



SOCIAL IMPACT-ORIENTED PROJECTS & DESIGN THINKING: A STUDY ON SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

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Abstract. The world is facing social problems unmet. Governments, institutions, companies, organizations and individuals are concerned about these problems by creating social impact. Social entrepreneurship and social innovation are ways in which social impact can be achieved by providing solutions to unmet social needs. Design thinking is also the method to solve problems within the framework of designers' way of thinking. So, it can be mentioned that they are to create solutions. While social problems surround the world so much, the ways to find solutions should work together more. This study first focuses on literature to show the intervened relationship between social impact-oriented projects and design thinking while approaching problems by defining notions. In the research part of the study, the depth-interview method is used to understand social entrepreneurs' journey while establishing their projects and creating social impact. Then these interviews are coded and findings are defined according to these codes. The interview results are tabulated according to the entrepreneurs' processes. Although design thinking gives us some stages, it is also seen that social entrepreneurs have different inputs in real life experiences. While personal stories and experiences greatly influence social enterprise journeys, the involvement of stakeholders plays a crucial role in amplifying these initiatives and driving progress. The findings show that the real-life experience may differ from the defined process depending on today's conditions and inputs. There is an opportunity to define design thinking recommendations focused on social impact, even if there are commonalities between their experiences and design thinking. So, social impact issues should be announced more and social impact creators like social entrepreneurs should be listened more to define processes to define the relations.

Keywords: *Design thinking, social impact, social innovation, social entrepreneurship.*

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1. Introduction

With population growth, the demands for social needs are increasing. People all over the world face similar social problems such as educational inequality, health systems, environmental threats, poverty and high crime rates. Around 1.2 billion people live in poverty around the world and earn less than one dollar a day, leaving them

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malnourished without proper housing, clean water and adequate sanitation (WHO, 2013). Fowler (2000) also characterizes poverty, inequality, insecurity and injustice as the old world's most intractable problems and the new world's literary problems. The world is full of social problems and traditionally the solution to these problems has been the responsibility of governments and benefactors, but their efforts have been ineffective (Pralhad, 2010).

The popularity of social problem-solving stems from its potential to generate both social benefits and economic opportunities simultaneously (Grilo & Moriera, 2022). Social issues must be seen in the context of 21st-century challenges as a period of great social transformation, including aging populations, mass urbanization, social exclusion, unemployment and environmental issues. These struggles cut across a wide range of political, economic, technological and environmental boundaries (Bawa & Munck, 2012).

As one of the solutions, social innovations are fueled by wealth imperatives. The growing challenges of global warming, rising inequality, demographics, migration, epidemics and terrorism are exacerbated by governments effectively nationalizing the private sector financial crisis after 2008. Many developed economies are expected to remain under severe pressure on welfare budgets throughout the 2020s. As a result, social innovation will be needed to address shortcomings and market failures in providing basic, universal social services in developed and developing countries (Nicholls *et al.*, 2015). However, social entrepreneurship has made an impact as a new mechanism, created by civil society, to address the most pressing problems facing society, combining the discipline of business with the innovation and determination of individuals (Dees *et al.*, 2001).

As we look at the concepts, it is seen that “social” is where social innovation and social enterprise intersect. Social value creation is the goal and outcome of both concepts (Dwivedi & Weerawardena, 2018; Slimane & Lamine, 2017). According to Phills *et al.* (2008), both social innovation and social entrepreneurship are about identifying an opportunity to solve a problem to meet a social need. Research also shows both are about pursuing a social mission and recognizing opportunities (Bruin & Ferrante, 2011; Monllor & Attaran, 2008). By contrast, social innovation and social entrepreneurship emphasize the importance of stakeholder interactions that are collaborative besides dynamic, social learning and networking (Dawson & Daniel, 2010). There is a significant overlap between social entrepreneurship and social innovation in the process of identifying opportunities for problem-solving unmet social needs (Philips *et al.*, 2015).

While tackling social problems is argued, in the design field, it is seen that design is expressed as a way of thinking rather than a physical approach within the design process. The demand for a definition of design thinking has been driven by the desire to adopt and apply design practices in other domains (Dorst, 2011). Design thinking is a problem-solving approach that emphasizes intuition, pattern recognition, emotional and functional meaning and the use of non-verbal media. It is a new approach to creating solutions (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). The focus is on the requirements of the potential consumers of a product or service and the needs of the infrastructure that delivers it. The process examines systems and applies design tools to address wider issues. It relies on collaboration, iteration, creation and empathy as the basis for problem-solving (Gothelf & Seiden, 2016). So, it is seen that social issues and design thinking have common parts to solve problems and create solutions.

