Analysis of the Missions of Higher Education Institutions within the Scope of Third Mission Understanding

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Abstract: Universities are more than institutions only conducting research and educating students in today's world. Changing conditions in the world show that there is a need for redefining the functions of universities. This is called the third mission of universities. Starting from this perspective, this study aims to examine, first, the missions of all state and private universities in Turkey within the framework of the "third mission," one of the most important priorities of universities today. The study results show that universities in Turkey adopted the third mission understanding to a certain extent, and particularly with the influence of the Council of Higher Education (CHE). However, they should do more related to the continuing education (CE), and, partially, to the social engagement (SE) dimensions. While many of the world's leading universities include concepts such as service-learning, public engagement, or outreach in their missions and programs in order to seek integration with the societies in which they exist and with all the stakeholders with whom they cooperate, collaborate, and conduct important related activities, it is a concern regarding Turkey's future that many universities (about 23%) did not even reflect the third mission understanding in their mission statements.

Keywords: *Higher education, mission, third mission understanding.*

Introduction

The University of Karueein, the oldest university in the world and continuing as an educational institute since its origin, was founded in 859 AD in Fez, Morocco. With their changing missions, universities have played an important role in the social structure of Europe as well, beginning with the University of Bologna in Italy, founded in 1088 and considered the first European university (Guinness World Records, n.d.). Mostly at the center of scientific research in the first years of their establishment, universities have changed their images and achieved a new structure instead of being institutions where only scientific studies are conducted. In his study examining the missions of universities from the Middle Ages to the present, Scott (2006) put forward the transition from the teaching-centered universities of the Middle Ages to the public-service–oriented educational institutions of the 20th century and offered evidence of how they have evolved from a national level to internationalization. Although it is not possible to generalize all the universities in the world, it is possible to see the role that universities have undertaken in today's world and their efforts to adapt their missions to this role in the mission statement of the University of Minnesota:

"…The University's mission, carried out on multiple campuses and throughout the state, is threefold:

Research and Discovery – To generate and preserve knowledge, understanding, and creativity by conducting high-quality research, scholarship, and artistic activity from which students, scholars, and communities benefit across the state, the nation, and the world.

Teaching and Learning – To share that knowledge, understanding, and creativity by providing a broad range of educational programs in a strong and diverse community of learners and teachers, and to prepare graduate, professional, and undergraduate students, as well as non-degree seeking students interested in continuing education and lifelong learning for active roles in a multiracial and multicultural world.

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> Outreach and Public Service – To extend, apply, and exchange knowledge between the University and society by applying scholarly expertise to community problems, by helping organizations and individuals respond to their changing environments, and by making the knowledge and resources created and preserved at the University accessible to the citizens of the state, the nation, and the world." (University of Minnesota, n.d.).

These and similar strategies used by the University of Minnesota and many others, recognizing that universities are more than institutions only conducting research and educating students in today's world. Changing conditions in the world show that there is a need for redefining the functions of universities. This is called the third mission of universities (Zomer & Benneworth, 2010). Although it has many different definitions, "the third mission" has been defined by both researchers and universities as producing knowledge for social, cultural, and economic development with other stakeholders of the society across university borders (Zomer & Benneworth, 2011; Universities Third Mission, 2019; Third Mission, 2019).

Although there are many ways to cooperate and collaborate with society, third-mission activities are generally classified as three main dimensions (E3M Project, 2012; Marhl & Pausits, 2011). These are technology transfer and innovation (TTI), continuing education (CE), and social engagement (SE). Discussions over the last 20 years have shown that the main factor in the emergence of this third mission undertaken by universities is the disconnection between the university and the society. The greatest indicator of this disconnection is the impressions given by the university and the society that they represent two separate worlds (Cuhadar, 2008; Mpofu, 2007; Sandy & Holland, 2006). In today's world, while many universities are discussing what steps should be taken toward the third mission, and even when these are conveyed into practice, it is first necessary to briefly examine the quantitative and qualitative change process of Turkish universities in the last century in order to understand how a Turkish university experiences this third mission process.

Turkish universities, which history dates back to the madrasas of the Seljuk and Ottoman Empires, achieved their original development in 1923 with the declaration of the republic. While Istanbul University, which opened in 1933, was recorded as the first university in the history of the republic, this number increased to seven in 1957, to 27 in 1987, and to 69 in 1997 with private universities (Gunay & Gunay 2011) and to 206 in 2019 (CHE, 2019a). A development as important as this quantitative growth was recognized in 1981, when higher education in Turkey entered a restructuring process in terms of academic, institutional, and administrative aspects with the Higher Education Law introduced by the government of that period (CHE, 2019b). All higher education institutions were gathered under the CHE, while academies were transformed into universities; educational institutes were converted into faculties of education; and conservatories and vocational schools were affiliated with universities. Thereby, the Council of Higher Education became the sole institution responsible for all higher education (CHE, 2019b). The CHE, striving to manage universities under a certain order and with the aim of forming a policy similar to its counterparts worldwide and, especially, regarding the universities' presidents' elections (Dogramaci, 2007), made significant contributions to the development of higher education in Turkey in the first years of its founding, according to its first president, Ihsan Dogramaci (1984). However, in one of his books published in the following years, Dogramaci, who resigned upon the development of academic members' becoming authorized in the presidents' elections in 1992, stated that he was in favor of the continuation of the CHE, but that it could not meet the needs of the time (Dogramaci, 2007).

