



TEZ ŞABLONU ONAY FORMU

THESIS TEMPLATE CONFIRMATION FORM

1. Şablonda verilen yerleşim ve boşluklar değiştirilmemelidir.
2. Jüri tarihi Başlık Sayfası, İmza Sayfası, Abstract ve Öz'de ilgili yerlere yazılmalıdır.
3. İmza sayfasında jüri üyelerinin unvanları doğru olarak yazılmalıdır. Tüm imzalar mavi pilot kalemle atılmalıdır.
4. Tezin son sayfasının sayfa numarası Abstract ve Öz'de ilgili yerlere yazılmalıdır.
5. Bütün chapterlar, referanslar, ekler ve CV sağ sayfada başlamalıdır. Bunun için **kesmeler** kullanılmıştır. **Kesmelerin kayması** fazladan boş sayfaların oluşmasına sebep olabilir. Bu gibi durumlarda paragraf (¶) işaretine tıklayarak kesmeleri görünür hale getirin ve yerlerini **kontrol edin**.
6. Figürler ve tablolar kenar boşluklarına taşmamalıdır.
7. Şablonda yorum olarak eklenen uyarılar dikkatle okunmalı ve uygulanmalıdır.
8. Tez yazdırılmadan önce PDF olarak kaydedilmelidir. Şablonda yorum olarak eklenen uyarılar PDF dokümanında yer almamalıdır.
9. **Bu form aracılığıyla oluşturulan PDF dosyası arkalı-önlü baskı alınarak tek bir spiralli cilt haline getirilmelidir.**
10. Spiralli hale getirilen tez taslağınızdaki ilgili alanları imzalandıktan sonra, [Tez Jüri Atama Formu](#) ile birlikte bölüm sekreterliğine teslim edilmelidir.
11. Tez taslağınız bölüm sekreterliğiniz aracılığıyla format ve görünüm açısından kontrol edilmek üzere FBE'ye ulaştırılacaktır.
12. FBE tarafından kontrol işlemleri tamamlanan tez taslakları, öğrencilere teslim edilmek üzere bölüm sekreterliklerine iletilecektir.
13. Tez taslaklarının kontrol işlemleri tamamlandığında, bu durum öğrencilere METU uzantılı öğrenci e-posta adresleri aracılığıyla duyurulacaktır.
14. Tez taslakları bölüm sekreterlikleri tarafından öğrencilere iletileceği için öğrencilerimizin tez taslaklarını enstitümüzden elden alma konusunda ısrarcı olmamaları beklenmektedir.
15. Tez yazım süreci ile ilgili herhangi bir sıkıntı yaşarsanız, [Sıkça Sorulan Sorular \(SSS\)](#) sayfamızı ziyaret ederek yaşadığınız sıkıntıyla ilgili bir çözüm bulabilirsiniz.

1. Do not change the spacing and placement in the template.
2. Write defense date to the related places given on Title page, Approval page, Abstract and Öz.
3. Write the titles of the examining committee members correctly on Approval Page. Blue ink must be used for all signatures.
4. Write the page number of the last page in the related places given on Abstract and Öz pages.
5. All chapters, references, appendices and CV must be started on the right page. **Section Breaks** were used for this. **Change in the placement** of section breaks can result in extra blank pages. In such cases, make the section breaks visible by clicking paragraph (¶) mark and **check their position**.
6. All figures and tables must be given inside the page. Nothing must appear in the margins.
7. All the warnings given on the comments section through the thesis template must be read and applied.
8. Save your thesis as pdf and disable all the comments before taking the printout.
9. **Print two-sided the PDF file that you have created through this form and make a single spiral bound.**
10. Once you have signed the relevant fields in your thesis draft that you spiraled, submit it to the department secretary together with your [Thesis Jury Assignment Form](#).
11. Your thesis draft will be delivered to the GSNAS via your department secretary for controlling in terms of format and appearance.
12. The thesis drafts that are controlled by GSNAS, will be sent to the department secretary to be delivered to the students.
13. This will be announced to the students via their METU students e-mail addresses when the control of the thesis drafts has been completed.
14. As the thesis drafts will be delivered to the students by the department secretaries, we are expecting from our students no to insist about getting their theses drafts from the Institute.
15. If you have any problems with the thesis writing process, you may visit our [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) page and find a solution to your problem.

Yukarıda bulunan tüm maddeleri okudum, anladım ve kabul ediyorum. / I have read, understand and accept all of the items above.

Name : Yashar
Surname : Kardar
E-Mail : Yashar.kardar@hotmail.com
Date : 05/10/2021
Signature : _____

SUSTAINING LOOSE COMMUNITIES THROUGH PARTICIPANT
ENGAGEMENT: THE CASE OF INNOCAMPUS ACCELERATOR PROGRAM

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF NATURAL AND APPLIED SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

YASHAR KARDAR

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN
INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

SEPTEMBER 2021

Approval of the thesis:

**SUSTAINING LOOSE COMMUNITIES THROUGH PARTICIPANT
ENGAGEMENT: THE CASE OF THE INNOCAMPUS ACCELERATOR
PROGRAM**

submitted by **YASHAR KARDAR** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of **Master of Science in Industrial Design, Middle East Technical
University** by,

Prof. Dr. Halil Kalıpçılar
Dean, Graduate School of **Natural and Applied Sciences**

Prof. Dr. Gülay Hasdoğın
Head of the Department, **Industrial Design**

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Fatma Korkut
Supervisor, **Industrial Design, METU**

Examining Committee Members:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eminegöl Karababa
Business Administration, METU

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Fatma Korkut
Supervisor, Industrial Design, METU

Asst. Prof. Dr. Damla Özer
Industrial Design, TED University

Date: 06.09.2021

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last name : Yashar, Kardar
Signature :

ABSTRACT

SUSTAINING LOOSE COMMUNITIES THROUGH PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT: THE CASE OF INNOCAMPUS ACCELERATOR PROGRAM

Kardar, Yashar
Master of Science, Industrial Design
Supervisor : Assoc. Prof. Dr. Fatma Korkut

September 2021, 143 pages

Alongside the growing interest in entrepreneurship, accelerators and their role in entrepreneurship ecosystems and the success of entrepreneurs is increasingly being explored and studied. However, the social dynamics present in these programs and their role on the sustainability of the impact they have on the continued development of alumni have been relatively overlooked in the literature. The aim of the study is to explore and understand factors influencing continued alumni engagement with accelerator programs in the case of the Innocampus accelerator program. This study explores participant engagement in the Innocampus accelerator program before, during, and after their graduation from the participants' perspective. This thesis also examines whether or not these engagements lead to the development of communities of practice that influence alumni development. In order to understand these, semi-structured interviews have been conducted with the alumni of the Innocampus accelerator program, and they have been asked about their experiences and reflections on the subject of study. Three major conclusions have been derived from the study. First, post-program engagement of the Innocampus alumni with the organization is influenced by the dynamics developed through their experiences in joining Innocampus and during their participation in the program, combined with experiences and interactions after the program with Innocampus and its network. Second, the expectations and motivations of alumni

continue to change in different stages towards the organization and the network. Third, as a result of the existing network structure, alumni engagement continues inside the network in the form of a loose community.

Keywords: Accelerator Programs, Entrepreneurship Education, Communities of Practice

ÖZ

KATILIMCI BAĞLILIĞI SAYESİNDE GEVŞEK TOPLULUKLARIN VARLIĞINI SÜRDÜRMEŞİ: INNOCAMPUS HIZLANDIRICI PROGRAMI ÖRNEĞİ

Kardar, Yashar
Yüksek Lisans, Endüstri Ürünleri Tasarımı
Tez Yöneticisi: Doç. Dr. Fatma Korkut

Eylül 2021, 143 sayfa

Girişimciliğe artan ilgiyle birlikte, hızlandırıcılar ile bunların girişimcilik ekosistemlerindeki ve girişimcilerin başarısı üzerindeki rolü giderek daha fazla araştırılan ve çalışılan bir alan haline gelmiştir. Ancak, bu programlarda mevcut olan sosyal dinamikler ve bunların mezunların gelişimindeki etkisinin sürdürülebilirliği üzerindeki rolü alanyazında nispeten göz ardı edilmiştir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Innocampus hızlandırıcı programı örneğinde mezunların hızlandırıcı programlarla devam eden bağlılığını etkileyen faktörleri araştırmak ve anlamaktır. Bu çalışma, katılımcıların Innocampus hızlandırıcı programına bağlılığını mezuniyetlerinden önce, mezuniyetleri sırasında ve mezuniyetlerinden sonra onların kendi bakış açılarından incelemektedir. Bu tez ayrıca, bu bağlılığın, mezunların gelişmesini destekleyen uygulama topluluklarının oluşmasını sağlayıp sağlamadığını da incelemektedir. Bunları anlamak amacıyla Innocampus hızlandırıcı programı mezunları ile yarı yapılandırılmış mülakatlar yapılmış ve onlara çalışma konusuna ilişkin deneyimleri ve bunların yansımaları sorulmuştur. Araştırmadan toplanan verilere dayanarak üç ana sonuç çıkarılmıştır. İlk olarak, Innocampus mezunlarının ağ ile program sonrasındaki etkileşimi, hem programa katılım sürecinde ve program sırasında edindikleri deneyimler aracılığıyla gelişen dinamiklerden hem de Innocampus ve ağı ile program sonrasındaki deneyimlerden ve etkileşimlerden etkilenmektedir. İkincisi, mezunların organizasyona ve ağa

yönelik beklenti ve motivasyonları sürecin deęişik aşamalarında deęişmeye devam etmektedir. Üçüncüsü, mevcut ağ yapısının bir sonucu olarak, mezunların baęlılığı, ağ içinde gevşek bir topluluk şeklinde devam etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hızlandırıcı Programlar, Girişimcilik Eğitimi, Uygulama Toplulukları

Hani

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis is the outcome of searching through an unconventional path both academically and career-wise, and it would not be possible without the support of everyone that has been alongside me during this journey.

I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to my advisor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Fatma Korkut. For encouraging my initiatives from the start of my academic life, encouraging my curiosity, and helping me share the hard-learned experiences with new generations of designers at METU. Working and learning alongside her has been exciting and encouraging. I am thankful and honored for having had the chance to have been supported by her throughout this journey.

I would also like to thank my longtime mentor and guide, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Harun Kaygan. He has been extremely patient, supportive and has always shared his experiences and knowledge with no hesitation. I am thankful for all his encouragement, which has always excited me to try to contribute to the industrial design community both academically and professionally.

I am also grateful to have had the support of my friend and mentor Mehmet Emin Okutan during this time, with whom we have been on our own journey to support entrepreneurs.

I have been incredibly lucky to have shared the challenge of finishing this thesis with the support and company of my dear friend Hande Büyüknisan. I am thankful to have had her support and encouragement throughout this process.

My journey as a foreigner in Turkey has been exciting and full of memories. I want to thank my dearest friends Ali Farid, Salar Rahimi, and Rawan Kahwaji for always being supportive.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my family for all their unconditional love and sacrifices to create a better future for my brother and me. I owe an indefinite debt to my mother, Shayesteh Abolmasoumi, and father, Arman Kardar, who have changed countries, passed on their own opportunities, and never backed down in their effort to care for us. I also feel incredibly lucky to have my younger brother, Mani Kardar alongside me through this process always planning our next adventure together.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	v
ÖZ.....	vii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	x
TABLE OF CONTENTS	xii
LIST OF TABLES	xvi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xvii
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Aim and Scope of the Study.....	4
1.3 Research Questions	5
1.4 Significance of the Study.....	6
1.5 Structure of the Thesis.....	6
2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	9
2.1 Entrepreneurship.....	9
2.1.1 Design Thinking and Entrepreneurship.....	12
2.1.2 Entrepreneurship Ecosystems.....	13
2.1.3 Incubators and Startup Accelerators.....	15
2.2 Understanding Networks	18
2.2.1 Development of Networks in Incubators and Accelerators.....	20
2.2.2 Why Entrepreneurs Join Networks.....	22
2.2.3 Internal Networks	22
2.2.4 External Networks	23

2.2.5	Influence of Network Ties on Entrepreneurs.....	23
2.3	Entrepreneurs in Communities of Practice	25
2.3.1	Internal Collaboration and Bonding.....	26
2.3.2	Proximity in Networks.....	27
2.3.3	Trust and Intimacy	27
2.3.4	Sense of Responsibility.....	28
2.4	Summary	28
3	METHODOLOGY	31
3.1	Case Study	32
3.1.1	Innocampus Accelerator Program.....	34
3.2	Sampling and Data Collection	44
3.2.1	Preliminary Pilot Study and the Interview Guide	46
3.2.2	Interviews.....	47
3.2.3	Being an Insider	48
3.3	Data Analysis	49
3.4	Limitations of the Data Collection Process	50
3.5	Summary	50
4	FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS	51
4.1	Pre-Innocampus: Onboarding to the Innocampus Accelerator Program	52
4.1.1	Motivations in Applying to Innocampus Accelerator Program.....	54
4.1.2	Innocampus Application Evaluation Process.....	56
4.2	During-Innocampus: The Participants' Experience of Innocampus Accelerator Program	62
4.2.1	New Networks	62

4.2.2	Peer-to-Peer Interactions	65
4.2.3	Accessibility to Shared Space: Opportunities for Bonding and Collaboration	71
4.2.4	Facilitators and Activities Enabling Interactions Among Participants.....	72
4.2.5	Challenges in Peer-to-Peer Interactions	78
4.2.6	Challenges of Sharing a Space	79
4.3	Post-Innocampus	80
4.3.1	Alumni Application of Learnings from Innocampus	80
4.3.2	Entrepreneurship Culture.....	81
4.3.3	Interactions of Alumni with Innocampus Facilitators	84
4.3.4	Sustainability of Alumni Interactions with Innocampus Mentors.....	86
4.3.5	Interactions among the Innocampus Alumni.....	88
4.3.6	Alumni's Sense of Loyalty Towards Innocampus	90
4.4	Summary.....	94
5	CONCLUSION	95
5.1	Overview of the Study.....	95
5.2	Prominent Conclusions.....	96
5.2.1	Development of Innocampus Network.....	97
5.2.2	Qualities Encouraging Continued Engagement.....	101
5.2.3	Innocampus Network as a Loose Community of Practice	104
5.3	Recommendations for Further Research	107
5.4	Reflections.....	109
	REFERENCES	113
A.	Volunteer Participation Form	121

B. Research Volunteer Consent Form (English)	122
C. Research Volunteer Consent Form (Turkish)	124
D. Semi-Structured Interview Guideline (English)	126
E. Semi-Structured Interview Guideline (Turkish)	130
F. Analysis Data in Turkish	134
G. Innocampus Accelerator Program Promotion for Şanlıurfa Accelerator Program (English Translation).....	143

LIST OF TABLES

TABLES

Table 2.1 Community Capital Framework in accelerators (Bliemel et al., 2019)...	19
Table 3.1 Training topics and entrepreneurs/experts from Innocampus Gaziantep accelerator program (Innocampus, 2016).....	40
Table 3.2 Education level of Innocampus participants at the time of their participation in the Innocampus program.....	42
Table 3.3 Foreign Participation in Innocampus Programs	43

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURES

Figure 1.1 DemoDay of Stackle at YFYI (Yeni Fikirler Yeni İşler) Competition ...	2
Figure 2.1 Elements in defining entrepreneurship (Gedeon, 2010).....	11
Figure 2.2 Elements of entrepreneurship ecosystems.....	14
Figure 2.3 Elements of accelerator program networks	21
Figure 3.1 Innocampus accelerator program (Innocampus, 2016)	34
Figure 3.2 Innocampus YapLab Training on Robotics (inno_campus, 2017).....	35
Figure 3.3 Innocampus accelerator program process	36
Figure 3.4 Training activity inside Innocampus containers.....	38
Figure 3.5 Expertise distribution of participants at Innocampus Accelerator Program.....	43
Figure 4.1 Interpersonal Interactions Among Participants within an Innocampus Accelerator Program	51
Figure 4.2 Innocampus accelerator program promotion for Şanlıurfa Accelerator Program (Innoampus Şanlıurfa Girişim Hızlandırıcı Programı, 2017) (See Appendix G for English translation).....	53
Figure 4.3 Correlation of motivation with joining Innocampus accelerator program	55
Figure 4.4 Challenges of participant engagement and resolution factors.....	58
Figure 4.5 Scope of interactions discussed by interviewees.....	62
Figure 4.6 Leadership training at Innocampus accelerator program (Innocampus, 2016)	78
Figure 5.1 Application form for participation in the study.....	121

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

As a teenager, I had the opportunity of taking part in charity activities of an NGO in Iran named Mahak Charity alongside my aunt, who used to work there. Mahak Charity was a non-governmental and non-profit institution providing support to children with cancer. There I saw dozens of children fighting their illness and recovering. One thing that impacted me personally was how the children were staying positive despite the difficulties of their treatment processes by being part of the community of the children, volunteers, and members of the institution. After seeing the impact that these activities could have on the lives of people, I wanted to find ways to see the possibility of extending them to a much larger population.

I then joined the Industrial Design undergraduate program of Middle East Technical University in 2012 with the hope of learning how to develop products and services that could improve society. At first, I was faced with an industry heavily focused on products and artifacts, which pushed me to try to explore alternative ways of using what I was learning. An internship I did with Evreka, a startup developing IoT (Internet of Things) solutions for waste management in cities, was the first step in this direction. During this internship, I saw how new products and services could potentially help reduce the carbon footprint of urban activities and the role entrepreneurs play in making these changes possible.

Following these experiences, together with a group of my friends, we decided to initiate activities in an attempt to implement what we had learned in our industrial design education with entrepreneurship to raise awareness regarding social issues and solve societal problems. Some of these initiatives included Designermeetup,

where we organized a series of events bringing together experts and enthusiasts from different disciplines to discuss recent social and technological trends, Stackle focused on using open design to build modular kitchen appliances that could enable a more sustainable kitchen while automating cooking processes, and finally a social startup named Joon, aimed at enabling disadvantaged craftsmen to gain their financial independence through development and sales of craft products.



Figure 1.1 DemoDay of Stackle at YFYI (Yeni Fikirler Yeni İşler) Competition

As someone who has been educated in the field of industrial design yet working as an entrepreneur, the similarities, and applications of design thinking in the field were almost immediately noticeable. Over the recent years, there has also been an increasing interest in studying entrepreneurship as a design activity (Ding, 2019; Romme & Reymen, 2018; Sarooghi et al., 2019; Zhang & van Burg, 2020). Design is also aimed at creating artifacts with a pragmatic goal similar, which in this sense it is very similar to entrepreneurship (Hyttinen, 2021). This is also leading to the

possibility of transferring design analogies to the study of entrepreneurship in order to use design principles in the study of the field (Zhang & van Burg, 2020).

In the formation of new enterprises and businesses, "typical" entrepreneurs may not be equipped with specific knowledge and skills related to topics such as marketing, finance, and human resource management even when skilled in product development (Omerzel & Antončič, 2008). This case has especially been true for me personally as subjects of my education did not cover most of these topics and skills. While this may be the case, participation in accelerator programs such as YFYI (Yeni Fikirler Yeni İşler) organized by the Technopark in Middle East Technical University and The Innocampus was helpful in acquiring the skills mentioned earlier. The role of accelerators in educating and enabling startups growth is being explored extensively (A. Isabelle, 2013; Bliemel et al., 2019; R. Brown et al., 2019; Cohen, 2013; Cohen et al., 2019b; Hochberg, 2016; Pauwels et al., 2016; Reimers, 2015; Uhm et al., 2018). The programs provide a combination of resources and networks, inside and outside of the accelerator (Shih & Aaboen, 2019; Wu et al., 2020). While helpful, a limitation to this support is that these programs are organized within limited durations (Cohen, 2013; Galbraith et al., 2021). The implication of this has been that following programs, my access as an entrepreneur to these networks and resources would also be limited, and its impact was visible in our performance as entrepreneurs (Omerzel & Antončič, 2008; Oosterbeek et al., 2010).

