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## Measuring Higher Education Institutions' Social Responsibilities\*

Yükseköğretim Kurumlarının Sosyal Sorumluluklarının Ölçülmesi

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Abstract: Higher education institutions are the key drivers of social and economic development in every nation. Within the effect of globalization, the increasing demand for post-secondary education and the rise of the information society, institutions are now going through rapid changes to meet these demands. These rapid changes also gave rise to the quest of the higher education institutions' responsibilities. Teaching and research come forth amongst institutions' fundamental responsibilities, whereas the 'third mission' or 'social service' is still under debate in terms of its structure, applications and the tools to measure the fulfillment level of higher education institutions' social responsibilities. The purpose of this research is to develop an institutional measurement tool involving the perceptions of the stakeholders' social responsibilities of higher education institutions, to assess the social responsibility fulfillment level of the hosting institution. In order to develop a scale to measure the hosting institutions' social responsibility level, a mixed method consisted of a qualitative single case study with semi-structured interviews and a survey was conducted by means of the Community Engagement Institutional Scale especially designed for this research. In the qualitative section of the research, semi-structured face to face interviews were conducted with 22 participants that were believed to represent the stakeholder groups. Content analysis was applied to the eight interview questions and a pool consisted of 250 items was formed totally from the participants' responses. For the quantitative part of the research, Exploratory Factor Analysis was conducted with 210 participants drawn randomly from the population. After the Confirmatory Factor Analysis, the scale was measured to have a variance rate of 64.894 % and the reliability value was found as .97, with 25 items falling under four sub-dimensions. After the Confirmatory Factor Analysis done by conducting the Structural Equation Modelling with AMOS 24., it was found that the measures indicate a good fit for the model that was created. According to the findings, obtained by applying the scale to the randomly selected sample of 690 undergraduates out of 4521 at the hosting institution, social responsibility accomplishment level perception differs according to gender, department and grade level of the participants.

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As a result, the hosting institution's social responsibility accomplishment was found to be at a moderate level from the undergraduates' perceptions.

**Structured Abstract:** Higher education institutions' social responsibilities came up to stage after the effect of corporate social responsibility which was first mentioned by American businessman during the 1960s, becoming a mainstream concern for big corporations, small and medium-sized enterprises, public authorities and other organizations at the international level. Within an understanding of taking action on a voluntary basis, assisting disadvantaged and socially excluded people corporate social responsibility focuses on similar topics of inclusion and community participation, as a form of 'corporate citizenship' for greater responsibility of the business and corporate world. Voluntariness is believed to boost the personal development and skills, maturity, personalities, values and experience of individuals also creating a will to participate in social applications which are for the benefit of the society.

Higher education institutions' social responsibilities are regarded as a combined duty with research and instruction by many scholars. Some believe that they fulfill this duty by accomplishing research and instruction, so that institutions are not organized according to their duties. Institutions conduct a cluster of social applications by means of community-based service learning as a course to be completed by undergraduates. Increasingly, institutions are recognizing that engagement with their local communities in other collaborative projects and research are additional aspects of social responsibility fulfillment. And for students, it is the service-learning applications that put them into the center for community-university engagement through a series of activities, that alleviates the heavy load of universities and scholars to pass the desired knowledge and experience to the students also enabling activation of classroom curricula, prompting social and civic development and creating new bounds with the society and university.

McPherson (1991) stated that students reach into a state of mind in which they refer the society beyond the walls of higher education institutions as the real world due to the isolation from their own culture is the fundamental need for university-community engagement. Individual applications and efforts of scholars, student groups' efforts and combination of these two is regarded as a supply for sustainable development for better community engagement, which is defined as a university's active role in supporting a mutually beneficial relationship with on- and off-campus community partners in a range of ways (Fitzgerald, 2012: 101). For community-university engagement beyond service-learning activities, Bloomgarden and O'Meara (2007) state that, scholars widely maintain institutionalizing civic work in higher education and creating sustainable community partnerships require colleges and universities to go beyond dependence upon student volunteer service and to connect communities with faculty teaching and research.

B-HERT (2006) recognizes that engagement is not new and all universities are already engaged with communities in a number of ways and this diversity also reflected in the efforts to measure the social responsibility fulfillment level of institutions, which is the core objective of this research. Holland's (1997) Matrix measuring institutional commitment to service stands as one of the leading examples of these efforts followed by Kecskes and Muyllaert (1997) reducing Holland's social responsibility indicators. Furco's (2000) self-assessment rubric, evaluating Kecskes and Muyllaert's (1997) Benchmark, which was later revised (2003), and Bringle and Hatcher's (2000) the Comprehensive Action Plan for Service-Learning Matrix for structuring strategic planning are good examples of the focus on service-learning assessment issues. More is done to assess departmental participation and commitment to social applications like Gelmon et al.'s (2005) Building Capacity for Community Engagement: Institutional Self-Assessment, designed to assess the capacity of institutions, Kecskes's (2006) Matrix designed solely for academic departments, followed by Doolittle and Faul's (2013) Community Engagement Scale measures the attitudes and behaviors affected by service.

A sequential mixed method was utilized in this research to develop a scale to measure Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Faculty of Education's social responsibility accomplishment level, started with a qualitative single case study with purposefully selected 22 participants from stakeholder groups of higher education institutions as academicians, civil society organization representatives, local authorities, undergraduate students, whom were asked eight open ended interview questions. Qualitative data were analyzed by applying content analysis with NVivo 10 during Spring Semester of 2014-2015 academic year between the dates 05.01.2015 and 26.03.2015, ended up with eight themes and 31 categories serving a basis for the items of the scale which was developed for this research. The scale was first applied to 210 undergraduate students from the hosting institution as a pilot study for Exploratory Factor Analysis with 25 items falling under 4 dimensions as a 5-point Likert scale with a high (.974) reliability level and named as

Community Engagement Institutional Scale (CEIS) which was applied to 690 randomly selected undergraduate participants for Confirmatory Factor Analysis as well as to collect the major data for the research in May 2015. The factorial validity of the scale is examined with principal component analysis deleting items with loads less than .49, normal distribution with Skewness and Kurtosis values between -2 and +2 (Can, 2014), and at least r=.20 item-total correlations regarded enough for factor analysis (Cokluk et al, 2014). Structural validity of the scale was explored via exploratory factor analysis having .60 and higher  $\alpha$  coefficient was assented as evidence of reliability (Hair et al., 2010). Confirmatory Factor Analysis was done by conducting the Structural Equation Modelling with AMOS 24. Chi-square value was found to be lower than 2 indicating a good fit, The Goodness-of-fit Index was measured as .845 indicating a presence of a fit in the model, Adjusted Goodness-of-fit Index was measured as .955 which indicates that the model is close to the fit value, Comparative Fit Index of the model was measured as .957 indicating a good fit, and finally the Root-Meansquare Error Approximation value was measured as .057 indicating a good fit in the model created. The research is limited to the 22 participants that form the study group amongst the stakeholders, as well as the purposefully selected sample (n= 690) of undergraduate students, that is drawn from the population (N= 4251), whom are enrolled at the hosting institution in the stated academic year.