Although it is not often the subject of scientific studies much, the existence and responsibilities of the CHE are still being discussed on different platforms; however, it continues to be a major actor shaping higher education in Turkey. The CHE, which approaches the third mission of universities in regard to regional development, announced in 2016 the launch of two programs, namely the Regional Development-Oriented Mission Differentiation and Specialization program and the Research-Oriented Mission Differentiation and Specialization (CHE, 2016). It can be seen that the CHE attempts to emphasize the third mission of universities with the Regional Development-Oriented Mission Differentiation and Specialization program, but it addresses this mission mostly in terms of regional economic development (Dulupcu & Sungur, 2018). Five universities founded after 2002 were included in this program, and the number of these universities increased to 10 at the beginning of 2019 and the fields required for the specialization of universities were determined (CHE, personal communication, February 23, 2019). Unlike other universities, additional budget and academic staff support were provided to the universities included in these programs, and there was an attempt to underscore the determination of this issue (CHE, personal communication, February 23, 2019).

It has been observed that these programs that the CHE is attempting to apply represent a reflexive action to the changing missions of universities worldwide and aim to generate excitement, especially in the universities included in the program. However, a thorough analysis should be performed to determine the extent to which Turkish universities can be integrated into the third mission understanding with the steps taken. First, there is a need to accept that the targeted program covers a limited number of universities and that how other universities will follow in this sense has not yet been fully defined. More importantly, the universities of the Regional Development-Oriented Mission Differentiation and Specialization program underscore only the economic dimension of the third mission approach, aiming to bring universities together with the society in terms of social, cultural, and economic factors. When taking steps for economic cooperation, how will social and cultural cooperation with the society be provided, and in what

ways will other universities not included in this program follow? This also raises the question of whether universities will continue to have an isolated and inaccessible image as "ivory towers" (Kesten, 2012).

One of the easiest ways to understand the answers to the questions above and the goals of Turkish universities in the framework of the third mission is to examine, first, the missions of universities, meaning the road maps they have designed for themselves. When examining the related literature, it can be seen that there are few studies examining missions theoretically or the mission understanding of universities systematically in Turkey. In one of the few studies conducted, Efe and Ozer (2015) compared the mission and vision documents of state and private universities in Turkey and found no differences. They also stressed in their study that current CHE policies and Ataturk's and Kemalism emphasis on mission statements (Efe & Ozer, 2015). In another study, the mission and vision statements in the strategic plans of the universities were examined, and it was determined that the universities mostly emphasized the aim of "Providing Services for a Qualified Labor Force" in their missions (Ozdem, 2011).

Methodology

Research goal

Although the studies conducted generally offer insights related to the mission and vision understandings of Turkish universities, there is, thus far, no study that classifies these missions within the scope of the "third missions of universities." Although the evaluation of the studies conducted by the universities within the scope of the third mission includes many dimensions, the first and one of the most important is the mission statements of the respective universities (E3M Project, 2012). Starting from this perspective, this study aims to examine, first, the missions of all state and private universities in Turkey within the framework of the "third mission," one of the most important priorities of universities today. Accordingly, this study will primarily seek to answer the question: To what extent are the mission approaches of state and private universities in Turkey conforming to the "third mission" understanding? In addition, changes in the third mission understandings of universities that revised their missions after 2016 and the differences in these understandings in relation to those at the time they were founded will be investigated. Furthermore, considering that the third mission is an approach that saves universities from becoming ivory towers and offers them the opportunity to cooperate with society and increase mutual exchanges (Marhl & Pausits, 2011), the answer to the question: To what extent could state and private universities in Turkey provide this intimacy with society? will also be sought.

Sample and data collection

Gathering data from documents is considered one of the most commonly used data collection methods along with interviews and observations in qualitative research and is also used as a data collection method by itself when directly observing and interviewing are not possible (Merriam, 2018; Yildirim & Simsek, 2011). In this regard, in this study, "the mission documents" of universities that they declare to the public related to what kind of university they will be and presenting the duties they will undertake will be summarized. Data gathering began in January 2016 and included 179 universities that were active at the time; 107 of these were state funded and 72 were private. The total number was accepted as the study group, and no sample selection method was used. However, the study group was revised since some universities were closed for various reasons, and many new universities opened during the study. Therefore, 206 universities, the establishment of which was accepted by the Turkish Grand National Assembly as of 2019 and announced by the CHE on its website, were included in the study group, and no sampling was used. Next, we sought to obtain the mission statements or strategic plans of these 206 universities through their websites; the result was that 9 state universities and 4 private universities founded at the end of 2018 and for which mission statements had not yet been announced were excluded. Thus, the final number of universities in the study group was determined as 193, of which 120 were state and 73 private universities.

Analyzing the data

After acquiring the mission statements of 193 universities in the study group, each one was analyzed word by word using the content analysis method and then classified according to themes under the titles of technology transfer and innovation (TTI), continuing education (CE), and social engagement (SE) (E3M Project, 2012; Marhl & Pausits, 2011), regarded as the three main dimensions in studies conducted thus far on the third mission.

The following definitions were established for these themes to determine under which third mission dimension(s) the universities' mission statements would be classified:

> The term TTI is related to the transfer of an idea, tacit knowledge, know-how, technical knowledge, intellectual property, or discovery or invention resulting from research conducted at universities (in cooperation with external partners or independently) into a non-academic environment where such knowledge can lead to social and commercial benefits at local, regional, national, or global levels.

> The term CE is used to refer to all learning activities undertaken throughout one's life span with the aim of improving knowledge, skills, and competences with a personal-, civic-, social- and/or employment-related perspective.