Participating in the Innocampus accelerator program in Gaziantep while working on Joon was also one of the experiences where we felt and benefitted from the support of peers, mentors, and other people taking part in the program. But my access to the resources and network of the program was not influenced as much compared to the other programs I had participated in. The main difference that I could assume existed based on my personal observations from the program was the strength of the bonds formed among participants of the Innocampus as well as with

the organizers and mentors in the program. This led me to the assumption that the process in which networks or communities are formed during accelerator programs may be able to influence the sustainability of their influence on development and growth of the alumni in their professional growth.

1.2 Aim and Scope of the Study

The goal of this inquiry is to understand the types and dynamics of participant engagement and its role in sustaining a community in general, and in the case of the Innocampus accelerator program in particular. With respect to the literature studying entrepreneurs, they engage in complex issues requiring problem solving skills, multidisciplinary knowledge, continued entrepreneurial learning, and access to resources. Over the recent years, design thinking has become an increasingly important part of the knowledge and practice entrepreneurs utilize to succeed as it enables them to innovate and navigate these complex issues with a productive approach. This is also one of the reasons design thinking has become an increasingly dominant part of the trainings included in entrepreneurial training programs such as Innocampus accelerator program.

Understanding factors leading to development and sustainability of communities that develop following accelerator programs may help in understanding possible new facets of education and practice of design thinking in multidisciplinary networks and social aspects of continued learning in such communities. Taking into consideration the literature related to entrepreneurship, while the influence of networks and social bonds formed during accelerator programs on learning and access of entrepreneurs to resources has been emphasized, the role of interactions on the development and sustainability of these communities, and social aspects of presence of such communities beyond exchange of knowledge and best practice has been less studied.

In the scope of this study, to explore these interactions and their influence on the development of sustainable loose communities, 13 of Innocampus accelerator programs' alumni have been interviewed about their experiences happening before, during, and after their graduation from the program. Participating interviewees have graduated from accelerator programs organized by Innomate as part of Innocampus project in Adana, Gaziantep, Şile, and Şanlıurfa. Over the interviews, interviewees have been questioned about their interactions with facilitators, mentors, peers, and other present stakeholders they have had engagements with, as well as about the influence of space, and activities they have taken part in on their engagements with other stakeholders and Innocampus as a whole.

Subject of this study, the Innocampus accelerator program, is a project belonging to the company Innomate. Innocampus accelerator program has been active between the years of 2015 and 2017 with total of six accelerator programs organized in different cities. Innocampus is an accelerator and FabLab in the form of a mobile structure consisting of three containers that have graduated more than seven cohorts over its duration of activity. During the accelerator program, in addition to trainings focused on the business skills of entrepreneurs, there have been trainings and activities that have influenced interactions between participants, mentors, and organizers of the program. Following the program, alumni of the program from different cities have also been in contact and sometimes collaborated. Taking these two features into consideration, the program was selected as a case study to be investigated more in-depth.

1.3 Research Questions

The questions mentioned below will be addressed regarding the aim of this study.

The main questions that this thesis concerns itself are as follows:

- What are the factors influencing the sustained engagement of alumni with the Innocampus community following their graduation from the accelerator program?
- Whether and how Innocampus participants' motivations and expectations have changed during and after the accelerator program, and how have these influenced the participants' engagement with the Innocampus community?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Accelerator programs are a common phenomenon at this point as support organizations for entrepreneurs in different regions. Providing access to networks is a critical part of the role that these organizations play for entrepreneurs and startups. However, how far the support of these programs extends beyond the duration of these programs, and activities that lead to the sustainability of their impact is not well researched and explored.

Innocampus accelerator program is a unique case in Turkey, and a rare case internationally due to the mobility of its physical facility. And it is especially relevant to the subject of this study in exploring accessibility of the network it has developed in different regions among program alumni and its sustainability, although the program has been discontinued prior this research.

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

This study consists of five chapters, Chapter 1, *Introduction*, provides a brief introduction to the subject of this study and the selection of the topic. This section mentions the aim and scope of this study, as well as the research questions that have been addressed throughout it.

Chapter 2, *Literature Review*, reviews the topics that have developed the baseline for this study. It begins with positioning and understanding entrepreneurs,

entrepreneurship, and the role of support organizations such as accelerators for their development. Then discusses networks and network ties and how they facilitate entrepreneurial learning. And finally, it shares aspects of activities and interactions that lead to the development and sustainability of loose communities among entrepreneurs.

Chapter 3, *Methodology*, discusses the research approach used for this study. It shares the scope of this thesis and presents a more detailed introduction to Innocampus as the case selected for this study. It describes the qualitative research method used and its development process. And finally, it shares the process used to document and analyze the data collected through the study.

Chapter 4, *Findings and Analysis*, presents the analysis of the data collected from interviews conducted. This section discusses the interviewees' reflections by categorizing them based on whether they have been related to participants' thoughts before joining the program, their interactions through their participation in and after the accelerator program. These three sections discuss various aspects of interactions and experiences that have been noticed by interviewees to have had an influence on their engagement and its sustainability as part of the Innocampus community.

Chapter 5, *Conclusion*, presents the conclusions of this study in relation to the literature and the field study, and discusses the implications of it.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Over this chapter, I have collected and brought together research that addresses my topic of interest as well as laying the basis of my research. As mentioned earlier, subject of this study is the continued interactions of alumni of an accelerator program named Innocampus and its role in sustaining a loose community.

First, I explore the dimensions of entrepreneurship ecosystems and the role of accelerator programs in relation to entrepreneurs inside these ecosystems. I state an overview of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs' participation in entrepreneurship ecosystems, their social interactions with accelerator programs, and aspects of these interactions that carry influence on their entrepreneurship efforts and businesses.

In the second section, I explore social networks in accelerator programs, the engagement of entrepreneurs in these networks, and how entrepreneur's interactions vary in relation to different types of social ties.

I analyze how networks that entrepreneurs take part in also take the form of communities of practice, and factors that influence entrepreneur's engagement with these communities of practice, such as trust, bonding, loyalty, and their sense of responsibility towards these programs.

2.1 Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is valuable for economies as economic growth is correlated with the existence of small entrepreneurial firms at large, and as the number of these

firms increase, they also lower the effective cost for elements of the entrepreneurship ecosystem to grow (Ács et al., 2014; Acs et al., 2017; Alvedalen & Boschma, 2017; Audretsch & Belitski, 2017; Auerswald, 2015; Bendickson et al., 2021; Cao & Shi, 2020; Isenberg & Global, 2011; Mack & Mayer, 2016; Malecki, 2018; Spigel, 2016).

Arguably, entrepreneurs are at the center of entrepreneurial activities. However, the definitions of an entrepreneur can vary depending on the focus and perspective of the researchers analyzing them. There are two main approaches to defining an entrepreneur shared by (Gedeon, 2010). The first approach, which is addressed as the traits school, considers the influence of founders' characteristics, goals, and social and cultural environment on the qualities of the companies created. The behavioral school, in turn, focuses on the process of venture creation, which includes stages of entrepreneurial activities such as emergence, newness, and transformation. A definition that can be used to describe an entrepreneur summarized by (Smith & Chimucheka, 2014) considers the entrepreneur as a person or an economic agent who spots opportunities in the market and establishes a business using creativity to address the needs of the market, endures the risks that come with it, and takes its rewards.

With the dynamic and changing context of entrepreneurship as a practice as well as developments in the studies on the topic, a variety of definitions have been developed based on researchers' perspectives while the field is also constantly evolving (Gedeon, 2010; Lyons et al., 2021a). According to (Gedeon, 2010), definitions of entrepreneurship have their roots mainly in two theoretical views of either risk theory of profit or the dynamic theory of profit. The risk theory of profit defines and evaluates the entrepreneur based on the degree of risk, development of the venture, and ownership status of the entrepreneur. The dynamic theory of profit, on the other hand, defines the entrepreneurship process based on the role of entrepreneur in creating equilibrium or disequilibrium in market competition. This

theory is based on the economic theory that proposes profits arise when there is dynamic change from the static equilibrium state of perfect competition.

Entrepreneurship has been defined as an act of creating products and services to solve people's needs by using strategies in an innovative manner (Smith & Chimucheka, 2014) through the creation of ventures with economic impact (Lyons et al., 2021a; Neck et al., 2004). Following his research into definitions of entrepreneurship, Gedeon (2010) defines entrepreneurship as follows:

A multi-dimensional concept that includes owning a small business (Risk Theory), being innovative (Dynamic Theory), acting as a leader (Traits School), or starting up a new company (Behavioral School). It includes spotting opportunities to drive the market toward equilibrium (Austrian School) or causing disequilibrium through “creative destruction” (Schumpeter). It includes doing this on your own, in a team, or within a company. It involves starting without any resources and creating new values in the realm of business, social values, government or academia” (p.30).

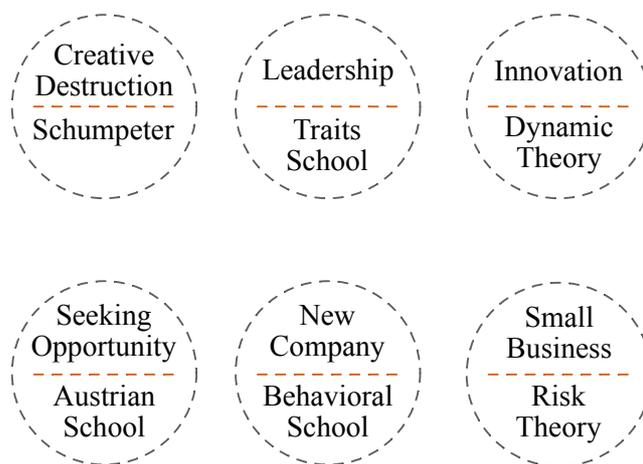


Figure 2.1 Elements in defining entrepreneurship (Gedeon, 2010)

It must be considered that entrepreneurial activities are not isolated, and their goals and influence extend beyond economic outputs. Entrepreneurial activities can have impacts on job and wealth creation, the environment, and society as a whole, as well as markets and local economies (Lyons et al., 2021b; Prasastyoga et al., 2021).

2.1.1 Design Thinking and Entrepreneurship

In his article, T. Brown (2008) defined design thinking as “a discipline using designer’s sensibility and methods to match people’s needs with what is technologically feasible and what a viable business strategy can convert into customer value and market opportunity” and qualifies five characteristics in design thinkers including empathy, integrative thinking, optimism, experimentalism, and collaboration. (1) Empathy is to be able to understand and empathize with multiple perspectives when approaching problems. (2) Integrative thinking is to be able to see and understand problems beyond analytical aspects of them to develop innovative solutions. (3) Optimism is the assumption that a better state and solution to a problem is always possible. (4) Experimentalism is to explore solutions beyond tweaks to existing ones and utilize creativity. And (5) collaboration is the notion of the reality that to tackle problems and complexity of products, and services, interdisciplinary collaborations are a necessity.

Design thinking is perceived by researchers and practitioners as a methodology well suited to tackle wicked problems which are problems that are difficult to be completely resolved due to their complex nature (Koh et al., 2015). In its application, it shares number of qualities that a successful entrepreneur requires that has been influential in its adoption in education and practice of entrepreneurship. Both practices are focused on (1) development of artifacts; these artifacts can be products, organizations, markets, or institutions. (2) Design and entrepreneurship are both focused on finding better solutions to wicked problems. (3) Both fields are reliant on understanding users and customers to spot innovation and business opportunities. (4) Collaboration in multidisciplinary teams is an

essential quality of both fields in solving complex issues. (5) Imagination and creativity are essential to both fields to be able to envision and spot opportunities (von Kortzfleisch et al., 2013).

2.1.2 Entrepreneurship Ecosystems

Entrepreneurial activities are socially, culturally, and economically embedded in their local communities, which is why researchers have been increasingly focusing on the range of factors such as entrepreneur's personal motivations, characteristics, goals, learning capacity, local policies, social and cultural environment that can increase these activities (Fortunato & McLaughlin, 2021b; Gedeon, 2010; Roundy et al., 2018). For entrepreneurship activities to increase, they need to be supported and facilitated by a conducive environment that includes the physical, social, cultural, and economic infrastructure of local communities (Korsching et al., 2007). The diverse elements of the entrepreneurship ecosystems such as human capital, education, universities, finance, customers, suppliers, support organizations such as accelerators and incubators, entrepreneurial culture, and regulatory frameworks, and highlights that one of the most important elements of the entrepreneurship ecosystem is the entrepreneur and individuals with an entrepreneurial attitude who lead the mobilization of resources in development and growth of new ventures (Alvedalen & Boschma, 2017). The research on these environments has mainly been focused on place, actors, governance, and evolution, among which the latter has been relatively the least explored (Cho et al., 2021).

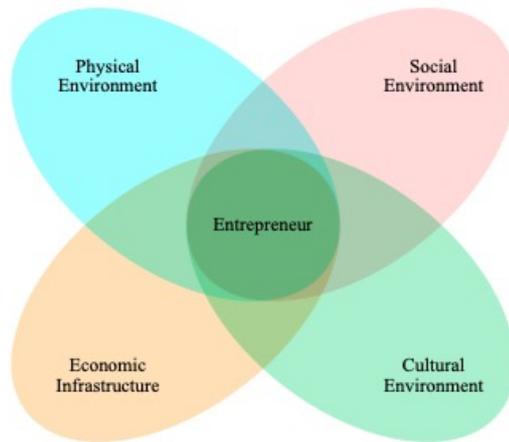


Figure 2.2 Elements of entrepreneurship ecosystems

There is a broad consensus on the underlying concept of entrepreneurship ecosystems “as a community of multiple co-evolving stakeholders that provides a supportive environment for new venture creations within a region” (Cao & Shi, 2020), where the geographical boundaries of the entrepreneurship ecosystem can be defined at any scale (Qian et al., 2013).

Cao & Shi (2020) explain the construct of the entrepreneurship ecosystem under three themes of interaction-logic, resource-logic, and governance-logic. (1) Interaction logic includes interactions between entrepreneurial actors, networks and institutions, and knowledge spillovers in the entrepreneurial ecosystems. Knowledge Spillovers are defined by Bendickson et al. (2021) as sharing information of value within the networks existing in the entrepreneurship ecosystem. Information and knowledge shared often happens when there are existing asymmetries in between different actors, regions, or industries (Xu et al., 2019). (2) Resource-logic covers resource allocations driven by developments and activities of new ventures. (3) Governance-logic explores the governance principles to unlock entrepreneurship-driven economic growth.

The constructs mentioned are all influenced by a combination of structural configurations including actors, networks, and institutions, and the interactions present in between them (Cao & Shi, 2020). Relationships and interactions inside the ecosystem and the combination of environmental factors that influence these relationships are critical to enabling strong ties between people that can support sustainable, competitive, and innovative economic growth (Escalfoni et al., 2020). Motoyama & Knowlton (2016) also draw attention to the importance of ways in which entrepreneurs interact with elements of the entrepreneurship ecosystems and how these interactions influence the mutual development of entrepreneurs and ecosystems. The structural elements of the entrepreneurship ecosystems include available capital, conducive policies for entrepreneurship, culture, labor pool, market, knowledge, and present supporting services, as well as interactions of entrepreneurs in the ecosystem with these elements which facilitate development of the ecosystem and new ventures. Noticeably, entrepreneurship ecosystems are comprised of highly complex interactions and the degree of entrepreneurial activities can vary between different regions depending on the composure of elements in each ecosystem (Fortunato & Mclaughlin, 2021). However, in understanding dynamics affecting entrepreneurship ecosystems and the rate of entrepreneurship in them, social and cultural factors in local surroundings and communities in different regions has not been explored well (Fortunato & Mclaughlin, 2021).

2.1.3 Incubators and Startup Accelerators

Entrepreneurial support organizations help the development and encouragement of entrepreneurial activities inside the entrepreneurship ecosystems (Escalfoni et al., 2020). Startup accelerator programs such as Innocampus are support organizations in the form of programs of limited duration. These organizations support entrepreneurs by enabling access to resources such as human resources, capital, working space, and networks of peers, mentors, investors, and customers and

educate them on how to utilize these resources (Cohen, 2013; Cohen et al., 2019b; Nijssen & van der Borgh, 2017).

Accelerator programs are a type of incubator; however, they differ in terms of some of their key qualities. These programs are cohort-based, organized in limited durations, and with certain program goals that are aligned with the expectations of program sponsors (Cohen, 2013; Galbraith et al., 2021). The focus of these programs can be targeted at certain sectors, regions, or demographics such as refugees or women (Bliemel et al., 2019). Some of the most recent trends in the development of accelerators in the United States are the emergence of vertical specialization and diversification of startup types, initiation of corporate accelerators, initiation of university accelerators, development of accelerator networks, vertical integration of accelerators into seed funds, changing form into a business incubator, and development of international presence (Escalfoni et al., 2020).

(Pauwels et al., 2016) identify five groups for accelerator programs' design elements; program packages, the strategic focus of the accelerator, selection process, funding structure, and alumni relations. Program packages include services that accelerators provide to their startups which include planned mentoring services, seed capital, and space. The strategic focus of the program is the decisions on the industry, sector, and geographical focus the programs concentrate on. Startups join accelerators often after participating in a rigorous multistaged selection process that are organized online and through open calls. Usually, an open call is organized for a period of time, during which portfolio companies can register and apply online. The study also finds that most programs are funded through private shareholders, including investors, corporates, or public institutions. Alumni of accelerator programs and their relationship with the accelerator is the last design element. The study done by (Pauwels et al., 2016) finds that some

accelerators invite back their alumni to share their experiences with active startups in the program.

The program design and return of expectations can also vary between public or for-profit organizations with a certain expectation of the return of investment for the sponsors (A. Isabelle, 2013). The expectation on return of investment can vary depending on the program sponsors and shape the design of the accelerator program. While government-sponsored accelerators could expect outcomes in economic and regional development, investor sponsors could expect maximization of their financial return from the program (Cohen et al., 2019a). Cohen et al. (Cohen et al., 2019b) also share that these different accelerators also perform differently in terms of their output on portfolio firms as investor-led accelerator portfolio companies tend to have more post-program capital raised.

In the United States, an estimated 6.000 startups have taken part in 650 accelerators and raised around \$30 billions of funds (Galbraith et al., 2021). The limited time frame and the cohort logic existing in accelerators also influence some of their features and methodologies applied throughout the program. The application process for these programs can include an efficient due diligence process aligned with the selection criteria; the development program used is very structured and may include coverage of topics such as business, IP (intellectual property) strategy, and investment processes followed by more informal and personalized processes to support startups (Bliemel et al., 2019). Most accelerators also end with a “demo day” or graduation events where potential investors, customers, and members of corporations and other private companies participate in as well as public guests to listen to pitch presentations prepared by startups (Cohen et al., 2019c; Hochberg, 2016). Pitch presentations (PitchDecks) often include some key slides that describe different aspects of a business. Topics mentioned in these slides include (1) Company overview, (2) mission/vision of the company, (3) the team building the business, (4) the problem business tries to address for its customers or in the

market, (5) the solution the company is providing, (6) the market opportunity addressed by the company, (7) the product or service that company has developed to address the problem mentioned, (8) the customer group that company is providing service to, (9) the technology or innovation developed by the company that enables the product, (10) the current state of competition in the market, (11) the traction and growth of the company, (12) the business model of the company, (13) the marketing plan of the company, (14) current state of company financials, and finally (15) the request entrepreneurs have from their listeners in terms of support or investment (Harroch, 2020).

2.2 Understanding Networks

Carpenter et al. (2012) summarizes definitions existing for social networks as “a social phenomenon consisting of entities connected by specific ties reflecting interaction and interdependence, such as friendship, kinship, knowledge exchange, and so on”. Social networks consist of social ties, different patterns of ties, positionings, and embeddedness (Li, 2013). The accumulation and access of networks for individuals can lead to development of social capital for them which is the utility and beneficial outcomes of the network for its participants (Carpenter et al., 2012).