The findings state that female undergraduates perceive that the hosting institution accomplishes its social responsibility higher than males, similar to the findings of former research which states that gender differences have a considerable effect on perceptions (Abes et al., 2002; Antonio et al.; Ridenour, 2007). Moreover, a significant relationship was found between grade levels and age groups of the participants on behalf of the higher grades and older ages, so that service-learning course is a compulsory which is registered starting from the junior year. Departmental differences also have an effect on the perception of the social responsibility accomplishment level of the institution like stated in former research (Ninneman, 2011; Kucher, 2012) having more positive scores for Science, Linguistics and Art departments than Social Science departments for this research. As a result, the hosting intuition's social accomplishment level found out to be at a moderate ( $\bar{X}$ = 2.97) level from the perceptions of the undergraduates. So that these undergraduates are guided by the scholars who are responsible to teach service courses, it is possible to state that the academic staff has focus on social responsibilities (Macfarlane, 2005), but regarding the overall score of the scale more focus and action is need to be taken so that the current status is not at a high level similar to the former research (AAC & U, 2008).

It was possible to find out that research and instruction take more attention of the scholars rather than the third mission which is the social responsibilities. By service learning and individual social applications of scholars and the student groups this duty seems to be accomplished. The lack of interaction between the stakeholders and institutions can stand as one of the reasons for this gap. The leadership of the institutions and the participation of the stakeholders can create better applications for the benefit of the society and supply a high level of community engagement. For better applications, economic and mental power must be put together, taking social responsibility phenomenon from an individual act to a mass act for the scholars, students and the community by applying award and promotion systems as well as further research focusing on new measuring tools to be created in order to assess the improvement levels of institutions from different perspectives, that this research likely to contribute.

**Keywords:** Educational administration and supervision, higher education, social responsibility, community engagement, mixed method

Öz: Yükseköğretim kurumları tüm uluslarda sosyal ve ekonomik gelişimin öncüleri konumundadır. Küreselleşmenin de etkisiyle ortaöğretim sonrası eğitime olan talebin artması ve bilgi çağının yükselişi ile yükseköğretim kurumları bu talepleri karşılayabilmek adına hızlı bir değişimden geçmektedirler. Bu değişimler aynı zamanda yükseköğretim kurumlarının sorumluluklarının da sorgulanmasına neden olmuştur. Öğretim ve araştırma, bu kurumların önde gelen temel sorumlulukları arasında yer alırken, 'üçüncü görev' veya 'sosyal hizmet' kavramları ise söz konusu olguya yönelik halen yapısal, uygulama ve ölçme araçları hususunda tartışmalara tabiidir. Bu araştırmanın amacı, ev sahibi yükseköğretim kurumunun sosyal sorumluluklarını gerçekleştirme düzeyinin, kurumsal bir ölçme aracı geliştirerek ölçülmesidir. Ölçeğin geliştirilebilmesi adına, tekli durum çalışması ve tarama modelini içeren karma yöntem kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın nitel bölümü için, paydaşları temsil ettiği varsayılan 22 katılımcı ile yarı yapılandırılmış yüz yüze görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Sekiz görüşme sorusuna verilen cevaplar içerik analizi ile çözümlenmiş ve tamamen katılımcı cevaplarından oluşan 250 soruluk madde havuzu oluşturulmuştur. Araştırmanın nicel bölümü dahilinde evrenden rastgele olarak seçilen 210 katılımcı ile Açımlayıcı Faktör Analizi yapılmıştır. Doğrulayıcı Faktör Analizi sonrasında tespit edilen verilere göre ölçek %64.894 değerinde varyans ile açıklanmaktadır ve dört kategori içinde yer alan 25 madde ile güvenirlik değeri .97 bulunmuştur. AMOS 24. kullanılarak Yapısal Eşitlik Modeli ile gerçekleştirilen Doğrulayıcı Faktör Analizi sonrasında gelişitirilen modelde ölçümlerin iyi uyum gösterdiği tespit edilmiştir. Ev sahibi kurum dâhilindeki 4521 kişilik evrenden rastgele olarak seçilen 690 lisans öğrencisinine uygulanan ölçek ile elde edilen bulgulara göre, ev sahibi yükseköğretim kurumunun sosyal sorumluluklarını gerçekleştirme düzeyinin katılımcıların cinsiyeti, okuduğu bölüm ve sınıf düzeyi değişkenlerine göre farklılık gösterdiği tespit edilmiştir. Sonuç olarak, ev sahibi yükseköğretim kurumu sosyal sorumluluklarını lisans öğrencilerinin algılarına göre orta düzeyde gerçekleştirdiği bulunmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Eğitim yönetimi ve denetimi, yükseköğretim, sosyal sorumluk, toplum katılımı, karma metot

#### Introduction

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are going through a rapid change as a result of globalization, faster than ever before (Scott, 2002) through a four dimensioned process as economic, politic, cultural and technological aspects (Karlsen, 2002; McBurnie, 2002). The neglected societal factors gained importance in administrative processes, rather than the economic ones like the last 40-50 years (Drucker, 1996). HEIs are under pressure of national and global demands of change and the action taken to fulfill this need is far from solutions, as they cannot exceed their theoretical frames. HEIs which are responsible for social changes, cannot keep up the pace with the current issues and demands which ends up with a gap between the society and university.

Higher education institutions are the top level of the education systems all over the world with their duties of instruction, research and social responsibilities. The latter has gained importance in the last decade so that social issues and events come forth by means of globalization, which had wide ranging effects on higher education institutions. Universities now play an important role more than ever with the struggles also never complicated before. This research focuses on one of these struggles which is not only identifying what social responsibility is from higher education institutions' stakeholders, but also to measure the fulfillment level of these institutions related to this uprising phenomenon from the perspective of the undergraduates by means of a scale developed specifically for this purpose.

# **Social Responsibility**

The social responsibility (SR) phenomenon is more than a term that combines state, private and civil society organizations for a unique and target-based objective that helps to share the positive outcomes within the efforts to defeat the negative ones with the team work notion (Paksoy, 2001). Bayraktaroğlu (2008), believes that SR is the obligation of the human activities that are adopted for the benefits of the system to achieve its objectives by taking the ethical values and employing its resources to modernize the fellowship that the organization is located in. Organizations must also focus on the utility of the local region, society, the world and humanity itself as they focus on their economic benefits (Yılmaz, 2006). The crossing point of SR definitions is that, they manage to fit in a common ground in which the primary focus is on the demands of interest groups and societal expectations (Top & Öner, 2008). SR is best understood as the idea that organizations, institutions, and individuals have an obligation to act for the benefit of society as a whole, drawing on principles around ethics and social welfare (Rababah et al., 2021: 4).