Thus, this study aims to address the relation between concepts of design thinking and projects, enterprises based on social issues by exploring the journey of social entrepreneurs while establishing their social enterprises. On the other hand, the aim of the research is to understand whether a design-oriented thinking method proposal can be created for projects that focus on creating social impact by perceiving real-life experiences. First step of the study is to understand concepts of design thinking and social projects like social innovation, social entrepreneurship with their relations as the literature part. Then, the research part of the study involves the examination of interviews with social enterprises in Türkiye. These interviews provide insights into their experiences, stakeholders and approaches to problem-solving and help to identify ways the design thinking process can be developed to create social impact.

Social entrepreneurship and social issues can be accepted so new as a discipline in Türkiye. On the other hand, interest and support on the notion is evolving among the entrepreneurial areas and non-governmental organizations. In Türkiye, where social issues are getting more important like the rest of the world, it is not hard to say that finding solutions for these issues is crucial for everyone. Also, according to the report published as “Sosyal Girişimler ve Türkiye İhtiyaç Analizi” (Social Enterprises and Needs Analysis in Turkey), social enterprises stand out as a new model with significant potential for the country (Ersen *et al.*, 2010). For these reasons, the research part of the study focuses on the process of social enterprises to get deeper understanding how things work and how to contribute to the design thinking process with a focus on social impact. 10 interviews were conducted with social entrepreneurs to see their problem discovery, idea development and to see this process’ relation with processes of design thinking. The last part of the study includes a brief discussion the findings of the research. According to the examination of the interviews, the insights into the processes, approaches to concepts and being specific to social impact and social entrepreneurship.

2. Conceptual Background

The notion of social is used to define a type of problem and needs (Phills *et al.*, 2008). Kickul and Lyons (2020) also use social for everything that belongs to community and society. While mentioning ‘social’, other notions related to the concept; like social impact, social value, social entrepreneurship, social innovation are seen in the literature. Social impact, as one of them, covers everything about people and lifestyles and it comes from the awareness of the impact on social innovation on society (Grieco *et al.*, 2015). Social impact is all about people and lifestyles, meaning this statement is not intended to be a checklist of potential social impacts; rather, it reflects an awareness and understanding of the impact of social innovation on society and its stakeholders (Grieco *et al.*, 2015). Vanclay (2003) defines social impact as changes in peoples' ways of life, beliefs and culture, as well as impacts on the community, the environment, well-being, personal rights, anxieties, well-being, civilian rights and aspirations. As most of the definitions conceptualize social impact as leading to 'positive' social change, others define social impact as reducing negative impacts (Stephan *et al.*, 2016; Bartling *et al.*, 2015). Social innovation and social entrepreneurship are also phenomena that have become part of the literature and practice concerning social impact.

Social impact is a critical aspect of social entrepreneurship. It refers to the outcomes of a social enterprise that generate sustainable social benefits and promote social change (Lumpkin *et al.*, 2011; Austin, 2006). Although social impact can be considered a relevant dependent variable based on social entrepreneurship performance, social impact findings have struggled for consistency due to a proliferation of terminology and contexts. Social enterprises and their models to create social value are not only effective but also efficient about solving problems and generating social impact (Singh, 2016). Social enterprises are usually motivated by the social impact created or gained to sustain themselves even though they create social and economic value (Alter, 2006). Social innovation is also defined as the practical development and deployment of new products, services and programs that give solutions to unmet social needs (Goldsmith, 2010). Unlike business innovation driven according to needs of the market and customers, social innovation has a cultural attention. The purpose is to be a response to unmet societal and also human needs (Lettice & Parekh, 2010). As seen in the definitions, social value can be called the main purpose of social innovation and social entrepreneurship.