In a study, Bliemel et al. (Bliemel et al., 2019) utilize the Community Capital Framework to explore the dimensions of social interactions taking place in the process of accelerators. The Community Capital Framework has been developed by Emery and Flora (Emery & Flora, 2006) to understand communities’ fundamental building blocks, and they include built, cultural, financial, human, political, social, and natural capitals. Table 2.1, developed by Bliemel et al. (2019), reinterprets these community capitals for accelerators.

Table 2.1 Community Capital Framework in accelerators (Bliemel et al., 2019)

Community Capital	Accelerator Feature and relation to infrastructure for entrepreneurial clusters
Human	Developing skills and abilities from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohort-based learning from educational program speakers • Customized learning from mentors, accelerator managers, invited guests and alumni • Peer learning from co-located peers
Social	Developing connections to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentors, accelerator managers, speakers, and invited guests and alumni • Referrals to external investors and other stakeholders
Financial	Accessing financial resources via <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seed funding the accelerator • Introduces to follow-on investors • Revenues from customers • Government grants
Political	Managing power-relationships within the accelerator via <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation of terms of entry and exit • Selection process for entry • Internal policies and processes • Screening process for referrals (e.g., to mentors and investors) Managing power-relationships outside the accelerator via <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting applications to public grants and regulatory organizations
Cultural	Establishing norms of behavior, traditions, and shared

	<p>language via</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohort selection and screening process, including hosting public recruiting events and graduations (Demo Days) • Guidance from mentors • Induction from educational programs • Interactions with co-located peers
Built	<p>Sharing of physical resources via</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-location in the same space provided by the accelerator and its immediate physical environment

2.2.1 Development of Networks in Incubators and Accelerators

Startups join incubators and accelerators to find direct or indirect support for their ventures by accessing resources and gaining legitimacy. Developing networks accelerates their learning processes vital for company growth (Pettersen et al., 2015). As startups have different needs at different stages, to be able to support them, incubators and accelerators generally provide this support through generic services and network relationships (Shih & Aaboen, 2019). Business incubators are increasingly focusing on developing internal and external networks and networking capabilities that can enable knowledge spillovers, intelligence, and access to material resources while potentially improving entrepreneurial learning in entrepreneurs (Pettersen et al., 2015; Wu et al., 2020).

The network built by an incubator may be developed around the incubation process; however, it can also act as a comprehensive platform for entrepreneurial integration and an open system for entrepreneurial innovation (Wu et al., 2020). The importance of business incubators in bridging and resource acquisition has been emphasized by multiple researchers as they contain networks and credibility

needed by new businesses; research on the role of cooperation within these networks is still in development (Breivik-Meyer et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2020). As the startup infrastructure enables activities of entrepreneurs and their outcomes, startup activities also develop the infrastructure as an outcome which leads to alignment in objectives and shared vision of the cluster (Bliemel et al., 2019). We can distinguish networks into three different types; information networks as means of discovering opportunities, exchange networks that can influence the acquisition of resources, and influence networks that enable the development of legitimacy for entrepreneurs (Alvedalen & Boschma, 2017). As startups go through different stages of development, each of these networks has a varying influence on their growth (Pettersen et al., 2015). It must be mentioned that the extent that startups get influenced by opportunities and constraints in these networks is influenced by how they are positioned compared to other individuals and firms in the network (Alvedalen & Boschma, 2017; Pettersen et al., 2015).

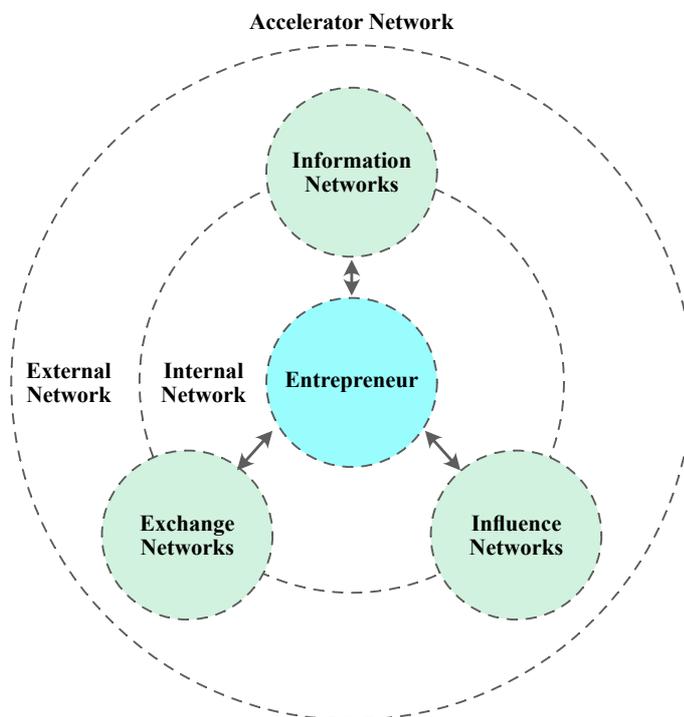


Figure 2.3 Elements of accelerator program networks

2.2.2 Why Entrepreneurs Join Networks

By participating in the network, entrepreneurs develop social capital in the benefit of themselves and their startups. These benefits include development of their identity, acquiring knowledge about opportunities and technologies, financial means, trust to reduce market costs, entrepreneurial skills and know-how shared in the network, access to talent, access to customers, suppliers, and new markets, and performance of the business (Alvedalen & Boschma, 2017). As the number of active members increases in interactions between internal and external networks, with the common vision of success for entrepreneurs taking residence, the strengthened connection between internal networks supports the reputation of members and Business Incubators' access to new network members, which, in turn, can enable obtaining resources, new information and access to professional knowledge (Wu et al., 2020).

Institutional voids can happen when important institutional arrangements to support markets are too weak to have sufficient impact. The environments characterized by institutional voids carry high amounts of uncertainty, distrust, and risk for entrepreneurs. Informal institutions can however mitigate the effects that lack of formal institutions may have on entrepreneurship ecosystems by developing trust within networks which is the backbone of entrepreneurs' growth (Bendickson et al., 2021).

2.2.3 Internal Networks

Strong relationships among internal network members improve the conditions for entrepreneurs to share information by developing an emotional connection, mutual familiarity, and trust, which also help promote mutual learning, encourage the exchange of information, and develop or apply knowledge in specific areas (Wu et al., 2020). Social networking activities organized by business incubators play an important role in the socialization of tenants with communities. These events

provide an environment where tenants are not distinguished based on their experience, which supports the development of an internal network in the business incubator and enhances communication and knowledge transfer (Nijssen & van der Borgh, 2017).

2.2.4 External Networks

External networks of incubators are also important for the development opportunities and flexibility they provide in accessing resources for entrepreneurs. Diverse network relationships can accelerate entrepreneurial developments and capacities, improve technological capabilities, and through heterogeneous resources and knowledge, enable entrepreneurs to explore different perspectives. An example of this can be the relationship between entrepreneurs and suppliers or customers, which helps them gather information regarding market demands; this information allows entrepreneurs to develop their existing products and services as well as provide new resources to the internal network (Haneberg & Aaboen, 2021; Wu et al., 2020).

2.2.5 Influence of Network Ties on Entrepreneurs

Alvedalen & Boschma (2017) describe the nature of network ties in proximity terms to investigate how types of links, besides individual characteristics such as education and work experience may enhance entrepreneurship. Granovetter (1973) defines the strength of ties as a combination of the amount of time, emotional intensity, intimacy, and the reciprocal services that characterize the tie. Ties among the members of networks tend to affect how relationships are utilized among the members. Entrepreneurs' network ties refer to individual entrepreneurs' interactions with the network members for business purposes (Sullivan et al., 2021). These social ties in internal and external networks can be categorized as strong or weak. Both strong and weak network ties can have a variety of consequential benefits and disadvantages for networks when present. Examples of this could include where

network structures are too strong and might hamper the entrepreneurial process when they become too inward-looking and too cognitively or socially proximate. A closely tied core in the local network and high proximity between network partners may negatively affect radical entrepreneurship, as such networks suffer from lock-in and a shortage of recombination possibilities. Local network structures may also become too fragmented, with few connections between nodes and a lack of proximity (Alvedalen & Boschma, 2017).

Weak ties are generally new relationships with individuals that entrepreneurs have less frequent interactions, a short relationship, and weak socio-emotional connection. (Sullivan et al., 2021). Weak social ties may be more effective in knowledge sharing, and members with weak ties seem to be more likely to access novel information compared to those with strong exclusive ties. (Sullivan et al., 2021).

Strong ties are network partners or individuals that entrepreneurs have regular interactions with and are socio-culturally close (Sullivan et al., 2021). They have an important role for entrepreneurs in terms of providing support, knowledge, and complementary resources and in supporting cooperation among members (Bøllingtoft & Ulhøi, 2005). These ties are believed to be motivated in helping entrepreneurs while tackling complex and difficult to grasp situations (Sullivan et al., 2021). Strong ties among members of the network allow for the transfer of complex information among members since strong ties require frequent interaction and involve a high degree of trust and emotional closeness (Soetanto, 2017). While strong social ties may be essential to launch a business, they can also create difficulties. Ties with family and friends can carry expectations and implicit rules that, if undermined, may sour relationships and potentially hinder business activities (Jack, 2005).

2.3 Entrepreneurs in Communities of Practice

Considering the extent of social relationships entrepreneurs build in their participation in incubators and accelerator programs, entrepreneurial learning can be viewed as a socially situated learning process through social relationships and interactions (Haneberg & Aaboen, 2021). Where participants of the social networks develop a sense of belonging and social identity in relation to a set of ties inside the networks they participate in, communities are developed (Colclough & Sitaraman, 2005). Considering this frame, recent developments in entrepreneurial learning research have moved towards assessing entrepreneurs as a community of practitioners; this perspective considers entrepreneurship as a social practice that is constructed and is made sense of in such communities (Haneberg & Aaboen, 2021). Communities of practice are collaborative, informal networks that support professional practitioners in their efforts to develop shared understandings and engage in work-relevant knowledge building (Owen, 2009, p.3). Wenger (2002) divides components shaping communities of practice to meaning, practice, community, and identity. Here, meaning is defined as “an experience of daily life”, where it is negotiated among the members of the community and developed. Practice is defined as a structured act of doing activities that has meaning for the actor. Community in communities of practice is defined based on three dimensions and when there is mutual engagement, a joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire among participants. Identity in this context is defined as how individual member develops traits and characteristics shared and unique from the community through participation in the practice.

Following the view that through participating in the practices of experienced individuals, newcomers learn, and as they advance, they become more central to the community; becoming an entrepreneur can also imply the process of participating in a community of entrepreneurial practice (Haneberg & Aaboen, 2021).

Another aspect of these memberships is that, as it is entrepreneurs to be engaged in several forms of practice, community multi-membership is common, and individuals with these participations can have access to multiple resources allowing for knowledge brokering (Haneberg & Aaboen, 2021). However, the relationship of entrepreneurs with their communities goes beyond their interactions with stakeholders in their value chain, yet this topic has not been explored as extensively (Lyons et al., 2021a).

When considering the entrepreneurs as the insiders to the network, it must be considered that the development of community relies on building and improving the structure of the community field by creating connections between special interest fields and enhancing problem-solving capacities of the community (Lyons et al., 2021a)

2.3.1 Internal Collaboration and Bonding

When new tenants first join the business incubator, they will lack identification with the incubator and the environment; socialization is important as it creates a frame of reference for participants in their interactions with others in the environment. Cooperation with the internal network is particularly important for entrepreneurs' survival. Establishing good relationships with other entrepreneurs in the internal network also improves the enthusiasm and capacity to seek new knowledge. From the network aspect, the total strength of the network is also dependent on the closeness, stability, and trust among members (Wu et al., 2020). A challenge in developing these qualities among entrepreneurs is that their self-interest drives them for the opportunity, which can create hesitation in engaging in active collaboration with other entrepreneurs and network members. This challenge creates the condition in which positive intra-business incubator dynamics to support sharing of resources, knowledge, and collaboration the business incubator must consciously use socialization tactics (Nijssen & van der Borgh, 2017).

2.3.2 Proximity in Networks

Proximity in networks is also an aspect that influences the utilization of internal and external networks for entrepreneurs in the incubator. Boschma (2005) mentions five dimensions of proximity that influence the relationship of entrepreneurs with internal and external incubator networks: cognitive, organizational, social, institutional, and geographical proximity. Describing network ties could be done in terms of their proximity to allow for exploration of types and individual characteristics of links that influence entrepreneurship (Alvedalen & Boschma, 2017).

Physical proximity can catalyze relationship formation among entrepreneurs (Pettersen et al., 2015). If located inside a business incubator, the proximity of entrepreneurs and startups can promote internal collaboration due to informality and the high frequency of interactions. A combination of business incubator context and personal contact can build trust, which is a prerequisite for cooperation (Bøllingtoft & Ulhøi, 2005; Nijssen & van der Borgh, 2017).

2.3.3 Trust and Intimacy

(Fortunato & Mclaughlin, 2021b) has found that entrepreneurs and small businesses find improved collaboration within the community as important, but conversations among entrepreneurs can often stay at a superficial level. The reason for this is suspected to be due to the fear of sharing information with benefits to other businesses' competitive advantage. (Jack, 2005) has also found that entrepreneurs prefer to deal with individuals they already know or have worked with to generate knowledge and concludes that trust in the individuals with networks is often greater than the trust in the professional information sources. In some cases, the strength of trust-based interactions can proceed formal contracts, while most relationships are multiplex (Pettersen et al., 2015).

2.3.4 Sense of Responsibility

In traditional models of sense of community, communities are viewed as a resource for meeting key needs such as the need for a sense of belonging, influence, and connection. However, the strength of these relationships can be influenced by other contextual factors (Nowell & Boyd, 2014). As suggested by (Nowell & Boyd, 2010), a sense of community responsibility can be considered as a complementary element. In the model, it is emphasized that individuals develop values, norms, ideals, and beliefs through their embeddedness in various institutions, which can trigger a sense of obligation and responsibility for individuals as they try to reconcile with who they perceive they are (Boyd & Nowell, 2017).

2.4 Summary

In this chapter, after developing an understanding of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship, the role of startup accelerators is explored as an actor in entrepreneurship ecosystems, as well as towards the development of entrepreneurs. As part of the activities and benefits accelerators provide to entrepreneurs, developed networks are then discussed, as well as their potential transition and transformation towards a more engaged form which leads to development of communities of practice.

Entrepreneurship is a practice focused on generating economical value as a result of building and growing new ventures. However, activities of entrepreneurs are part of the environment that they interact with developed of a combination of physical, social, cultural, and economic infrastructures.

Accelerators support entrepreneurs with their learning, accessing resources, as well as developing their reach to the ecosystems they take part in, and networks within them. This support is provided directly through the services that accelerators provide to entrepreneurs, and indirectly through networks developed around these accelerators.

Joining networks can benefit entrepreneurs by increasing their access to financial resources, human resources, best-practices, customers, suppliers, and other resources utilizable for the development of the business. Social ties in the network based on their proximity to one another and to the entrepreneur can have different dynamics. The strength of these social ties can facilitate trust and provide access to more in-depth knowledge and complex problem-solving opportunities. Meanwhile, the weaker social ties, support knowledge exchange and access to a more diverse and novel pool of information.

Entrepreneurship is a socially situated process that takes place supported by collaboration inside networks with the goal of work-relevant knowledge building. Considering the extended network of social relationships and collaborations entrepreneurs build over their participation in incubators and accelerators, and how they utilize them, entrepreneurship can be considered as a social practice taking part in a community. However, the role of accelerators and incubators in development of entrepreneurship related communities, entrepreneurs' perspective and engagement in these communities, and the correlation between development of entrepreneurs and dynamics of these communities is a relatively unexplored area in the literature.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

During this study, I have explored expectations, motivations, and factors influencing interactions of Innocampus participants before, during, and after their participation in the program. For the possibility of better understanding, I have also investigated whether and in which ways participants have continued to engage with the Innocampus community after their graduation from the program.

The Innocampus accelerator program has been chosen for this study due to multiple reasons that make it unique as a means to study developments and sustainability of alumni engagement with a startup accelerator programs. Over this chapter, I have explained the research design process and the methodological approach adopted for this inquiry.

This research started with curiosity and an intention to understand a phenomenon from the perspective of its subjects. Instead of aiming at validating a hypothesis, it aimed at understanding and framing the thoughts and perspectives of participants after time passed from their participation in the accelerator program. (Gray, 2004) categorizes epistemological approaches to research as Objectivism, Constructivism, and Subjectivism. During this research, information gathered of participants has been used in the attempt to better understand the meanings they have created and associated to their context. For this purpose, a Constructivist approach has been adopted with the intention of understanding the perspective of participants in the study on meanings, values, and experiences they have had related to the subject of inquiry. Being as such, as part of this research, I have no intention of arriving at generalizable knowledge, rather new points of view and issues for possible further

research. With these goals in mind, an inductive process was developed and implemented. After building the research questions, plans were made for possible methods of data collection and analysis (Gray, 2004). The research process was designed in this case to collect and organize data with the purpose of exploring related patterns suggesting variables that could be investigated further and following studies to expand upon the topic.

Within this framework, qualitative research methods were adopted in this research. Qualitative methods are used in research of social worlds in learning about both social and material context of study subject's perspectives. This type of research is mainly contextual and is used to gather information on people's motivations, emotions, prejudices, concerns, and interpersonal interactions (Gray, 2004; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). With the purpose of understanding the formation and role of loose communities and their impact on participants of accelerator programs, the scope of the study and method of data collection was designed with the goal of achieving thorough documentation. Startup accelerator programs vary in their design, curriculum, target participants, and effectiveness in implementation. In addition to this, the extent to which post-program communications continue also tends to differ.

This inquiry concerns itself with the post-program sustainability of loose communities and understanding interactions that may affect them. Participants of the study were selected from the graduates of the Innocampus startup accelerator program. To learn about the perspective of Innocampus alumni regarding their participation in the program and thoughts prior, during, and after the program, semi-structured interviews were conducted.

3.1 Case Study

(Yin, 2003) describes case studies as an ideal method under the influence of three main conditions: Research topic is in a relatively broader context, isolated variables

are either really difficult to achieve or not accessible in a complex context, and there is a need to rely on more than one source of evidence. (Cousin, 2005) also expands on this explanation by drawing attention to the comparison with an experimental design where causation and thus control are important; in the case study method, research focuses on exploration and understanding with the purpose of making fuzzy generalizations. The method is ideal for “how” and “why” questions where controlling the design of context is not possible (Gray, 2004).

There are four case study approaches as described by (Gray, 2004), single case study with a single unit of analysis, single case study with embedded units of analysis, multiple case studies done with one unit of analysis, and multiple case studies done with multiple units of analysis. Case studies are a method where data can be collected on a range of topics within the same group. By choosing case study as the method of inquiry, it was made possible to focus on a range of people that have shared interaction with the same organization and thus making learning about shared and contradicting perspectives between participants possible within a point of reference.

In the case of this inquiry, a single case study with a single unit of analysis has been used for examining the phenomena where the participants of the Innocampus accelerator program were interviewed about their thoughts, feelings, and experiences existing prior, during, and after the Innocampus. Innocampus being one of its kind in Turkey and the program in terms of its specific combination of mobility, physical, developed network and not having been repeated, it was chosen as the subject of this study with the goal of creating a precursor for further studies on the topic.

Startup accelerator programs vary in their process, the level of engagement of their participants, and the extent to which participants and alumni identify themselves as being part of a community. To be able to gain an insight into the experience of

participants within a practical context, Innocampus was chosen as the focus of this case study which is a unique case from two perspectives. Innocampus is one of the rare programs that not only has organized a training program in multiple cities but moved the physical space of the program with itself as well. Many of the participants in the cities that the program has traveled to didn't have access to networks, resources, and tools, including 3D printers, CNC machines, and laser cutters prior to their participation in the program. The second aspect of the Innocampus that makes it a unique case is that there are still continued interactions among not only participants of the program in the same city but also among participants of different Innocampus programs even though more than a year has passed since their graduation from the program.

