

Searching for the Quality of the Mission Statements of Turkish Private Universities

Kurtuluş Yılmaz GENÇ (*)

Abstract: Mission statements it is an important strategy and communication element for the reasons that it present basic purposes, borders of activities of organizations, it includes principles and values which create public image and motivate stakeholders. Statement's adaptation to basic criteria will make them more effective. Mission statements should include three groups of elements: stakeholders, components, and purposes. This study, searching for the elements mentioned above, in mission statements, was implemented on entire Turkish private universities. 39 mission statements form 62 private universities were analysed. Essentially, private universities' mission statements include stakeholders in low rate, and components and purposes in high rate. Generally, Turkish private universities' statements are functional.

Keywords: Quality of mission statement; Turkey; Turkish Private Universities, web sites

Jel Classification: L21, L33.

Türk Özel Üniversitelerinin Misyon Açıklamalarının Kalite Ölçütleri Çerçevesinde Değerlendirilmesi

Özet: Misyon açıklamaları örgütlerin varlık nedenlerini ortaya koyan, faaliyet sınırlarını yansıtan; içerdiği amaç, ilke ve değerlerle imaj yaratan, paydaşları motive eden önemli bir strateji ve örgütsel iletişim unsurudur. Açıklamaların içerik olarak temel ölçütlere uygun olması onların etkililiğini de artıracaktır. Misyon açıklamaları üç grup unsur içermelidir, bunlar: Paydaşlar, bileşenler ve amaçlardır. Bu çalışma Türkiye'deki özel üniversitelerin tümü ele alınarak yukarıda belirtilen unsurların üniversite misyon açıklamalarında ne ölçüde değinildiğini ortaya koymaya yönelik olarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Türkiye'deki 62 vakıf üniversitesinden 39 misyon açıklaması değerlendirilmiştir. Esas olarak vakıf üniversiteleri misyon açıklamalarının paydaşları düşük oranda, bileşenler ve amaçları ise yüksek oranda içerdiği görülmüştür. Türk özel üniversitelerinin misyon açıklamaları genel olarak işleve uygundur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Misyon açıklamalarının kalitesi, Türk özel üniversiteleri, web siteleri.

Jel Sınıflandırması: L21, L33.

*) Assist. Prof. Dr., Giresun University
(e-posta: kyilmazgenc@gmail.com)

Introduction

The purpose this study; is searching the quality of mission statements of universities in terms of number of components that fits the ideal one. The study includes the following steps. First; the literature about the quality of mission statements will be explained. Then, a research on the quality of Turkish private universities mission statements will be presented. Finally, results and the conclusion will be given.

1. Mission Statement

To set up a mission statement is the first step of a strategic planning process. A mission statement is an important instrument of organizations' presentation itself. It can be a brief of statements or a long statement. It is the declaration of; basic operation area, sector, stakeholders, purposes, geographic scope, unique identity, products and values/philosophy. A mission statement also presents; why the company exists, the competitive position and distinctive competence; what the company believes in; and behavioural standards. It communicates firms' direction and purposes, controls it to act in a specific area, guides it and motivates employees (Bartkus et al., 2000: 23-27; Davies and Glaister, 1997: 594-595). Mission statements include the elements of firms' desired public image, so it strengthens the links with the society. It is essential for highly competitive business environment, and it facilitates the integration or unity of a firm by referring purposes, direction, and also basic principles.

A university's mission statement benefits to all its stakeholders, as stated above, by communicating direction, purposes and principles, by guiding and motivating them. It presents basic themes of a university's philosophy. It is especially influential on youngsters, students, academics; and guides them all in accordance with purposes. Therefore it is a way of coordinating the identity of a university and integrating it.

2. Contents of an Ideal Mission Statement

As stated by Bartkus et al. (2004; 2006), an ideal mission statement should include three groups of contents: Stakeholders, components, and objectives. These will be explained below.

2.1. Stakeholders Mentioned in Mission Statements

Bartkus et al. (2004; 2006) presented that a mission statement must include several stakeholders: Customers, employees, investors, society, suppliers, competitors, state. This is a necessity for private sector firms or public firms to present an ideal mission statement. To refer to all these stakeholders will be beneficial for integrating the units of an organization for common purposes. To refer them will present the importance of each, and help firm to respond demands of them all. This will motivate the organization as a whole, in terms of realizing/fulfilling responsibilities. Mentioning all the stakeholders is also essential to set up close links with them, and gain support. For example; when "employees" is in the content of an organization's mission statement, all the employees will feel themselves as a part of organization. This will lead a sophisticated integration of

the staff to the organization. Customers or society will behave in the way of cooperation with the firm, and also, suppliers will try to do their best work.