2.1. Social Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship

While creating social impact, social innovation and social entrepreneurship can be mentioned as being social impact oriented. Social innovation is recognized as an innovative solution which addresses rather than current solutions a social need more effectively and which makes assets and resources use more effectively (Caulier-Grice *et al.*, 2012). Different definitions have been made for social innovation as a concept and it has matured in the process. Although social innovation is not a new topic, it is seen to have moved to a stage that addresses not only local issues but also more systematic and structural problems (Nicholls *et al.*, 2015).

The term 'social innovation' has been used in various contexts. The earliest references, dating back to the 1960s, show empirical research in the social sciences and humanities. Since then, social enterprise and social entrepreneurship have continued to be used in relation to socially beneficial technological innovations, corporate social responsibility and open innovation (Caulier-Grice *et al.*, 2012). Social innovation is defined as developing and implementing new products, services and programs that meet social needs (Goldsmith, 2010). Operationally and innovatively, social innovation processes strongly support the creation of new ideas to improve well-being, peace and quality of life, important for investing in entrepreneurship and accelerating innovation-driven socio-economic growth (Saha & Saha, 2020).

Social entrepreneurship is another social impact-oriented project version. Social innovation is much wider than social entrepreneurship and it is based on social entrepreneurs' activities, using innovation to meet social needs (Grilo & Moriera, 2022). Bornstein and Davis (2010) define social entrepreneurship as the process of building and transforming institutions to address social problems that require urgent attention including degradation of environment, poverty, disease, illiteracy, environment, illegality and abuses of human rights. According to Robinson (2006), social entrepreneurship is about identifying social problems and finding ways of solving them. The venture's social impact, business model and sustainability are assessed and a social mission is established for a non-profit or business-oriented for-profit organization that follows a dual (or triple) bottom line. Social enterprises can take various forms, such as non-governmental organizations, individual businesses or cooperatives. Social

enterprises have defined outputs that lead to social impacts, which determine their organizational success. To progress to the growth stage, they must clearly articulate their outputs and impacts and measure their social impact to demonstrate their success (El Ebrashi, 2013).

If it has a succession, social entrepreneurship creates a positive difference on society. It can provide constructive ideas and motives that move society in the right direction and achieve a state of harmony. Social enterprise must be aimed at achieving broad social, cultural and environmental objectives, promoting high levels of social satisfaction and fostering social innovativeness. One of the most critical components of social entrepreneurship is that it fosters innovation (Austin, 2006; Light, 2006; Mair & Marti, 2006; Nichols, 2010). In this sense, innovation is the key difference between nonprofit management and social entrepreneurship (Brock & Steiner, 2009).

When we look at two concepts related to social impact, it is seen that social innovation is much broader in scope than either social enterprise or social entrepreneurship. However, there may be overlapping with one or the other or both. For example, a social entrepreneur may set up a social enterprise that delivers a program that is innovative in a social sense (Caulier-Grice *et al.*, 2012). The literature on both concepts focuses on the benefits to people in organizations, communities and society through the direct and indirect achievement of more social outcomes (Dawson & Daniel, 2010; Morris *et al.*, 2021). While creating these social outcomes, there are ways to bring solutions as a way of thinking or an approach to problems. Design thinking is one of these ways of thinking that can be used to solve complex problems like social issues.

2.2. Design Thinking and Its Relation with Social Impact-oriented Projects

Design thinking is a thinking process that aims to transform, evolve and innovate, lead to new ways of managing work and new forms of life. This involves considering new realities and bringing design culture and methods into fields like business innovation (Tschimmel, 2012). Design thinking is an agent of change, a framework for teaching and learning that embraces uncertainty, disagreement and complexity in action-oriented ways, where abstract thinking and applied processes can be equally and highly valued (Valentine *et al.*, 2017). Owen (2005) identifies six key characteristics of design thinking: a focus on human needs, consideration of environmental impact, adaptability, multifunctionality, a systematic approach and the ability to work with qualitative information. Di Russo (2016) states that this approach is also consistent in every field from business to social innovation.

Various design thinking approaches can be found in the literature. This approach includes various steps, design practices or methods (Carlgren, 2013). When looking at different models, design thinking encourages further discussion on each aspect of its relevance and its capacity to stimulate public efforts and improvements for a better society (Palma, 2020). The stages of design thinking are generally expressed in three to five stages. Bequette and Bequette (2012) state that most processes follow a similar set of steps, including problem definition, conducting research, generating ideas, prototyping, testing and evaluating the outcome.

