conducted in 2016 by Delle and Amadu has shown that proactive type of personalities are interlinked with entrepreneurial intention and performance. These results are proof that dynamic people have a higher chance of identifying and getting the chance to apply these opportunities. The interaction is reciprocal and intersecting between entrepreneurs' tendency of innovating, self-efficacy, and proactive personality. Many researchers have made the connections varying these constructs and their collectivity impact on the entrepreneurial behaviors.

## METHOD

### Research Model

This study is a quantitative research, and scales have been utilized for the study.

### Participants

The population of the study consists of students between the ages of 18-35 studying at Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, and the sample consists of 250 students selected from the population by convenience sampling. In order to avoid any margin of error in sample selection, the formula  $(N=N^2 pq/d^2(N-1)+ t^2pq)$  was used, taking into account the known population size (Sümbüloğlu, 1994). Using this formula, which calculates the sample size with a margin of error of 0.05, the number of samples to be taken from a population of 3284 with the stratification technique was targeted as 344, but the number of samples reached was 250 due to the distance education and the online surveys that were intended to be done face-to-face. The sample size reached corresponds to a 94% confidence interval with a margin of error of 0.06.

Since the courses were taught remotely, participants were reached through groups formed by class representatives. Surveys were sent to all students in the form of online forms. The participant invitation target was set as 1715 people. It was aimed to achieve a minimum participation of 20%. The data of the participants who participated voluntarily and whose surveys were considered valid were evaluated.

**Table 1.** Participant distribution by departments

Departments	Population	Target sample	Study sample
Faculty of Engineering	593	62,12	45
Architecture and Design	643	67,36	50
Faculty of Fine Arts	504	52,80	37
Faculty of Sports Sciences	703	73,64	57
Faculty of Tourism	841	88,10	61
Total	3284,0	344,02	250

### Data collection tools

Data were collected by tools listed below with online forms.

### Entrepreneurship Tendency Scale

The Entrepreneurship Tendency Scale, developed by Girginer and Uçgun (2004), consists of 14 items used to evaluate entrepreneurship tendency. This scale is a 5-point Likert type, with 1 = Totally Disagree and 5 = Completely Agree. The consistency of the answers given to the Entrepreneurship Tendency Scale was examined with Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ ) and was found to be 0.737.

### General Self-Efficacy Scale

The 20-item scale of the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995), was reduced to 10 items with revisions in 1981. There is no reverse scoring in this four-point Likert scale (completely incorrect = 1, completely correct = 4). In this scale, where all items are scored positively, a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 40 points are received. High scale scores indicate high self-efficacy (Aypay, 2010). In the Turkish adaptation study conducted by Aypay, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and the Stress Coping Scale were used to determine criterion validity. According to the validity and reliability analysis we conducted within the scope of the study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was found to be 0.909. The scale consists of two subdimensions. Effort and resistance (ER) (3,4,5,7,8,10), ability and confidence (AC) (1,2,6,9). The alpha coefficients for the scale components were found to be .79 for the first subscale and .63 for the second subscale. The correlation coefficient obtained for the test-retest reliability of the scale indicates a high level of significant relationship ( $r = .80, p < .001$ ) (Aypay, 2010).

### Abbreviated Proactive Personality Scale

The scale developed by Bateman and Crant (1993) was adapted into Turkish by Akın, Abacı, Kaya and Arıcı (2011). The scale consists of 10 items and there are no reverse coded items. The scale is a 7-point Likert scale with values between "I completely disagree (1)" and "I completely agree (7)", and as the scores increase, the proactive personality trait increases. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the abbreviated Proactive Personality (PP) scale was calculated as 0.932.

### Statistical analysis

The data obtained in the research were recorded in the Microsoft Excel program and these data were analyzed using the SPSS program. In the analysis of the data in the study, Kolmogorov-Smirnow test was used for normality test, Mann-Whitney U test was used for pairwise comparisons, Kruskal Wallis H was used for intergroup comparisons, and Spearman Correlation analysis was used to examine the mutual relationship.

## RESULTS

**Table 2.** Demographic variables of participants

Variables	n	%	
Gender	Female	140	56
	Male	110	44
	Total	250	100

Departments	Faculty of Engineering	45	18,0
	Architecture and Design	50	14,8
	Faculty of Fine Arts	37	20,0
	Faculty of Sports Sciences	57	22,8
	Faculty of Tourism	61	24,4
	Total	250	100
Age	18-24	173	69,2
	25-35	77	30,8
	Total	250	100

The demographic characteristics of the participants are shown in Table 2. When the table is examined, it is seen that the participants are mostly between the ages of 18-24, with a rate of 69.2%, and that there are mostly female participants, 56% of which are female. It can be seen that the distribution of individuals participating from 5 different units is close to each other.