Mentioning all the stakeholders may also cause negative results, in terms of priority (Bartkus et al., 2006: 87). Some stakeholders could demand only their names to be mentioned in mission statements. So, statements that include all the stakeholders could cause conflict or antipathy. Many firms could act in the way of referring only the special stakeholders. This implementation could cause closer links with only distinguished or more important ones, but it may weaken links with others. As another negative impact on public or stakeholders can be the uncomplicated structure of the statement.

An ideal university mission statement should include employees, academics, administrators, society, students, other search institutions, other universities, government, and graduates. These are the stakeholders of a university. For a university; it is essential to refer them to provide a strong integration, and unity. Especially to refer/advert administrative personnel and academics, administrators as employees; and also to refer students will motivate them accordance to universities' aims, purposes and reason to be. This will make them more efficient; therefore as a whole efficiency of the university will increase. To refer other universities and other search institutions in the mission statements will allow cooperation for research projects, academic and student exchange. Referring government, university will get its support and respond to demands. By referring them in mission statements; society will be encouraged to set up close links with university, and to present their support to it; students will try to do their best, and realize how valuable them all.

2.2. Components Mentioned in Mission Statements

As presented in related literature (e.g. Davies and Glaister, 1997; Bart and Tabone, 1999., Bartkus et al., 2004; 2006); components of an organization's mission statement should include following elements: products/services, core technology, location, desired public image, target market, unique identity, concern for satisfying customers, concern for employees, concern for survival, industry, geographic scope, and values/philosophy. These can be adapted to a university mission statement as the following: industry, services, desired public image, concern for satisfying customers/target students, concern for employees, geographic scope, values/philosophy, motivational message of excellence or unique identity, benefit to society, distinctive competence, future orientation, and academic objectives.

Industry or services can be anticipated to be stated in mission statements. Desired public image is so essential that many activities even to create a sophisticated one to be attractive for the society. Any statement or word about satisfying customers/target students or concern for employees motivates them all to act in the prospective way and create their best. Geographic scope presents borders of a university. It is about the place of its campus, facilities, and area of activities, its influence or origins of its students, academics. Values/philosophy encourages stakeholders to behave in accordance to moral or ethical principles. Motivational message of excellence or unique identity also encourages

students and academics to do their best in order to be appropriate for university. It is also essential to attract best students and academics from inside or outside country, and it is a way of creating a shining public image. Benefiting to society is the basic aim of a university, which can be realized either educating students, creating science or guiding the community. A university contributes to society by all these ways, and any statement about benefit to society in mission statements facilitates to set up close links between them. Distinctive competence is the core ability or skill special to organization/university which characterizes it. It is a way of separation of any organization from similar ones, based on abilities or skills. Future orientation is the reflection of strategies of an organization, which take it further. Academic objectives also should be referred in a university mission statement, as a side of its scientific characteristics. It is especially influential on academics to pay attention to academic activities.

2.3. Objectives Mentioned in Mission Statements

Mission statements should include objectives. In related literature, this issue also mentioned. Bart (1997: 373) determined six objectives that can be presented in mission statements. These are as follows: provide a common purpose, define the business scope, set up behavioural standards, help identify with the firm, create shared values, and inspire employees. Bartkus et al. (2006: 88) revised this and set up four objectives for any organization's mission statement should include these are: a public declaration of firm's direction, a control mechanism to control the boundaries of its activities, to assist employees in non-routine decision making by presenting organization's values, to motivate and inspire employees by creating a shared sense of values.

Bartkus et al. (2006: 88-89) determined four objectives for an ideal mission statement. First of all, it declares the direction of a firm, which is about presenting a future orientation. Secondly, mission statements present the boundaries of an organization in terms of business activities; therefore it includes expressions to prevent the implementation of inappropriate operations. If a mission statement mentions at least two of the following components; industry, customer, geographic scope, and distinctive competence; it serves as a control mechanism. Third, by presenting organizational values or philosophy, it facilitates employees' non-routine decision making. Finally, an ideal mission statement should include a statement or a word that express a shared sense of purpose/view to motivate or inspire employees, which is about excellence or societal benefit. These four objectives also are in the framework of this study to be searched.