3.1.1 Innocampus Accelerator Program

Innocampus is a nonprofit project belonging to the company Innomate. The project is an accelerator and FabLab in the form of a mobile structure consisting of three containers (Figure 3.1). Innocampus travels to different cities and sets up the



Figure 3.1 Innocampus accelerator program (Innocampus, 2016)

containers in university campus areas where locals interested in learning about entrepreneurship and prototyping skills can join a diverse range of trainings and

programs organized. Innocampus programs have often been sponsored by organizations such as NGO's and local institutions. Cofounders of Innocampus, Memet Ünsal, Serhat Doğan, and Mustafa Osman Turan initiated the project in 2014 after visiting FabLabs in Belgium. Later on, Memet and Serhat founded "Innomate Innovation, Technology and Sustainability Inc." Innomate in 2016 (Ünsal, n.d.). Innomate is a company based in İstanbul, Turkey developing and conducting entrepreneurship and technical trainings as a service. Innocampus team includes the project founders, employees, and volunteer experts. The team and their roles vary in their responsibilities based on their professions and seniority levels in the organizations (Innocampus, n.d.; Innomate, n.d.).

Innocampus organizes a range of trainings and events, including startup accelerator programs, Startup Weekends, Hackathons, YapLab programs, and high school summer camps. YapLab programs are trainings organized by Innocampus facilitating group, alumni or program participants teaching different ways of making including rapid prototyping methods such as 3D printing and laser cutting, IoT, electronics, robotics trainings, digital design, and design thinking

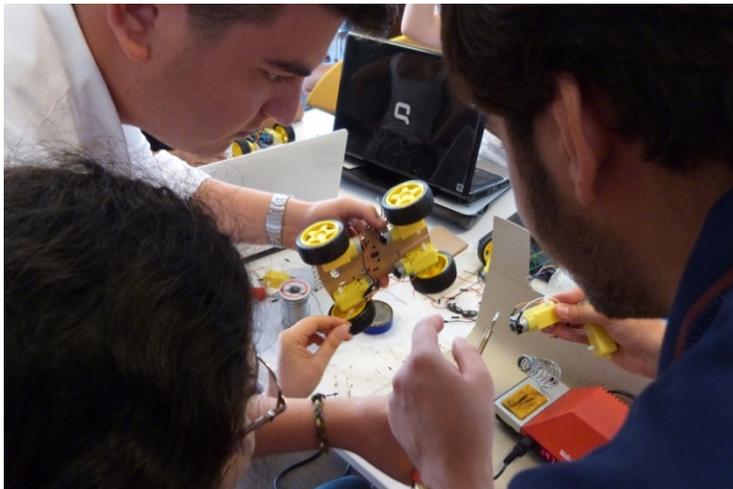


Figure 3.2 Innocampus YapLab Training on Robotics
(inno_campus, 2017)

(Innocampus, 2017).

This inquiry focuses on participants and alumni of startup accelerator programs organized by Innocampus, which includes a Startup Weekend, elements of YapLab programs, and more than 90 hours of entrepreneurship training content delivered over the course of two to three months to participants.

Before the start of the accelerator program, Innocampus promotes its arrival to the new location and the upcoming program online and in print through direct and indirect channels, including social media, student clubs, and announcement panels located in the campuses of host universities. Potential participants are required to apply to the program with their project ideas as a team or individually through online forms created by the Innocampus team. After applications, applicants are invited to one-to-one interviews to explain their business models, the participants who pass this stage are then invited to a “Startup Weekend”, which is also called “Hackathon”. The program process of the Innocampus accelerator program described above can also be seen as illustrated in Figure 3.3.



Figure 3.3 Innocampus accelerator program process

3.1.1.1 Startup Weekend Event / Hackathon

Accepted participants are invited to join the Startup Weekend event organized by Innocampus, where the second round of evaluations takes place. The Startup Weekend is a 48-hour event format where teams work on developing their ideas

and presentations to explain their projects to a jury of experts. Innocampus Startup Weekend events include trainings on the basics of business design, such as how to create a business model canvas (a tool used to describe, analyze, and design business models (Au et al., 2011) and instructions on how to create a startup pitch deck (a presentation prepared to showcase company's product, technology, and team to potential investors (Harroch, 2020)) and deliver it to an audience. During these two days, teams continue working on their ideas while getting trainings and incorporating them into their activities.

At the end of the event, teams present their ideas to a jury assembled of Innocampus organizers and external guest mentors invited. After evaluation by a jury, accepted teams to the accelerator are then invited to join the program. Once accepted to the program, participants start by attending the trainings organized by Innocampus for the remaining duration of the startup accelerator program.

3.1.1.2 Innocampus Accelerator Program

The accelerator program run by Innocampus is divided into three main stages, which aim to enable participants to learn to reflect on their business ideas, make develop and prototype them, and learn to sell them. The mobile structure (containers) is assembled at locations, typically university campuses, where Innocampus programs are intended to run. Innocampus trainings and programs are then provided by experts and mentors in their fields within this mobile facility.



Figure 3.4 Training activity inside Innocampus containers

The Innocampus accelerator program includes trainings concerning the skills related to team development, product development, and business development. As mentioned before, these training topics are organized and provided in three stages with the aim of teaching participants how to think, how to make, and how to sell.

Technical trainings are also provided to participants as part of the accelerator program to teach traditional, digital, and rapid prototyping methods enabling them to create working prototypes of their ideas. Topics provided in the technical trainings include 3D printing, laser cutting, CNC routing, Arduino, and app development. As described earlier, there is an application process for applicants to join the Innocampus accelerator program; technical trainings are, however, are occasionally open for the participation of the general public as well.

Innocampus training days start with participants, facilitators, and guest experts all meeting at the containers at times between nine and ten in the morning. After everyone arrives, the days start with an activity where all participants gather in a circle, each shares a word about how their past day has been and what they are looking forward regarding the day ahead, which is named “Burdayım”, a Turkish phrase meaning “I am here”.

After finishing “Burdayım”, trainings begin with a presentation or a briefing done by the guest experts on the topics of the training, examples of which can be seen are given in Table 3.1. Trainings then continue with participants and their teams presenting business ideas and their progress while experts give them feedback. After a round of presentations, the afternoon is spent with a second training or workshop by trainers to help participants further develop their projects.

Table 3.1 Training topics and entrepreneurs/experts from Innocampus Gaziantep accelerator program (Innocampus, 2016)

Training Topic	Instructor	Company
MBTI Personality Test	Boran Şimşek	Duracell
Design Thinking	Kerem Alper	Atölye İstanbul
3D Printer Modelling	Taceddin Ölmez	Innocampus
Collective Leadership	Behice Ertenü	Boğaziçi University
Market and Financial Analysis	Tuğrul Ağırbaş	Anadolu Efes
Business Fit Test	İhsan Elgin	Core Strategy
Business Law for Syrians under Temporary Protection	Zehra Sağlam	Sağlam Law Firm

Mentors and experts joining Innocampus trainings have been of different companies and backgrounds. There have been guest speakers who have been freelancers, managers at large corporations such as Anadolu Efes and Duracell, consultancies, or of entrepreneurship background. Each guest mentor and speaker has taken part in the program sharing their expertise in different domains to address the diverse range of topics participants in the programs may need to succeed following their participation.

Depending on stakeholders, time limits, and other contextual factors, sometimes modifications are also done to the program, such as including or removing certain topics and trainings. For instance, since the accelerator program held in Gaziantep included Syrians residing in Turkey as well as local people, a training topic titled “Business Law for Syrians under Temporary Protection” was added to the program to support the Syrian participants.

3.1.1.3 Demo Day and (Startup Pitch Deck Presentation)

At the end of the accelerator program, a public Demo Day event is organized to where investors, experts, companies, and potential customers of participants are invited. The participants who completed their project development present their ideas with their Pitch Decks.

After the end of the program, the alumni and participants of the program can stay in communication through individual channels and WhatsApp groups created by Innocampus prior to the program, where all alumni are included and can communicate with one another.

3.1.1.4 Innocampus Participants

Innocampus organized eight startup accelerator programs in Adana, Çanakkale, Gaziantep, İstanbul, İzmir, Şanlıurfa, Seferihisar, and Urla between 2015 and 2017. As of 2020, there are 685 alumni who have participated in trainings or accelerator programs organized by Innocampus. Most participants have been between the ages of 19 to 26 years old, but the youngest participants were 15 years old at the time of their participation, and there have also been more than 30 people older than 26 years old. According to the data shared by Innocampus, at the time of their participation, 576 participants have been continuing their education, and 58 of them have been graduated from different levels of higher education. The education topics and level of participants at the time of their participation in the programs vary, as demonstrated in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Education level of Innocampus participants at the time of their participation in the Innocampus program

	Enrollment in Education During Innocampus Program	Existing Educational Degree During Innocampus Program
High School	78	-
Undergraduate	467	52
Master	28	2
PhD	3	0
Other	-	4

The professions and expertise domain of the alumni vary. Among them, there are students and professionals from the fields of computer engineering, mechanical engineering, design, architecture, education, social science, science, and other engineering domains. As visible in Table 3.2, most participants have been enrolled in university and studying undergraduate degree during their participation in the program. Due to this, most participants may have been relatively new in their domains even if advantages due to university studies exist among their expertise. The distribution of expertise domain among participants in the Innocampus are demonstrated in Figure 3.5

It is important to also mention that in certain programs of Innocampus, there have been participants from Syria as well as other nationalities alongside Turkish participants. The ratio of foreign participants in various programs and cities is given in table 3.3.

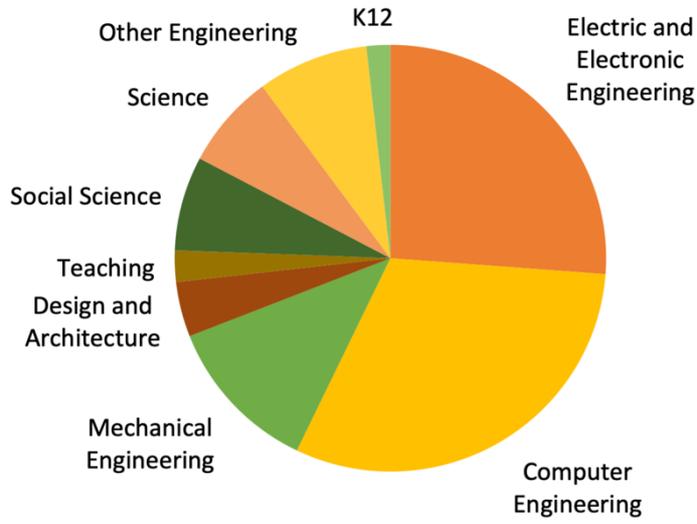


Figure 3.5 Expertise distribution of participants at Innocampus Accelerator Program

Table 3.3 Foreign Participation in Innocampus Programs

City	Program Type	Nationality		Gender	
		Turkish	Foreign	Male	Female
Gaziantep	Summer Accelerator	8	21	24	5
Gaziantep	YapLab + Maker Fest	42	3	39	6
Urla (İzmir)	Summer Accelerator	14	9	13	10
Şanlıurfa	Summer Accelerator	19	13	22	10
Şanlıurfa	YapLab + Maker Fest	51	1	23	29

3.2 Sampling and Data Collection

With a constructivist approach, I aim to interpret individual accounts of Innocampus alumni regarding the experience of the accelerator program before, during, and after graduating from the program. Over this section, the process in which the participants were selected for this study, formation of interview questions, and conduct of semi-structured interviews as the main method of data collection in this study are explained.

In the selection of the sample for this study, the goal has been to select a sample from the population of Innocampus Accelerator program alumni that can best represent the group and diverse experiences. Diversity of the sample has been important in this case due to its potential in finding negative and exceptional cases (Gray, 2004, p. 324). With this in mind, a combination of maximum variation sampling and snowball sampling strategies has been combined to reach out and select the sample group. Maximum variation sampling requires diversification of cases to cover a range of variations with the goal of testing and challenging potential main patterns in terms of their validity for the group. After confirmation of the first group in the study, snowball sampling has been used to reach out and extend the reach to potential interviewees and achieve a richer sample group (Gray, 2004, p. 325).

Prior to the interviews, an application form (See Appendix A) to take part in the study was formed, and it was shared by the Innocampus team within alumni communication channels. Two of the participants showed their interest in joining the study by filling the application form and sharing their contact information. Participants who filled the form were then contacted to organize interviews. The remaining 11 participants of the study were invited through introductions made directly by Innocampus team members or interviewees who had participated in the study themselves. While pursuing introductions and references, interviewees were

encouraged to make introductions to Innocampus alumni of programs in different locations.

Individuals who filled in the form and shared their intention to take part in the study were then contacted and informed about the aim and scope of the study. While informing the participants, information about the aim of the study, the importance of their contributions, and the extent to which their data will be used was shared. Conditions of the study in which participants' contributions were completely voluntary basis and their right of withdrawal without providing any reasons were also communicated during these calls. Following applicants' confirmation, a written consent form (See Appendix B) was shared in print or through email with the participants. Since the interviewees of the study consisted of Turkish and foreigners living in Turkey, the consent form was prepared both in Turkish and English (See Appendix C). During interviews, verbal consent was then obtained. Filled and signed confirmation of the written consent form was also requested from participants to audio record interviews and use obtained recordings for transcription and analysis in the scope of this research.

While 13 interviews were held, two of them were omitted due to multiple cutoffs and the unreadability of the interview data. Among the 11 participants whose interviews were studied throughout this study, there are interviewees who have participated in Innocampus accelerator programs run in Adana, Gaziantep, Şile, and Şanlıurfa. One of the interviewees was Syrian, where the interview was conducted in English, and the remaining interviews were held in Turkish. Among the participants, two were female, and nine were male. Among interviewees, there are two alumni from Gaziantep program, five participants from the Işık University program, three participants from the Şanlıurfa program, and one from the Adana accelerator program. Four of the interviewees participating in the study had experience or prior knowledge about entrepreneurship before participating in the Innocampus accelerator program.

3.2.1 Preliminary Pilot Study and the Interview Guide

Over this section, to explore the alignment of the potential interviews, the process in which the interviews realized during this study was designed and tested before implementation are described. I started with literature research on the themes related to this study, such as entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship ecosystems, accelerator programs and role of social networks in supporting entrepreneurs in their engagement with different stakeholders.

A set of interview questions was created based on research questions related to this thesis and the topics mentioned in the literature review explored. After creating the first draft for interview questions, I contacted some alumni of Innocampus whose contact information was available. After contacting and briefing them on the purpose of the pilot study, it was accepted by one participant. An interview was then organized with the participant. After the interview, a transcript of the selected interview was prepared and coded. The coding of the interview was then evaluated together with the thesis advisor. After the revisions, the questions were finalized, and the interview guidelines were prepared in both English (See Appendix D) and Turkish (See Appendix E).

The interview guide was divided into three sections (See Appendix C), questioning experiences of alumni before, during, and after Innocampus Accelerator Program. The first section focused on framing the background of participants and understanding their interactions and perspectives before and while joining the program. The second section aimed at understanding social interactions, collaborations, and their perceived influence on the participants. The third section focused on the activities of participants after finishing the program, their interactions with the Innocampus if continued, and their reflections on their experience from Innocampus as well as its influence on their current activities.

3.2.2 Interviews

Interviews were organized with the participants in order to understand the perspective of Innocampus alumni regarding their interactions before, during, and after the program and factors influencing the continuation of their engagement with Innocampus and its actors following the program. During the interviews, participants were asked about their related experiences, memories, feelings, expectations, and concerns, as well as the state of their interactions with other Innocampus participants, mentors, and facilitators.

The semi-structured interview format was preferred since it allowed for a degree of freedom that enabled further exploration of topics related to the research and probing interviewees where further detail and context was available (Gray, 2004). 13 semi-structured interviews were held with the alumni of the Innocampus Accelerator Program, the duration of which ranged between 20 to 90 minutes. Participants of the study were located in different cities across Turkey, and due to the logistical difficulties in visiting them, ten interviews were held online person online as video calls using online communication tools such as Whereby (Appear.in), which were recorded, and two of them in person. An interview guideline consisting of topics and questions to be covered was prepared to be used during the interviews (See Appendix D and E). The guideline was also prepared in English and Turkish due to the varying nationality of participants. The wording and order of questions were changed often during the interviews to maintain naturality and flow of interviews, but the set of questions addressed among all interviews remained similar to keep consistency. During interviews, note-taking by the researcher was also used to capture the data and enable reflection on interviews following their conduct.

The interview guide was divided into three sections (See Appendix D and E), questioning experiences of alumni before, during, and after Innocampus Accelerator Program. The first section focused on framing the background of

participants and understanding their interactions and perspectives before and during the joining process to the program. The second group of questions was aimed at understanding social interactions, collaborations, and the perceived influence of the program on the participants. The third section focused on the activities of participants after finishing the program, their interactions with the Innocampus if continued, and their reflections on their experience from Innocampus as well as its influence on their current activities.

3.2.3 Being an Insider

I am an alumnus of the Innocampus Accelerator program organized in Gaziantep, where I worked on developing my own project. I'm also currently active in the entrepreneurship domain, working closely with entrepreneurs in and out of Turkey. As a researcher, it could be argued that I am identified as an insider to the group under the study due to my involvement in the domain and shared cultural attributes in terms of activity in entrepreneurship (Greene, 2014).

Being an insider to the study group comes with influential factors on the study, which can translate to both benefits and otherwise. These factors vary based on the extent that one can be considered as an insider to the group.

The researcher may be a complete insider, sharing multiple experiences or profound similarities, or it is possible to have only an extent of shared experiences with detachments (Chavez, 2015). At the time where the interviews included in this study have been conducted, I was an alumnus of Innocampus but didn't have constant contact with the network due to several factors. Approximately two had passed from the last Innocampus program, and the team was not actively running accelerator programs at the time. In this context, despite my shared identity as Innocampus alumni with the participants' group, I had a reasonable distance from the participating group due to my difference of nationality, lack of intimate or constant communication with other alumni, and involvement in different networks

of entrepreneurship apart from the Innocampus network. This certain space of standing between an insider and outsider has been part of my perspective as the researcher. While being familiar with the culture under study, the diversity of participants' socioeconomic background has been a constant motivation to understand the phenomena under study from their perspective. While this study may be influenced by my subjectivity as an insider, the positioning is relative and may be explored further (Merriam et al., 2001). As that may be, the process has been implemented with the goal of allowing for honest representation of the interviewee's views and perspective under the circumstances.

3.3 Data Analysis

The data was collected through interviews; the first step taken has been to transcribe the interview data. Verbatim transcription of all interviews has been done to create a full account of interviews and participants. After completion of transcriptions, interviews with extensive problems in their listenability and coherency have been omitted from further analysis. Due to my linguistic limitations in Turkish, transcriptions held in the language have all been reviewed by a language expert to correct spelling and grammar mistakes.

Transcribed data has been analyzed using the template analysis method (King, 2012). First, based on inquiries raised by the subject of this study and questions used in the interviews, an initial template for the thematic codes has been created. Then, interview data has been segmented and coded in detail to explore issues and concerns raised by interviewees. Taking into consideration my language limitations, stricter and in-depth coding has been done to make more specific data organization possible. During the process of coding, revisions have been made to the initial template by adding and removing certain parent codes. After finalizing the codes, transcriptions have been reviewed until no new or relevant data has been found. Selected examples from transcriptions of Turkish as their main language have been translated into English to be used as quotations throughout this study.