The term SE is connected to the role of universities to engage with their civic, cultural, industrial, and business communities and the main activities that universities organize aimed at the society at large or at specific sectors of the society in order to enrich them in the cultural or developmental field (E3M Project, 2012).

Codes were specified in order to determine which mission statements were classified under TTI, CE, and SE during the analysis process. At this stage, codes such as "science, scientific, research, knowledge, development, economy, technology and development" were determined for the TTI theme in line with the research and investigation output, and criteria were determined for these codes to be provided by non-academic environments in the mission in alignment with at least one of the following codes: "local, regional, national, global, universal, world, country, city, stakeholder, business world, industry, society or humanity." The criterion that the "lifelong" code should be included in the same mission with words such as "society, individual, student, and every age" was applied for the CE theme. It is accepted as the criterion for the SE theme that one of the terms such as "sociocultural development, social, art, artistic, cultural, health, value, sports, and social responsibility" should be included in the university's mission statement. Additionally, the words, which could be related to any of the third missions of universities but containing very general expressions, such as "social sensitivity, social development, contributing to society, enlightening society, and adding value to society" were classified under the title of SE and evaluated under one of the codes of "serving society" or "social responsibility" instead of being written as separate codes. After the codes were determined, the identified keywords were shown to two experts from the Educational Sciences Department before the content analysis was conducted and were confirmed to be suitable for the themes identified.

Next, content analysis was performed using the determined codes, and the first dimension of the analysis was completed. After this stage, the codes, missions, and themes determined by the researcher were sent to two other experts who were asked to conduct the same analysis process. The content analysis of these three experts (including the researcher) was found to be approximately 75 percent similar in the first stage. The three experts then met and again studied the data set for the mission statements that they had performed independently and could not agree on at the first stage of the content analysis, and the analysis process was completed in line with the agreed-upon decisions. However, while analyzing the third mission understandings of the universities according to their founding years, based on the triple grouping conducted by Ozdem (2011) according to the years the universities were founded, i.e., before 1978, between 1978 and 2006, and between 2006 and 2010, a new group was added to these for universities founded after 2010, and the number of groups increased to four.

Results

Table 1: The distribution of the mission statements of universities related to the third mission dimensions

University	Universities that included only the TTI theme in their mission statements (percentage)	Universities that included only the CE theme in their mission statements (percentage)	Universities that included only the SE theme in their mission statements (percentage)	Universities that included both the TTI and CE themes in their mission statements (percentage)	Universities that included both the TTI and SE themes in their mission statements (percentage)	Universities that included both the CE and SE themes in their mission statements (percentage)	Universities that included the TTI, CE, and SE themes together in their mission statements (percentage)	Universities that did not include any third mission themes in their mission statements (percentage)
State University (Totally 120 University)	56 (46,7%)	-	2 (1,7%)	1 (0,8%)	39 (32,5%)	-	6 (5%)	16 (13,3%)
Private University (Totally 73 University)	17 (23,3%)	1 (1,4%)	10 (13,7%)	4 (5,5%)	10 (13,7%)	-	3 (4,1%)	28 (38,5%)
Totally (193)	73 (37,8%)	1 (0.5%)	12 (6,2%)	5 (2,6%)	49 (25,4%)	-	9 (4,7%)	44 (22,8%)

As shown in Table 1, as a result of the analysis, it was determined that 56 (46.7%) of the state universities in the study included only the TTI theme in their mission statements within the scope of the third mission, and the number of universities including the TTI and SE themes at the same time was 39 (32.5%). It was then observed that this was followed by 16 (13.3%) universities that did not include any third mission theme in their mission statements; 6 (5%) universities that included the TTI, CE, and SE themes together; 2 (1.7%) universities that included only the SE theme; and 1 (0.8%) university that included both the TTI and CE themes, respectively. It was identified that no state university included both the CE and SE themes.

Table 1 also shows that 28 (38.5%) private universities did not include any third mission theme in their mission statements; 17 (23.3%) included only the TTI theme within the scope of the third mission; and 10 (13.7%) private universities included only the SE theme. The distribution of the mission statements of private universities to the other

third mission themes are as follows: 10 (13.7%) universities included both the TTI and SE themes; 4 (5.5%) universities included both the TTI and CE themes; 3 (4.1%) universities included the TTI, CE, and SE themes together; and 1 (1.4%) university included only the CE theme.

When considering which third mission dimensions were emphasized more by both state and private universities, it was found that the universities with the TTI theme (37.8%) in their missions were in the first rank; those with the TTI and SE theme (25.4%) were in the second rank; and universities that did not include any third mission theme (22.8%) were ranked third. These were followed by universities that included only the SE theme (6.2%); universities that included the TTI, CE, and SE themes together (4.7%); universities that included both the TTI and CE themes (2.6%); and those that included only the CE theme (0.5%).

Universities that included only the TTI theme in their mission statements

Table 2: Word List for TTI

TTI words related to the research and the outcomes of these researches	Frequency		TTI words for non-academic environments	Frequency	
	State	Private		State	Private
1. Knowledge	16	5	1. Society (Social)	26	8
2. Research	16	9	2. Region (Regional)	15	1
3. Technology	10	3	3. Country	10	6
4. Scientific	9	4	4. Stakeholder	9	-
5. Progress	8	3	5. City	9	-
6. Development	7	3	6. Humanity	6	2
7. Science	6	3	7. National	5	1
8. Economy	3	4	8. Universal	4	1
9. Project	2	2	9. International	4	2
			10. World	2	2
			11. Industry	3	2
			12. Global	2	2
			13. Business World	2	-
			14. Local	1	1

TTI was found to be the most emphasized field within the scope of the third mission according to 193 state and private universities whose mission statements were examined for this study. In particular, almost half the state universities included only the TTI dimension in their mission statements, and although this percentage decreased among private universities, a significant number of universities that included any third mission dimension addressed this dimension. It was also noted that the terms that were accepted in the scope of research and development were stated in the mission statements of the universities, evaluated together with the words for non-academic environments. While the state universities emphasizing the TTI dimension most often used the words "knowledge, research, and technology" together with the words "society, region, and country" in their statements, private universities used "research, knowledge, scientific, and economy" with the words "society" and "global" (Table 2).