Design thinking has recently started to be adopted by nonprofit organizations in their processes (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). Based on the needs of the customer or consumer, social issues require systematic solutions. Design thinking can be used in non-profit organizations to bring better solutions to social problems. It cuts across

traditional boundaries between the public, private and third sectors (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). It has also been successfully mobilized by design consultants, management educators and others. In this context, an approach to business or even social innovation is proposed (Kimbell, 2011). Design thinking can lead to hundreds of ideas and solutions that will ultimately lead to better outcomes in the real world for the organizations and the people that they serve (Brown & Wyatt, 2010).

Buchanan (2014) also identified four different ways in which design can be applied. They are the ethos which permeates an organization and its culture and the way in which it thinks and acts. In this sense, design thinking can be transferred as a way of thinking in terms of applicability to social projects. The literature highlights that design thinking uses a new mechanism to promote participatory approaches among the many innovations in the social context, particularly in the form of social entrepreneurship (Booker, 2014; Kolko, 2012). The scope for creating opportunities to redefine wicked problems using design thinking has clearly increased with the social enterprises' several innovative methods (Booker, 2014). Selloni and Corubolo (2017) argue that the process of co-designing their contribution to a social enterprise project represents a potential form of social innovation within the field of social entrepreneurship, where design thinking can play an important role in supporting, accelerating and democratizing innovation. Involving users and other actors in the design and development of the service can address some of the problems faced by existing services supported by social entrepreneurs. According to them, social entrepreneurs need to experience different forms of collaboration in which a design-oriented approach plays an important role, making collaboration more innovative and productive (Selloni & Corubolo, 2017). Brown (2009) suggests that design for social entrepreneurs is desirable to consider the role and actions of social entrepreneurs using design thinking, which is above all a human-centered approach to innovation.

3. Methodology

Interest in social innovation and social entrepreneurship has grown in response to the rise of 'world-changing' organizations and the failure of governments to address environmental and social issues (Adro & Fernandes, 2021). On the other hand, social entrepreneurship and social innovation literature and academic research are still in their infancy (Bacq & Janssen, 2011; Farinha *et al.*, 2020). Social entrepreneurship by individuals is an innovative process of creating social value that addresses the needs and concerns of marginalized groups (Spear *et al.*, 2013). Social enterprises are believed to utilize innovative approaches to tackle complex issues, thereby contributing to the attainment of sustainable social value (Mair & Marti, 2006; Rotheroe & Richards, 2007). In this context, social entrepreneurship projects were included in the study because they focus on enhancing design relevance and social impact. The aim of this selection is to understand their real-life experiences while creating social impact and to understand how to contribute design thinking method with a focus on social impact. The research part of the study consists of two stages: literature analysis and field research in this regard.

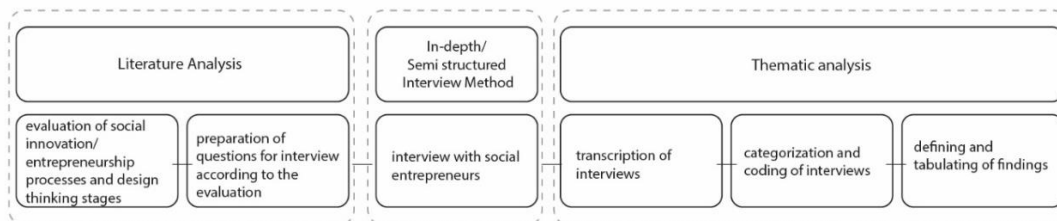
The research part of the study proceeds in three stages. Firstly, the stages of design thinking were evaluated alongside the processes of social entrepreneurship and innovation through a literature analysis. The questions used in the research with social enterprises were prepared according to this analysis. Bringing them together and

tabulating them help us to see the differences as well as the overlaps between the process and the stages and to develop the questions in accordance with both sides.