3. Searching For the Quality of Turkish Private Universities Mission Statements

3.1. The Research Process

The research on Turkish universities' mission statements was realised at June and July 2011. Source to obtain data was universities' web pages. Research included private universities, and only, "mission statements" were taken into search action. There were 62 private universities, officially founded and in action in Turkey. 39 of 62 private Turkish

universities have officially presented mission statements on their web pages. These 39 mission statements include; 33 “mission”, 4 “mission-vision”, 1 “mission/core duty”, and 1 “duty”. The longest private university mission statement was counted as 323 words, shortest statement was 20 words, and mean for them was 78.84 words. In the research process three basic groups of elements were searched in Turkish private university mission statements. These are; stakeholders, components, and objectives. Stakeholders: employees, academics, administrators, society, students, other search institutions, other universities, government, and graduates. Components: industry, services, desired public image, concern for satisfying customers/target students, concern for employees, geographic scope, values/philosophy, motivational message of excellence or unique identity, benefit to society, distinctive competence, future orientation, and academic objectives. Objectives: a public declaration of firm’s direction, a control mechanism to control the boundaries of its activities, to assist employees in non-routine decision making by presenting organization’s values, to motivate and inspire employees by creating a shared sense of values.

As data related words were focused and their frequency was presented (among 39 mission statements). As a method for presenting results all those “words” were written on this text. By this way it is supposed to demonstrate private universities’ basic priorities. It would be seen below that; frequencies were also shown in parenthesis.

3.2. Searching For the Quality of Turkish Private (Foundation) Universities Mission Statements

Table: 1 Stakeholder Mentioned in Private University Mission Statements

Stakeholders in University Mission Statements (Number of stakeholder, %)
Employees: 6 (15.38%)
“All of the employees” (2; 5.12%), “people-centred”, “employees”, “staff”, “stakeholder individuals”.
Academics: 7 (17.94%)
“Academics” (6; 15.38%), “education staff”, “educators”, “science human”.
Administrators: 2 (5.12%)
“Management staff” (2; 5.12%), “stakeholder individuals”.
Students: 31 (79.48%)
“Students” (13; 33.33%), “individuals” (8; 20.51%), “graduates” (4; 10.25%), “young people” (3; 7.69%), “leaders of the future” (2; 5.12%), “future scientists” (2; 5.12%), “qualified individuals”, “highly educated experts”, “employable and responsible individuals”, “transformation leaders”, “human”, “health-human”, “person”, “Ataturk’s individuals”, “human power”.

<p style="text-align: center;">Society: 31 (79.48%)</p> <p>“Societal/society” (18; 46.15%), “human/humanity” (12; 30.76%), “social benefit” (3; 7.69%), “social environment” (2; 5.12%), “our region’s and country’s needs” (2; 5.12%), “societal sensitivity”, “societal needs”, “societal improvement”, “all parts of society”, “Turkish nation”, “our human”, “social problem”.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Other Research Institutions: 7 (17.94%)</p> <p>“National and international education and research networks/projects” (2; 5.12%), “international organizations” (2; 5.12%), “between organizations (2; 5.12%)”, “stakeholder organization”, “cooperation between organizations”.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Other Universities: 7 (17.94%)</p> <p>“Distinguished world universities”, “national and international education and research networks”, “international organizations”, “between organizations”, “university networks”, “stakeholder organization”, “cooperation between related organizations”.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Government: 3 (7.69%)</p> <p>“Public organizations”, “Turkish Republic”, “stakeholder organization”.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Graduates: 8 (20.51%)</p> <p>“Graduates” (8; 20.51%), “modern graduates”.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Families: 3 (7.69%)</p> <p>“Parents”, “stakeholder individual”, “families”.</p>

Employees: 6 (15.38%), academics: 7 (17.94%), administrators: 2 (5.12%), students: 31 (79.48%), society: 31 (79.48%), other research institutions: 7 (17.94%), other universities: 7 (17.94%), government: 3 (7.69%), graduates: 8 (20.51%), families: 3 (7.69%). Turkish private university mission statements include “administrators” with the lowest rate, and “students” with the highest rate. At private university mission statements naturally “students” are in high consideration. “Government”, “graduates”, and “families” are also included only by a few statements. “Families” could be mentioned in a higher rate also to influence them, and by this way attract students. “Graduates” had to be included in a higher rate to provide their more active support, and “natural representation”; and encourage them for these. “Other research institutions” and “other universities” are generally not contained by private universities at mission statements, which present an inadequate declared cooperative mind set. “Government” was mentioned in a low rate, which can be explained with ownership type.