It's been emphasized that, particularly within the area of instruction, it is determined as social adherence to the principles and expectations that society placed upon an individual (Bierhoff & Rohmann, 2004; Wentzel, 1991). Ridenour (2007), states that the implication of the adherence to

rules seems to be an aspect of SR, but lacks the motivational factor and this can benefit the government as well as the individual, but the motivation behind obedience or even civil disobedience should be considered instead of a broad generalization of complying with governmental or societal rules (p. 2). More broadly, not only to incorporate social rules and relation to a community of people and society at large, but also as engaging in actions that benefit the environment in desirable ways (Berkowitz & Lutterman, 1968). In other words, SR can be anything from paying taxes, driving within the speed limit, recycling, protecting wildlife, or even civil disobedience (Ridenour, 2007). The social responsibility of HEIs is a kind of basic philosophy or principle, as a kind of social movement which not only contributes ethically to the academic community but also to the ethical relationships with the ecosystem around it, which is essential for stakeholder engagement (Esfijani & Chang, 2012; Rad et al., 2020: 71).

### **Corporate Social Responsibility**

As it is stated in the field of literature, despite a huge and growing body of research, no widely accepted definition of 'corporate social responsibility' (CSR) exists. Arguments have existed related to corporate social responsibility's (CSR) significance and key elements ever since the term was first used (Davis, 1973; Frederick, 1986; Wood, 1991; Whetten et al., 2002) by American experts (Bowen, 1953) of business management during the 1960s, over the past few years CSR has become a mainstream concern, for big corporations, small and medium-sized enterprises, public authorities and other organizations at the international level. One early definition of CSR was proposed by Carroll (1999), who argued that the societal obligation of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given period in time (p. 500).

According to Nedd (2008), CSR assumes a moral approach to business operation in which the corporation is conscious of the impact of its activities on stakeholders. CSR is often perceived as a response to pressure from outside stakeholders who may be adversely affected by company practices, or a pro-active effort by firms to predict or at least alleviate these pressures and enhance the image and value of the corporation (Apostolakou & Jackson, 2009). Shawyun et al. (2012: 115) emphasize that, CSR has been widely discussed, argued (Caroll, 1999; Davis, 1973) and researched over the last decades, but it has eluded a definitive and standardized concept accepted.

Caroll (2021) states that three persistent questions continued to frame the CSR discussion as humanity transitioned to the 2000–2020 era as; "To whom is a corporation responsible? For what is the corporation responsible? How should corporations behave?" with the growing interest and research on CSR, which focuses on the relation between corporate social and financial performance boosting up the argument of "do good" (Thompson, 2018), with a leading outcome known as "business case for CSR" referring the financial benefits that the business advocates seek for within a growing interest.

### **Universities and Social Responsibility**

In 1988, 430 rectors from European universities signed the HEI's Magna Charta in Bologna, which can be regarded as the overture of academic, sociological reflection on the future of the university (Hrubos, 2011: 347). It was the first time as a body institutional leader, representatives of the academic community, proclaimed the fundamental principles to be observed in relation to the function of the university, which can be seen as a starting point of the changes in HEIs including the rise of social acts by means of social responsibility phenomenon. Universities are benchmarks in society and responsible from the youth who will be tomorrow's future professionals with their teaching, research, and extension dimensions to training professionals with ethical values and sensitivity towards current problems so that they can contribute to the benefit of society (Arroyave et al., 2021:52).

Universities have moral liabilities to the society (Cooper, 2005), which could be called University Social Responsibility (USR) within leadership and research (Karima et al., 2006). These are the issues that HEIs must focus on the path of transforming the society to an upper level by means of their well-known functions that are teaching and conducting research (Bernardo et al., 2012). Depending on their leading role, which is yielding "learning that emphasizes what students can do with their knowledge and that involves students, individually and collectively, in analyzing and working to solve significant problems in the larger world" (Schneider, 2005: 127). HEIs must nourish mankind's abilities to reach a desired social responsibility level. Colby et al. (2003) classified these capacities in three categories as; "moral and civic understanding, moral and civic motivation and core skills for carrying out a moral and civic responsibility" (Tosado, 2011: 4).

Turkish Republic's Constitution of 1982 that forms many changes in the country's future, the item number 130 related to the higher education system and the 2547 Higher Education General Law, the item number 4 states that the duties of HEIs like other countries, are defined as "education", "research" and "social service". In today's circumstances, the duties of "education" and "research" are generally combined into each other and carried out by scholars of public and private HEIs of the country. Institutions are not organized according to their duties and they are trying to accomplish their three dimensioned responsibilities at the same time. It is possible to say that institutions mainly focus on the first two missions, which are "education" and "research" and the low quantity of graduate students, when they are compared with undergraduates, is likely to prove this situation (Erdem, 2013: 5).

#### The Third Mission

It is believed that HEIs are powerful drivers of innovation and change in the society. All pursue the three missions, but different institutions have different contributions to make (Conway et al., 2009). Institutions must choose the role which best suits their strengths (B-HERT, 2006). Recently, often on the initiative of policy-makers, many universities have taken action to develop a "third mission" by fostering links with knowledge users and facilitating technology transfer (Etzkowitz et al., 2000b; Florida & Cohen, 1999). This "other" HE goal, apart from teaching and research, is what UNESCO (2008) terms as the "Third Mission". This third mission of higher education similarly identified as "Community Engagement (CE)" which expands the roles of universities beyond the traditional roles of teaching and research.

The role of universities has become more important, and due to the shift from the traditional model to an entrepreneurial university model over the past three decades created a transformation that promoted technology transfer and business startups (Dinh, 2021: 144), which embeds economic and social development that the policymakers wants HEIs to facilitate entrepreneurship, which will create a mutual interaction between regional industry and the society enabling the third mission to step aside from 'the periphery' of the university organisations towards 'the academic core' (Salooma & Charles, 2021: 352).

This term refers to a wide range of applications performed by HEIs which "seek to transfer knowledge to society in general and to organizations, as well as to promote entrepreneurial skills, innovation, social welfare and the formation of human capital concerning the development of science and society through social engagement within the activities classified in relation to research (technology transfer and innovation), to teaching (lifelong learning/continuing education) and to university engagement in social and cultural life" (Compagnucci & Spigarelli, 2021: 2).

## **Service Learning**

One of the many frameworks used to concretize CE in educational institutions is the "service learning", which is an experiential pedagogy (Furco, 1996; Serow et al., 1996) that provides contextual learning through active, integrated and motivated experiences (Cantor, 1995), and builds

upon, enriches students' understanding of their individual and collective potential. For many scholars, it is a methodology that connects academic work in classrooms with experience in communities (Furco, 1996; Morton & Troppe, 1996; Zlotkowski, 1996) to help students learn how to contribute to the development and maintenance of communities.

Berger (2003) grouped SL practices into four categories of service as; "direct" service in which the particiant groups (students and the community) interact in direct relationship as applications for age groups, homeless or senior centers, "indirect" service in which the students are not engaged in face to face applications, "advocacy" in which informational or awareness actions are taken, and "research" in which the students take part in real research settings for the benefit of the community (Mortari & Ubbiali, 2021: 125-126).