In the second part of the research, the data collection technique was used by applying semi-structured interview techniques with the already established social enterprises. Semi-structured interviews, along with in-depth interviews, allow for intervention, when necessary, in addition to the pre-prepared questions. This approach enables social entrepreneurs to freely discuss their processes and experiences without limitations. The interviews are conducted with social entrepreneurs, because the main reason of them is to create social impact and they are established by more individuals and founders of them are more specified to connect to ask interviews. To create a sample, participants of last two years of a program and a competition (which are called Social Enterprise Istanbul: PartnerUp Program and Ibrahim Bodur Social Entrepreneurship Program) that focus on social impact, social innovation and social entrepreneurship were included. The program and the competition require social entrepreneurs to have an idea to participate in and to have reached at least the dissemination and development stages. Since these conditions reflect the goals to be achieved in the design thinking stages and given that social entrepreneurs have experience in developing their ideas, the participants were considered as a sample group for the research. Participants were asked to contribute to research via e-mail, Linked-in accounts. To discover their establishment journey, in-depth interviews were conducted with 10 social entrepreneurs who agreed to participate. The content of questions was based on four parts as the subject and team of their social enterprises, how they discovered the problem, their idea development processes and the announcement and implementation of social enterprises.

The data collected from the interviews with social entrepreneurs was analyzed through thematic analysis method with in-vivo and descriptive coding. Coding refers to analyzing what stands out in the conducted interviews. In this framework, post-it sheets were used and answers to questions were categorized in the framework of common keywords. By aiming to understand their processes and the relationship between design thinking processes, interview analysis was evaluated within the context of design thinking processes. Finally, the findings show that the study provides local-based key inferences about the social enterprises' process during the establishment of their enterprises and how to connect this process with design thinking process.

Table 1. Research methodology process



3.1. Data Collection

By evaluating the intersections of social innovation, social entrepreneurship processes and design-oriented thinking stages, interviews were conducted with questions prepared to obtain information on how existing social enterprises progress and how they pass through these stages. While the processes of these two concepts

were included in the literature section, their intersections and stages were evaluated. By examining the literature on design thinking, social innovation and social entrepreneurship processes, questions were formulated to explore how social entrepreneurs identify and implement social impact-oriented ideas, focusing on existing actions and processes without delving into more technical terms like 'empathy'. These questions are divided into four groups as mentioned: firstly, the general organizational structure and knowledge of enterprise, secondly, defining the problem, identifying the target audience and their needs, thirdly, coming up with and testing ideas and finally, implementing the idea.

In the research conducted in Türkiye, in addition to identifying social entrepreneurs whose main goal is social impact, social entrepreneurs are also recognized for having a similar structure to small organizations, individuals, or groups with new ideas, which Mulgan et al. (2007) referred to as “bees”. The number of participants was set at a minimum of 10 social entrepreneurs for in-depth interviews. Interviews were conducted online, depending on Covid conditions and the current location of the researcher, the entrepreneurs and the author. For interviews Zoom online platform was used at convenient times of participants and recorded with the consent of the social entrepreneurs. The interviews lasted 45 minutes on average. The audio recordings were transcribed through the ‘Transcriptor’ application and transferred to Microsoft Word. The recordings were listened to again and mutual dialogue editing was made and situations arising from the program, such as spelling errors, were eliminated. Data collected from interviews are coded based on thematic analysis method with in-vivo and descriptive coding, then findings were categorized and then tabulated.

3.2. Findings

The topics of the social enterprises interviewed ranged from environmental factors to women's employment (Table 2). All participants are founders or co-founders of social enterprises and are actively responsible for a department or issue in social enterprises. Social enterprises are coded from SG1 to SG10 in alphabetic order while introducing findings.

Table 2. Topics of social enterprises participating the research

Social Entrepreneurship	Topic of the Social Entrepreneurship
SG1	Encouraging social impact within festivals
SG2	Measurement, analyzing and management system of air pollution
SG3	Creating an old-friendly society and offering products and services
SG4	Content creation Encouraging young people to create benefits
SG5	Biodegradable material alternative to polystyrene Creating positive impact on environment
SG6	Human-centered design support for legal problems
SG7	Participatory communal living space

SG8	Creating gender equality in STEM field Increasing women employment in technology sector
SG9	Decreasing use of one-use plastic bottles Supporting canteens usage habits
SG10	Creating sustainable income model for fragile communities Upcycling production via creativity in textile sector

