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SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION “EARLY CHILDHOOD”

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ABSTRACT

Studies on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education are making progress in the field of education as well as in the fields of economy and technology. These studies, which have made progress in the field of education, have started to take place among the education policies beyond the project and workshop applications. This expansion contributes to the development of entrepreneurship. In this context, entrepreneurs are known as people who update themselves, care about the needs of the society, focus on solving problems, and evaluate their innovative practices and creative thinking skills well. Therefore, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education requires a planning that is based on childhood experiences in the life of the individual. For this reason, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education refers to a process that can take place in an individual's life, starting from childhood. The child, who started to receive entrepreneurship education in childhood, can take an active role in entrepreneurship-related activities in adulthood. The lifelong process of entrepreneurship from childhood to adulthood highlights the sustainability aspect of entrepreneurship. Sustainability can be explained as the routine continuation of the life of humanity while ensuring the continuity of production and diversity. The process of being sustainable of entrepreneurship is possible by keeping the consumption awareness under control while producing. Sustainable entrepreneurship adopts to create the consciousness of life without harming the universe throughout the life of the individual. In order to ensure the spread and continuity of this situation, it is important to introduce sustainable entrepreneurship education to children at an early age. It is thought that the entrepreneurship education given in the early childhood period will contribute to the realization of sustainable entrepreneurship activities. It is thought that the formation of a sustainable entrepreneurship perception starting from early childhood will enable future

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generations to use existing resources. From this point of view, in this study, it is aimed to examine sustainable entrepreneurship education for the early childhood period. For this purpose, the related literature has been scanned and the obtained studies have been compiled thematically.

Keywords: Sustainability, Entrepreneurship Education, Early Childhood, Entrepreneurship

JEL Codes: I20, I29, Z0

1. INTRODUCTION

Today, with the development of technology, access to information has become easier all over the world (Günay, 2022). For this reason, it is seen that the people of the world need some qualifications in order to continue their development in the 21st century (Kırkıç and Bora, 2022). It is seen that the access to the differences in the production and consumption habits of individuals is easier, and new practices related to the world's economic and production power spread more easily. In this process, the development of individuals' ability to see opportunities for critical thinking, creativity, and learning by doing and living has an important place (Greels et al., 2015). Entrepreneurship is one of the 21st century skills and deals with the individual's approach to being economical while using the world's resources. In this sense, entrepreneurship is expressed as the steps taken today to ensure the use of common resources with future generations (Joynes et al., 2019).

Entrepreneurship is realized through people who can focus on the social environment of entrepreneurial individuals, analyze their needs correctly, realize the opportunities around them, and produce new ideas by taking risks (Hoogendoorn et al., 2019). Entrepreneurs need to be aware of these competencies and opportunities in order to be ready for sustainable innovations (Kraus, 2018). The realization of entrepreneurship practices with the goals of sustainable practices represents an important situation for the future of the world. In this direction, it is necessary to correctly evaluate the interaction between sustainability and enterprise (Schaltegger and Wagner, 2011).

Sustainability refers to how the resources that individuals use today should be consumed in a balanced way so that future generations can also use them (Renda, 1995). In this context, sustainability is the maintenance of the existing economic, social and environmental functioning of individuals and minimizing the damage to the environment. Sustainability can also be expressed as protecting the ecological balance and increasing the quality of life of people by taking into account the available resources (Oral, 2006).

Sustainable entrepreneurship requires the existing entrepreneurial culture and sustainability to come together and work together with different disciplines (environment, economy, social). From this point of view, it is an important step to adapt existing businesses to achieve a sustainable structure. After that, it is necessary to ensure that the businesses to be established have a sustainable and flexible structure. It is to build the world of the future from

today by not only contributing to the economy with the value-added products and services they have produced, but also taking into account the needs of the society and environmental responsibilities (Ballı, 2020).

In order to build the future, it is necessary to give importance to the experience of especially young children by doing and living. With this understanding, it is important to transfer entrepreneurship and sustainability to future generations with education starting from an early age. In early childhood education, sustainability has brought a new dimension to learning in early childhood programs. According to sustainable development, education means developing the capacity to transfer change now and in the future by supporting young children to understand the importance of sustainability. Early education is crucial to influencing attitudes, knowledge and behavior about sustainability. Children today face a rapidly changing world that creates new challenges and opportunities. Sustainable education practices can be considered as a key tool in tackling challenges. Although early education may not meet all these expectations, it remains an important starting point for the adoption and promotion of values that are important for sustainability (Bahtić et al., 2020). The aim of this study is to examine the national and international literature on sustainable entrepreneurship education in early childhood. In the light of this information, the literature on sustainable entrepreneurship education in early childhood was searched. After the screening, four themes were determined thematically, namely entrepreneurship, sustainability, sustainable entrepreneurship and early childhood education, and these were examined and discussed in detail below.

2. ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Twenty-first century skills; learning and innovation skills, digital literacy skills, career and life skills (Trilling and Fadel, 2009). Entrepreneurship, which is among career and life skills, has an important place among 21st century skills that affect the development levels of societies (Ghafar, 2020).

Having twenty-first century skills is a situation that directly concerns the teacher as well as the students (Hasırcı, 2018). For this reason, individuals with twenty-first century skills are expected to have the capacity to take their place in society by taking their identity to the next level and to be an individual who can produce (Boyacı and Özer, 2019).

In today's world, where scientific and technological developments are fast and economic and cyber development affects all societies, it is seen that the development criteria of countries have changed in line with the skills of the twenty-first century. It is quite remarkable that evaluations are made according to the number of start-ups and patents, especially as economic development criteria (Davenport, 2018). In order to manage this process as a society, in line with the needs of individuals; It is necessary to have entrepreneurial skills who can understand the age in which they live, analyze the needs of the society well, think innovatively, access information easily and quickly, and most importantly, have made lifelong learning a lifestyle and respond to the needs of the age (Uçak and Erdem, 2020).

Entrepreneurship is a concept that has been tried to be explained by different disciplines and has a rich content (Diandra and Azmy, 2020). Entrepreneurship is explained as individuals' making the opportunities related to an unexplored situation functional, evaluating with a proactive (foreseeing) glance, and perceiving the situation by evaluating it with different dimensions (Florian et al., 2007). The most important condition for understanding entrepreneurship is to understand the interaction between ideas and practice (Rosca et al., 2020).

In Turkey, studies on entrepreneurship skills at primary education level are included in the curriculum prepared in MEB 2005; It is expressed as “skills required to establish a new system in order to better produce or market a product or service that may be demanded, to exhibit the necessary and effective behaviors in social relations, communication, business world and similar areas in an appropriate and timely manner”. Trainings within this scope provide practice-based experiences for students to acquire entrepreneurial skills. Through these studies, it can enable students to realize themselves and strengthen their weaknesses. Providing entrepreneurship-related training can increase the tendency and orientation on the subject at the local and cultural level (OECD, 2020). In this context, it is necessary to develop training program competencies that encourage creativity and innovation and support well-being and resilience (Rieckman, 2020). These can also be effective in supporting students' motivation about the subject (UNESCO, 2020).

3. SUSTAINABILITY

With the increase in consumption all over the world, it is seen that there are problems related to production and protection of existing resources. In recent years, this situation has been discussed by different disciplines in different branches of science. In this direction, the 15-year sustainable development goals were discussed in the meeting held by scientists working in different disciplines at the United Nations in 2015. At this meeting, 17 new targets were set to combat poverty, climate change, inequality and injustice (URL1).

In changing world conditions, adopting a sustainable lifestyle with a different approach in the use of resources in the world is a transformation process. It is accepted that inclusive and long-term practices are needed in order to develop sustainability by different disciplines. It is thought that these practices can be possible with changes in lifestyles and education. Sustainability education is important for individuals to apply what they know on this subject from today to the future. It is expressed as a life education that should be implemented by integrating into education programs from early childhood to the last stage of education in adulthood (Sterling, 2004).

Sustainability is a concept within the science of ecology. Sustainability is a prerequisite for ensuring the continuity of the ecosystem (Holden et al., 2017). Sustainability also refers to an important development process on which different disciplines work in the national and international arena (Yıldırım, 2020).

Sustainable development is based on three moral pillars: meeting human needs, ensuring social equality, and respecting environmental boundaries (Holden et al., 2017). In this direction, after planning to meet the needs of future generations regarding sustainability, it also refers to a development process that aims to meet current needs. This gives the opportunity to develop the understanding of sustainability and development together (Pitelis, 2013).

Sustainable development has an important place in the management of the process related to economic and social concern. In this respect, there is a field of action above the developments in environmental factors (Harris, 2000). The consistent and systematic use of all available means strengthens the relationship between social and ecological systems (Litting and Griebler, 2005).