So that SL enables students to take part in active learning process rather than the passive one by means of the applications conducted, a linkage of the course content to real-life experiences can be created that enhances the youth's creative thinking process in order to solve practical societal problems, "thereby taking learning process beyond classroom" (Dewey, 1986; Miettinen, 2000; Olagoke-Oladokun, et al., 2020: 4948).

# **Community Engagement**

Aslin and Brown (2004) define that "a community is usually thought of as all the people living in one specific area, whereas it can also mean a "community of interests" where members may not live near each other, but will all have something in common about which they respond as a group (p. 4). Holland (2000) states that, the engagement term came up to stage in 1994 during the Annual Meeting of American Association of Higher Education.

McPherson (1991) comments on the fundamental need for university-community engagement: "By the time they reach college, many students have learned to refer to the larger society beyond the walls of academia as the 'real world'. The separation this reflects is perhaps one of the most ironic, and tragic, aspects of traditional educational models, we isolate learners from the very culture we profess to be preparing them for. Yet for many students, a deep encounter with those in need may be the most educational thing that ever happens to them (p.50)" (Feagan & Rossiter, 2011).

This term in HE is defined as a university's active role in supporting a mutually beneficial relationship with on- and off-campus community partners in a range of ways (Fitzgerald, 2012; 101) and some HEIs "refer to themselves as 'engaged' institutions involved in civil and community service or 'outreach', such as members of the global Talloires Network of 363 universities in 77 countries" (Weiss, 2016). Nejati et al. (2011, as cited in Sousa et al., 2021: 265) state that 10 best universities are very engaged in social responsibility, being sufficiently capable of transmitting information about their main areas of CSR according to their annual reports.

## **Measuring Community Engagement**

Many researchers studied measuring community engagement from different perspectives. One of the first was Holland (1997) developed a matrix discovering commitment to social service at an institutional focus within some cases identifying commitment levels that measure vision/mission statements as; (L1) "no mention or undefined rhetorical reference", (L2) "service is part of what we do as citizens", (L3) "service is a vital element of our academic agenda" and (L4) "service is a central and defining characteristic" (p. 33)."

Kecskes and Muyllaert (1997), reducing Holland's four dimensions to three as; *Critical Mass Building, Quality Building* and *Sustained Institutionalization* developed a rubric for engagement known as the *Benchmark*, which maintained the levels of engagement, again reducing organizational factors (Kecskes, 2008).

Furco (2000), evaluating the responses to Kecskes and Muyllaert's (1997) *Benchmark Worksheet* developed the *Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Service-Learning in Higher Education* later revised (2003) the original rubric added a new component, which assesses the departmental level of support to service learning and focuses on counting the departments in which service learning took place and their funding information.

Bringle and Hatcher (2000) developed the Comprehensive Action Plan for Service-Learning (CAPSL) Matrix which provides a mean for structuring strategic planning to implement service learning in higher education. The Matrix identifies four election regions considered as important for the stakeholders in service-learning issues and identifies activities for them as; Planning, Awareness, Prototype, Resources, Expansion, Recognition, Monitoring, Evaluation, Research, and Institutionalization. According to Kesckes (2008), CAPSL is distinctive from the others depending on suggested sequential activities despite their hardness.

Gelmon et al. (2005), developed *Building Capacity for Community Engagement: Institutional Self-Assessment* designed to assess the capacity of a HEI not only for community engagement but also for scholarship, and "to identify opportunities for action which has six dimensions and for each element of each dimension, four 'levels' are articulated which represent a summary of the literature and knowledge on institutional best practices with respect to commitment to community engagement and community-engaged scholarship" (p. 1). The leading characteristic of this tool is being the first to fit the various levels of the HEIs rather than focusing on the institution (Keskes, 20008).

Kecskes's (2006) Characteristics of Engaged Departments Matrix designed solely for academic departments to assess the capacity of CE at HEI departments with six dimensions involving key factors for CE. The self-assessment rubric contains six dimensions; including elements that form the dimension. The process is characterized from "Stage One: Awareness Building, towards Stage Four: Institutionalization", in which departments perform better engagement to the full institutionalization of community engagement within the academic unit (Furco, 2000, 2003; Kecskes & Muyllaert, 1997, as cited in Keskes, 2008).

Doolittle and Faul (2013) developed "Community Engagement Scale" to be easily administered and useful to educators who are seeking to measure the attitudes and behaviors that have been affected by a service-learning experience with two subscales as the Attitude subscale with eight items and the Behavior subscale, with six items believed to be strong enough to recommend its use in educational settings and preliminary use, which will be useful to researchers seeking to better understand the relationship of attitudes and behaviors with civic engagement in the service-learning setting (p. 4). Akin et al. (2014), examined the validity and reliability of the Turkish version of the Civic Engagement Scale of Doolittle and Faul (2013), studying with the sample of 275 undergraduate students and the findings showed that confirmatory factor analysis indicated that the 14 items and two-dimensional civic engagement model was well fitted for the Turkish version and have high validity and reliability scores (p. 55).

### **Purpose**

The social responsibility of the HEIs' has gained importance in the last decade, which is measured by different instruments from different perspectives. The purpose of the research is to examine the hosting institution's SR level by using a scale developed for this research which measures HEIs' social responsibility levels from the perceptions of the undergraduates of the hosting institution.

#### Method

This research is a sequential mixed method involving a qualitative single case study with open ended interviews and a quantitative survey in which the researcher seeks to elaborate on or

expand on the findings of one method with another method (Creswell, 2003:31). It is believed by many influential methodologists that utilizing multiple methods is "not only feasible and beneficial in solving puzzles, but can solve some problems the 'pure designs' cannot overcome" (Niglas, 2004:11).

Many researchers mention that institutions create an understanding of social responsibility and "the insights and approaches" of HEIs which "are portfolios of best practices from which" many can benefit (Colby et al., 2003:10; Tosado, 2011). This situation stands as an example that research related to this phenomenon is conducted by utilizing case studies (Colby et al., 2003; Ehrlich, 2000; Tosado, 2011). In addition, it is generally underlined that case study technique can well fit educational aspects in which the "contextual conditions" with "experiential knowledge" and "knowledge transfer" are the focus (Yin, 2003; Stake, 2005).

The Quantitative part of the research was designed as a survey which is a "means for gathering information about the characteristics, actions, or opinions of a large group of people" (Pinsonneault & Kraemer, 1993: 77; Glasow, 2005). According to Creswell and Hirose, "survey research designs are a set of research procedures in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, beliefs, perceptions, behaviors or characteristics of the population (2019: 1)"

### Study Group /Population and Sample

This sequential mixed research started with a single case study with the study group consisted of purposefully selected 22 participants representing the HEI and its stakeholders as, seven academicians, seven Civil Society Organization representatives, four Local Authorities and four undergraduate students as stated in Table 1, which were considered as critical to the success of this case study (Yin, 2003). Purposeful sampling is "choosing particular subjects which are believed to facilitate the expansion of the developing theory" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998: 65).