When the mission statement for Abdullah Gul University is examined within the scope of the third mission; after emphasis on educating the individual in mission statement, it can be seen that the university emphasizes the dimension of sharing the outcomes it achieves with the research mission with its stakeholders: "…university seeking solutions to global challenges through partnerships and learner-centered approaches." Similarly, after emphasizing the basic characteristics of the students it wants to educate in the mission statement by Igdir University, using concepts such as "development in local," "progress," and "regional and national development" is an indication that the university has chosen one of the dimensions within the scope of the third mission. The mission of Maltepe University, a private university, was stated with the following sentence:

> To move our country forward in the field of aviation and space sciences, to develop knowledge and research at international and national levels and to transform them into economic values for our country, to establish functional relationships between global-national-regional objectives related to objectives, principles and values.

Examining the mission statement of the university shows that it includes words such as "knowledge," "research," "international and national level," "our country," and "economic" and aims to transfer the research and its outcomes to different non-academic environments in considering the TTI scope of the third mission.

Universities that included only the CE theme in their mission statements

It was found that the theme of CE, considered one of the dimensions of the third mission and based on the keyword phrase "lifelong learning," was not included in the mission statements of either state or private universities in Turkey to a large extent, and nearly all the universities that included this theme also incorporated the TTI and SE themes in their statements at the same time. Ihsan Dogramaci Bilkent University was the only university in Turkey evaluated in this category, stating that it aims to educate its students "to maintain their lifelong learnings and thus, to contribute to the development of humanity as competent, creative, large-minded, ethical, and socially responsible leaders of the future."

Universities that included only the SE theme in their mission statements

Table 3: Word List for SE

Words for SE	Frequency	
	State	**Private**
1. Serving Society/Humanity	2	6
2. Social/Communal Responsibility	-	3
3. Society	-	2
4. Value	-	1

It can be seen that Turkish state universities did not generally include the SE theme alone compared to the CE theme, and that the SE theme is included especially in state universities along with the TTI theme as part of the third mission understanding, as shown in Table 1. In addition, the number of private universities emphasizing this theme alone is larger when compared to public universities. The most-often repeated codes within the scope of this theme were found to be "serving society/humanity" and "social/communal responsibility" (Table 3).

Tokat Gaziosmanpasa University, one of the universities that included only the SE theme in its mission statement, has emphasized the SE theme of the third mission understanding with the statement: "…to present the experiences of the university to the service of humanity" after describing the profile of the student that it aims to educate as part of its mission. A total of 10 private universities including Bezmialem University, Avrasya University, and Hasan Kalyoncu University included the phrases "community health," "social responsibility," and "serving the public" after generally listing their research aims and the characteristics they plan to develop in their students. The mission of one of these, Beykoz University, states: "To be a universal university that learns and contributes to learning and to society through learning."

Universities that included both the TTI and CE themes in their mission statements

Only 5 of the 193 universities examined within the scope of this study included both the TTI and CE together, which are among the third mission themes. The universities gathered under this theme included two separate codes in Table 2 and the code "lifelong learning" at the same time in their missions:

> "To give human-oriented education; to contribute to the development of the region and the country by training inquisitive individuals equipped with research and development skills; and adopt lifelong learning and scientific thinking." (Kilis 7 Aralik University)

> "To educate individuals competent in their fields, culturally and socially equipped, sensitive to society and environment, having the habit of lifelong learning and attaching importance to ethical values, to provide contemporary, innovative and leading education and research environments based on Kemalist thought and to contribute to the society and people in this way…" (Acibadem Mehmet Ali Aydinlar University)

> "TED University carries the mission of fostering graduates that are creative, critical-minded, self-confident, well-rounded lifelong learners by using innovative teaching methods and curricula that have a proper depth-to-breadth balance required by global knowledge economies. TED University, which holds pride in being transparent, accountable and trustworthy, is and will always be a learning institution aiming at continuity and sustainable development and at contributing to the world of science by generating new knowledge through a wide range of scholarly research and creative efforts in focus areas of institutional priority." (TED University)

Universities that included both the TTI and SE themes in their mission statements

Table 4: Word Lists for TTI and SE

TTI research and the words about the outcomes of these researches	Frequency		TTI Words for non-academic environments	Frequency		Words of SE	Frequency	
	State	**Private**		**State**	**Private**		**State**	**Private**
1. Research	15	7	1. Society (Communal)	16	5	1. Culture	18	3
2. Technology	13	5	2. Country	14	4	2. Art	16	1
3. Science	15	2	3. Regional	12	3	3. Social	9	2
4. Scientific	10	3	4. Humanity	8	4	4. Serving Society	6	2
5. Progress	9	1	5. National	6	2	5. Social/Social Responsibility	5	1
6. Knowledge	7	3	6. Universal	8	-	6. Health	3	3
7. Economy	5	4	7. City	6	1	7. Value	6	-
8. Development	6	2	8. Stakeholder	4	1	8. Social Peace/Welfare	5	1
9. Project	5	1	9. International	3	2	9. Socioeconomic	3	2
			10. Local/	2	1	10. Sports	3	1
			11. World	2	-	11. Social problems	2	1
			12. Global	1	-			