When looking at the organization and teams within social enterprises, some social enterprises have a single founder, while others have co-founder relationships with family or friends, or run the enterprise together. Within the organization, there are units and tasks that individuals are responsible for according to their areas of interest and professional competencies. For example, in SG10, the responsibilities are distributed among the founders and employees in three areas: Business, Impact and Design, while in SG9, the co-founders, who are family members, share the roles of CEO, CTO, CMO (management, technology, sales-marketing) and their areas of responsibility are determined accordingly. In addition to their core teams, there are also social enterprises that work as community organizations working on a voluntary basis. While SG7 works with a community of 70 people from Türkiye and abroad, SG4 works with over 300 volunteer students from all over Türkiye, who come from different disciplines, especially in fieldwork. On the other hand, social entrepreneurs receive various external support to carry out their activities. In addition to consultancy and mentoring, project-based employees, part-time employees, volunteers or interns, as well as support in terms of suppliers, technical, visual design and collaborations that increase their competencies or make things work. In terms of consultancy and mentor support, it is seen that the process is carried out with the immediate environment, various mentoring organizations or academics.

When we look at the decision-making processes in social enterprises, it is seen that a structure in which decisions are made by units in their own areas of responsibility and more strategic decisions are made together. While one group of social enterprises talked about the need for participation and collective decision-making, another group of social enterprises stated that units make decisions related to their own areas of responsibility and share them with other units/individuals through information or consultation, but the whole team/core team comes together to make strategic, risky, long-term decisions. On the other hand, it is seen that teams are viewed from two different perspectives: the core team and the whole team. While SG1's 'inclusive and transparent', SG2 founder's 'while advocating inclusiveness, of course, it is necessary to observe a participatory approach in the organizational model', SG5 founder's 'joint decision-making', SG6's 'democratic', SG8 founder's 'together' express the involvement of the team at the point of decision-making, the need for units to take their own initiatives in their own areas of responsibility was also expressed.

When we look at the birth of the ideas that social entrepreneurs come up with, it is seen that they emerge from things that they have experienced or witnessed individually, that are part of their conversations and lives. What is referred to as their individual experiences are the problems and realizations, they have experienced themselves or witnessed in their environment, as well as their professional or academic experiences. In response to these, it is observed that seeking solutions or questioning with how questions contributed to the ideas of their social enterprises (Table 3). While social enterprises develop their ideas, it is seen that the problem definitions of their target

audiences are close to the process of the birth of the idea and that they proceed based on the problems they have experienced, observed and witnessed. SG10 founder's statement 'It was very clear, I experienced it myself' describes and supports the item based on personal experience. Another interesting finding while they tell their experience during the establishment of the entrepreneurship may be their lack of knowledge about social entrepreneurship. Most social entrepreneurs mentioned that they weren't aware of the concept of social entrepreneurship. They learnt it when they met people that know social entrepreneurship or participated in some programs. The aim of entrepreneurs was to find a solution for a problem, change something or use their abilities to create something. A few participants like the one having experience in a social innovation center would know about the concept.

Table 3. Factors in the emergence of social enterprise ideas

The birth of social enterprises' idea	SG1	SG2	SG3	SG4	SG5	SG6	SG7	SG8	SG9	SG10
Daily conversation	•							•		
Professional		•				•				
Personal experience / need		•	•	•			•		•	
Personal curious / Hobby				•	•					
Academic study					•					
Witnessing / observation							•	•		•
Familiarity with social entrepreneurship							•			
Project work							•			•
Social awareness		•								

The target audiences of social enterprises vary according to their subject matter. While there are target audiences representing a very specific group, there are also social enterprises with target audiences that cover the whole society within the scope of law and participation. In addition to the search for different areas of use and application, the desire to increase their sphere of influence, that is, the expansion within the scope of the target audience compared to the beginning in the process, is seen in the processes of social enterprises. At the point of deciding on the target audience, personal experience, professional approach, inclusiveness, community agenda, behavioral patterns, searching by asking questions such as who and whom and data headings appear. On the other hand, project-based initiatives may have a narrower target group for the project. It is observed that social entrepreneurs discuss their ideas with their target audiences and with people from whom they can get external support. From both perspectives, it is seen that these discussions mostly take place in their immediate environment, with people they can reach and with whom they have a close relationship.