Table 1: The Study Group

Gender	Age	Position	Affiliation
M	51	Academician/Admin.	Faculty of Education
F	40	Academician/Admin.	Faculty of Education
M	47	Academician/Admin.	Faculty of Education
F	41	Academician/Admin.	Faculty of Education
M	43	Academician/Admin.	Faculty of Education
M	49	Academician/Admin.	Faculty of Education
M	43	Academician/Admin.	Faculty of Education
F	67	Housewife	Turkish Women's Association
M	50	Retired officer/Admin.	The Atatürk Thought Association
M	48	Retired Worker/Admin	Orphans' Association
M	52	Retired Academician/Admin.	Contemporary Life Association
M	42	Primary Teacher/Admin.	Educational Syndicate
M	52	Academician/Admin.	Educational Syndicate
M	47	Primary Teacher/Admin.	Educational Syndicate
F	34	Public Relations	Municipality
F	44	Culture and Social Issues Dept. Employee	Municipality/ City Council Sec.
M	64	Retired Teacher/Admin.	City Council
F	44	Administrator	Municipality
M	21	Computer and Inst. Technologies	Faculty of Education
M	21	Egn. Lang. Teach. student	Faculty of Education
F	23	Mathematics student	Faculty of Arts and Science
F	23	Guidance and Counseling student	Faculty of Education

Eight interview questions were applied to two representatives each from the study group as a pilot testing of the interview questions, then applied to the study group stated in Table 1. The pilot test is believed to assist the research in determining if there are flaws, limitations, or other weaknesses within the interview design and will allow the researcher to make necessary revisions prior to the implementation of the study (Kvale, 2007).

**Table 2:** The Demographic Information of the Sample

Specialties		1	2	3	4	5	Total
		18-20	21-23	24-26	26+		
Age	n	241	335	101	13		690
	%	34.93	48.56	14.64	1.87		100
		Male	Female				
Gender	n	325	365				690
	%	47.10	52.90				100
		1	2	3	4	5	
Grade	n	176	123	108	230	53	690
Grade	%	2	17.82	15.65	33.33	7.69	100
		5.51					
						Counter-	
Field		Science	Social Sc.	Linguistics	Arts	weigh	
of	n	225	154	135	17	159	690
Education*	11 %	32.60	22.31	19.57	2.47	23.05	100
	70	32.00	22.51	17.57	2.77	23.03	100

<sup>\*</sup>Science group involve undergraduates from Science Education, Information and Communication Technologies Departments, Counter-weigh group involve undergraduates from Psychological Guidance and Counselling and Primary Education Departments, Linguistics group involve undergraduates from German, English and Japanese Language and Teaching Departments, Social Science group involve undergraduates from Social Science, Geography and History Departments, Arts group involve undergraduates from Music Department.

The quantitative part of the research consisted of undergraduate students that form a sample (n=690) which was drawn from the population (N=4251) with the random sampling technique (www.egitim.comu.edu.tr, 2015). The scale was first applied to 210 undergraduate students as a pilot study for Exploratory Factor Analysis, then applied to the sample (n=690) for Confirmatory Factor Analysis, which the data for the research was collected and analyzed.

#### **Data Collection Tool**

In order to develop the Community Engagement Institutional Scale (CEIS) for this research, eight semi-structured interview questions were prepared after a detailed literature review. Semi-structured interview questions; "consist of several key questions that help to define the areas to be explored, but also allowing the interviewer or the interviewee to diverge in order to pursue an idea or response in more detail" (Britten, 1999: 12). After peer review and consulting five scholars from the field, the final shape of the protocol, including the consent form and interview questions were set. The first two questions aim to gather participants' definitions of SR and USR. The third one's purpose is to analyze participants' knowledge of the current USR applications currently conducted. The fourth question aims to analyze the possible outcomes of these USR applications for the stakeholders. The fifth question focuses on the expectations of stakeholders from HEIs in terms of SR applications. The sixth question aims to find out the fulfillment level of USR duties according to stakeholders' expectations. The seventh interview question aims to gather opinions about possible positive effects of high interaction with HEIs and the stakeholders. The final question's purpose is to find out future considerations of USR from the participants' perspectives. The protocol was applied to the study group face to face, all were recorded and the duration was 20 to 50 minutes.

To ensure trustworthiness, Denzin (2009) and Patton's (1980) recommendations of three types of triangulations out of four was applied (data, investigator, theory and methodology) as; "(a) data triangulation (interviews, examining printed documents and web sites), (b) investigator triangulation (peer review and scholar consultation), (c) methodological triangulation (mixed methodology applying a survey with CEIS, after semi-structured interviews).

For reliability and validity issues, the advices proposed by Patton and Cochran (2002) were thoroughly followed. Depending on these steps, we can mention that this research is systematic, (interviews with a protocol including consent of the participants and content analysis for the responses, survey with a high ( $\alpha = .974$ ) reliability level scale and Holland Matrix (1996) for USR web site analysis for current status of applications) and transparent (interview transcriptions were sent to participants and before coding the participants' consent was taken).

The scale is consisted of four sub-dimensions with 25 items, the total variance is explained as 64.894 %, and the factor loads have a range between .510 to .801 which are presented in Table 3.

	Table	3: Rotate	ed Componer	nt Matrix of	the CEIS
	Rotated Co				
	Component	ts			
	Items	1	2	3	4
	<b>A1</b>	.728			
	<b>A2</b>	.801			
	<b>A3</b>	.596			
	<b>A4</b>	.713			
	<b>A5</b>	.565			
	<b>A6</b>	.604			
	A7	.636			
	<b>B1</b>		.597		
	<b>B2</b>		.647		
	В3		.606		
	<b>B4</b>		.748		
	<b>B5</b>		.510		
	C1			.679	
	<b>C2</b>			.636	
	<b>C3</b>			.756	
	<b>C4</b>			.743	
	C5			.694	
	<b>C6</b>			.663	
	<b>D</b> 1				.604
	<b>D2</b>				.713
	D3				.611
	D4				.697
	<b>D5</b>				.612
	D6				.644
	<b>D7</b>				.697
% variance		49.713	6.378	4.821	3.938
Total % variance	64.894				
Reliability	.947	.875	.825	.914	.915
Reliability (α)	.974				
KMO	.947				
BARTLETT	3716.181				
	(p=.000)				

The development and application purpose of the CEIS was to asses the hosting institution's SR accomplishment level from the perceptions of the undergraduates whom are believed to be the extension of the HEI for a better CE, which are also the considerable part of stakeholders of the HEI (Burrows, 1999). And the developd tool for this purpose with .947 reliability level is considered to contribute to the field of literature.

#### **Data Collection Procedure**

Face to face interviews were conducted at the beginning of the Spring Semester of 2014-2015 Academic year; between 05.01.2015 and 26.03.2015. Interviews for the research were arranged and conducted after necessary permissions taken, at a suitable surrounding chosen by the participants. Recorded and transcribed interview responses were read repeatedly to obtain a general sense of its perspective, meaning, and the tone the qualitative data (Patton, 1980; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) before the content analysis, in order to determine a framework for USR from the stakeholders' perspectives.