3.4 Limitations of the Data Collection Process

Data collection and analysis of this study have had limitations regarding to the case study, research field, and my language barriers. The Innocampus Accelerator program has been discontinued prior to the initiation of this study. This affected accessing potential participants due to their limited engagement with the group at the time of the research. This limitation extends to accessing members who have not continued their communication with Innocampus or stopped their entrepreneurship journey. Due to the locational dispersion of the sample pool, there have been logistical and financial limitations in doing physical interviews with potential participants possible. Most interviews organized during the study have been held in Turkish. As it is not my native language, some limitations have existed in conducting and transcribing these interviews.

3.5 Summary

This chapter has described the methodology used to plan data collection and analysis of the field research. The goal during the conduct of this study has been to understand the topic of research from the perspective of participants. Thus, a constructive approach has been adopted since the perspective of this research is that meaning is created by participants and only interpreted by the researcher. Semi-structured interviews as a method of qualitative research have been conducted with 13 Innocampus Accelerator program alumni. Over the study, interviewees have been questioned about their background before joining the program, their interactions, and influential factors on their change before, during, and after the program. Collected data has been transcribed and then analyzed using the template analysis method. Themes and related codes to the subject of the study have been formed following a thorough analysis of the collected data.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter includes the analysis of 11 interviews from the 13 interviews conducted with the alumni of Innocampus accelerator program. 13 interviews have been held with alumni of Innocampus regarding their journey and experiences with the aim of understanding their reflection on their experiences before, during and after the program. These interviews play a role in understanding the motivation to participate in the program and sustain their involvement after graduation. Interactions in Innocampus exist in multiple directions among stakeholders of the program, however in context of this research, I focus on interpersonal interactions from the perspective of Innocampus participants as demonstrated in (Figure 4.1). It must be mentioned that these interactions extend to organizations and experts that participants are introduced to with the help of facilitators, mentors, and other participants of Innocampus.

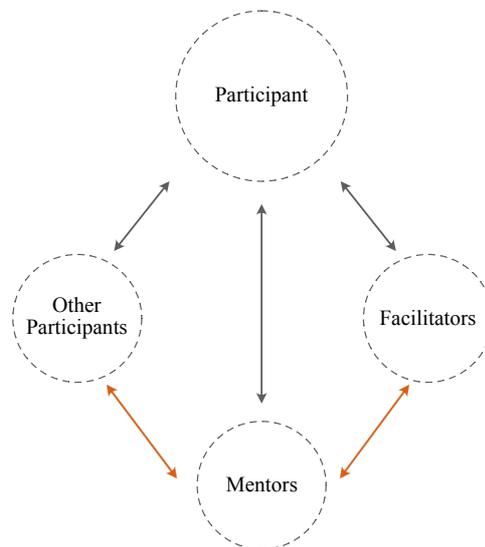


Figure 4.1 Interpersonal Interactions Among Participants within an Innocampus Accelerator Program

4.1 Pre-Innocampus: Onboarding to the Innocampus Accelerator Program

The process of introduction and joining Innocampus Accelerator program for most participants of the study has happened in three stages: introduction to Innocampus, application process and evaluation process.

The participants of Innocampus have been introduced to the program through four main channels: i) they have been directly invited to the program, ii) been referred through partner organizations such as universities, iii) been introduced to the program through friends and relatives, or iv) have learned about it through social media and online promotions. Most participants have heard about the program through promotions done physically and digitally in their respective universities or other related organizations collaborating with Innocampus.

In multiple accounts participants have mentioned having heard of the program through promotions of events or friends or contacts who have attended in events organized by Innocampus or where Innocampus has taken an active role. Participants have mentioned taking part in events organized by Innocampus in collaboration with their universities or familiar organizations that they have been present at. On some accounts, interviewees have mentioned hearing about Innocampus from digital and physical promotions in their university, or digital groups belonging to local groups on Facebook or Twitter. Programs and the arrival of the containers has been announced and promoted through posters published and distributed in university campuses close to the launch location of the program.

As mentioned by the participants and evident in (Figure 4.2), these promotions have included information on programs, containers, and utilities available in the



**Tanıtım toplantısı 5 Ekim Perşembe
saat 13:30 da, Mühendislik Amfisinde**

Aklında girişimcilik fikrin, hayallerinde iyi bir girişimci
olmak varsa yanında InnoCampus var.
Hemen başvur, iş fikrini hayata geçir!

Son Başvuru: 19 Ekim 2017

*Detaylı bilgi ve başvuru için: innocampus.org
Başarılı takımlara hibe desteği verilecektir.*

Figure 4.2 Innocampus accelerator program promotion for Şanlıurfa Accelerator Program (Innoampus Şanlıurfa Girişim Hızlandırıcı Programı, 2017) (See Appendix G for English translation)

containers to participants. In some cases, however, participants have gotten aware of the program through events that Innocampus team have participated in or through direct referrals from trusted acquaintances.

4.1.1 Motivations in Applying to Innocampus Accelerator Program

For most interviewees in the study, joining the Innocampus program has been their first experience with entrepreneurship. While this may be the case, most of these interviewees have also had experiences taking initiatives in activities, designing, and making tools and products or in some cases starting businesses; The extent and focus of these activities vary based on age, expertise, and their interests. Experience and prior knowledge about entrepreneurship in this context seem to have had an influence on motivations of participants in joining the program.

Interviewees who have had past experiences with startups, accelerator programs, or have participated in activities in similar domains tend to have more defined expectations regarding value they intend to get from the program. Their expected outcome prior to joining the program could be being enabled to establish their business, speed up their development progress in comparison to their own pacing or just being able to have access to an environment where they can collaborate with their teammates better.

Interviewees who haven't taken part in entrepreneurship activities or accelerators before Innocampus, have mentioned their motivation in joining the program to be access to available tools in the containers, validating their capabilities or understanding the potential and value of their idea to become a business. Being able to use 3D printers, or technical devices otherwise inaccessible to applicants, have had a strong factor in their decision to join the program.

Some of the interviewees graduated from Innocampus accelerator programs in different cities have also mentioned how they have been motivated to join Innocampus because it would enable them to get access to activities, resources and networks that was otherwise too costly or inaccessible to reach. Interviewees have compared joining Innocampus to the being in Istanbul on multiple occasions as

most entrepreneurship related activities are seen to be mostly there. One participant shares his experience as follows:

Every month I visited [Istanbul] 4, 5 or 6 times, when you think about it, considering the flight prices, travelling 6 times between [city name] and Istanbul in one month is costly...these are not easy for a 21 and 22 year old, but something called Innocampus turns up, visits your city over the weekends, and brings the same people who you go to listen to in Istanbul to your feet. You leave your house in the morning, go and to listen to this person, not in a conference hall for 1000 people [where they usually present], but in a meeting room with only 15 people (See Appendix F.1 for original data).

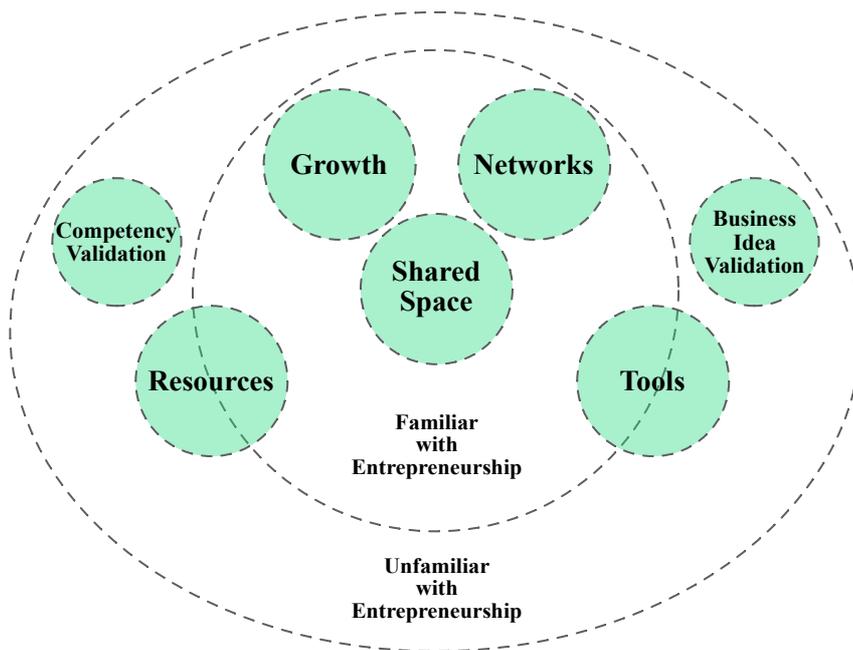


Figure 4.3 Correlation of motivation with joining Innocampus accelerator program

4.1.2 Innocampus Application Evaluation Process

Most participants of the study have been called by Innocampus team after their application to the program. These calls have mostly been the introduction point of applicants with the team, and an evaluation stage where they have been questioned about their projects, motivations, and potential questions about the program. In some cases, participants have also been invited to face to face interviews where they have been evaluated for the program with the Innocampus group being present.

4.1.2.1 Participating in the Hackathon

Following the Interviews, accepted teams participated in a 48-hour hackathon where they were asked to develop their businesses ideas further. The hackathon organized before the accelerator program is the last stage of teams' evaluation to join the program. This event has also been first experience of participants getting to know other applicants, meeting Innocampus organizing team and mentors present to help teams throughout the program. One participant mentions that the hackathon was the beginning and an experience signaling the upcoming program.

4.1.2.2 First Impressions: The Hackathon Experience

The hackathon carries importance as it is the first point facilitators, mentors, other teams, and peers are present in the same place. Due to the duration of the event and extended exposure of participants to present people and the environment, various dynamics form which worth mentioning. Joining the hackathon environment while exciting for participants as an opportunity to work further on their ideas, has also been stressful and concerning at first. Participants joining the activity have shared their hesitations and concerns in engagement at first based on their lack of familiarity with people and space. In some cases, these first reactions have also been accompanied by biases or contempt for groups of different nationalities.

Participants who experience these hesitations, have also mentioned their caution and concerns in communicating, continuing the program, and even sharing their ideas to get feedback from mentors and facilitators in the program.

4.1.2.3 Searching for a Sense of Familiarity

In their entrance to the hackathon some participants seem to be looking for a sense of familiarity. An example of this sense of familiarity is whether or not there are people who participants have met or know from before joining the program. It can also manifest as whether participants are able to identify similarities in themselves with other people or activities done. One participant shares her experience after joining the hackathon as:

When we first got there, I was really nervous. After listening to projects, (I was asking myself) what am I doing here? What has this got to do anything?" then she continues explaining "Everyone was getting to know each other and presenting their ideas, so were we. But I wanted to leave and run away, this was my first reaction (See Appendix F.2 for original data).

In these cases, a number of factors have had positive effect on encouraging engagement of participants with peers, facilitators and mentors present in the space. Seeing someone that participants are already familiar with and are comfortable has been encouraging. In other cases, the influence of facilitators on the development of the project and motivation of the teams to continue has also been a topic repeatedly mentioned by participants which has led to motivate them to develop themselves and their projects.

In cases where participants have had a certain level of familiarity with entrepreneurship programs or their introduction to Innocampus has been made through close acquaintances, these first reactions seem to be influenced and vary.

These participants have shared a more enthusiastic and positive first experience in the hackathon.

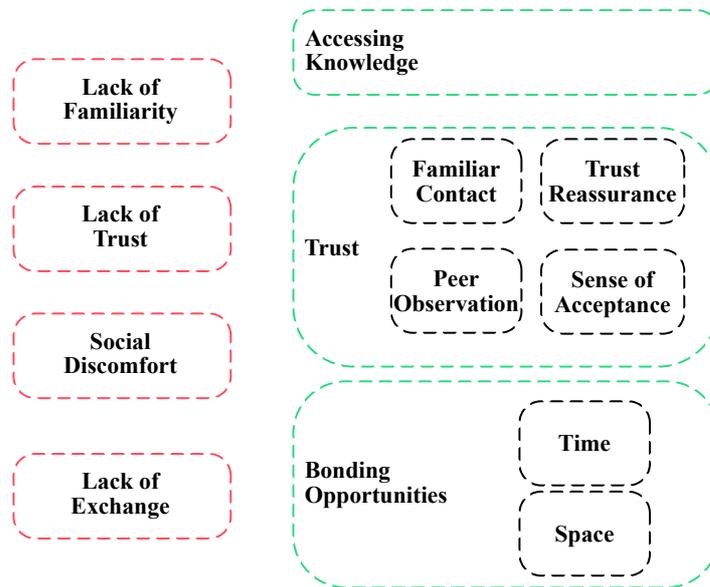


Figure 4.4 Challenges of participant engagement and resolution factors

4.1.2.4 Facilitators of Knowledge Exchange: Trust and Motivation to Access Resources

In some accounts, participants have mentioned concerns and hesitations about sharing information and ideas related to their projects with others present in the hackathon. The main reason for their hesitance in sharing these information roots in participants' lack of trust in others present in the sessions at the beginning. In these accounts there have been two factors that have encouraged participants to engage with the program and overcome their hesitations based on the reflections shared. These two factors are realization of interactions that have created trust in participants towards stakeholders present in the hackathon and the motivation to access resources which in this case has been knowledge of mentors and facilitators.

Meanwhile, in peer-to-peer attempts of understanding or sharing ideas, some interviewees have mentioned that when they have attempted to understand others' ideas in some cases or been approached by peers who have been curious about their ideas, there has been an early hesitation towards sharing their ideas because of the fear that their ideas may be stolen. But as time passes in the hackathon, and participants share their ideas with mentors, a participant suggests they also get more comfortable sharing their ideas with other teams.

Based on reflections shared by the participants, development and reassurance of trust has been an important factor in increasing engagement of participants with mentors, facilitators, and peers. Some participants who had joined hackathons prior to Innocampus, compare their experiences to past events from two main perspectives, whether the priorities of activities and interactions has been on development of participants or other subjects and whether there has been a continued support following the activity. On the latter issue, one of the participants mentions how in most hackathons he has taken part in there is a prize in the end, but independent of whether a team wins the prize, there is barely a follow-up with the teams, the continuation of the Innocampus hackathon with the accelerator has a positive difference for the interviewee.

4.1.2.5 Building Trust: Commitments of Program Stakeholders

Other participants also mention how in the activities they have participated in prior to Innocampus, they felt that focus and expectation of organizers and sponsor organizations have not been on their projects and personal developments. One participant puts it as follows: "This was the first time we didn't wear t-shirts belonging to the sponsors in a hackathon; we would wear their wrist bands, their t-shirts... while here (in Innocampus) they told us to develop our ideas." (See Appendix F.3 for original data). Another participant explains his first experience in Innocampus as "you don't have to fit in a personality frame, or an identity, you can join as the person you are. They get to know you for the person you are, but in

other trainings, you have to fit their expected personality frames (expected by organizers or sponsor organizations)." (See Appendix F.4 for original data)

In development of trust and reliance, cases of support and commitment of facilitators towards development and encouragement of teams have been repeated multiple times. These can be in simple forms as to compliment and share excitement about future of participants' projects, guiding participants by showing weaknesses in their projects and potential places to search for solutions, or more action-based behavior such as accompanying and staying over the weekend as well as weekdays.

A rather interesting attitude that participants have shared, is how their perspective on stakeholders can encourage their engagement with them. Some participants for instance have mentioned to have feared their ideas being stolen by peers, mentors, or facilitators during the hackathon. In these situations, extended time spent in the same environment, observation opportunities of interactions between other people present, interest in developing their projects, and motivation to access available resources including expert knowledge and diverse thoughts have played a role in encouraging participants to share their ideas.

The motivation to get access to knowledge and thoughts of other participants has been a determining factor in members taking a leap of faith and sharing their ideas with mentors present in the hackathon. One of the interviewees explains:

Letting go of this thought (that people may steal your ideas) became a good thing. Because entrepreneurship doesn't rely only on one idea, you may have different ideas about life and whether or not your startup idea will work or not, or we may need insights of some people. We need feedbacks, and you need to get these feedbacks. And to get these feedbacks you need to explain your project to people clearly. You should explain it in a way that no questions are

left in people's minds so that they can help your project or give feedbacks such as "this project will work", "these are the flaws of your project", or "your project may succeed if you give these". (See Appendix F.33 for original data)

4.1.2.6 Facilitating Collaboration and Bonding: Shared Space

Extended time that participants have been sharing the space in which the hackathon has taken place in, has also had an influence on enabling interactions and bonding among participants. During this time, some participants have formed new teams, and at some instances changed their biases towards certain groups completely. To demonstrate the extent of this bonding, an account from one of the interviewees describes the change of bias and attitude they have experienced throughout the hackathon while being exposed and sharing a space over 48 hours with foreigners taking part in the program. The interviewee explains the experience as follows:

I had never communicated to a Syrian in my life, even when they asked for directions (in the street), we never showed, because we thought they would harm us. We follow news and Twitter, there we read things about instances that someone (a Syrian) came and stabbed his house owner... But after spending 48 hours with that person who was asking us for directions, we started to warm up in our communication... You know when there is a favorite soccer team you watch on television. One day you go to the airport, and you meet them in person, take photographs and understand that soccer player is also an average person like you, just because he has chosen to play soccer, he become famous. That is what we realized; we saw those who we have been named as "Syrians" could actually be our friends (See Appendix F.5 for original data).

4.2 During-Innocampus: The Participants' Experience of Innocampus Accelerator Program

One of the important aspects for Innocampus participants has been the accessibility that it has created for them. This accessibility has been to networks and resources such as people, and knowledge otherwise out of their reach or costly to access.

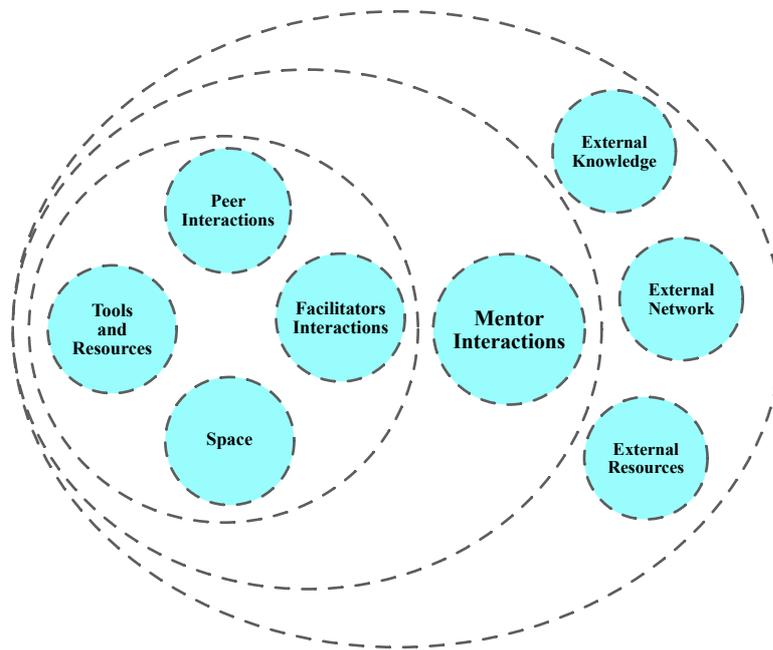


Figure 4.5 Scope of interactions discussed by interviewees

4.2.1 New Networks

The arrival of new people to the program has also benefitted participants in terms of the networks they get access to and learning about new perspectives. Firstly, it has been through the introductions that they have made to their own network. While not significant in immediate instance, through repeated introductions made by different mentors, the participants have shared their growing outreach to different networks. In addition to this, by growing aware of coming guests

(speakers, mentors, experts) and their activities they have also been able to learn about and follow activities of dependent organizations in their networks.