In terms of discussing their ideas with their target audience, entrepreneurs' starting from their own experiences and the experience of their environment is effective, but meeting with people in their immediate environment comes to the forefront. Apart from this, it is also common to come together with a group as a community, a social experiment by meeting with the target audience that does not belong to the immediate environment. Likewise, there are social entrepreneurs who do not meet with their target audience. The ways of meeting with the target audience seem to take the form of informal conversations in social settings or coming together to discuss ideas. It is also stated that these meetings do not change the ideas of social enterprises, but rather contribute to their processes in the form of identifying their needs, providing an environment and validating the problem (Table 4).

Table 4. Discussing the idea of social entrepreneurship with the target audience

Discussing the idea with target audience	SG1	SG2	SG3	SG4	SG5	SG6	SG7	SG8	SG9	SG10
Project-based discussion	•					•				
Finding discussion useless before idea		•								
Discussion with close environment			•	•	•				•	•
Experimental group				•						
Professional target audience	•								•	
Discussion with the community							•			
No discussion with target audience								•		•

Table 5. Discussing the idea with others and its contribution on the idea

Discussing the idea with other people	SG1	SG2	SG3	SG4	SG5	SG6	SG7	SG8	SG9	SG10
Discussion with with acquaintances	•								•	•
Discussion with experts	Sector experienced people	•			•			•		•
	Academicians		•		•					
	NGO experienced people							•		•
Professional target audience								•		
Training- competitions- programmes			•	•						
Discussion with the community					•	•				

On the other hand, in terms of discussing ideas with outsiders, subject matter experts who can be accessed through the immediate environment or exist in the environment come to the forefront. It is seen that these discussions also take place within the trainings, programs and competitions attended, while the development of ideas is ensured by coming together with people who are experts in the sector, academic experts in their field and people with NGO experience who will support the development of their ideas (Table 5). It is observed that these consultations contribute not only to the maturation and development of ideas but also to the business development process and that they contribute to simplification and focusing on the desire to do everything and confusion that occurs during the idea development process mentioned earlier.

When we look at the prototype development of social enterprises in the process of developing their ideas, it is seen that they mainly go through trial processes. In initiatives that develop on an output such as a product or a website, prototypes are realized, while in project-oriented initiatives, a project is realized with the target audience. In an organization-based social enterprise, the prototype process does not take place. Some social enterprises have more than one field under a single roof. Some of these areas are not suitable for prototyping in terms of their scope. In contrast to the intellectual consultations with the immediate environment, at the point of testing the prototypes, we encounter testing processes focused on the target audience to see the operability of the idea. In the social enterprise SG2, where the target audience has turned into entrepreneurs and the immediate environment is also the target audience, the testing process is carried out through this environment.

While formal surveys, measurement tests, forms and in-depth interviews were used in tests where the target group was a large group, informal conversational interviews were used in scales and groups where one-to-one interviews were possible. The feedback not only contributed to the process functioning of the systems, but also had an impact on the evolution of the systems to more suitable conditions for the use or participation of the target audience. In general, social entrepreneurs also mentioned positive feedback during the process.

Table 6. Factors in the announcement and dissemination of social enterprises

Announcement and dissemination way		SG1	SG2	SG3	SG4	SG5	SG6	SG7	SG8	SG9	SG10
Personal access	Personal network	•	•								
	Direct communication	•			•						
Promotional activities	Sponsorship / Cooperation		•	•	•			•	•		
	Fairs		•								
	Events									•	
	Being speaker							•			
References- word of mouth			•							•	
Inclusion in the ecosystem							•	•			
Academic publication			•								
Programs / Competitions			•	•			•	•	•	•	
Media / Agency				•	•			•			
Institutions / Organizations						•	•		•	•	•

While social enterprises emerge, the most effective factors in terms of being heard by the target audience and in the market are the programs, training, competitions, various institutions and organizations they participate in. Sponsorships and collaborations, media and agency work are common in terms of getting the word out about initiatives. However, the impact of organizations, institutions, programs, competitions, training in the field of social entrepreneurship/women's entrepreneurship/entrepreneurship is more widespread to spread the idea and social entrepreneurship.

It is seen that social enterprises' decision-making in reaching the target audience takes shape in accordance with their target audience. For example, to reach out to the public sector, communication is made through a reference, whereas with private companies, direct communication is provided through e-mail. In this sense, differences are observed even within a single social enterprise depending on who the target audience will be (Table 5). The sector they want to reach, the points where people are located, their tendencies and functioning are factors in these transportation channels.