The items in the scale were drawn completely from the statements of 22 participants of the study group. Firstly, the researcher prepared a draft of the participant responses to eight semi-structured interview questions consisted of more than 250 statements. These statements were gathered according to their appropriateness all stating different aspect related to USR issues. After examining the emerging phrases, the number of statements was reduced to 104 and shared with three peers from the field, which then the amount reduced to 84 items, falling under five categories as; "A= Transferring the social responsibility consciousness to students, B= Contribution to social life C= Transferring academic knowledge, D= Partnership with the stakeholders, E= Outcomes of social responsibility applications." The latest form (84 items under five categories) of the preliminary draft was then sent to six scholars, depending on the specialist feedbacks for the preliminary draft of the scale, the amount of the items was reduced to 50, still preserving the five categories. The draft was turned into a 5-point Likert scale and applied to 210 undergraduate students as a pilot study, that were enrolled at the Faculty of Education, at the hosting HEI in the mid May of 2015 for a week.

### **Data Analysis**

The qualitative data were analyzed by using NVivo 10 software program by utilizing the constant comparative method of exploratory thematic analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985),that we (a) reviewed interview transcripts; (b) specified and listed each idea or unit without categorization; (c) benchmarked the emerging themes, definitions related to SR and USR, their criticism and outcomes of current applications and expectations forthcoming future, which served as the a prior context for creating the thematic categories for content analysis resulted with eight themes and 31 categories expressing the perceptions of the stakeholders for HEIs social responsibilities.

Factor analysis of the scale was done by using SPSS 21 software program right after the pilot application, and it was found out that the amount of the items in the scale was reduced to 25 falling under four categories with Cronbach's Alpha level of .974, and the total variance explained as 64.894 %. The categories and the number of its items are; "A= *Transferring the social responsibility consciousness to students*" with seven items, "B= *Transferring academic knowledge*" with five items, "C= *Partnership with the stakeholders*" with six items, and "D= *Outcomes of social responsibility applications*" with seven items.

For factorial validity, principal component analysis (PCA) with a varimax rotation was used to examine the factorial structure of the scale. The items from each factor were then submitted to the principal axis factoring with varimax rotation. All items that loaded less than .49 in the initial analysis were deleted and the analysis was redone. PCA indicated a four-dimensional scale with a high loading on factors. To assess the normal distribution for items, Skewness and Kurtosis values between -2 and +2 was employed as a criterion (Can, 2014), and at least r=.20 item-total correlations for items were accepted as enough for factor analysis (Çokluk et al, 2014). Then, structural validity

of the scale was explored via exploratory factor analysis with Principal Component and Varimax Rotation methods, and the reliability of the scale and its factors were assessed by using the Cronbach Alpha technique (.60 and more  $\alpha$  coefficient was assented as the evidence of reliability) (Hair et al., 2010).

As an other dimension of the scale development process, the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was conducted for CFA with AMOS 24. SEM aims to test a model which is designed within a strong frame (Şimşek, 2007; Hair et al., 2010). In scale development process, SEM helps the researcher to identify the scale items which fall under appropriate sub-dimensions.

Figure 1 reflects the structural equation modelling of the Community Engagement Institutional Scale, its sub-dimensions and the items of these sub-dimensions drawn for CFA. The model fit indexes for the developed scale are stated in Table 4.

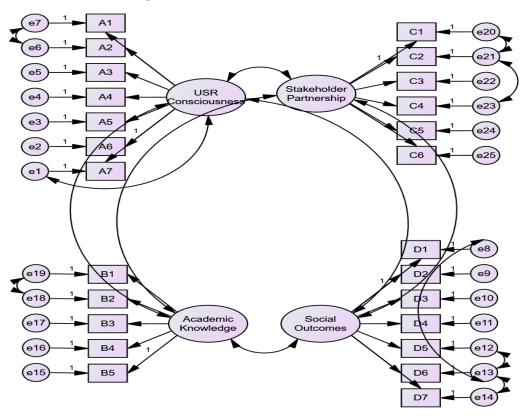


Figure 1: Community Engagement Institutional Scale's Confirmatory Factor Analysis

 Table 4: Community Engagement Scale's Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model Fit Indexes

$X^2$	Df	P	$X^2/\mathbf{df}$	GFI	AGFI	CFI	RMSEA
502,484	261	.000	1.925	.845/873	.817/825	.955	.057

As a result of the CFA conducted, Chi-square value ( $X^2$ /df) was found to be lower than 2 which indicates a good fit for the created model (Tabachnick & Fidel, 2007). The Goodness-of-fit index (GFI) value was measured as .845 that indicates a presence of a fit in the model (Kline, 1998; Sümer, 2000; Schermelleh-Engel-Moosbrugger, 2003). Adjusted Goodness-of-fit Index (AGFI) value was measured as .817 which indicates that the model is close to the fit value recognized in the field as .90 (Sümer, 2000). Comparative Fit Index (CFI) of the model was measured as .955 which

indicates a good fit (Tabachnick & Fidel, 2007) in the created model. And finally, Root-Meansquare Error Approximation (RMSEA) value was measured as .057 indicating a good fit in the model (Schermelleh-Engel-Moosbrugger, 2003; Tabachnick & Fidel, 2007). The results that were obtained from the CFA conducted by means of SEM confirmed the structural reliability of the scale.

Descriptive statistics were generated for each of the 25 individual questions, which were then separated under four main headings. These descriptive statistics included the mean scores for each question, as well as the frequency distributions for each response. These means were then analyzed using one-way ANOVA to determine the significance between the variables.

### **Findings**

Participants that form the sample (N= 690), who were enrolled at the hosting institution in 2014-2015 academic year (N=4251) from various departments and grades, assessed the institution's USR accomplishment level within four components. The components that were formed after the EFA developed specifically to assess the institution's accomplishment level of USR are as follows;

- 1. "Transferring the social responsibility consciousness to students" with seven items,
- 2. "Transferring the academic knowledge" with five items,
- 3. "Partnership with the stakeholders" with six items,
- 4. "Outcomes of social responsibility applications" with seven items.

In order to interpret the participants' assessments, their responses to 5-point Likert scale's means were computed which are demonstrated in Table 5.

Table 5: Participants' USR Assessment Level Statistics

20020001000		
Components	N	$\overline{X}$
1	690	2.94
2	690	2.92
3	690	2.89
4	690	3.11
Total	690	2.97

The findings stated that participants' responses were at a moderate level ( $\bar{X}$ = 2.94) regarding the hosting institution's efforts to 'transfer the SR consciousness to undergraduate students', which is the first component of the CEIS. This situation could be interpreted as the educational agenda, personal efforts of the scholars and institutional perspectives, and finally the service learning has a positive effect on the perceptions of USR and participation of undergraduate students in social applications.

The second component of CEIS, also allowed to find out that participants have a moderate level (X=2.92) of perception in relation to the 'academic knowledge transferring' efforts of the academicians at the Faculty of Education. Likewise transferring the SR consciousness, academics at the faculty are able to pass their current knowledge at a medium level as it has been stated by the receivers.