It was found that 49 state and private universities in Turkey included the TTI and SE themes together in their mission statements. Specifically, 32.5% of state universities included these two themes, which are within the scope of the third mission, together and constituted a significant difference compared to the private universities, of which only 13.7% included these two themes together. The universities under this theme included the codes of the TTI theme in Table 2 and the SE theme in Table 3 at the same time in their mission statements. When examining how often the state and private universities included the codes under these two themes, it was determined that the codes included and their frequency numbers under the TTI theme are as follows: research (22 times in total), technology (18 times in total), science (17 times in total), society (21 times in total), country (18 times in total), and regional (15 times in total), while the codes under the SE theme are as follows: culture (21 times in total), art (17 times in total), and social (11 times in total) (Table 4).

Anadolu University, one of the state universities including the TTI and SE themes at the same time in its mission statement, emphasized the words "city, region, country, world, universal"; "research, project, knowledge, science, technology"; and "culture, art, sports." Nigde Omer Halisdemir University, another state university, determined its mission as "to contribute to the development of the country and region with the consciousness of respect to the environment by providing the development of science, technology and art," thereby including both the TTI and SE dimensions of the third mission approach at the same time. Lokman Hekim University, a private university, identified its mission as "to undertake financial initiatives to contribute to local, regional and national economy by developing pharmaceutical and medical technology in the light of scientific knowledge produced, to consider developing and implementing projects as the reasons for its basic existence in order to improve and spread healthy life at individual and social level by acting with social responsibility sense," thereby including many words in both the TTI and SE themes in its mission.

Universities that included both the CE and SE themes in their mission statements

It was found that none of the universities whose mission statements were examined within the scope of the present study included the CE and SE themes noted in the third mission at the same time.

Universities that included the TTI, CE, and SE themes together in their mission statements

Table 5: Word lists for TTI, CE, and SE

TTI research and the words about outcomes of these researches	Frequency		TTI Words for non-academic environments	Frequency		Words for CE	Frequency		Words for CE	Frequency	
	State	Pvt.		State	Pvt.		State	Pvt.		State	Pvt.
1.Research	3	-	1.Country	3	1	1.Life/lifelong learning	4	3	1.Cultural	4	2
2.Science	3	1	2.Regional	3	-	2.Individual of all ages	1	-	2.Art	4	1
3.Technology	2	1	3.City	2	1				3.Sport	3	1
4.Knowledge	2	-	4.Society	1	2				4.Social	1	2
5.Economic	1	2	5.Stakeholder	1	1				5.Value	2	-
6.Development	1	-	6.World	2	-				6.Welfare	1	-
7.Scientific	1	-	7.Universal	2	-						
8.Project	2	-	8.Local	1	-						
9.Progress	1		9.International	1	-						
			10.National	1	-						

The conducted analysis identified that the number of universities that included codes under the three basic themes determined within the scope of the third mission in their mission statements was only 9 of 193 public and private universities; 6 of these were state-funded, and 3 were private universities. When examining how often these 9 universities, as evaluated within this scope, included the codes under these three themes in their missions, it was found that they used the codes for science, research, technology, and economy most often with country, regional, society, or city codes under the theme of TTI; they used the codes of life/lifelong learning or individuals of all ages most often under the theme of CE; finally, they used the codes of cultural, art, and sports under the theme of SE (Table 5).

Bingol University, one of the public universities that included the TTI, CE, and SE themes together in its mission statement, fully emphasized all themes accepted within the scope of the third mission with the following statement: "to carry out the research activities performed in order to solve the problems related to the lifelong learning understanding of provincial and regional people and local problems, and to contribute to the universal knowledge" and "to contribute to the social, economic and cultural development of the province and region." Marmara University was another state university emphasizing all themes included in the third mission by expressing its mission as follows: "Marmara University is a university producing value in science, culture, art and sports for all its stakeholders by prioritizing social values with its long-standing experience, is also pioneering, international and contemporary university with multilingual education, aiming at sustainability with the importance it attaches to lifelong learning." Other universities, apart from those mentioned above, are Eskisehir Technical University, Gazi University, Kirikkale University, and Yildiz Technical University for state universities and Alanya Hamdullah Emin Pasa University, Atasehir Adiguzel Vocational School, and Istanbul Gedik University for private universities that included all the components of the third mission in their statements.

Universities that did not include any third mission themes in their mission statements

It was found that 44 of the 193 state and private universities (16 state and 28 private) whose mission statements were evaluated within the framework of the third mission understanding for this study did not include any third mission themes. These universities' statements showed no emphasis that would be included in the CE theme. Moreover, while some universities partially included some codes in their mission statements that could be included in the TTI or SE, the codes used in their missions such as research, art, or technology did not match codes for non-academic circles, so their missions were not classified under this theme. It was determined that many universities in this category included the goal of "educating students" or "educating individuals" at the center of their missions. The statements of some state and private universities evaluated in this context are as follows:

> "It is an educational university that educates individuals with professional competencies in various fields with the responsibility of scientific research and service to society." (Kutahya Dumlupinar University)

> "To become a unique university that is civilization-oriented and adding universal values to the science, technology and art it produces. (Istanbul Medeniyet University)

> "Bakircay University is a university adopting to educate the knowledgeable and virtuous professionals as a principle, who play a leading role in producing and applying technology with high added value in Turkey and who are necessitated by the society in this field." (Izmir Bakircay University)

