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The approaches of Turkish political parties towards entrepreneurship in their party programmes

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Abstract

This study aims to identify to what extent political parties in Turkey include the concept of entrepreneur and entrepreneurship, which are regarded as the most essential resources of countries' in international competition, in their programmes. In other words, the attitudes of political parties towards entrepreneurship will be set forth. The study covers the "economical approaches" part of programmes of the political parties which were represented in Turkish Grand National Assembly between 1923 -2011. Parties, which were established as political parties but were not represented in Turkish Grand National Assembly were left out of the scope of the study. Method: "Document review", which is a frequently used qualitative research method in social sciences, was used in this study. The data is obtained by content analysis. Such words as "entrepreneur, entrepreneurship, individual initiative, individual enterprise, private enterprise, special entities, proprietary capital and private sector in the political party programmes were identified as key words and it was acknowledged that such concepts were perceived as "entrepreneurship" by the political parties. Thus, the approaches of political parties are taken in the scope of the study.

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1. Introduction

As in all economies, the concept of entrepreneurship is among the most significant issues in Turkey in the last 20-30 years and is mentioned as the most important element whose development should be encouraged. The fact that government is not the place to earn a living anymore apart from some obligatory services of the government increased the importance of entrepreneurship further. Therefore, the political parties make a commitment to their voters for providing employment by strengthening private sector.

In a sense, party programmes are important in terms of giving tips about the policies that political parties will implement when they come into power with the support of the public. Thereof, their approach to the concept of "entrepreneurship" is essential.

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1. Development of political parties in Turkey

As this study is closely related to politicians, it is necessary to give some information about political parties and their programmes.

There are various views about the involvement of political parties in Turkey in political arena. From a point of view, first political parties in Turkey were established after the proclamation of Second Constitution in 1908. There were three main attention-grabbing tendencies in the first three political parties established: Islamists, Turanism and Westerners. Even a left wing political party named Ottoman Socialist Party had its place in political arena. Most of the opposition parties gathered under the roof of *The Freedom and Accord Party*. This party was a party that protected some political and social rights and freedoms and a party which supported foreign investment. (Önel, 2009).

With the proclamation of the Republic, the first political party established was Republican People's Party established in 1923. It continued to have its place in political arena as the only party until 1946. Later in 1946 multi-party system started in Turkey with Democratic Party.

Since the 1961 Constitution political parties has been given institutional guarantee at constitutional level as the "sine qua non elements of democratic political life", besides that such rights as founding a political party, entering into a political party or leaving a political party have been regulated as a subjective public right and in 1965 for the first time in Europe a detailed political party law was made even before Germany.

In the period between 1961- 1980 there had been significant changes in terms of Political Parties Law; with the acceptance of Proportional Representation and with the emergence of new movements of thought in the country, the number of political parties increased and the ideological differentiation between these parties became more evident. In other words, Turkey began to experience multi-party system in real terms. After 1980 coup d'état Grand National Assembly of Turkey was closed and the activities of political parties were suspended. The legal statuses of political parties were reconstructed in a much more authoritative way in 1982 Constitution and in the Political Party Law no 2820 published in the official gazette no 18027 dated April 24, 1983 this area was restructured (Önel, 2009).

1.1. Political party

Political party; A political community with a continuous and stable organization, which aims to take hold of or continue to control the government mechanism by getting the support of the public (Özbudun,1968).

In today's political life, political parties are mechanisms which can use the normal authority of people arising from democracy to determine country politics and public politics through voting (Duveger,1993).

Political parties are institutions organized in order to effect political decisions within a program and thus, take hold of political power (Kışlalı, 2004).

From another point of view, a political party is a continuous political institution which aims to take hold of political power for a certain period or more and to use this power; and which tries to get the support of the whole or majority of the public in order to do that (www.teis.gov.tr).

As it is stated above, political parties organized as legal institutions during the Second Constitutionalist Period and have been under constitutional guarantee since the 1961 Constitution. The same was also adopted in 1982 Constitution (Yararsoy, 2009).