Sustainability, which has recently come to the fore in the field of education, is expressed as social sustainability. Social sustainability refers to how social norms, social identities, social interaction and social institutions will continue in the future. In this context, social integrity; It is explained as meeting individual needs such as health, well-being, nutrition, shelter, education and cultural expression (Moldan et al., 2012).

The relationship between entrepreneurship, which has been expressed as a solution to everything in the last ten years (Munoz and Cohen, 2018), and sustainability, rather than traditional entrepreneurship that explores inequalities between people and the cause of environmental degradation, is examined (Cohen and Winn, 2007). In this direction, by reinforcing the connection between traditional entrepreneurship, society and the environment (Gibbs 2006), a new field of entrepreneurship called sustainable entrepreneurship (Aghelie et al., 2016) has emerged (Teran-Yeppez et al., 2020). Sustainable entrepreneurship is explained below.

4. SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship is expressed as an individual's awareness of opportunities and turning from consumption consciousness to production consciousness. The development and evaluation of this process explains the general situation of sustainable entrepreneurship and the activities to be carried out (Cohen et al., 2008; Dylick and Hockerts, 2002; Hahn et al., 2010).

When entrepreneurship and sustainability are expressed together, they reveal a new concept with an innovative approach. Sustainable entrepreneurship means “the discovery, creation and use of entrepreneurial opportunities that contribute to sustainability by producing social and environmental gains for others in society” (Groot and Pinkse, 2015). In particular, the attitude and tendency to take action in sustainability studies carried out in the field of education encourages individuals (Agu et al., 2021).

Misoska et al., (2016) stated in their study that educational experiences that develop knowledge about sustainable entrepreneurship affect attitudes towards behavior. Sustainable

entrepreneurship has revealed that education has a positive role in entrepreneurial trends (Tomy and Pardede, 2020; Gerba, 2012; Vuorio et al., 2018). Wagner et al., (2019) concluded that the intervention points of different practices and techniques can develop sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystems according to the sciences of universities. The education given on this subject is seen as one of the educational paths that can develop the necessary skills to direct students to the subject of sustainable entrepreneurship.

Brauckman (2011) evaluated the trainings on entrepreneurship and other branches of entrepreneurship as a cultural contribution. In this regard, he considered entrepreneurship as a culture and saw it as a continuation of the cultural future (Lindner, 2018).

5. ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

Early childhood is very important to prepare for lifelong human life. In early childhood, development is rapid and children interact with the environment at a high level (Aral et al., 2011). The attitudes and behaviors gained in this period have a power that affects the future ages of the individual. In this respect, the education of children in early childhood has a critical importance. Children's early childhood education is effective in building the future years of children (Uzun, et al., 2019). It is very important in the education received at school after the family in early childhood (Kouser and Popat, 2022). In the management of this process, parents need to make a plan for the child (Poyraz and Dere-Çiftçi, 2011). Bakken et al. (2017), in their study, it was stated that children who received early childhood education took more responsibility at the primary school level, and their behaviors were more positive in their interactions with their peers.

In early childhood, supporting children to receive a quality education in accordance with their developmental needs is important for them to be responsible and productive adults. In this direction, thanks to children, the productivity level of the society will increase in the future (Katrancı, 2014). For this purpose, the education given in the early childhood period provides the children with the competences such as entrepreneurship, research ability, self-control, creativity, and cultural values for the generations that adapt to the contemporary society (Ömeroğlu and Yaşar, 2004).

With the emphasis of twenty-first century skills all over the world, the importance of starting childhood education from early years has become more prominent (Perdana et al., 2021) and the concept of entrepreneurship in early childhood has begun to be discussed. Entrepreneurship education is integrated into education programs in almost all countries around the world. In support of these studies, the European Commission added entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship to the list, while creating a list of eight key competences for lifelong learning (Jufri and Wirawan, 2018). It is emphasized that it is important to provide entrepreneurship education that supports the strengthening of high levels of resilience and adaptability, starting from childhood, at every stage of life, especially from an early age in order to experience new productions (Langlois, 2020).