The third component, which was designed to examine the perceptions of participants regarding the mutual 'relations between the hosting institution and its stakeholders' enabled to underline that the interaction with the community partners is again at a moderate level ( $\bar{X}$ = 2.89), just like the other components.

The final component of CEIS aimed to find out the participants' perceptions of the 'outcomes of USR applications' that were conducted by the hosting institution. The outcomes of USR

applications were perceived to be at a moderate level ( $\bar{X}$ = 3.11), receiving the similar score like the other components, by the participants.

According to these findings, the total mean of the CEIS asserted that participants' attitudes towards the accomplishment level of the hosting institution in terms of USR is at a moderate level ( $\bar{X}$ = 2.97).

Likert's (1932) scores state (a) 1.00-1.79 as 'very low', (b) 1.80-2.59 as 'low' (c) 2.60-3.39 as 'moderate' (d) 3.40-4.19 as 'high' and (d) 4.20-5.00 as 'very high' level. By means of CEIS which is specifically developed to assess the hosting institution's USR accomplishment from the perspective of its undergraduates, it was possible to see that the institution has left two levels behind, but still have two more levels to go from 'moderate' to 'high' or 'very high' by focusing on more SR applications with the participation of its stakeholders.

In order to examine participants' perceptions of the social responsibility accomplishment level of the hosting institution according to gender t-test was applied and the findings are stated in Table 6.

**Table 6:** Participants' USR Assessments Based on Gender Differences

Gender	n	$\bar{X}$	sd	df	t	p	η2
Male	325	2.87	.789	688	-3.126	.002*	0.01
Female	365	3.06	.808				

<sup>\*</sup> p= 0.05 Meaningful.

As reflected in Table 6, there was a significant [t  $_{(690)}$  = -3.126; p<0.05] difference between participants' genders. Even if the effect size ( $\eta$ 2=0.01) of this difference was found to be at a low level (Cohen, 1998) amongst the gender groups, it is possible to say that female ( $\bar{X}$ = 3.0658) participants believe that the hosting institution is more likely to accomplish its USR duties when it is compared to male participant responses ( $\bar{X}$ = 2.8751). This finding can also be interpreted as; there is a positive correlation between gender and perception of the USR accomplishment level of the institution. The underlying fact of this difference can also be the fact that female participation to social issues is generally higher than males, which is often stated in the field of literature (Abes et al., 2002; Antonio et al., 2000; Ridenour, 2007).

Participants' perceptions of the hosting instituion's social responsibility accomplishment level regarding their age, departments, and academic grades were presented in Table 7, Table 8 and Table 9.

Table 7: Participants' USR Assessment Based on Age Differences

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	Differences
Between groups	6.960	3	2.320	3.623	.013*	В-С
Within groups	439.333	686	.640			
Total	446.293	689				

A: 18-20; B: 21-23; C: 24-26; D: 26+

Noticing that the Levene's test is not significant; (1.372; p= .250> $\alpha$ =0.05) the assumption of homogeneity of variance was met and the results reflect that there is a significant difference [F<sub>(3-686)</sub>]

=3.623, p=.013< $\alpha$ =0.05] between participants' perception of the USR accomplishment level of the hosting institution according to their age.

In order to clarify the differences between groups, Tukey and LSD tests were used. The participants in the age group 'B: 21-23 years' ( $\bar{X}$ =3.06) were more likely to believe that the hosting institution is putting effort to accomplish the USR duties, when it is compared with the age group 'C: 24-26 years' ( $\bar{X}$ = 2.79). This situation can be interpreted as younger participants' (n=335) level of agreement was higher than the older group (n= 101).

 Table 8: Participants' USR Assessment Based on Departmental Differences

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	Differences
Between groups	14.219	4	3.555	5.636	.000*	A-B, B-C, B-E
Within groups	432.075	685	.631			
Total	446.293	689				

A: Science; B: Social Sc.; C: Linguistics; D: Arts; E: Counter-weigh

According to the results; the Levene's test is not significant;  $(1.548; p=.187>\alpha=0.05)$  the assumption of homogeneity of variance was met within the test for participants' USR assessments based on departments and the results stated significancy in the perception of the USR accomplishment level of the hosting institution according to their departments [F (4-685) =5.636; p <0.05].

To clarify the differences between groups, Tukey and LSD tests were also used for departmental differences. According to these tests, there was a meaningful difference between the participants in Science (A) departments ( $\bar{X}$ =3.10) and Social Sciences (B) departments ( $\bar{X}$ =2.71); Social Sciences (B) departments ( $\bar{X}$ =2.71) between Linguistic (C) departments ( $\bar{X}$ =3.01), and Counter-weigh (E) departments ( $\bar{X}$ =3.0).

The results stated that Science (A), Linguistic (C) and Counter-weigh (E) departments were more likely to believe that the institution is on its path to accomplish USR duties when it is compared with Social Science departments (B). No significant match was found on behalf of the Arts (D) departments between the other departments.

 Table 9: Participants' USR Assessment Based on Academic Grade Differences

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	Differences
Between groups	22.018	4	5,504	8,887	,000*	A-D, A-E, B-E, C-E, D-E
Within groups	424,275	685	,619			
Total	446,293	689				

A: 1th; B: 2nd; C: 3rd; D: 4th; E: 5th

Variance of homogeneity was not met in the variable, as it was found significant (4.966; p=  $.000 < \alpha = 0.05$ ) within the test for participants' USR assessment based on grade differences. Depending on this reason, Skewness (-0.06) and Kurtoisis (-0.53) analysis were done, the values between -2 and +2 were employed as a criterion (Can, 2014) and clarification of the differences

between groups was not done by using Tukey and LSD tests. Instead, Tamhane and Dunnet T3 tests were applied, so that the equal variances are not assumed. According to these tests, there was a meaningful difference between the participants in the 1<sup>st</sup> (A) grade ( $\bar{X}$ = 2.87), 4<sup>th</sup> (D) grade ( $\bar{X}$ =3.12) and5<sup>th</sup> (E) grade ( $\bar{X}$ =2.45) undergraduate students.

The findings also stated that there was a meaningful difference between 5<sup>th</sup> (E) grades ( $\bar{X}$ =2. 45) and the other undergraduate students; 1<sup>st</sup> (A) grades ( $\bar{X}$ = 2.87), 2<sup>nd</sup> (B) grades ( $\bar{X}$ =2. 99) 3<sup>rd</sup> (C) grade ( $\bar{X}$ =3.04), and the 4<sup>th</sup> (D) grades ( $\bar{X}$ =3.12).

 $3^{rd}$  (C) grade ( $\bar{X}$ =3.04), and  $4^{th}$  (D) grade ( $\bar{X}$ =3.12) students seemed to be more positive on behalf of the hosting institution in terms of assessing the USR accomplishment level, when it is compared with  $1^{st}$  (A) grade ( $\bar{X}$ =2.87),  $2^{nd}$  (B) grade ( $\bar{X}$ =2.99) and  $5^{th}$  (E) grade ( $\bar{X}$ =2.45) students.