In article 3 of the law no 2820 on political parties, political parties are defined as: "Institutions with a legal entity which are founded in accordance with Constitution and laws, through parliamentary and local administration elections, and which aims to carry the country to the level of contemporary civilizations in a democratic government and society order through the formation of national will by their opinions determined in their rules and programs and by their white propaganda.

1.2. Party program

The definition of party program is more limited compared to political parties. A party program of a political party is the action plan that separates that party from the others and that shows what demands, wills and expectations that party will meet when it comes to power with main lines. This action plan has to be consistent with the philosophy, ideology and image of the political party. Inconsistency creates unreliability towards the party (İslamoğlu, 2002:123).

In his work titled *Political Marketing* (2002) İslamoğlu accepts party programs as “political products” among political marketing components and stresses that below mentioned issues should be considered in preparing party programs.

- Party programs should be national,
- Party Programs should be consistent with the party’s philosophy, ideology and identity
- The programs should consider national issues and their order of priority
- Solution suggestions should comply with world and country realities.
- They should be consistent in itself
- They should be persuasive and reassuring
- They should be the product of the party
- The targets of the program should be realistic and achievable.
- They should be based on scientific data.

As the study focuses on political parties and their programs in essence, information both about political parties and their party programs are given.

2. Enterprise and entrepreneurship

Enterprise is defined as business, company, firm that is established for producing good and service. The aim of an enterprise is to make profit by producing goods and services. The person who establishes the enterprise is called entrepreneur (Seyidoğlu, 1992).

Entrepreneur can be defined as someone who takes the risk and brings together such production factors as natural resources, capital and labour in order to manufacture goods and services (Tekin, 2004).

The concepts began to take their place in the literature during 19th and 20th centuries. The concept was included in economy by the French economist Cantillon and with J. Babtiste Say the concept obtained the meaning we use today. According to Say, entrepreneur is someone who brings together all production factors and produces a good that is supposed to be valuable and who takes the risk for the profit he will make. Say’s description of entrepreneur is based on both undertaking risk and having administrative skills (Aytaç-İlhan, 2007: 103).

Fillis and Rentschler (2010) define entrepreneurship as the period of creating value for society and business world (Fillis and Rentschler, 2010); while Garcia et al. (2007) define it as creating new economic activities through establishing new organizations and discovering opportunities (Garcia et al. 2007).

Schumpeter (1961) counts entrepreneurship as a mentality that occurs at decision making level regarding business world. The most significant property of this mentality is to look for innovations and bring them in. Entrepreneur is a person who can blend existing opportunities and form new ones. The occurring innovations break the balances and recession in relevant industry branches and form booms and bounces (Özal, 2009).

Davis (1997) defines entrepreneur as “Someone who sees an opportunity, brings the necessary resources together, undertakes the risk and target for the profit.” while Frank (2000) defines it as: “a risk-taker for the activities he takes and maintains.” and Bone and Kurtz define as: “Someone who establishes his own business and determines his own future.” (Gürol, 2006).

3. Importance of entrepreneurship

Recently, entrepreneurship is regarded as the locomotive of economic and social development and for Lazer, entrepreneur is accepted as the most important player of modern economy (Sanchez, 2011). It can be said that the concept of entrepreneurship began to gain importance with the move from industrial society to information society (Esen, 2011). And with the passing to information age, the weight of labour in production decreased while the weight of the labour based on information increased. Thus, the importance of entrepreneurship emerged as the supplement of innovation, creativity and administrative activities. Additionally, with the significant changes that emerged in such activities as production, transportation and administration in information society and with the service sector becoming important with the effect of globalization, the importance of entrepreneurship increased more (Esen& Yılmaz, 2011; Soysal, 2010).

4. Method

In this study, content analysis, which is one of the qualitative research techniques with an important area of utilization in social sciences, is used. Content analysis is a technique used for characterizing documents, interview breakdowns or records (Altunışık et al., 2010). In content analysis, words, sentences, paragraphs and themes can be the subject of research.