> "Our mission is to educate qualified individuals at the national and universal level by creating areas of high performance in the production and application of scientific knowledge within the sense of social sensitivity." (Atilim University)

"KTO Karatay University, a long-established representative of the education world, continues its efforts to achieve successes that will shape the future of humanity in accordance with the historical responsibility it has taken from Karatay Madrasah. KTO Karatay University is a foundation university that is committed to educating individuals who will provide benefit for all humanity at local, national and global levels, are strong in theory as well as in practice and will take important roles in the social and economic development of our country." (KTO Karatay University)

"The mission of Izmir University of Economics is to educate qualified graduates equipped with leadership qualities, who are entrepreneurs and can think critically and contribute to science through original research." (Izmir University of Economics)

Third mission approaches of universities that revised their mission statements after 2016

An important finding within the scope of the study was that 65 of the 175 universities[†], of which 108 were state and 67 were private (49 state and 16 private universities, approximately 37% of the universities in 2016), founded before 2016 had declared their mission statements and then made significant changes to them through the end of 2018.

Table 6: Distribution of universities that revised their mission statements after 2016

	Universities emphasizing the third mission understanding for the first time (Percentage)	Universities developing third mission scope (Percentage)	Universities narrowing the scope of the third mission (Percentage)	Universities with no change in their third mission theme (Percentage)
State (49)	13 (26.5%)	6 (12.2%)	9 (18.4%)	21 (42.9%)
Private (16)	4 (25%)	2 (12.5%)	6 (37.5%)	4 (25%)

As shown in Table 6, approximately one-quarter of both private and state universities that revised their mission statements after 2016 included the third mission understanding for the first time. For example, while the emphasis was mostly on research and publication in the mission of the Social Sciences University of Ankara in 2016, with the following statement: "SSUA, which was founded in 2013, is a research-oriented university. It aims to carry out researches and publications that will contribute to the international literature in the field of social sciences."

The mission statement restructured after 2016 included the following expressions, evaluated under the TTI theme of the third mission:

"…to be a university shedding light on the future of the country and the region with its researches to be conducted in the field of social sciences, to contribute to the researcher universe, and to make itself responsible for turning research outputs into benefits through education and other dissemination processes and then to provide these for the benefit of society."

While the universities included only one or two of the TTI, CE, and SE themes determined previously within the scope of this study, it can be seen that the percentage of private and state universities increasing the number of these themes to two or three is about 12%. For example, Bahcesehir University put the emphasis only on students as part of the future labor force in its mission before 2016 with the following statement:

"The mission of Bahcesehir University is to train the labor force to be the leaders of the future with systematic thinking competence, being sensitive to local and global issues, complying with international standards, contributing to scientific, technological and cultural knowledge, supporting universal ideas and values."

In its new mission statement, it has emphasized both the TTI and SE dimensions of the third mission understanding with the following:

"Bahcesehir University is a foundation university aiming to research and develop for the production, protection and dissemination of knowledge that will raise the living standards of our country and humanity, and to contribute to the problems faced by our country, people, state, industry and non-governmental organizations with creative solutions."

Another interesting finding that should be noted is that nearly 37% of the private universities and 18% of the state universities narrowed or completely removed their emphasis on the third mission when changing their missions. For example, whereas Istanbul Halic University included statements planning to have an impact on society in social fields, such as emphasizing economic development of the society, supporting entrepreneurship, or placing the philosophy of giving back to society what one has been given with the spirit of social responsibility, it preferred to move away from

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[†] Universities that closed in 2016 were not included in this number.

its mission approach, which could be considered within the scope of the third mission, by including the following statements in its new vision revised after 2016: "to have a voice in universal science, art and sports by inspiring from the rich cultural heritage of the Golden Horn." While the percentage of private universities not making any amendments in the themes emphasized within the scope of the third mission is 25%, the ratio of state universities is approximately 43%. It was further observed that four state universities and one private university where no changes in mission statements were made did not include themes within the scope of the third mission either before or after 2016. For example, Galatasaray University defined its mission as educating individuals with different characteristics, and the present study found that the statements within the scope of the third mission were not included in the statement before 2016, written as:

> "aiming to educate individuals adopting free and questioning thought, supporting entrepreneurial spirit, having social responsibility and universal academic values by combining Galatasaray tradition, based on equality and diversity, with the knowledge, skills and abilities required by the time in order to contribute to the development and evolution of the national and international community."

Compare this to the statement after 2016: "educating qualified individuals equipped with contemporary values, supporting international cooperation and interdisciplinary studies, being interrogator and researcher in a long-established educational environment."

Third mission understandings of universities according to the years they were founded.

Table 7: Distribution of Third Mission Understandings of Universities by the Years in Which They Were Founded