Table 2: Components Mentioned in Private University Mission Statements

Components in University Mission Statements (Number of components, %)
Industry: 37 (94.87%)
<p>“Educate” (21; 53.84%), “education” (15; 38.46%), “research” (13; 33.33%), “science” (8; 20.51%), “educating and training” (5; 12.82%), “production of scientific knowledge” (5; 12.82%), “technology” (3; 7.69%), “academic” (2; 5.12%), “higher education (2; 5.12%) institute”, “publication”, “health mission”.</p>
Services: 37 (94.87%)
<p>“Educate (21; 53.84%)”, “education” (15; 38.46%), “research (13; 33.33%) and societal service”, “science” (8; 20.51%), “education, research and societal service” (6; 15.38%), “educating and training” (5; 12.82%), “production of scientific knowledge” (5; 12.82%), “contribute society” (5; 12.82%), “contribute science” (4; 10.25%), “societal development” (3; 7.69%), “expand knowledge” (3; 7.69%), “technology” (3; 7.69%), “lead societal development” (2; 5.12%) , “scientific research” (2; 5.12%), “lead scientific research”, “strengthening links across sectors”, “encourage tolerance”, “creating academic atmosphere”, “creating education facility”, “service”, “publication”, “entrepreneurship”, “university-society integration”, “respond social needs”, “health power”.</p>
Public Image: 38 (97.43%)
<p>“Contribution to science, society” (8; 20.51%), “world/international standards” (7; 17.94%), “Ataturk’s principles and revolutions” (6; 15.38%), “universal values/norms” (6; 15.38%), “high quality” (4; 10.25%), “cooperation” (4; 10.25%), “local ethic” (3; 7.69%), “qualified graduates” (3; 7.69%), “respect to diversity” (2; 5.12%), “modern society” (2; 5.12%), “sharing” (2; 5.12%), “respond to all expectations” (2; 5.12%), “academic recognition” (2,56%), “educate universally admired work force”, “real university spirit”, “original and innovative approach”, “free thought”, “creativity”, “Ataturk’s thought”, “Ataturk’s nationalism”, “innovative”, “leading scientific research”, “in the light of civilization values”, “science and ethics synthesis”, “communication”, “participation”, “values”, “contribute to peace”, “synergy”, “mutual yield”, “environmental sense”, “create difference” , “tolerance”, “best service”, “nationalist”, “loyal to state”, distinguished”, “national” and “spiritual”, “research”, “social benefit”, “corporate efficiency”, “change student life’s”, “create and develop together”, “research centre”, “universal”, “service to human and humanity”, “happiness of students and employees”, “respect to national values”, “preferred university”, “universal citizenship”, “continuous learning”, “university-society integration”, “reverse intelligence immigration”, “leading aviation”, “health personnel graduates”, “Turkish intellectual”.</p>
Students as Customers: 0 (0%)

Employees: 7 (17.94%)

“All of the employees” (2; 5.12%), “basis up on human”, “lecturer”, “employees”, “staff”, “stakeholder individual”, “academic” and “management” staff.

Geographic Scope: 33 (84.61%)

“Society” (8; 20.51%), “country” (6; 15.38%), “human/humanity” (12; 30.76%), “world” (5; 12.82%), “universal” (6; 15.38%), “National and international” (5; 12.82%), “international” (5; 12.82%), “Turkey (3; 7.69%)”, “region and country” (3; 7.69%), “national and universal hardware”, “our society, and humanity”, “EU”, “Turk”.

Values/Philosophy: 31 (79.48%)

“Ataturk’s principles and revolutions” (6; 15.38%), “universal values” (6; 15.38%), “respect to values (6; 15.38%), differences (2; 5.12%)”, “social responsibility” (4; 10.25%), “integration of international and local values” (3; 7.69%), “universal ethic values” (2; 5.12%), “respect diversity” (2; 5.12%), “respect to environment” (2; 5.12%), “responsibility to create knowledge for humanity”, “equity, ethic values”, “Ataturk’s thought”, “modern civilization”, “peace”, “justice”, “freedom”, “honesty”, “civilization values”, “scientific ethic”, “learning institution”, “respect for beliefs”, “tolerance”, “nationalist”, “loyal to Turkish State and nation”, “universal norm”, “look for”, “share”, “Ataturk’s nationalist”, “local values”, “free minded”, “create and develop together”, “national values”, “modern values”, “high moral values”, “intellectual sensitivity”, “only guide is science”.