Since there is an inflexible experientialism and mind is pushed into the background in positivist approach, it is accepted that true information can only be obtained through methods based on real measurement and therefore, it is not possible to find true information with remarks made through other methods except from analysis based on numeric data (İslamoğlu, 2009). From this aspect, quantitative researches are indispensable data acquirement tools of positivist approach. However, particularly in social sciences, it might not be possible to digitize everything and to make stereotypes and to accurately measure the case that is intended to be measured. Therefore, qualitative researches are important tools in social sciences in obtaining data. Qualitative research can be defined as obtaining information about social facts through observation, interview or document assessment in the environment they belong to and theorizing by analyzing this information (İslamoğlu, 2009).

As in all parts of the world, for various reasons it is not possible for political parties to put the policies, which they included in their party programs before elections and planned to implement when they come into power, into practice. Therefore, although there are various themes about entrepreneurship and developing it in party programmes, implementation of these policies when the party came into power could be in contradiction with the results of the study. However, this does not impact the reliability of the study negatively. That is because this study is about which political parties include the concepts of entrepreneurship in their programs in order to develop it. It should be accepted that parties can not realize all the policies that they promised to do when they come into power. Thus, although the concept of entrepreneurship and its development is mentioned quite a lot in a party program, it is possible that the party may not come into power or may not pay the necessary attention to it when they come into power.

The model of the study is given in Figure 1. The terms; private, personal, individual, civil and free in political party programs are classified by matching them with investment, initiative and enterprise concepts. On the other hand, the concepts private, personal, individual, free and domestic are classified separately by matching them with capital, entrepreneur, sector and business. The aim in doing that is to set forth the approaches of political parties towards enterprise and entrepreneurs in their party programs by combining both classifications.

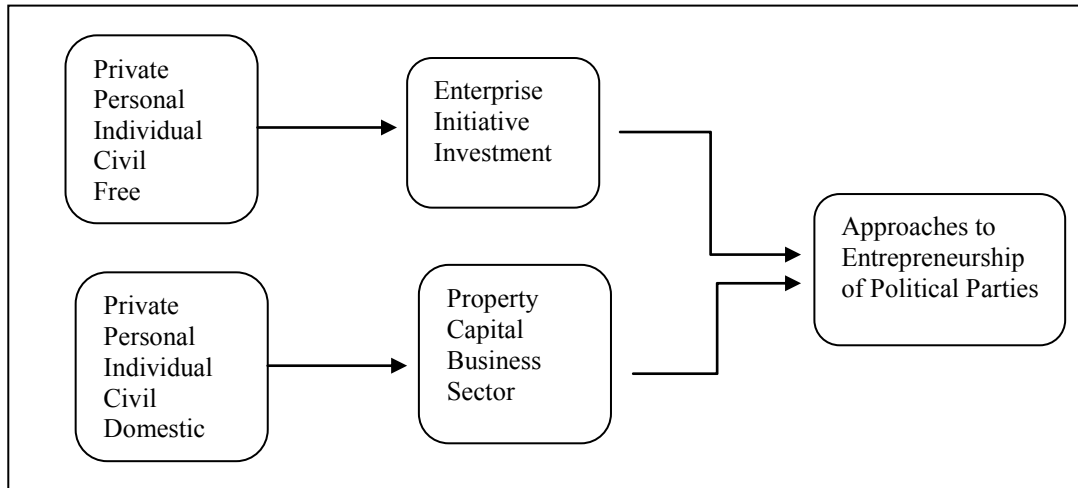


Figure.1: The model of the study

The political parties represented in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey during the 1923-2011 period and the concepts related to entrepreneurship in those parties' programs are given in the tables below:

Table 1: Concepts related to entrepreneurship in political party programs (1923-1960)

PERIODS AND POLITICAL PARTIES 1923-1960	Concepts related to entrepreneurship in political party programs ²										
	Private	Personal	Individual	Civil	Free	Private	Personal	Individual	Civil	Domestic	TOTAL
	Enterprise/initiative/ investment					Property/capital/ business//sector					
1. Republican People's Party			2					-			2
2. Democratic Party			10					7			17
3. Nation Party			7					7			14
4. Republican Nation Party			3					-			3
5. The Freedom Party			3					2			5
6. Republican People's Party			7					1			8
TOTAL			32					17			49

When the party programs of the political parties represented in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey between 1923-1960 are examined, it is determined that the concepts entrepreneur or entrepreneurship were used mostly in the program of Democrat Party (17 times) followed by Nation Party (14 times); and it is also seen that these concepts were barely used in the programs of Republican People's Party (2 times) and Republican Nation Party (3 times).