Foundation Years	Universities that included only the TTI theme in their mission statements (percentage)		Universities that included only the CE theme in their mission statements (percentage)		Universities that included only the SE theme in their mission statements (percentage)		Universities that included both the TTI and CE themes in their mission statements (percentage)		Universities that included both the TTI and SE themes in their mission statements (percentage)		Universities that included both the CE and SE themes in their mission statements (percentage)		Universities that included the TTI, CE, and SE themes together in their mission statements (percentage)		Universities that did not include any third mission themes in their mission statements (percentage)	
	State	Pvt.	State	Pvt.	State	Pvt.	State	Pvt.	State	Pvt.	State	Pvt.	State	Pvt.	State	Pvt.
1978 and Before (21 State)	7 (33%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9 (43%)	-	-	-	2 (10%)	-	3 (%14)	-
Between 1978 and 2006 (31 State/23 Private)	17 (56%)	7 (30%)	-	1 (4%)	1 (3%)	3 (13%)	-	1 (4%)	9 (29%)	6 (26%)	-	-	2 (6%)	-	2 (%6)	5 (22%)
Between 2006 and 2010 (42 State/18 Private)	19 (46%)	4 (22%)	-	-	1 (2%)	2 (11%)	1 (2%)	3 (17%)	15 (36%)	1 (6%)	-	-	1 (2%)	-	5 (12%)	8 (44%)
Between 2010 and 2018 (26 State/32 Private)	13 (50%)	6 (19%)	-	-	-	5 (16%)	-	-	6 (23%)	3 (9%)	-	-	1 (4%)	3 (9%)	6 (23%)	15 (47%)

The missions of state and private universities in Turkey were categorized under four groups according to the years they were founded as before 1978 or between the years of 1978 and 2006, 2006 and 2010, or 2010 and 2018. These were then analyzed in order to gain insights related to the effects of the years universities were founded on their third mission understandings (Table 7).

The results of this analysis demonstrate that 86% of the state universities founded before 1978 included one of the third mission themes in at least one field, while 53% included two or three themes. Of the state universities founded between 1978 and 2006, 94% included one of the third mission themes in at least one field, and 35% of these included two or three themes. Of the state universities founded between 2006 and 2010, 88% included one of the third mission themes in at least one field, whereas 40% included two or three themes. Of the state universities founded between 2010 and 2018, 77% included one of the third mission themes in at least one field in their mission statements, and 27% included two or three themes.

By contrast, no private universities were founded before 1978. It was determined that 78% of the private universities established between 1978 and 2006 included one of the third mission themes in at least one field, and the percentage of

these universities with two or three themes was 26%. Of the private universities founded between 2006 and 2010, 66% included one of the third mission themes in at least one field, while 23% included two or three themes in their missions. Of the private universities founded between 2010 and 2018, 53% included one of the third mission themes in at least one field in their missions. whereas 18% of these universities included two or three themes.

Discussion and Conclusion

It can be seen that Turkish universities have been attempting to change their images in the 21st century in regard to both quantitative and qualitative aspects, yet this is not an easily accomplished process. There are three actors in this process; the first is the collection of state universities dating back to the Ottoman Empire or the early years of the republic that are attempting to establish their place among the world's powerful universities with their long-established infrastructures. The second actor in this process is represented by private and state universities that have participated in Turkish higher education for the last 30 years; these are struggling to exist and striving to find places in the higher rankings of universities. The third actor in this process is the CHE, which is attempting to direct all these universities. The goal of all three actors is to transform Turkey's universities into prestigious institutions of higher learning reputed among universities worldwide, in accordance with Turkey's targets at the international level. In the 21st century, for many universities around the world, this goal means cooperating and even collaborating with society and the business world, and being at the center of societal issues, or in other words, being at the heart of society and the business world rather than being perceived as ivory towers that stand apart from society.

The results of the study show that few state and private universities in Turkey (about 5%) have included technology transfer and innovation (TTI), continuing education (CE) and social engagement (SE), which are the three dimensions of the third mission understanding, in their mission statements simultaneously.

Considering that the number of Turkish universities including TTI and SE at the same time is five times (approximately 25%) the general percentage and that the percentage of universities including only TTI is about 38%, it is clear that the main problem for many of the mission statements of Turkish universities seems to arise due to the lack of the lifelong learning approach. This is not actually surprising because many universities in Turkey are institutions where young adults go to receive an education for four years and then never return, and the faculties of medicine and dentistry of these universities are visited mostly by the public for health reasons. Although many universities have continuing education centers, they have difficulty transforming them into lifelong learning centers. Turkish universities have fallen behind the great universities around the world in regard to alumni associations and their members, which represent one of the significant indicators that a university is becoming a lifelong learning center. Considering that universities founded in the last 20 years may experience institutionalization problems in this sense, websites and internet pages for alumni associations at Bogazici University, Dokuz Eylul University, Gazi University, Hacettepe University, and Ankara University, all based in three metropolitan areas, were visited. It was not possible to locate the numbers of members of alumni associations for any university other than Bogazici University, which has 18,000 registered alumni (Bogazici University Alumni Association, n.d.; Hacettepe University Alumni Association, n.d.; Ankara University Alumni Association, n.d.; Dokuz Eylul University Alumni Association, n.d.; Gazi University Alumni Association, n.d.). When the numbers of members of alumni associations of several leading universities worldwide are examined, the differences between them is much more easily seen. For example, the number of living alumni members of the University of Oxford is 300,000, and Harvard University has 371,000 alumni, while Penn State University, which is in the first rank in the US, has 692,000 alumni (Penn State Alumni Association, n.d.; Harvard at a Glance, n.d.; Oxford Alumni Networks, n.d.). When the websites of these universities and the activities they offer alumni for lifelong learning opportunities are examined in detail, this difference widens.