Motivational Message: 33 (84.61%)

“Universal standards” (7; 17.94%), “leading scientific research” (4; 10.25%), “international academic recognition” (2; 5.12%), “level of modern civilization” (2; 5.12%), “leaders of the future” (2; 5.12%), “world standards” (2; 5.12%), “distinguished” (2; 5.12%), “leading society” (2; 5.12%), “model university” (2; 5.12%), “respond to the needs of society”, “educate future intellectual scientists”, “leading societal development”, “leading societal environment”, “bring to society”, “respectful university”, “worldwide university”, “leading university”, “respond world’s needs”, “diversity”, “tolerance”, “seeking excellence”, “ideal subject”, “most competent graduates”, “excellent educated”, “worldwide contribution”, “create universal scientific knowledge”, “service to human and humanity”, “happiness of all of the students and employees”, “preferred university”, “improved human life”, “reverse intelligence immigration”, “high quality”, “respectful”; **contribute to:** “universal science” (3; 7.69%), “region and country”, “country’s international relations”, “society”.

<p style="text-align: center;">Benefit to Society: 34 (87.17%)</p> <p>“Human/humanity” (12; 30.76%), “societal needs” (4; 10.25%), “Spread of knowledge” (2; 5.12%), “leading society” (2; 5.12%), “social responsibility” (4; 10.25%), “social benefit” (2; 5.12%), “societal sensitivity”, “local and global issues”, “regional and country’s needs”, “searching”, “knowledge creation”, “leading social environment”, “social environment”, “bring to society”, “all organizations”, “tolerance”, “best service”, “share with humanity”, “country’s values”; contribute to: “society” (11; 28.20%), “country”, “science”.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Distinctive Competence: 24 (61.53%)</p> <p>“Scientific freedom”, “real university spirit”, “ability for freedom of expression”, “original and innovative approach”, “cooperation with world’s leading universities”, “leading scientific research”, “ethics and science synthesis”, “synergy”, “specific research topics”, “sharing”, “create difference”, “tolerance”, “diversity”, “health-human”, “permanently distinguished”, “special and important”, “leader graduates”, “foreign language”, “original research”, “searching for implementation”, “free minded”, “projects”, “civic senses”, “multidimensional, independent thinking”, “high moral values”, “happiness of all of the students and employees”, “providing scientific climate”, “universal citizenship”, “university-society integration”, “innovation culture”, “leading aviation”, “health field”, “Turkish intellectual”, “design expert”.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Future Orientation: 8 (20.51%)</p> <p>“Future” (4; 10.25%), “targets” (2; 5.12%), “reaching international academic recognition”, “sustain the quality”, “future oriented”.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Scientific Objectives: 28 (71.79%)</p> <p>“Contribute science” (5; 12.82%), “contribute to global scientific knowledge” (5; 12.82%), “interdisciplinary” (5; 12.82%), “scientific,... cooperation” (3; 7.69%), “respond to technological needs” (2; 5.12%), “leading scientific research” (2; 5.12%), “world class research” (3; 7.69%), “educate intellectual scientists”, “develop new concept”, “high performance areas of knowledge”, “specific research topics”, “widening the borders of science”, “scientific cooperation”, “search”, “production of helpful knowledge”, “national and international projects”, “original scientific research”.</p>

(All the frequencies and percentages inside parenthesis in all study are just about related matters with special framework which were focused on respectively.)

Components mentioned in private university mission statements are as the following: industry: 37 (94.87%), services: 37 (94.87%), public image: 38 (97.43), students as customers: 0 (0%), employees: 7 (17.94%), geographic scope: 33 (84.61%), values/philosophy: 31 (79.48%), motivational message: 33 (84.61%), benefit to society: 34 (87.17%), distinctive competence: 24 (61.53%), future orientation: 8 (20.51%), scientific objectives: 28 (71.79%).