**Table 3.** Survey results according to gender

Surveys	Gender	Mean	SD	U	Z	P value
Entrepreneurship	Female	45,17	7,4	6568,5	-1,997	0,046*
	Male	46,42	7,3			
ER	Female	16,57	4,4	6105,0	-2,818	0,005*
	Male	18,08	3,7			
AC	Female	12,80	2,325	6549,0	-2,049	0,040*
	Male	13,40	2,046			
PP	Female	50,17	13,196	6675,0	-1,807	0,071
	Male	53,26	11,306			

The results of the Mann-Whitney U analysis comparing the scale scores of the participants according to their gender are shown in Table 3. When the table is examined, except for proactive personality scores, other scale scores vary significantly according to gender. The analysis showed that men had statistically higher scale scores than women.

**Table 4.** Survey results according to departments

Departments	PP	ER	AC	Entrepreneurship
Engineering	53,2±14,1	13,2±2,4	17,9±4,4	44,7±9,3
Architecture and Design	52,7±10,6	13,4±1,9	17,8±4,1	48,2±4,4
Fine Arts	49,2 ±11,9	12,6±1,9	16,3±4,1	45,7±6,2
Sports Sciences	53,6± 10,6	13,1±2,3	17,6±3,9	45,9±6,7
Tourism	49,4± 13,8	12,9±2,3	16,7±4,2	44,7±8,5
P value	0,159	0,434	0,259	0,109

The Kruskal-Wallis analysis results comparing the scale scores of the participants

according to their departments are shown in Table 4. When the table is examined, no statistical difference was found in the scale scores considering the departments the participants studied.

**Table 5.** Correlation results between survey points

		<b>PP</b>	<b>ER</b>	<b>AC</b>	<b>Entrepreneurship</b>
<b>PP</b>	r	1	,724**	,694**	,415**
	P		,000	,000	,000
<b>ER</b>	r	,724**	1	,782**	,306**
	P	,000		,000	,000
<b>AC</b>	r	,694**	,782**	1	,265**
	P	,000	,000		,000
<b>Entrepreneurship</b>	r	,415**	,306**	,265**	1
	P	,000	,000	,000	

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results of the Spearman correlation analysis regarding the correlation of the applied scales with each other are shown in Table 5. The analysis shows that the scale scores have a positive relationship with each other.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Spearman correlation test conducted to determine the relationship between Entrepreneurial Inclination and two subscales of the Self-Efficacy Scale, Effort and Resilience - Talent and Confidence, and Proactive Personality Scales revealed a significant positive relationship ( $p < 0.05$ ) between Entrepreneurial Inclination, Talent and Confidence, Effort and Resilience, and Proactive Personality Scales. It was found that the relationship between the sub-dimensions of self-efficacy, effort and resilience, talent and confidence, and proactive personality was at a high level ( $r > 0.70$ ). This result is parallel to the previous findings. For instance, Tekin and Aşar (2021) found a significant positive correlation between entrepreneurship tendency and risk-taking propensity, suggesting that individuals with a higher risk appetite are more likely to pursue entrepreneurial ventures. Similarly, Aykan et al. (2021) and Liu and Wang (2022) identified a strong association between entrepreneurship tendency and innovation orientation, highlighting the importance of creative thinking in entrepreneurial endeavors. Researchers also reported that, openness to experience, self-confidence, and risk-taking propensity had a strong positive relationship with the tendency towards entrepreneurial activity (Javan, 2014, Ahmed et al., 2012, Zisser et al., 2019, Nasip et al., 2017). Furthermore, many researcher examined the relationship between different personality traits and entrepreneurial success and they found that emotional stability, openness to experience, extraversion, and conscientiousness were positively associated with entrepreneurial success (Setia 2018, Brandstätter 2011, Hasanah et al. 2022 ).

The results of the study have supported the significance of being proactive in making decisions to pursue a career in entrepreneurship.