For the  $1^{st}$  and  $2^{nd}$  grades, this finding could probably be interpreted as being 'new' in the 'higher education business' and the absence to participate in social applications like service course, so that this course is compulsory starting from the  $3^{rd}$  grade, which allows undergraduate students to take part in social applications within the directory of scholars and depending on a term based plan. And for the  $5^{th}$  grades, on the other hand, twofold interpretation could be done as; (a) the amount of the participants is low (n= 53) when it is compared with other participants ( $1^{st}$  = 176;  $2^{nd}$  = 123;  $3^{rd}$  = 108;  $4^{th}$  = 230), and (b) spending five years at the same institution could possibly end up with inertia.

### **Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions**

The purpose of the research was to measure Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Faculty of Education's USR accomplishment level from the undergraduates' perspective within a survey by using a measurement tool, specifically developed for this research by utilizing a mix method combined with a qualitative single case study to develop the scale.

After the required tests, it was found that female (n= 365) students were more likely to believe that the institution is on its path to accomplish the USR duties, when compared with the male (n=325) students. This finding reflects accordance with the field of literature, that gender differences have a considerable effect on social resonsibility perceptions (Abes et al., 2002; Antonio et al.; Ridenour (2007); as Rushton (2005) underlined that, genes have a stronger influence on males than females and testosterone is positively correlated with aggression and negatively correlated with prosocial behavior (Harris et al., 1996; Ridenour, 2007).

The participants in the age group '21-23 years' were more likely to believe that the hosting institution is putting effort to accomplish the USR duties, when it is compared to the age group '24-26' years. The possible reason of this result could be interpreted depending on the service-learning course, as the mentioned age group generally represents the third graders whom have spent two years without being registered for the course and after this experience, they could possibly feel more engaged and curious about the social issues, unless they have not spent personal effort related to the issue during their senior years. Grade variable' results were pretty much the same with the age variable as 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students seemed to be more positive on behalf of the hosting institution, in terms of assessing the USR accomplishment level, when it is compared with 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.

It was also found that departmental differences (Ninneman, 2011; Kucher, 2012) affected the assessments of the undergraduate students' perception of the hosting institution's USR accomplishment level. The findings asserted that the participants from Science, Linguistics and Art departments evaluated the institution's USR status higher than of those, who study at the Social Science departments.

The findings revealed that the hosting institution's USR accomplishment level was at a moderate ( $\bar{X}$ = 2.97) level depending on the results of the student participants' USR assessment level statistics presented in Table 7. This finding could be interpreted as, the hosting institution's applications that were conducted so far (whether it is institutional or individual), in terms of service to the community is acceptable and the academic staff is not 'disengaged' (Macfarlane, 2005: 299), but need more consideration in order to reach the desired educational and social outcomes on its way to be a fully integrated institution; like Templeton Association's (2007) research findings the faculty and administration of the campus agree on the importance and the value of implementing social projects and applications, current status is not at the desired level (AAC & U, 2008: 3).

The overall findings of the research asserted that likewise the global ones, the Turkish Higher Education Institutions prioritize education and research responsibilities when it is compared with social responsibilities, which are under debate for many years from various perspectives. The Turkish context of the USR phenomenon can be seen linear to the changes that take place in the global arena. Scholars complain about the lack of time to deal with this kind of issues because of the research and other educational responsibilities that are expected to be fulfilled during an academic year. This causes a limited concentration on social responsibility issues and creates the lack of interaction between the three formations regarded as 'stakeholders' in this research. This 'lack of interaction' is the primary concern of many participants that reflected their ideas about the subject throughout the research (especially during the qualitative process), which could be overcome by the leadership role that is undertaken by HEIs.

Even if the interaction is not at a level that participants' desire, the findings of the research revealed that there was an ongoing interaction between the stakeholders that could be named as 'individual' more than 'institutional' in terms of social applications. These individual activities have a wide effect range within a gap filling structure to meet the demands of the appliers. These formations need to be in a cooperative manner in order to create better projects, while reducing the cost, the time and the energy that is spent. Within the leadership of HEIs and the participation of the stakeholders, supplying the local demands can possibly be much easier, after creating a database for the things to be done to support the cultural and economic development locally as a first step and nationally as the second step.

Many scholars are now dealing with the identification and application procedures of community-university engagement issues and the ways to measure its effectiveness. All of the efforts serve a fundamental aspect which is to 'act' as the key driver for the social and economic change and to sustain the development process of the nations. The social responsibility phenomenon is generally regarded as an *individual* act taken for the benefit of the society. Undergraduate students are dealing with social applications within student groups and service-learning events. These student groups can be arranged to meet the primary/secondary students from the local surroundings which can help to span the idea of taking responsibility for others from an early age and can help to create a social tie having positive effects on students, school personnel and the parents.

Leaders of both formations (the university and its stakeholders) can arrange school visits to inform the youth about the social activities that are currently on the run. And, by getting students' attraction with the help of audio-visual materials, these visits can create a desire for the administrators, teachers and students to conduct small scaled social applications at their local surroundings. These visits can be arranged to be made several times a year by different stakeholders to be more effective and creative.

In order to create better social projects, not only the combination of economic powers is required, but also the mental power is required to create and conduct better projects. A careful planning and consensus between the university administrators and the stakeholders can enable to form new projects. A common database is needed to be formed within the leadership of the university

in order to arrange what to do and when to do it. Moreover, this database can also serve as a social application bank to share the experiences gained and lessons learned for other formations in and out of the territory.

Arranging an awarding system related to social applications like 'Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll', 'Ernest Lynton Award for the Scholarship of Engagement', 'Thomas Ehrlich Civically Engaged Faculty Award' and the 'International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement's Distinguished Research Award' (O'Meara et al., 2013) in the USA, to get the scholars into action depending on the reason that dealing with social issues does not help scholars to gain credits for promotion. Yearly or semester based awarding system can light up the desire and creativity of the scholars and motivate them to do better projects, conduct various research to identify and supply the social needs, create a common ground for a better understanding of the interaction and the role of universities to lead its stakeholders.

As a result, this research brings forth the global changes in higher education from a societal perspective, focusing on the social responsibility issue from an educational viewpoint. Like the former studies and scholars, this research underlines that HEIs are the key drivers of improvement both for the individual and the society itself and states that it is high time for the Turkish higher education to engage the current changes, within the experience that comes from the Madrasa periods of the Ottoman Empire, to a power in order to create a better society through a qualified engagement. The study group and the sample that was used to develop the scale also limits the methodology that was conducted as well as the findings in this research. By means of this research a new tool was developed that can contribute the efforts to measure institutional social responsibility engagement level from the perspectives of undergraduates.

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- 1. Araştırmacıların katkı oranı beyanı / Contribution rate statement of researchers:
  - a. 1. Yazar/First author %50,
  - b. 2. Yazar/Second author %50.
- 2. Yazarlar tarafından herhangi bir çıkar çatışması beyan edilmemiştir (No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors).

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