² The terms private, personal, individual and civil which are used in the tables are used with different meaning in legal texts, however, their English equivalents could mean the same thing.

Table 2: Concepts related to entrepreneurship in political party programs (1960-1980)

PERIODS AND POLITICAL PARTIES 1960-1980	Concepts related to entrepreneurship in political party programs										
	Private	Personal	Individual	Civil	Free	Private	Personal	Individual	Civil	Domestic	TOTAL
	Enterprise/initiative/ investment					Property/capital/ business /sector					
1. Republican People's Party			-				1				1
2. The Justice Party			10				4				14
3. Republican National Party of Peasants			3				3				6
4. Republican National Party of Peasants			7				-				7
5. New Turkey Party			8				-				8
6. Nation Party			4				1				5
7. Turkish Labour Party			2				-				2
8. Trust Party			33				13				46
9. Nationalist Movement Party			6				5				11
10. Turkey's Unity Party			4				-				4
11. Republican Reliance Party			36				21				57
12. Democratic Party			20				9				29
13. Republican People's Party			7				-				7
14. National Salvation Party			138				39				177
TOTAL			278				96				374

In the party programs of the political parties represented in Grand National Assembly of Turkey between 1860-1980 concept about enterprise or entrepreneurship was used for only once in Republican People's Party and twice in Worker's Party of Turkey. Moreover, in most of the parties represented in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey during this period the concept of entrepreneurship was used less than 10 times. The parties which used the concept most were National Salvation Party (177 times), Republican Reliance Party (55 times), Reliance Party (46 times), Democratic Party (29 times) and Justice Party (14 times).

Table 2: Concepts related to entrepreneurship in political party programs (1980-2011)

PERIODS AND POLITICAL PARTIES 1983-2011	Concepts related to entrepreneurship in political party programs										
	Private	Personal	Individual	Civil	Free	Private	Personal	Individual	Civil	Domestic	TOTAL
	Enterprise/initiative/ investment					Property/capital/ business /sector					
1. Motherland Part			4				-				4

2.	Populist Party	4	1	5
3.	The Welfare Party	-	-	-
4.	True Path Party	2	1	3
5.	Social Democratic Populist Party	1	1	2
6.	Nationalist Movement Party	2	1	3
7.	Republican People's Party	1	2	3
8.	Virtue Party	4	8	12
9.	Democratic Left Party	3	20	23
10.	Justice and Development Party	1	9	10
11.	Peace and Democracy Party	-	1	1
TOTAL		22	44	66

It is found that during the period between 1983-2011 the concepts of entrepreneur and entrepreneurship are less used in party programs compared to the previous period. In this period, Democratic Party was the one which used terms related to entrepreneurship in its party program (23 times). And in the program of Welfare Party, no concept related to entrepreneurship was found.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, the concepts related to entrepreneurship and its development in the political party programs represented in Grand National Assembly of Turkey, which are significant for our country, are tried to be determined through content analysis. It can be said that the political parties which included these concepts in their party programs attached more importance to entrepreneurship. However, the objective of this study is not whether these parties put necessary efforts in the issue after they came into power or not. That could be studied separately. In this study, only the preexisting condition is put forth.

As a result of the study, it is found that Democratic Party and Nation Party were the political parties which included the issue of entrepreneurship in their party programs during the 1923-1960 period, while it was Reliance Party, Republican Reliance Party and Democratic Party during the 1960-1980 period and Democratic Left Party and Virtue Party during the 1980-2011 period.

Following this study, it can be examined if these parties put the policies they set regarding entrepreneurship into practice after they came into power either alone or with a coalition partner.

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