Basically, maybe the most interesting result is; none of the private universities looks students as “customers”, and this is an indication that they take their main “university operations” as “societal”. There is no declared purpose in terms of gaining profit from activities, but in contrast with this; there are many words for providing societal benefit. “Industry”, “services”, and “public image” are all mentioned in high rates in private university mission statements. These three elements together are important for private universities in terms of attracting students, by communicating functions to them. As an interesting result, in contrast with expectations, these elements are relatively low in the content of statements. In terms of “public image”; “contribute to science, society”, “universal standards”, “and universal values”, and “Ataturk’s principles and revolutions” are mainly themes for private universities. Rates for these themes are significant; and this is because of responding same sensitivities of same society, or being organizations of same environment. “Employees” is not a general mission statement focus for private universities.

“Geographic scope” was mentioned as for “region”, “country” and “world”. Private universities give importance to national and universal service, influence, contribution, and competition. Regional service is less important for private universities because of their geographical distribution. “Values/philosophy” was again presented with; “Ataturk’s principles and revolutions” “universal values” “respect to values, differences”, “integration of international and local values” “universal ethic values” “respect diversity” “respect to environment”. “Motivational message” also reflects similar sensitivities, and also similar or same themes mentioned to motivate both students, employees, and all other stakeholders. Statements in terms of “distinctive competence” were mentioned by private universities with a higher but similar rate with state universities. “Future orientation” is also in a low rate in private universities’ mission statements in terms of “direct” future words, but of course, as it was said before they all have an indirect “future orientation”. Last theme, “scientific objectives” presents their one of basic focus areas is not at high rates.

Table 3: Objectives Mentioned in Private University Mission Statements

Objectives in Mission Statements (Number of statements, %)
<p style="text-align: center;">Future Orientation: 8 (20.51%)</p> <p>“Future” (4; 10.25%), “targets” (2; 5.12%), “reaching international academic recognition”, “sustain the quality”, “future oriented”.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Control Mechanism: 38 (97.43%)</p> <p>“Educate” and; “international” (5; 12.82%), “country” (4; 10.25%), “Turkey” (3; 7.69%), “society” (3; 7.69%), “universal” (3; 7.69%), “humanity” (2; 5.12%), “education,.., training”; “national, universal”, “educate leaders of future”, “humanity” and “students”, “world class research”, “regional”, “leading scientific research”, “leader graduates”, “region”, “original research”, “interdisciplinary”, “high moral values”; “education” and “creativity” and “freedom of thought”, “humanity” and “synthesis”, “education” and “specific research”, “sharing” and “higher education”, “academic” and “tolerance”, “society” and “corporate efficiency”, “world” and “excellent educated”, “civic senses”, “education” and “human/humanity”, “science” and “country”, “health” and “country”.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Non-Routine Decision Making: 30 (79.92%)</p> <p>“Universal values” (7; 17.94%), “Ataturk’s principles and revolutions” (6; 15.38%), “respect for beliefs and ethical values” (4; 10.25%), “local ethics” (3; 7.69%), “social responsibility” (4; 10.25%), “national values” (2; 5.12%), “universal ethics” (2; 5.12%), “respect for social values and differences” (2; 5.12%), “scientific freedom”, “universal thought and values”, “Ataturk’s thought”, “modern civilization”, “free thought”, “respect for human rights”, “reliable”, “civilization values”, “science ethics”, “learning organization”, “create and develop together”, “universal ethics”, “modern values”, “high moral values”, “integration of values”, “Turkish intellectual”.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Motivate-Inspire Employees: 35 (89.74%)</p> <p>“World standards” (7; 17.94%), “social benefit” (5; 12.82%), “world class research” (3; 7.69%), “spread knowledge” (2; 5.12%), “model” (2; 5.12%), “distinguished” (2; 5.12%), “universal contribution” (2; 5.12%), “universally skilled/admired individuals”, “educate future leaders work force”, “respond to future technological needs”, “educate future intellectual scientists”, “lead social development”, “reach modern civilization level”, “creativity”, “leading scientific research”, “contribute to science”, “human”, “bring to humanity”, “international recognition and respect”, “leading university”, “creating difference”, “best service”, “permanently distinguished”, “ideal subject”, “excellent”, “internationally competent”, “universally admired scientific knowledge”, “happiness of all the students and employees”, “preferred university”, “contribute country’s reputation”, “advance country in the field”, “contribute international relations”.</p>

Future orientation: 8 (20.51%), control mechanism: 38 (97.43%), non-routine decision making: 30 (79.92%), motivate-inspire employees: 35 (89.74%). “Control mechanism” for private universities basically depend on the usage of “sector” and “geography” together. “Non-routine decision making” also one more time bases upon main values of Turkey, and universal ethics. “Motivating-inspiring employees” terms again include world class standards, excellence, guiding and contributing society.