These conditions have enabled participants' access to mentors and their resources, which has led to the perspective described by an interviewee as follows: "If you only have a business idea and a team, over the program you had enough mentor support to develop an MVP [minimum viable product] and even get investment at the end of the process." (See Appendix F.6 for original data)

4.2.1.1 Visiting Trainers and Mentors

In the sessions over Innocampus accelerator program, after guest mentors arrive, they usually make a presentation and then there is a time frame where founders get to interact with them on a one-on-one basis. On multiple accounts, participants have mentioned that they think mentors that joined the Innocampus process have been people that if they hadn't met in Innocampus, they wouldn't have a chance to get to know them. This thought is because of the level of expertise and success of these people, also one of the participants adds that while mentors arriving may have been people with 10 to 20 years of experience in their relative fields, they have been eager to share their knowledge and experience, and also have been able to communicate their experiences and thought very clearly and to the point and this is something that may have not been as easy to make possible. One of the participants explains his thoughts as follows:

Here, it isn't just 3D printers, there are some people that you follow on social media, for example there was Erhan Erkut whom I was following, and then I suddenly noticed that they have brought him as a speaker to our program. (See Appendix F.7 for original data)

4.2.1.2 Bonding and Sharing an Intimate Space with Mentors

Participants mention an aspect of these interactions with the mentors during the program that has been important for them: the opportunity to share a small space and being able to interact one-on-one with them. Following the sessions, it has also been noticeable when mentors have shared their contact information with the teams encouraging them to reach out and continue their communication or even helped them in different manners after the session, they have participated in.

A participant also mentions that the warm attitude of mentors towards participants has helped them build their self-confidence. In his words, he explains:

Generally, we are shy of management members. Tuğrul was a vice president, someone from higher management group and he made us feel like he is one of us. It showed us we can sit with someone from higher management, drink together and talk, this improved our self-confidence. (See Appendix F.8 for original data)

4.2.1.3 Mentors Providing Access to Their Available Resources

The participants have mentioned multiple instances when they have needed assistance in accessing resources required for them to be able to realize their projects or increase their efficiency. In some cases, mentors participating in the program have provided access to these resources and the knowledge on how to use them. Some interviewees have mentioned how they have gotten support from mentors in terms of getting access to these resources required to realize specific projects such as software licenses, tools, and financial resources. In some cases, these assistances have been provided as free access to knowledge, consultancy services, or expertise. But in some cases, mentors have gifted access to software, tools, and technical devices required by entrepreneurs to develop their projects as well.

4.2.1.4 Mentors' Personal Experiences: A Method of Self Reflection

Another aspect of the interactions with mentors that has been mentioned by participants is getting the chance to learn about mentors' personal experiences. Being able to get to know the mentors and hear their experiences seem to allow for relatability and help founders self-reflect on possible future journeys and development paths. Understanding these stories, challenges in their success, methods they have used to overcome their challenges and motivations in continuing these activities are some of the reasons that these stories are important for participants. While mentors' topic of presentations and discussions has changed, participants seem to consider experiences related to their project domain, life and career choices, opportunities, challenges and how they have overcome these challenges relatable and valuable.

4.2.2 Peer-to-Peer Interactions

Over the duration of the accelerator program, participants have had access to the Innocampus containers. At every session, all participants have been coming together and interacted as part of the trainings. Some of those living close to or staying at temporary residences in proximity of the containers have also been able to spend their time in and around containers outside of session times. This access has enabled interactions among participants resulting in bonds, conflicts, opportunities to support one another and in some cases build new groups.

Interactions leading participants to support one another have been mentioned almost by all interviewees in different topics, directions, and forms. The formation of these interactions is due to a combination of activities organized by Innocampus, including resources provided to the participants enabling their access to one another, moderation of facilitators, and initiatives taken by the participants.

4.2.2.1 Elements Driving Peer Support

The types of support provided by the participants to one another varies and are generally in a number of forms. Participants have been helping one another on sharing their skills and expertise where in advantage to others, sharing their thoughts on ideas and projects, their networks, and supporting morally or emotionally as individuals and groups.

The presence of support interactions among participants is a social dynamic that most interviewees discussing the topic, consider as an activity helping everyone involved in the group engaging in the activity with their growth. One of the participants draws a similarity between these interactions in Innocampus and a co-working space in Istanbul:

In these co-working spaces, some people continuously visit these areas, by solving each other's challenges, they raise themselves as well. If there wasn't such a thing, he would stay in the third level, the same situation for months. But because of this, they both grow with their friends and pass to the fourth level the next day. (See Appendix F.9 for original data)

When discussing the factors that have influenced the development of support interactions among participants, being at proximity of each other for extended times, taking part in activities that encourage collaboration, facilitator intervention, and interactions helping to bond beyond activities are the topics mentioned by the participants.

4.2.2.2 Skill Sharing and Knowledge Exchange

Skill sharing has happened on different levels among Innocampus participants. There are two dimensions mentioned by interviewees influencing their decisions on whom to approach that are level of expertise and approachability. As the

participants gain an awareness regarding what other members and teams work on, their strengths and weaknesses, they identify and make prioritizations about whom to approach regarding certain topics. When faced with a challenge, the participants have been asking their peers to teach them, or in some cases, help their peers solve the challenge. There have been multiple examples of some participants' creating logos for others, helping with prototyping their products' electronical components or 3D printing and helping with software development. In other cases, while learning or trying to execute a task, it has also been common for the participants to guide each other or teach each other certain skills necessary to develop their projects.

Another scope of this support has been through exchanging ideas, giving feedback, or sharing opinions. Depending on the topic that a participant has been asked for feedback or asked for feedback, the members approach topics either based on their expertise or look for different perspectives that may be helpful for the member requesting help. One of the methods that two participants have mentioned that they have used to help when the subject of the feedback has not been related to their experience has been to roleplay. They have tried to look at the subject from the perspective of other stakeholders such as customers of the projects and share their thoughts on this.

When teams have been sharing their developments openly in the form of presentations to mentors and facilitators, the participants have had a chance to observe, or have reached out to their peers after seeing their new developments or when they have needed or felt that peers need help regarding a specific topic. When presenting projects to mentors and facilitators inside the containers, all present participants get to observe presenting teams and their progress in time. This helps them identification of possible developments that are positive or can be used for their own projects as well. The audience commenting in these sessions usually

include mentors, facilitators, and other peers. A participant explains an example of this process as follows:

Some team presentations were very good, we would ask them about how they have done it, but more important than that, by seeing what they have done, because when you present you see the methods they use and get impressed by them. So, you won't need to ask them personally, but you see their progress, your own progress, and others' progress. After seeing these, you recognize and follow the changes each team has made as well as the reactions they get right or wrong. (See Appendix F.10 for original data)

In some cases, the participants have mentioned certain competitive dynamics between participating groups inside the accelerator program as well. In cases where a certain degree of competitiveness between participants of Innocampus have been mentioned, they have also mentioned how they have been more cautious on making an observable reaction to their new discoveries not to leak information outside of the group boundaries.

4.2.2.3 Sense of Bonding and Intimacy Among Peers

Informal interactions and bonding opportunities are important for participants to form intimacy with one another. Created intimacy seems to have a direct role in participants' comfort to approach one another, ask for help and give support as well as sustain communications and interactions throughout the program. There are three perspectives that have been more prominent in topics mentioned by the interviewees leading to the creation of stronger bonds among them. These three perspectives include i) the role of Innocampus as an organization and activities requiring interactions among participants, ii) having access, and iii) sharing spaces including but not limited to Innocampus containers.

Activities and trainings organized by Innocampus have encouraged participants to engage with one another. There seems to have been a certain level of discomfort and hesitation in these engagements at first in terms of both psychological and physical engagement. However, since activities are organized as part of the program, a common goal exists for participants at each activity and they are gamified, they seem to have successfully encouraged participants to engage with one another. Some of the interviewees have also correlated physical engagements during activities to have a role in creating intimacy among participants. While reflecting on the process one of the participants also mentions the change of his perspective about team building:

In these activities I would be matched with a member of another team, we would become a team then. Working together, but this wasn't about our project idea, it is a completely different topic, that moment, we would just be playing a game, it was about that. There I noticed this, I work very well with my own team, and we have no problem with each other. But a day will come that I will work with a completely different team. I will be forced to join other teams, even if I don't want it. Trying to adapt to that team had this kind of a benefit for me. We are not friends, but in those two minutes, we would work to win the game for the benefit of that team. (See Appendix F.11 for original data)

4.2.2.4 Social Support Among Peers

Awareness resulting from sharing the containers space enables participants to observe and learn from one another in terms of their social interactions as well. The chance to do these observations enables them to familiarize themselves with others in the program, make categorizations based on similarities and their approachability. It also allows them to stay aware of emotional status of other members and teams. Two of the participants have shared memories of initiating

entertaining activities to motivate or raise the mood of other participants after observing them facing challenges or certain monotony during program.

Being aware of the dynamics in other teams allows participants to learn and reflect on their own practices as well as get an understanding of alternatives in approaching team dynamics. Extending this observation over the duration of program, allows participants to also observe and evaluate on a personal level about how possible outcomes of different group and personal interactions can lead to. One of the participants explains his experience as follows: "You understand how a good team should be like, as you see them and other teams, you get a chance at weighing and comparing good personal and team relationships. This is a beneficial situation, maybe you live through different things and see, or maybe I live through them, and they see, these are all learnings." (See Appendix F.12 for Turkish)

The process of developing projects has had its difficulties for participants. Interviewees have benefitted from these social interactions on both personal and group level. One of the participants shares to have felt motivated and inspired learning about the personal challenges other participants have had in developing their projects:

When I was talking to some teams, they explained how they started their projects and many of them really struggled to get it to a point that it got now, and they influenced me with the determination that they had to push projects forward.

Some other participants have also mentioned taking initiatives to support other teams through creating socialization opportunities. One participant explains that after spending time with other teams and learning when they are going through difficult times or when the general mood of groups is not positive, they have

approached and engaged others as an opportunity to help them take a step back from their challenges and approach them with a fresh perspective.

It must also be mentioned that while majority of participants have shared their excitement and enthusiasm about socialization and bonding with other participants, one of the interviewees who had participated in the program without a team shares a different perspective on development and sustainability of personal relationships with other participants through the program. He explains his thoughts as follows: "This is not that important, because our goal there is to develop a network. It is not to sustain relationships, there already is not any purpose of anyone seeing others later" (See Appendix F.13 for original data). Interviewees who haven't joined the program with a team, or have had difficulty coping with their teams seem to have had more difficulty benefitting from social interactions with peers. In most cases, even if they have supported and helped other participants, they seem to not have been able to benefit from the same support.

4.2.3 Accessibility to Shared Space: Opportunities for Bonding and Collaboration

Being able to share a space for extended periods, allows participants to observe each other's activities, progress, skills, team behaviors, topics they may be working on, and enables access to them. Interviewees have mentioned on multiple accounts to have taken a proactive attitude in talking to other participants and trying to understand other skills and needs, and in some cases intervene as well.

Multiple interviewees have told anecdotes of spending time at the containers after session hours and in some cases over the night. Spending this extended time, allows more opportunity for teams to interact, communicate and support each other. An interviewee explains:

After five, everyone would continue their work and wouldn't leave the containers and teams would communicate with each other during that time. Some teams would learn software engineering from one another, here the relationship wouldn't be like a mentor, teacher, student. You are their teammate or from another team, we learned this here (See Appendix F.14 for original data).

Having access to the shared space has also had an influence on creating motivation in teams. For members who have stayed in the containers over nights and until late times, they mention that being able to see others working even when tired, it creates a sense of need to also be working and keep up with them. One of the participants who has not been able to stay in the campus over nights due to distance of living environment, also shares that after seeing photos of peers and other participants working, has felt motivated to work with the feeling of wanting to be there.

4.2.4 Facilitators and Activities Enabling Interactions Among Participants

The facilitators of Innocampus are the main organizers and coordinators of the program. But they have been a strong influence on the experience in the program for participants as well and this is evident in the reflections shared by interviewees. When framing direct support towards participants during the program, they have been helping teams and participants with technical side of their projects, communications, and collaboration within and among teams through interventions and activities organized as part of the program. In addition to these, they have mentored members, helped them with applying concepts shared in the program, provided access to mentors and experts when required by members and in some cases have supported them with their own means to solve challenges regarding projects. Over the discussion related to facilitators, their honesty towards

participants and attention to their personal and project developments are one of the critical issues that have been mentioned by most participants.

4.2.4.1 Roles of Facilitators for Participants

The facilitators of the program have had different roles for the participants and expectations of them have varied depending on these assigned roles. Participants consider them in the role of mentors, advisors, friends, as a valuable resource and a source of support. However, these assigned roles vary and interviewees have mentioned prioritizations they have had personally for deciding to whom they would approach regarding different topics. Participants seem to consider some members of the organizing group who help them with daily activities more as friends while keeping a more professional relationship with Innocampus members who they consider as also their mentors. They have mentioned additional differentiation based on expertise and roles of facilitators as well.

4.2.4.2 Facilitators as Mentors

While discussing assigned roles towards some of the facilitators they see as their mentors, they consider categorizations of their roles based on expertise, experience, their personal relationship, and their assumed hierarchy in the group. Considering these they have shared tendencies to approach facilitators on different topics, one instance could be their shared preference towards Memet as more of a realist and approach him with their business cases. The participants of the study have repeatedly shared their admiration and value of facilitators for them. For instance, one participant describes Memet as someone with practical knowledge ranging in different parts of business development because of the roles he has taken on in his past experiences. In their interactions with the organizing group, participants have shared their appreciation for being always accessible, having the possibility of getting help one-on-one and being approached sincerely and with sympathy.

For the facilitators who they consider as staff, they have mentioned examples of approaching some regarding problems in more technical issues such as 3D printers, regarding one as more like friends and approach for more personal issues and sometimes as a medium to share issues with the managing group.

4.2.4.3 Facilitators Intervene to Provide Networks and Resources

In their interactions with facilitators, there are a number of issues that participants have mentioned which I will be explaining below. Support and mentorship provided by facilitators has been important and mentioned multiple times by the participants. In cases where facilitators have approached them to help, one of the effects that has been mentioned on multiple accounts and valued by the participants has been the questioning of mentors on their thoughts regarding their own performance and challenges, it has been mentioned that this has been helpful for them specially to enable them to self-evaluate their activities. It has also been mentioned that facilitators themselves have also helped participants in gaining access to certain networks and experts when needed. In addition to this, using their experience and knowledge about these networks they have been guiding participants in how to navigate these external communications as well.

On the other hand, one participant has also mentioned his concern on exceeding the professionalism of the group when the interaction between participants has been emotional. He shares his belief that since Innocampus has not included their emotionality in the process, this has resulted in losing contact with some of the Innocampus participants and the organizing group.

4.2.4.4 Role of Innocampus

In enabling support among the participants, Innocampus Accelerator program and facilitators have also played a prominent role. Some examples include having activities that encourage interactions among peers from different teams, creating

trust through leadership activities and workshops that allow for self-reflection of participants on their own behavioral dynamics in team activities.

Another aspect that has been encouraging for teams in changing their perspective has been the purposive communication of the program expectations at the beginning of the program. One of the interviewees compares the experience to becoming a soccer team, mentioning that everyone in there was like a team that has come together with the shared purpose of bringing their ideas to life and introduce it to customers:

Innocampus team enabled this environment. Even during the hackathon, they never gave the image that some people are going to win here, and some will be eliminated. Everyone has the same purpose here, has an idea and wants to bring that idea together with its potential customers... If you can, you are able to build a personal network with the mentors that come here, with the network you build you can grow your business, or you can even go towards a partnership with other startups that are here. (See Appendix F.15 for original data)

Innocampus activities encouraging social exchanges among participants have been both as part of program trainings and smaller activities that have been repeated throughout the program: While discussing more informal activities encouraging participants to share experiences and bond certain part of walls close to where participants would sit in Innocampus and get feedback from others, activities done at the morning and evening called "Burdayım" (*I'm present*) and "Çıktım" (*I exited*) and body percussions done in the mornings at some of the programs.

In one case, a participant shares some challenges they have had in communicating with one of the teams, which later they start to communicate better and interact more. She thinks that this development is due to engagement and involvement of

the Innocampus team. After noticing these challenges, the Innocampus team has asked everyone to present their projects to other teams to get their feedbacks. After holding these presentations, she mentions that other members have changed their attitude and started to listen to one another.

The activities "Burdayım" and "Çıktım" have also had an impact on participants' interactions and relationships. During the activity, all participants are asked to sit around a chamber sharing how they feel about that day, then in the evening before leaving the group everyone shares how their day has passed and how they feel about the coming day. Over the activity, the participants have been guided to share their thoughts and emotions in the language of their preference. Aspects of this activity that participants mention to have influenced them has been the environment it has created to share personal issues and thoughts as well as professional ones, questioning and reflecting on themselves and developing a habit to continue this reflection. One of the participants explains: "When you say, "I'm here", physically you are, but to also be mentally present you brief the week you have passed... you share your expectations from the coming week... and then you would say "I'm here" and then the program would start." (See Appendix F.16 for original data) While sharing their thoughts, the participants also share their challenges, good and bad news, and this also creates awareness for participants regarding one another and in some cases sympathy. One of the participants shares: "You talk about something good or bad that has happened to you, emotions were being shared, too. Someone who had gone through an illness would share the news that they have come around it and you would get happy with them."

Participation and taking part in performing body percussion activities in the mornings has also been one of the activities that participants have mentioned for its impact on them. Considered together with "Burdayım" activity, interviewees mention that taking part in these activities has acted as a reminder for them to develop themselves on a personal level and feed their souls as well while working

on their business. They have shared appreciation on the focus on learning to be better people and humans, and not feeling like all their focus has been on earning money.

Not all participants and teams have been as open as others to collaboration or supporting one another. However, during the program these activities have had a role in enabling collaborations and create comfort for participants around the topic. During the leadership training, creating an environment where some participants are at a disadvantage and to be able to succeed must rely on others has also had a role in engaging them with each other. During the activity participants are asked to close their eyes apart from one person who takes on the role of leader in the created group. One of the interviewees explains the process:

You may hit a stone, and everyone stops, someone you don't know well suddenly bumps into you and you bump into them. You get into physical contact with people that normally you don't contact physically, and you try to achieve a common goal. The leader with open eyes, also tries to give the correct directive as everyone listens to him. You are supposed to listen to someone you had never listened to before. I think these would create intimacy (See Appendix F.17 for original data).



Figure 4.6 Leadership training at Innocampus accelerator program (Innocampus, 2016)

During the program, Innocampus has also asked present participants to take part in creating and doing new group activities. One of the interviewees who have contributed to developing these activities also mentions that taking part in helping other participants can be fulfilling for oneself as well.

4.2.5 Challenges in Peer-to-Peer Interactions

Not all participants have been able to get support from their peers as they expected. Participants have mentioned two cases that have made it more difficult to get feedback from others. One of the participants who has been working on a B2B technical project, has mentioned receiving less feedback from peers on his projects. The reason seems to be the subject of the project being outside experience and knowledge domain of other participants being a barrier to them being able to contribute. The interviewee sharing this view has mentioned to have been spending social time with other participants, engagement and interaction with other participants both personally and in supporting their projects. Another case mentioned has been by three of the participants who have not had teams while

taking part in the program or had weaker internal team interactions. In this case they also seem to have less feedback from their peers than they have expected. One of the participants shares his view: "My expertise was in software engineering, and they had their own domains, even small helps would be helpful, because I was alone. I was exhausted working on my own". In these case taking a pro-active stance in inviting peers to support each other and give feedback seems to have been an effective approach as one of the participants explains his process as follows: "We had walls that we were provided with in Innocampus, your wall would be the space right behind you, and we would help each other; but I wouldn't work on my wall much so I didn't keep myself active on the wall. But we worked together while searching for a logo." (See Appendix F.18 for original data)

4.2.6 Challenges of Sharing a Space

Sharing space as discussed by interviewees seems to have had positive impact for participants in a variety of ways, it has also been challenging in some cases. Multiple participants have shared experiences of non-positive interactions with other participants. One of the interviewees shares his experience as follows: "Normally, when I didn't like a person in an environment, I could distance myself, but here I couldn't, we need to stay together, sometimes even hold hands, we may need to work on an activity together, we have to communicate continuously." (See Appendix F.19 for original data) In these cases, as also mentioned in the experiences of interviewees during the hackathon, the participants seem to have found ways to adapt by changing perspective and behavior. For instance, in this case, the interviewee shares his adaptation to the process as follows:

When I see someone and perceive them to be bad, for them not to harm me, I have grown to avoid any interaction with them... but there, to develop a project that we are working on together, I had to keep a good relationship, at least to be able to warn the person; or to organize them I had to think like

them, to empathize with them, and here I solved the problem by approaching things like them. (See Appendix F.20 for original data)

4.3 Post-Innocampus

The process of Innocampus has had its contributions in equipping participants with skills beneficial to their professional life and their practices of entrepreneurship. Some of these skills and practices have included design thinking, basic financial skills, 3D printing, business model design, pricing, marketing and a range of other topics. Having experienced and participated in training regarding these topics during the participation in Innocampus, the interviewees have mentioned changes of perception and behavior that continues to affect their behavior following their graduation.