The use of equity capital comes to the fore during the establishment phase of social enterprises. Almost all entrepreneurs mentioned their own capital before making profit from the process or other supportive factors. Subsequently, the awards obtained from competitions and programs, as well as the grant support received, contributed to the development of the projects. At the point where the enterprises fulfil their activities, it is seen that they provide resources for the functioning of the enterprise in the form of collaborations, sales and projects depending on their activities.

Once social enterprises have expanded and met with their target audiences, they expand their areas of use or services and increase their scope. Two social entrepreneurs associated the changes in their processes with pivoting. At the end of the process of seeing what they can do in one place, the participants stated that they can bring solutions to similar problems in other areas and increase the benefit. On the other hand, there were also social enterprises that did not undergo any change or needed to shift their direction in a different direction. It has also been observed that social enterprises are looking for alternative orientations in their development and expansion processes due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It has also been observed that social enterprises accept change and believe that change will continue.

It is seen that social entrepreneurs focus on social impact with the influence of the programs they participate in and desire to measure it. In general, when expressing their social impact, they use longer, more descriptive descriptions of their ideas rather than keywords. It is seen that they have an impact on environmental and social problems, from an elderly-friendly society to creating waste under the umbrella of sustainability. However, social entrepreneurs are not yet at the full measurement stage in terms of social impact measurement, they have received consultancy and training on the subject, and are in the process of starting to measure or planning. In social enterprises that have started social impact measurement, the founders mention project-based measurements such as pre-test and post-test, numerical data such as the number of people reached and surveys and interviews to obtain these data. In project-based social enterprises, the project-based measurement method may vary. In general, social entrepreneurs are involved in planning and envisioning the method.

4. Conclusion

As a result of the interviews with the founders of social enterprises, the emergence of social enterprises emerges from the personal stories, experiences and observations of the participants. Among social entrepreneurs, it is encountered that they did not know what a social enterprise was and learned about it during the process of developing ideas. Most social entrepreneurs did not start their process as social entrepreneurs knowing what social enterprise is. They are motivated just to make something good.

Various organizations, institutions, networks, programs, training and competitions play an important role in publicizing social enterprises, developing ideas, networking and providing financial resources. Here, not only in the field of social entrepreneurship, but also institutions, organizations, programs, training and competitions related to entrepreneurship and women's entrepreneurship are included and contributed to. Mentoring is also one of the main needs of social entrepreneurs in terms of orientation. The founders informally discuss and consult with the target audience and external support they discuss their ideas with, predominantly from people from their own circles who may be related to the subject/experts on the subject. To create financial resources to create their entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurs benefit from equity capital at their starting points.

The aim of this study is to find out how design thinking should be specialized according to the real-life experiences when it is in the focus of social impact. Therefore, the objectives we hoped to achieve in the research were to obtain in-depth information on social entrepreneur stories and to question their applicability to design-oriented thinking processes. In this sense, when we look at the findings, we can tell that we reached inputs that can be integrated to design thinking process. We can summarize them as follows. According to examination of the literature and findings of research, it is possible to say that tools based on design thinking can be provided to support and develop social impact-oriented projects. By this way, design can be a catalyst for social projects. It is seen that there are common parts between design thinking processes and social entrepreneurs' experience for the idea. They also followed design thinking stages like cooperation, thinking about the future, innovative thinking and solving a problem. These stages also belong to social innovation and social entrepreneurship notions. It is suggested that both design thinking and social impact-oriented projects are still used together or that more hybrid integrated tools are used to better encapsulate design thinking oriented projects. For example, social entrepreneurs' own experience and abilities have an important role for the birth of social enterprises. As well as this, programs, competitions and institutions interested in social issues are so effective in finding ideas and getting wider in their fields, so there is a need to integrate these factors into the process. The inclusion of these requirements in the process will lead to social enterprises that bring much more successful results, perhaps even develop faster and solve different social problems.

However, to prepare future social innovators/entrepreneurs to create social impact on finding solutions for social problems, there needs to be greater awareness and education about what social innovation/social entrepreneurship is, then tools and methods can help them to find their way. On the other hand, if effective tools are wanted to be created, social innovators/entrepreneurs should be understood better about their experience like their motivations and on the other side challenges. There is always

a potential to study and find tools between social impact and design thinking as issues that will be on the agenda of our lives for a while.

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