Conclusion

This study presents that Turkish private universities’ mission statements, generally, include the basic elements of an ideal mission statement. Mission statements include components and objectives, but not adequate stakeholders, so stakeholders need to take more attention. There is not a necessity to include the names of all the stakeholders or to refer them, but at least more than three stakeholders should be included. It was seen that; one of the basic elements of a university “academics” were not mentioned sufficiently.

Another important and interesting result of this study is; the common themes of the statements for private universities. The reason for this is, of course, the common environment, in terms of society, necessities, needs, values, philosophy, and general structure. Same environment results in same kind of responses. As an example “integration of national and international values” is a reflection of daily cultural debates of Turkey. Values/philosophy generally presents universities’ ideal student/graduate ethics. Also; “loyalty to the principles of Republic” and “principles and revolutions Ataturk” are other important themes as values, and private universities mention these themes more than “modernity”.

Turkish private university mission statements especially differ in terms of length, and some of these are so complicated and artistic, they were professionally formed to attract students, and influence families. Universities should pay attention to the content of their mission statements to attract the students and academics and support of society.

References

- Acuner, T. and Genc. K. Y. (2008). “The Content Analysis of Mission and Vision Statements of Turkish and European Big Firms” (Paper). Proceedings of the 4. International Strategic Management Conference, June 19-21, pp. Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina.
- Bart, C. (1997). “Industrial Firms and the Power of Mission”. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 26, 371–383.
- Bart, C. K. (1998). “The Relationship between Mission Statements and Firm Performance: An Exploratory Study”. *Journal of Management Studies*, 35 (6), 823–853.
- Bart, C. K. and Hupfer, M. (2004). “Mission Statements in Canadian Hospital”, *Journal of Health Organization and Management*, 18 (2), 92-110.

- Bartkus, Barbara R., Glassman, Myron, McAfee, R. Bruce (2000). "Mission Statements: Are They Smoke and Mirrors?" *Business Horizons*, November–December, 23–28.
- Bartkus, B. R., Glassman, M., McAfee, R. B. (2002). "Do Large European, US and Japanese Firms Use Their Web Sites To Communicate Their Mission?". *European Management Journal*, 20 (4), 423–429.
- Bartkus, B. R., Glassman, M., McAfee, R. B. (2004). "A Comparison of the Quality of European, Japanese and U.S. Mission Statements: A Content Analysis". *European Management Journal*, 22 (4), 393–401.
- Bartkus, B. R., Glassman, M., McAfee, B. (2006). "Mission Statement Quality and Financial Performance", *European Management Journal*, 24 (1), 86–94.
- Davies, S. W. and Glaister, K. W. (1997). "Business School Mission Statements – The Bland Leading the Bland?". *Long Range Planning*, 30 (4), 594–604.
- Greengarten-Jackson, J. (1996). "Mission Statements in Service and Industrial Corporations", *International Journal of Quality Science*, 1 (1), 48–61.
- Hyndman, N., Eden, R. (2000). "A Study of the Coordination of Mission, Objectives and Targets in U.K. Executive Agencies", *Management Accounting Research*, 11, 175–191.
- Kemp, S., Dwyer, L. (2003). "Mission Statements of International Airlines: A Content Analysis", *Tourism Management*, 24, 635–653.
- Leuthesser, L. and Kohli, C. (1997). *Corporate Identity: The Role of Mission Statements*, *Business Horizons*, May–June, 59–66.
- Noy, E. (1998). "Total Business Strategy – The Missing Link", *Long Range Planning*, 31 (6), 927–936.
- Raynor, M. E. (1998). "That Vision Thing: Do We Need It?" *Long Range Planning*, 31 (3), 368–376.
- Sidhu, J. (2003). "Mission Statements: Is it Time to Shelve Them?", *European Management Journal*, 21 (4), 439–446.
- Smith, L. J. E. (2003). "A Vision for the Canadian Tourism Industry", *Tourism Management*, 24, 123–133.
- Wilkins, D. E. (1997). "With the Greatest Respect and Fidelity: A Cherokee Vision of the Trust Doctrine". *The Social Science Journal*, 34 (4), 496–510.