4.3.1 Alumni Application of Learnings from Innocampus

Some of the participants mention different ways in which they are applying their learnings from Innocampus in their current conditions and how Innocampus has enabled them to foresee and tackle challenges that may exist in the process. These topics can be strategies to evaluate business ideas, analyze their strengths and weaknesses, being able to research important issues related to implementation of an idea, building or managing interdisciplinary teams, present ideas and connect people without hesitation.

In some cases, the interviewees have also mentioned working further on their learnings from Innocampus and providing them as services or trainings to new audiences. Some interviewees have mentioned earning an income creating websites or organizing design thinking workshops or hackathons as services or initiatives following Innocampus. While some of these skills have been topics of trainings provided during Innocampus, there have also been cases of utilizing skills the

participants have acquired by observing behaviors and working practices of the organizing group in Innocampus.

4.3.2 Entrepreneurship Culture

Most interviewees with no prior experience in entrepreneurship have mentioned the entrepreneurship culture and the development of their position towards it after the program. While having a more prominent role in the discussion of participants about their experiences after the program, the topic has also been mentioned at some instances by interviewees in description of behaviors and interactions with peers and other participants. One of the participants who have had challenges in getting support from peers during the program considers the hesitation of peers in supporting one another as their lack of experience in entrepreneurship culture. In this case, he correlates the experience in entrepreneurship ecosystem with the tendency of mutually supporting one another.

The interviewees describe entrepreneurship culture from different perspectives, one of the participants explains entrepreneurship as the initiative to do something even if it is bad and test it instead of leaving it for another day. Some participants also explain entrepreneurship as a problem-solving culture, to listen to people, understand their needs and provide solutions. One of the interviewees explains:

Someone tells you about something and you instantly provide a tactical solution, maybe he/she will spend lots of effort, maybe it is very costly, maybe that person even can't do it at that moment, then you provide a solution.

4.3.2.1 Event Participation and Learning Criteria

In a case, one of the interviewees mentions his experiences from Innocampus as a reference point in deciding whether to take part in entrepreneurship activities such

as trainings or events. Before participating in these events, he mentions researching speakers attending events, their backgrounds, the topic of the event and the content of the discussions. He mentions doing this to make sure that the subject does not overlap or repeat trainings he has participated in as part of Innocampus. Another interviewee also mentions the relevancy of the trainings provided in Innocampus even with the passage of time, has also been considerable in terms of skills acquired:

I remember we had received a training related to lean canvas, later I saw in detail how the lean canvas has a place in the entrepreneurship ecosystem... I had gotten training related to design and 3D printing, it is 2020 now and we have been taught skills four years ago that are relevant today, and we are able to do 3D printing. (See Appendix F.21 for original data)

4.3.2.2 Discovering Inner Entrepreneurial Traits

As participants have developed a perspective on what entrepreneurship culture is and what being an entrepreneur means for them, some have mentioned discovering that they have had the characteristics, aligned with persona of an entrepreneur and sense of belonging to the culture which they mention owing to Innocampus. On multiple accounts, interviewees who identified themselves as entrepreneurs have mentioned carrying the traits and using them. One of the participants explains his experience as follows:

I discovered that I have the entrepreneurship qualities, I have a mold suitable to creating products, starting my own business, developing products, bringing a product that doesn't exist to life and creating a new product. This may seem simple, but I think it is a big characteristic... I discovered that I have a special talent in developing new products and establishing businesses and Innocampus provided this. (See Appendix F.22 for original data)

Based on accounts shared by interviewees, not all participants of Innocampus have identified themselves as entrepreneurs and continued with the same notion of staying as an entrepreneur or as part of the entrepreneurship ecosystem. There have been two main alternatives mentioned by the interviewees which I will be explaining. After going through the Innocampus program there have also been participants who have decided that entrepreneurship is not suitable for them. Some reasons that seem to have affected this have been that the participants have not been able to continue the projects they developed in Innocampus or have not been able to continue building their own projects or businesses.

4.3.2.3 Participation in Entrepreneurship Activities

A number of participants who have not continued their projects after Innocampus have mentioned continuing their participation in the entrepreneurship by organizing events, taking part in entrepreneurship trainings as mentors and contributors or applying the skills and mindsets they have learned in Innocampus regarding entrepreneurship and using them in their current job positions or personal initiatives. One of the participants currently working at a company mentions keeping relationship with the startup ecosystem by taking part in entrepreneurship programs as a mentor and helping them while also applying learning from Innocampus to experiment with business ideas using the resources of the company.

One of the interviewees also mentions the disadvantage of entrepreneurship experience in the case where one decides to develop expertise in one field which is in this case software engineering. He mentions that in his opinion the activity in entrepreneurship has damaged his career as he does not have a career track record in comparison to his peers in his professional domain. In one case, an interviewee has also mentioned to have put entrepreneurship on delay until the age of 30, during in which it is more possible to learn and implement to start a company.

4.3.3 Interactions of Alumni with Innocampus Facilitators

Most interviewees mention that they have kept certain levels of communication with the Facilitators of Innocampus, they have also had mutual support with them, mentors and peers following their graduation from the program.

Post-program interactions of some interviewees seem to have extended to collaborate with or have supported Innocampus by taking part in hackathons, trainings or programs organized by the group in different cities. These supports of Innocampus activities have extended to promote the program and its events in personal networks as well as giving access to Innocampus to local communities and insight on how to engage them. One interviewee shares his assistance to Innocampus as follows:

I did all sorts of announcements for Innocampus, I left the word everywhere, I wrote from everywhere, shared group messages from WhatsApp, even some of our friends are waiting for Innocampus to happen again to join even if it was paid, I promoted it like it was my own project. (See Appendix F.23 for original data)

4.3.3.1 Innocampus Support

The participants who have pursued their projects or have continued working on topics related to Innocampus domains and kept their communications with organizing group to an extent have also mentioned getting continued support and assistance from Innocampus team. The interviewees have mentioned their appreciation and fondness of accessibility and approachability of the facilitator group at Innocampus as one of the factors supporting their continuous communication with the group. Being able to reach out to the team has enabled teams to share their needs, get assistance or socialize with them. The occasions where interviewees have reached out to the organizing group or requested support

from them, has been to get feedback on their current activities, access to tools such as 3D printers, guidelines on how to use them or usage access of containers space. One of the interviewees shares her engagement with the Innocampus team:

We could talk about any topic, whenever we had a problem regarding technical issues, we could send an email to Memet, we have probably sent three or four emails this week about our activities. We write to him whenever there is a training, or an event, to get his opinion. We can also reach out to Tacettin to get his idea on the devices we are currently using, he is very informed on this topic and guides on where you can find certain device, when you can get it and if you can find it here. (See Appendix F.24 for original data)

The extent to which the participants have been getting support from Innocampus seems to be correlated with their frequency of communication in general and whether their domain of work has been related with entrepreneurship. But most interviewees mention to have kept a minimum level of communication through social media and personal contacts with individual members of the Innocampus. In some cases, when possible, participants and organizers have also met for socialization. The participants have mentioned occasions reached out to facilitators in some cases after visiting Istanbul, or when they have learned that a member of the facilitators has been in their city.

In cases where participants have not initiated or actively engaged with Innocampus after their graduation they mention to have been called by Innocampus following the program to check whether or not they have continued with their projects. But in a case, one of interviewees also mentions the expectation to have had a stronger follow-up communication by Innocampus following graduation.

Due to the nature of relationship among the participants and facilitators, some of the participants have also mentioned how their interactions with facilitators have stayed familiar and intimate even as time has passed. Being connected on social media channels also seems to help in following up, staying in touch and keeping a level of intimacy as well as being aware of the latest developments regarding Innocampus and its activities. Some interviewees have also share that they have kept the topics that they approach Innocampus facilitators about focused on challenges related to their project and professional activities and have not approached them with personal topics.

4.3.3.2 Containers and Sense of Belonging

Some of the interviewees have also mentioned the role of containers as a space belonging to the program in keeping their connection with Innocampus. Being able to visit the containers, engage with other participants and facilitators have had an important role in bonding of participants with stakeholders of Innocampus, which seems to have also been important after graduation from Innocampus. One of the participants explains: "Because they were at the containers we would visit them, we would work all night together in the containers, develop business ideas. Like this, we became a family. Even after they left, we still don't break our connections, our communication is still strong." (See Appendix F.25 for original data)

4.3.4 Sustainability of Alumni Interactions with Innocampus Mentors

Most interviewees have mentioned to be still in communication or have access to a certain number of mentors or guest speakers who have attended the Innocampus accelerator program they are a graduate of.

In some cases, Innocampus organization team have been active in engaging alumni with the program mentors. Sometimes, they have also taken a more active role in introducing alumni to other program alumni, new experts, business owners and

experienced entrepreneurs. Being able to identify with Innocampus has also been an influencing factor when reaching out to experts who are also familiar with Innocampus or requesting support from them. Interviewees have had experiences where they have come across the mentors in different places and after mentioning that they have met in Innocampus they have been able to communicate easily.

The extent to which interviewees have kept their communication and relationship with mentors varies. While some have kept a more personal relationship, others are only connected through social media or are comfortable with knowing that they have access to mentors when needed. Most participants, however, have mentioned to have communicated with mentors and reached out to them at instances that they have needed their expertise or resources.

Following mentors through social media enables participants to stay aware of activities related to entrepreneurship that mentors engage in or endorse through their channels. One participant also mentions to have participated in new trainings in entrepreneurship after seeing them on profile page of mentors they have followed from Innocampus.

Interactions with mentors has enabled participants to access resources, get feedback on their projects, reach new networks, or take their insight on challenges they have been facing at times. As mentors participating in the program have had interactions with the teams during their participations, they have also gained awareness regarding projects of participants. When requesting help from mentors, with their awareness on their problem, they have been directing them towards other people, experts or companies that could have solved the problem for them. Sometimes, participants have also approached selected mentors because of their experience or expertise in specific subjects. Examples of this include expertise of a mentor in a specific field such as marketing, prototyping, software engineering or decisions

such as pursuing an entrepreneurial or corporate career based on the direction the mentor has progressed in.

Attitude of mentors towards participants, their approachability and chances of bonding have been some factors influencing the participants in feeling comfortable in approaching mentors. Interviewees have mentioned being able to have diversity in conversation topics and spending time with mentors have helped in sustainability of the familiarity and being able to reach out to them after the program.

4.3.5 Interactions among the Innocampus Alumni

On multiple cases, participants have been communicating and keeping contact with alumni of their program. In some cases, these connections have also extended to participants and alumni from other Innocampus programs. Using social media or WhatsApp, they have been able to follow-up and keep a level of communication with one another. However, some members have kept a stronger interaction in terms of collaboration, socialization, and communication frequency. The relationship formed during Innocampus, shared areas of interest, and accessibility of members to one another are some of the factors that participants have mentioned to influence their interactions. An example of this is mentioned by one of the interviewees as follows:

[name1] and [name2] work on more creative stuff, activities such as design and crafts, both our interest domains and cities were closer. This is why we could meet a long while after and still meet, too. But there were people who were more on coding, they were only interested in coding, online commerce, we became good friends with them, too, but the ones getting closer would be mostly because of interest domains. (See Appendix F.26 for original data)

After Innocampus some of the participants have also built stronger relationships with fellow students in their universities from different departments. Some of these have extended to collaborations in organizing events and programs together after their graduation from Innocampus as well.

4.3.5.1 Alumni Gathering Event

In terms of activities organized by Innocampus following graduation that have an influence on participants staying in communication, yearly gatherings have been mentioned on multiple accounts. Over the event, alumni of Innocampus from different programs and cities have been invited to a location each year where they have been introduced to each other and shared their latest news and progress. Interviewees have mentioned the events to have had a role in them meeting new people, become friends and create new networks.

The alumni gathering event organized by Innocampus on a yearly basis has also enabled alumni to meet and get to know with Innocampus alumni from different programs. Over these events, alumni introduce themselves and explain their projects briefly to other members as well. Some participants who have met at these events, have met and gathered independently in other cities as well and some have collaborated on projects or supported one another. The diversity of locations alumni arrive at these events and their interest domains are also of interest to participants. One of the interviewees shares: "Because the containers travel 18 to 20 cities, there are alumni from every place in Turkey. And we develop a network by meeting these people." (See Appendix F.27 for original data) One participant also explains how by coming together these gatherings also enables them to see different perspectives ranging from technologic ideas to artistic. And through these alumni events, teams gather, share their needs, help one another, and solve each other's problems regarding projects.

4.3.5.2 Alumni Collaboration

Alumni from different programs, have also collaborated in different domains. These supports and collaboration have been both with and without financial transactions. Interviewees have shared instances of travelling together for their projects, helping one another in practicing and developing their projects. In some cases, alumni with different programs have also organized events and hackathons and activities related to entrepreneurship together and promoted them to support development of local entrepreneurship activities. One participant explains: "When I say there is a family there, it has to support each other while developing the workshop. For example, I worked on designs for social media, I was good at graphics. For topics related to trainings, robotics and coding another friend was responsible." (See Appendix F.28 for original data)

Some of these collaborations have also been by alumni visiting in progress programs to share their experiences with active participants, provide trainings and help with development of their projects. In these instances, there have also been instances of taking initiatives of gift giving among participants such as letters or small items such as keychains. An interviewee shares: "One of the participants there comes to you and thanks you, says you are amazing, takes your contact information and gives you a letter at the end of program. They write their thoughts about you, write their memories from a week and give it to you... I wish I could keep them as memories. While reading you get goosebumps, questioning yourself on how you have touched their lives" (See Appendix F.29 for original data). The interviewees have also shared feeling a sense of pride when alumni that they have helped at some points have succeeded and made achievements.

4.3.6 Alumni's Sense of Loyalty Towards Innocampus

There has been a shared sense of responsibility towards Innocampus among multiple interviewees. They have mostly expressed owing this feeling towards

Innocampus due to factors including the program having been provided to the teams with no expectation in return, the participants' considering the time and effort put by Innocampus team as self-sacrifice of their time and not expecting anything in return. Some of participants have also shared their feeling of debt contributing to this sense of responsibility towards Innocampus. One of the participants for instance shares experiences in helping Innocampus team with communications among participants. When asked about the reasons for this contribution, she shares:

I felt like they were doing that for free, and they weren't waiting to get anything from us and also, I felt like many people should understand as I understand and if I know something I should use it to help others, that's why I helped with communications. And it was so tiring, but I used to do it anyway, because it was making me feel happy and yeah it was a good thing. Nobody asked me to help, I just wanted to do it.

On multiple accounts, participants have mentioned a sense of responsibility or loyalty towards Innocampus, but in most cases interviewees have stated there have not been any responsibilities towards Innocampus expected or asked by the organizing group.

Participants seem to have developed this sense of loyalty and responsibility towards the program and its stakeholders through their direct interactions with the program actors or peer observations. In a case, some participants have also mentioned repeating the behaviors contributing to continuation of the behaviors among peers using Innocampus space, independent of organizing group.

On multiple accounts participants have shared a sense of responsibility and debt towards Innocampus. The most prominent reason shared that has influenced participants in this manner has been having received a service with no expectation

of return from Innocampus. Interviewees have shared feeling in debt for the time and effort spent by Innocampus or its stakeholders for participants, tools and resources that have been provided. Participants having received support from Innocampus following the program in accessing activities supporting their startups have also mentioned feeling responsible towards Innocampus. One of the participants mention:

These people came and spent their time on us, reported it, maybe gave-up a breakfast with their children by coming to our city, and tried to pass on their ideas to us who they don't know. We owe it to these people; I think we owe them a startup. By giving what we got from them, passing it on, we have to multiply what we have gotten from them by ten and provide it to society (See Appendix F.30 for original data).

Some participants have also mentioned that they consider their responsibility towards Innocampus to continue developing their projects and organize events to make sure the goals of Innocampus come to fruition. One of the participants explains that the goal of Innocampus has been to provide potential entrepreneurs the opportunity to build their own businesses. Because of this they express regret that they haven't continued the project they were developing during the Innocampus accelerator program. Few other interviewees who, for various reasons, have not been able to continue their projects share the same feeling of guilt and regret. In some cases, interviewees mention that they have integrated their learnings from Innocampus into new ventures and intentions to return to entrepreneurship and share the success with Innocampus' organizing group. There are also examples of participants who have visited other Innocampus accelerator programs after their graduation, or other programs organized by Innocampus team to share their own expertise, experiences or support the organizing team.

Another aspect of alumni interaction with Innocampus that has affected their feeling of responsibility has been their feeling of trust. This feeling of trust has

developed throughout the program as the first experiences of it are also mentioned in the section related to the hackathon experience. The honesty in conversations and feedbacks, responsible guidance and support of participants and development of a family-like communication are some of the factors supporting the development of this trust. One of the interviewees shares his experience as follows:

I had no responsibility towards Innocampus, but I will do anything they ask of me, I have literally obeyed them... I went there ready to learn anything they teach me, and do whatever they ask of me, they could ask wrong things of me, too, and I would do it, but they never did...When any of the organizing group members asked anything I would do, we would do it collectively in any way we can (See Appendix F.31 for original data).

Observing behaviors of peers also seems to have an influence on participants' sense of loyalty and responsibility towards Innocampus. During the program, the participants mention that they have never been asked to clean or do specific maintenance tasks in the containers. However, as facilitators and other peers have done these tasks such as cleaning of their own spaces, the participants have also gotten encouraged to do the same. Another factor that has influenced the practice of this behavior is the responsibility towards upcoming participants. One of the interviewees explains: "Normally if I damage a table at home, I won't get sad, but I got sad when I damaged a table there, I had a responsibility towards them [Innocampus]... I would be very careful while using the 3D printer there because the program has given a free usage to me, it would give the same usage to people after me as well, so I would try to leave them as they were to the extent possible" (See Appendix F.32 for original data). In one case, an interviewee with an extended access to the containers mentions that by focusing on keeping their usage of the containers and Innocampus space

clean, they have seen other people sharing the space have also been showing care in using the space with care.

4.4 Summary

In this section I have shared the variety of engagements Innocampus alumni have had from their introduction to the program for a duration of time following their graduation. The chapter begins with explaining the ways in which participants have gotten introduced to Innocampus, such as whether it has been through digital promotions, through common acquaintances or personal curiosity. Then continue with exploring their first interactions with the team, and experience with the admission process, as well as how their perceptions have changed during this process. I then explain the engagements, and social dynamics of interactions that have existed during the program. These interactions include a range of engagements with peers taking part in the program, mentors, trainers, and the facilitator group of Innocampus accelerator program. The topic is explored in terms of the types of social interactions existing between different stakeholders such as social exchanges, social and material support activities, development of bonds and influential factors in development of stronger engagements among participating members. Finally, I explore reflections of alumni on their interactions following their graduation from Innocampus accelerator program. Sustainability of the network engagements following the graduation of participants from Innocampus accelerator program has been influenced by a range of topics including continued catalyzation and facilitation by the facilitating team, developed values and behavior among participants, and continued social dynamics that lead to access to resources, networks, as well as different kinds of support.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Overview of the Study

This study aims to understand the influential factors potentially leading to the development and growth of loose communities in the case of the Innocampus accelerator program. As part of this exploration, dynamics of participant engagement before, during, and after the program, and with Innocampus as an organization and with the members of internal and external network have been explored.