A significant positive relationship was observed between effort and resilience and talent

and confidence. Self-efficacy demonstrates a significant relationship with entrepreneurial intention among new entrepreneurs, and this is a personal factor. These findings are supportive of previous studies. Recent study has indicated that robust interdependence exists between ones perceived capability and propensity to engage in entrepreneurship activities. Take, for instance, through Xin (2023) longitudinal study on self-efficacy which showed that participants with the higher levels of self-efficacy had higher rate to start entrepreneurial career and persisted despite odds similar revelation reported by Marshall et al. (2020). A research made by Rosique-Blasco (et al. 2018) was about of the relation associated with self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention among university students and they discovered that students that had high self-efficacy norm had the greatest inclination towards entrepreneurship. The results of another study conducted by Drnovšek, et al. (2020) have proved that the level of self-efficacy is much more positively related with the readiness to initiate a new business activity and the person's willingness to become an entrepreneur. Another validation of this theory came in McGee(2019) and Peterson (2019) research who found that entrepreneurs with a higher level of self-efficacy were more likely to find success in their ventures. Two other studies, one by Kóczán et al. (2019), and the other by Naktiyok et al. (2010), both found that self-efficacy was positively associated with entrepreneurial intention.

Different researches study the conjunction of self-efficacy, personality traits and entrepreneurship inclination (Naz, 2019). For example, in Zięba's study in 2019 and Saptadjaya and Gunawan's work in 2020, openness to experience and self-efficacy were directly and positively correlated to entrepreneurial tendencies. As small studies show Pihie et al. (2013), Wang et al. (2016), self-efficacy is among the factors of this relationship between personality and entrepreneurial intention. Likewise, Chen and He's (2011) study probed into an intervening role of potential chances and self-efficacy in connection with personality traits and entrepreneurial tendencies. Mediating role of predicted chance and self-confidence was found in that relationship which caused by the influence of some personality traits on an individual's entrepreneurial goal. For example, studies by Prabhu (2012) and Naz et al. (2020) suggested that 'proactive personality' - having high self-efficacy - is one of the main components behind the individuals' "entrepreneurial intention," or the motivation to start a business.

In parallel with the literature, as a result of this study, it was determined that the average score of entrepreneurial tendency ( $45.72 \pm 7.42$ ) was at a medium level and had a positive relationship with self-efficacy and proactive personality. Accordingly, as the self-efficacy score increases, the entrepreneurial tendency score also increases. A similar result has been determined that as the proactive personality score increases, the entrepreneurial tendency score also increases. In this study, the comparison of entrepreneurial tendency, self-efficacy and proactive personality traits among students studying in different departments adds innovation to the field as it has not been researched before. In the study, no significant difference was found in terms of scale scores according to the departments the students studied. It may be possible to attribute this situation to the fact that the students have similar educational curricula and similar personality traits. However, in future studies, the number of



participants should be increased and the results of participants from different departments should be compared.

## **CONCLUSION**

The research was conducted on 250 individuals studying at Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University. Among the participants, it was determined that 173 students were between the ages of 18-24. The average age was determined to be  $22.58 \pm 4.50$ . Females constituted 56% of the study with 140 individuals, while males constituted 44% with 110 individuals. It was found that 62 participants were studying in the field of tourism, 57 in sports sciences, 45 in engineering, 50 in architecture, and 37 in the Faculty of Fine Arts.

One of the variables used in the study is the gender variable. The study results revealed that males had a higher score in entrepreneurial inclination compared to females. The study found that the entrepreneurial and self-efficacy scores in females were lower than those in males. The research results indicate that male students have higher scores in the general self-efficacy sub-dimensions of talent and confidence, as well as effort and resilience, compared to female students. This situation is believed to be possibly attributed to socio-economic structure or societal gender perceptions.

The results of this study indicate a significant positive relationship between university students' proactive personalities and entrepreneurial inclinations. The aim of this study is to investigate the role of self-efficacy and proactive personality on university students' entrepreneurial inclinations. The results of the study have supported the significance of being proactive in making decisions to pursue a career in entrepreneurship. A significant positive relationship was observed between effort and resilience and talent and confidence. Self-efficacy demonstrates a significant relationship with entrepreneurial intention among new entrepreneurs, and this is a personal factor.

The study concluded that there is a significant and high relationship between proactive personality and self-efficacy. The Spearman correlation test conducted to determine the relationship between Entrepreneurial Inclination and two subscales of the Self-Efficacy Scale, Effort and Resilience - Talent and Confidence, and Proactive Personality Scales revealed a significant positive relationship ( $p < 0.05$ ) between Entrepreneurial Inclination, Talent and Confidence, Effort and Resilience, and Proactive Personality Scales. It was found that the relationship between the sub-dimensions of self-efficacy, effort and resilience, talent and confidence, and proactive personality was at a high level ( $r > 0.70$ ). As a result, the findings of our study are parallel to many studies in the literature.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the study findings, it can be said that in order to increase students' entrepreneurial tendencies, including courses or seminar activities on entrepreneurship in the education curriculum and encouraging them to be entrepreneurship can have a positive impact on their levels in this regard.

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