Another result of the study is that approximately 85% of the state universities included only TTI statements in their missions (only TTI, 47%; TTI and SE, 33%; TTI, SE, and CE, 5%). This result is consistent with the targets that the CHE has been continuing for years and brought to a new stage with the titles Regional Development-Oriented Mission Differentiation and Specialization and Research-Oriented Mission Differentiation and Specialization in 2016 (CHE, 2016). When comparing the results of the present study to those of previous studies, this is significant in regard to demonstrating that the CHE's power over state universities has continued in the same manner even though state universities are autonomous. Ozdem (2011) found \ that more than half of the universities' mission statements were gathered under the title of Services for Training Qualified Manpower Resources. In its report published in 2007, the CHE underscored that universities worldwide are trending toward a university model called the "entrepreneurial university," and it has determined a research and regional development-oriented approach as its target with its move in 2016 (CHE, 2007; CHE 2016). In particular, a large number of state universities revised their missions in line with this purpose of the CHE in the process since Ozdem's (2011) study. The findings of this study show that the TTI theme was mostly emphasized in mission statements of the state universities. By contrast, when considering private universities, it is seen that do not function as voluntarily as state universities in regard to achieving the goals of the CHE. The present study determined that approximately 40% of the private universities continue to select targets in line with the title Services for Training Qualified Manpower Resources, discussed in Ozdem's (2011) study, as their missions. Although private universities in Turkey are classified under the category of nonprofit organizations and "foundation" universities different from their counterparts in the world, they give their first priority to students in order to survive and

emphasize the theme of a "quality labor force" that will attract students since they are generally funded by groups described as entrepreneurial in Turkey. When considering that many families, which take on a significant financial burden by enrolling their children in private universities, are concerned about their children's future and that their priority is for their children to find a good job, it is natural for private universities to trend toward this "business-centered" understanding that will satisfy both private universities and students' families. However, changing world standards and some university ranking institutions starting to use the cooperation of society and industry as a criterion can be said to be a more effective tool than the CHE for mobilizing private universities that want to enter the top ranks as an important element of prestige.

The present study also revealed that 65 state and private universities that revised their mission statements after 2016 did not make any significant changes to fully integrate the third mission understanding, and several even deleted some statements that can be considered within this scope and narrowed their understanding of the third mission in their mission statements. This can be interpreted as the universities changing their missions being either not completely aware of the third mission understanding or not wanting to set such goals. One of the more interesting findings of the study is that expressions about Ataturk's principles and Kemalism, discussed under separate titles in the studies of Efe and Ozer (2015) and Ozdem (2011) and having an important place in universities' missions during that period, were not found outside the mission statements of one or two universities. Although the aim of this study is not to categorize the missions of universities, as other studies have sought to do, but rather to classify them within the framework of the third mission, it is considered necessary to emphasize this important transition to demonstrate universities' change processes. The reason for this change can be shown to be related to changes in the political structure of Turkey and the desire of universities, becoming increasingly internationalized and not wanting to appeal to the audience they address with national terminologies, for turning to an understanding that brings them more in line with other universities worldwide. Considering that almost none of the universities at the top in world rankings include such nationalist statements in their missions, this change is regarded as an appropriate approach for adopting the universal mission understanding whether such a change originates from a political or another reason.

Last but not least, the missions of the universities in Turkey were examined in the dimension of third mission understanding according to the years in which they were founded, and no significant differences were found in this respect between the state universities that have been continuing to provide higher education for approximately 50 years and the private universities founded in the last 10 years. Regardless of the year they were founded, approximately 80% of state universities included a dimension of third mission understanding in their mission statements and, in particular, emphasized TTI from the third mission dimensions. This indicates that the universities follow the goals and objectives of the CHE rather than their status as older or more institutionalized organizations in determining their mission understandings. However, in private universities, the year a university was founded was a more important factor for reflecting on the third mission understanding of their mission statements. In this manner, unlike state institutions, the survival of private institutions is thought to depend on their prestige and reliability in a society. For this reason, it can be said that the decrease in the anxiety of finding students to attend these universities, which have been maintained as private institutions of higher education for a long time and have less difficulty finding students, is effective in their tending toward an understanding that is more universal and includes other stakeholders instead of only training a "quality labor force" as their mission understanding.

Suggestions

It was found that universities in Turkey adopted the third mission understanding to a certain extent, and particularly with the influence of the CHE. However, they should do more related to the CI and, partially, to the SE dimensions. While many of the world's leading universities include concepts such as service-learning, public engagement, or outreach in their missions and programs in order to seek integration with the societies in which they exist and with all the stakeholders with whom they cooperate, collaborate, and conduct important related activities, it is a concern regarding Turkey's future that many universities (about 23%) did not even reflect the third mission understanding in their mission statements. It is suggested that it would be beneficial for the CHE, attaching importance to integration in the global society and internationalization, to take an urgent step regarding this issue, especially when its impact on public universities is considered.

Adopting the third mission understanding will be an important step for Turkey's universities and should include the following actions. Turkish universities should add the CI dimension to their mission statements in addition to the TTI and SE dimensions included by at least 25% of Turkish universities within the scope of third mission understanding. They should also take steps related to the practices that will activate their alumni associations, which is considered to be the easiest way to meet the above-mentioned goals as soon as possible.

Not only for universities but for all institutions and organizations, mission statements are regarded as manifestos that declare their goals and offer their road map to the society in which they operate. Starting without a purpose and failing to determine clear goals while, at the same time, planning to achieve a target increases the results to be obtained may, to a large extent, be negative. However, the mission statement, defined by Meacham and Barrett (2003) as "... a consensus on campus-wide values, expectations for student learning and development, and a statement of campus

priorities for many years ahead," is only a written document, and whether these missions can be successfully applied remains unclear. To this end, it is argued that the activities performed by universities that set goals within the scope of the third mission, by referencing the conclusions reached in this study, and their scientific studies, in which their activities within the framework of social engagement are considered one of the most important dimensions of the mission to integrate with the society, will contribute to the field significantly.

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