In their study, Calman and Whelan (2005) stated that the quality of early childhood education is positively related to the social and economic development of countries, and pointed out that the first years of childhood are effective in internalizing the entrepreneurial spirit. The fact that the internalization process in early childhood is much faster and different than in other life periods is considered important for the establishment of entrepreneurship. Different approaches are needed to apply the entrepreneurial spirit to early childhood. It is known that one of the important ways to ensure learning in early childhood is play (Maelis and Ingrid, 2015). Jufri et al., (2009) carried out a systematic research explaining the entrepreneurship games for children and the teaching process of the games, and in 2010 and 2011, Jufri and Pandag prepared an entrepreneurship program with a cross-sectional cognitive programming approach. In this program, entrepreneurial games for children have been developed by field experts for early childhood.

Sustainability in early childhood can be met by meeting the educational needs of children in the first years of life (Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2016). In order to maximize the intelligibility and impact of education on this subject, it is emphasized that it should be initiated in the early stages of a child's development (Promling-Samuelsson and Kaga, 2008). Malandrakis (2008) revealed in his study that children do not have their own responsibilities regarding sustainable development and entrepreneurship, only adults are responsible for this process. Studies on sustainable entrepreneurship in early childhood education show that entrepreneurship education given in early years can be effective in children's future choices. For this reason, sustainable entrepreneurship trainings and studies on this subject should be disseminated, especially through games and activities.

Among the sustainable development goals, inclusive and equitable education, lifelong learning for everyone and what needs to be done about sustainable development come to the fore. Ensuring that all children in the world have easy access to pre-school education by 2030 comes to the fore. Sustainable development in early childhood education, education programs for sustainable lifestyles, human rights, world citizenship, and gaining knowledge and skills related to the contribution of culture to sustainable development are among the priority objectives (URL2).

In general, sustainability education is about transferring from theory to practice, putting learning vision, content, learning environments and experiences into practice. Sustainability education attracts attention with the opening of thematic schools in recent years. In particular, the spread of forest schools is considered an important development in sustainability education. It is seen that practices related to entrepreneurship are also made in ensuring sustainability in forest schools. In this case, different approaches and practices related to the learning vision, content, learning environment and processes related to sustainability and entrepreneurship are tried. It is important to implement innovative practices that allow active participation such as opportunity education, informal education, and service-learning skills for children to develop their sustainable entrepreneurial skills (Hopkinson and James, 2013). In educational practices focused on sustainability education, especially problem-solving-based learning,

interdisciplinary curriculum, cooperation and action-oriented learning approaches come to the fore (Wiek et al., 2011; Özdemir, 2021).

It is thought that the researches on providing the orientation of individuals related to entrepreneurship will provide support in the activation of entrepreneurial abilities and raising future generations in order to solve their universal problems (Obschonka et al., 2017). Brother (2020), in the Pre-School Education Program published by the Ministry of National Education in 2013, "21. He states that the concepts of entrepreneurship, responsibility, cultural awareness, research and courage, which are among the concepts related to 21st century skills and STEAM, are heavily involved.

As role models, parents can support their children in their choice of being an entrepreneur. Schindehutte et al., (2003), in their study on the children of entrepreneurial mothers who perceive their role models as themselves, revealed that they tend to imitate positive and successful role models. At the same time, many business owner families take care to involve their children in their businesses from a young age. This increases the likelihood of sustainability and entrepreneurship entrepreneurs being passed on from parents to children (Boldureanu et al., 2020).

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

When the national and international literature on entrepreneurship and sustainability in early childhood is examined, it is seen that there are a limited number of studies in this context. In the literature review on sustainable entrepreneurship education in Early Childhood, studies conducted in different countries were examined. In these studies, studies on entrepreneurship in early childhood were encountered. However, there is no study on sustainable entrepreneurship education in early childhood. It has been seen that there are some goals and strategic steps in the studies carried out by international institutions on this subject. In particular, it has been tried to develop models related to training programs and practices within the scope of the subject.

Game preparation studies on entrepreneurship in early childhood are among the remarkable studies. In this context, it is expected that education programs related to sustainable entrepreneurship education in early childhood will be prepared in future studies. In addition, considering that entrepreneurship and sustainability are affected by the cultural structure, it is thought that it would be beneficial to conduct studies for different cultures. Considering that entrepreneurship is affected by family and social environment variables, it has been realized that there are important needs for longitudinal studies.

It can be recommended to conduct studies on interdisciplinary education programs of researchers in early childhood co-working areas, to expand sustainable entrepreneurship trainings for educators and families, to give more space to digital and innovative activities related to sustainable entrepreneurship, to applications in early childhood education programs implemented in Turkey and other countries.

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