In the second chapter, I shared the literature about networks and communities in entrepreneurship and accelerator programs. I focused on the dynamics of network and community development among entrepreneurs and the role support organizations such as accelerator programs play in the process. To understand the network and community development dynamics among entrepreneurs, their motivations, expectations, and known studies on the topic are mentioned.

Over the third chapter, I explained in detail how the field study was developed, and the research approach used to gain insight into the perspective of the Innocampus alumni regarding their experience of engagements in Innocampus. As part of this study, I conducted 13 semi-structured interviews with alumni of the Innocampus accelerator program who participated in programs organized in different cities. Over these interviews, the participants were questioned about their expectations and motivations in joining the program, their experiences over their participation and following their graduation. The chapter also describes the methodology used to document and analyze the collected data, as well as the limitations of the study.

Over the fourth chapter, the analysis of the data collected from interviews in the study is presented. Reflections of interviewees are described and categorized based on the main themes of the study and whether their experiences and thoughts are related to before their participation in the program, their interactions through their participation, or after their graduation from the accelerator. These three sections share aspects of interactions and experiences that have been noticed by interviewees and the influence it has had on their engagement with the Innocampus community and its sustainability.

In the following sections, I will explain my conclusions regarding the study and the analyzed data under the headings ahead.

5.2 Prominent Conclusions

This study mainly focused on understanding the factors leading to the continued engagement of participants with the Innocampus accelerator program and its network following their graduation. It is seen in the literature review that although there is an increasing emphasis on the importance of communities and networks for entrepreneurs' learning and growth, the way in which these communities develop during and after accelerator programs and their relation to the accelerator programs and the entrepreneurship ecosystem is understudied.

There are three main conclusions derived from studying alumni's reflection on The Innocampus and their engagements with the network. First, post-program engagement of the Innocampus Alumni with the accelerator program and its network is influenced by dynamics developed through their experiences in joining the Innocampus accelerator program, and during their participation in the program, combined with experiences and interactions realized after the program with the program and its network. Second, expectations and motivations of alumni

compared to before they join the Innocampus continue to change through this process towards the organization and network, and their engagement takes form accordingly. Third, as a result of the existing network structure, alumni's engagement continues inside the network in the form of a loose community.

5.2.1 Development of Innocampus Network

Continued engagement of the Innocampus accelerator program alumni with the network has had a variety of outcomes for both alumni and Innocampus as an organization and a network. The processes leading to the engagement of the alumni with the network and sustainability of their interactions have, however, been influenced by experiences they have had within the program and after their graduation. Some of the main factors influencing the development of these networks among participants have been (a) development of trust among members, (b) a sense of responsibility, and (c) a shared culture among participants and alumni.

5.2.1.1 Development of Trust and Intimacy

Trust among participants of the Innocampus accelerator program has been critical in the development of the network, participants interactions with one another, and with mentors and facilitators in the program. Early interactions, and reflections of participants on Innocampus accelerator program suggests a range of concerns without trust and bonding present towards other participants. Examples of these concerns have been the fear of the potential that ideas and projects can be stolen by other participants, mentors, or facilitators of Innocampus accelerator program, a feeling of fear and cautiousness towards participants with different social, racial backgrounds. In most cases however, early attitude of participants has been hesitant and with some resistance to overcome their lack of trust. This hesitation seems to have been rooted in the assumed risk approaching other stakeholders could have had for them, and the feeling that it may have required them to take a leap of faith.

In these conditions, the presence of a sense of trust has been influential on the exchange of ideas, knowledge, and resources, potentially beneficial to participants. It has also been fundamental for interactions supporting bonding among members, which is essential to the sustainability of the network (see Section 4.1.2.4; Section 4.1.2.5; Section 4.3.3.1; Section 4.3.5). The formation of trust between network members develops owing to (1) personal motivation of members in accessing resources, (2) activities and communication provided by Innocampus accelerator program, encouraging development of trust, (3) opportunities (shared space, socialization, etc.) for the development of awareness, familiarity, and bonding with other members of the network.

5.2.1.1.1 Knowledge Exchange

Starting with their participation in the hackathon, the participants take the initiative in sharing their ideas with mentors who may have knowledge or access to resources beneficial to the development of their projects (see Section 4.1.2.4). These exchanges and their influence as positive progress for participants further encourages them to continue their trust. However, early and mid-way through the program, there has been examples of participants filtering or gatekeeping when they have come novel information and knowledge. This gatekeeping has mostly happened when participants haven't trusted and felt comfortable with other stakeholders, or when they have felt competitive. This sense of competition inside the program seems to mostly have been related to a sense of validation by school authorities or winning the prize and support of Innocampus Accelerator.

5.2.1.1.2 Shared Spaces

Being able to observe other participants and these exchanges can also motivate others to share their ideas and information with mentors as well as with one another (see Section 4.1.2.6). Sharing a space for extended periods of time enables the

conditions for this kind of environmental awareness and observations to happen among members (see Section 4.1.2.4; Section 4.1.2.6; Section 4.2.2.3). It also allows for informal and social activities to occur that benefits bonding and growing intimacy among members (see Section 4.2.2.2; Section 4.2.3). Accessibility of the space used in the program outside of training hours is a factor that further enables the participants to visit the space, collaborate, and socialize (see Section 4.2.4.1).

5.2.1.1.3 Intimacy

How comfortable and intimate the participants are with other members is correlated with the development of trust among network members (see Section 4.1.2.6; Section 4.2.2.2; Section 4.2.3.3). The comfort and intimacy that support the development of these relationships develop under conditions where participants are able to socialize informally with other members in addition to their professional activities. An example of this could be where participants have used the containers space for leisure activities (see Section 4.2.3; Section 4.2.3.3) or spent time with mentors and facilitators dining or socializing out of the program context (see Section 4.2.2.2; Section 4.2.3).

5.2.1.1.4 Facilitation of Trust

Organizing team and the activities in the Innocampus accelerator program also play an important role in encouraging and motivating members of the network to trust one another and interact. As the participants join the Innocampus accelerator program to develop their ideas and projects, they tend to be sensitive about the program priorities and motivations. Addressing participant's concerns early on in the application process, communicating motivations behind Innocampus accelerator program, as well as financial and legal expectations, are important at this stage. Communicating a sense of purpose with participants to consider the common growth of the group during the accelerator program and form their views

of one another as potential future partners rather competitors when possible is influential in encouraging collaboration among participants as well (see Section 4.1.2).

As accelerator programs tend to be sponsored by certain donors, being focused on and committed to participant's development and balancing their role in activities based on donor expectations is important (see Section 4.1.2.5). Throughout the program, organizing activities that require participants to interact and collaborate with others out of their team and a close circle is also necessary to extend the trust and bonding among participants. The extent that these activities require both physical and social interactions with other participants, whom they are not as close with, even if discomfoting, plays a role in how successfully bonds and trust among members develop (see Section 4.2.3.3, Section 4.2.5.4).

5.2.1.2 Sense of Responsibility

The second quality that has enabled the development of Innocampus network has been the presence of a sense of responsibility among members with Innocampus organizing members and future participants who join the accelerator program. A sense of responsibility towards the organization may develop throughout the program due to the volunteer nature of the program alongside benefits provided to its participants, honesty and sincerity of facilitators and mentors towards their progress, and reassurance of trust for participants (see Section 4.3.6). The inclusion of participants in organizing and improving activities during the accelerator program has also been beneficial in developing a sense of responsibility and ownership towards the Innocampus accelerator and its network in participants (see Section 4.3.6).

5.2.1.3 Shared Culture and Sense of Belonging

The development of a shared culture and a sense of belonging among participants has been the third aspect enabling the development of the Innocampus network among members (see Section 4.3.2). Having a shared understanding of attributes defining an entrepreneur, including attitudes related to supportive behavior towards other entrepreneurs, is important as it can support increased collaborations among members. In addition to this, the presence of a shared culture among participants can support the development of a shared identity and a sense of belonging in the network, which leads to stronger bonds among members. Another aspect supporting the development of a sense of belonging among network members also includes the similarity of the experience in the program despite having participated in different cities. All the Innocampus accelerator programs have been organized with a similar process and inside the Innocampus containers used as the shared space. This commonality is essential in supporting program participants and alumni to relate with each other, even when they graduated from different programs.

5.2.2 Qualities Encouraging Continued Engagement

Interactions and experiences during the program have an important role in the development of a network among participants. Following graduation from the program, the interactions among alumni are not regulated as they are through the program. In this case, there are certain embedded qualities of the network coupled with supportive activities organized by Innocampus accelerator program and members can lead to sustainability of the network. These qualities include awareness of the members regarding activities of the network members, interactions and communications with other members and its frequency, and continued access to resources through engagement with the Innocampus and the network.

5.2.2.1 Follow-up of Network Activities

Awareness regarding activities of the Innocampus accelerator and network members such as mentors and other alumni is important in enabling opportunities for engagement. For alumni to be able to follow up on activities of the network through social media, direct communication, and messaging groups allow them to gather information regarding potential participation and engagement opportunities, and take the initiative to participate, support, or engage when possible (see Section 4.3.3; Section 4.3.3.1; Section 4.3.4; Section 4.3.5). Alumni who are able to follow up on activities in the Innocampus program network have taken part in programs, events, and trainings as mentors, provided trainings, shared knowledge regarding local communities, and promoted the program through their personal networks. Knowing where containers are located, or where the latest programs are being organized also allows for network members to physically visit and interact with facilitators, mentors, and new participants. Alumni visiting Innocampus accelerator programs as trainers and mentors have also influenced their sense of commitment towards Innocampus accelerator. Supporting new participants and observing their success develops a sense of achievement in alumni who have had a contribution. This sense of achievement plays a role in reimbursing further contribution and engagement with the Innocampus network (see Section 4.3.6).

5.2.2.2 Approachability

In the decision process of being able to approach members of the network, feeling that they are approachable is important for alumni in deciding to take the initiative and reach out. How approachable members of the network are perceived is correlated with existing trust and intimacy among members or the presence of referencing members such as facilitators. Approachability of members is especially important in reaching out to members such as mentors who are usually not as intimate or have a more professional relationship with the alumni (see Section 4.3.4). Having a minimum amount of communication through social media or

personal contact with other members or having had previous interactions and bonds formed through The Innocampus program, influence the development of this sense of approachability as well (see Section 4.3.3).

5.2.2.3 Informal Socialization Opportunities

A combination of informal interactions with network members carries importance for sustaining social bonds as well their development. Informal socialization opportunities support strengthening the ties and bonding among members. This in turn, helps alumni to be more comfortable with reaching out and communicating with other members as well as engaging in the network. These interactions can include physical visits to cities where other members such as facilitators, mentors, or alumni stay (see Section 4.3.3.1; Section 4.3.4; Section 4.3.5.2).

5.2.2.4 Motivation to Access Resources

The motivation to access resources, networks or knowledge encourages alumni to reach out to other members of the network. Alumni have been utilizing the network for the projects that they worked on during the program, new activities related to entrepreneurship, or sometimes to develop their personal careers as entrepreneurs or otherwise (see Section 4.3.3.1; Section 4.3.4). Being able to utilize the network for different purposes when needed, motivates alumni to keep their ties within the network.

5.2.2.5 Post-Program Innocampus Activities

Post-program initiatives, interactions, and activities organized by Innocampus accelerator following programs have also had an important role in enabling engagement among Innocampus network members and further extension of the network through bonding opportunities among members of the network. Some of the activities that have encouraged further development of these ties have been (1)

yearly alumni events bringing together program alumni from different cities, (2) inviting alumni to new Innocampus programs as mentors and trainers, or getting their support in preparations for upcoming activities, (3) reaching out to alumni regarding their progress or to offer support, and (4) supporting alumni to join programs, events, and activities that can support their personal or business progress.

During each program, participants develop a network that includes other participants, mentors, and facilitators that took part in the same program. Activities such as the yearly alumni gathering event, facilitated by the Innocampus team, not only help strengthen the bonds among members from the same program they also introduce and support the extension of these networks to alumni, mentors, and facilitator groups who have taken part in other Innocampus accelerator programs (see Section 4.3.5.1).

On multiple occasions, Innocampus facilitator group has reached out to alumni to learn about their progress. These occasional follow-ups help create a sense of being valued in alumni which can motivate them to continue their activities and reimburses a sense of responsibility towards themselves and The Innocampus. Supporting Alumni in learning about potential programs and activities that have the potential to support their businesses and projects are important as they allow for the development of successful examples in the network. Participating in these activities together with other alumni of Innocampus has also been helpful as members have been mutually supporting each other in tackling potential challenges (see Section 4.3.3.1).

5.2.3 Innocampus Network as a Loose Community of Practice

As a result of the dynamics mentioned in the earlier sections, there have been exchanges of knowledge and resources among network members in The Innocampus influenced by a sense of identity towards the Innocampus and its

network, as well as an effort in practicing entrepreneurial skills. The Innocampus alumni network demonstrate a range of qualities corresponding to qualities that may identify communities of practice. Through social exchanges, collaborations, and other activities that Alumni of Innocampus have been engaging in, they have continued to develop thoughts, assign meanings, communicate these on their daily practices with one another. Depending on the extent in which alumni have continued their activities in or related to entrepreneurship, they seem to have stayed more central in the network and able to keep a closer communication with other alumni, mentors, and most importantly Innocampus organizing group. Alumni have mentioned repeatedly how they associate their thoughts, manners, and behavior with Innocampus as an organization, and an entrepreneur in terms of its practice. Taking these factors which are explained more in detail below into consideration, it is possible to argue that the Innocampus network accessible to the alumni has become a community of practice. However, it must also be mentioned that Innocampus community has not been regulated, there is no official membership, and alumni have continued their engagement mostly out of personal motivation voluntarily.

Concepts of communities, networks and social capital can potentially be misused and misinterpreted. Which is why I find it important to make the distinction of the type of community that has been built following Innocampus accelerator programs. The social ties existing between alumni, and other stakeholders and members of Innocampus accelerator programs' network vary in terms of their strength. While interviewees have mentioned keeping contact with other alumni, facilitator group, and mentors, groups and connections that they have kept has been in form of clusters. The bonds existing in these clusters tend to be stronger with a higher rate of knowledge, resource, and social exchanges, while there has been less engagement and proximity with community members outside of the clusters. Bringing these together, it is possible to consider Innocampus accelerator program as a loose community.

Alumni of Innocampus have continued to engage with the network and interact with other members following their graduation independently, as well as with the facilitation of the Innocampus team. While these engagements have been highly reliant on the initiatives of alumni, shared attitudes towards Innocampus accelerator and certain qualities of the network have helped ease interactions among members, as well as regulate them to an extent with minimum intervention from the Innocampus organizing team.

There is a sense of identity associated with the Innocampus accelerator among alumni. This sense of identity is formed towards Innocampus as an organization and plays an important role in how alumni think and behave towards Innocampus internal and external network, as well as assets and resources owned by the organization such as the mobile facility space, as well as tools inside it. Alumni, identifying themselves as Innocampus alumni, as well as in their interactions with the Innocampus internal and external networks. This sense of identity as Innocampus accelerator alumni has formed as a combination of the entrepreneurship culture established in the network, shared interest in the growth of network members as well as Innocampus activities, similar experiences in terms of space and program alumni have been through, and a sense of loyalty towards Innocampus accelerator.

The presence of these factors in alumni influence how strongly they identify themselves with the brand, it also influences how they consider their engagements with other alumni based on whether or not they identify themselves as Innocampus accelerator alumni in a similar manner or not. Where the identification is present, alumni seem to demonstrate a certain level of trust and enthusiasm towards engagement with other members, which could normally require development on a personal level. This identification also manifests as how central to the network alumni consider other members and alumni to be.

Where alumni identify themselves with the organization, this shared identification can allow for reaching out and making connections to other members of the network, whether or not they have been introduced before. It manifests through members' enthusiasm in promoting the brand, supporting its activities, or continuing activities that further progress the program impact goals as perceived by the alumni. Alumni with a strong identification with the Innocampus have been participating and supporting entrepreneurship activities, independent of whether they have continued as entrepreneurs and collaborated with one another or not (see Section 4.3.6).

In interaction with other members such as mentors who have at some point participated in Innocampus accelerator activities and external organizations, the shared experience and knowledge regarding the organization has also been influential in easing knowledge and resource exchange. This has also been accompanied by a reputation developed by Innocampus accelerator, which also gives credibility to program alumni in their activities.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Research

This study explored the factors that lead to the continued engagement of alumni with the network of accelerator program in the case of Innocampus accelerator program. As part of this research, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 13 of Innocampus accelerator program alumni residing in different cities across Turkey regarding their experiences related to Innocampus accelerator throughout different stages of their engagement. Due to this reason, many of the findings in this study are solely from the perspective of the program alumni who have been relatively more engaged with the network. For future research on this topic, a more comprehensive study of the subject by including other stakeholders such as facilitators and mentors could provide further insight into the dynamics of the network from their perspective. A longitudinal study with possible documentation

of the interactions throughout the program could also create a better picture of the development and changes in engagement of the alumni.

Another topic to take into consideration is that there has been no further Innocampus activities since 2017. As the activities have not continued, studying the continued process of new members joining the network and community has not been possible. Studying the topic where the community interactions are active and continued could provide deeper insight into the dynamics of the community growth for alumni of accelerator programs. In the investigation of this topic, exploring accelerators as a community brand, development, and implication of community identity among members and its influence on community dynamics as well as members development can potentially provide further insight.

Majority of alumni taking part in the study have not continued their careers as entrepreneurs. However, they continue to engage and contribute to the community and activities that support the development of entrepreneurs. Studying the role of individuals experiencing the process and participating in accelerator communities on the development of the community is also a topic of interest that has been relatively ignored in the study of accelerators.

Finding out about presence of identity factors shared among Innocampus alumni was a surprising, yet intriguing finding which indicates a potential area of exploration. In consideration of accelerator programs as brands, exploring brand communities and their development could be invaluable in terms of enabling alumni engagement with the accelerator program and as an aspect to be considered in the design of accelerator programs.

The presence of an accessible network can provide continued access to resources and learning for alumni. Considering the diversity of expertise and topics of profession among members of the network, exploring communities of practice for a

more interdisciplinary higher education and practice of industrial design could be conducted. The role of communities of practice and dynamics leading to their development could also be further explored as means to understanding the impact of accelerator programs on developing entrepreneurship ecosystems, as well as successful startups.

5.4 Reflections

As also described in the methodology chapter at the moment of writing this dissertation, I am an industrial design graduate, chief innovation manager of Viveka, a full-service startup accelerator located in Ankara, and an entrepreneur. Being a designer who has been working as an entrepreneur, a mentor and a facilitator designing and managing accelerator programs in a range of domains, this study has been insightful and required me to reflect on a range of topics and imagining possibilities.

As designers, we learn, and practice means of problem solving and solution development in a wide range of domains. We use design thinking as a tool to understand, reflect, and develop solutions to wicked problems. However, in most cases, our practice is limited to develop and then pass on the responsibility of implementing these solutions to our clients, or stakeholders. To learn entrepreneurship, from the perspective of a designer, is to explore and implement design solutions in a developing, and sustainable manner. As designers, if we intend to learn to be more responsible towards the environmental, and societal changes happening, I believe we should be working closer to our users, be able to observe the impacts of our decisions on the world we live in and continue to be responsible. I think learning and practicing entrepreneurship, is one of the ways to enable such opportunity.

At early stages of entrepreneurship, where entrepreneurs are trying to validate their ideas and they have yet not produced any financial revenue, the process in which

an entrepreneur and a design thinking practitioner go through are often very similar. They both include activities such as researching the field, conducting user research, generating solutions, testing them, and revising the product or service offering.

As the projects develops, and the business idea materializes, the knowledge and skills the entrepreneur needs to be able to continue to scale the business in a successful manner, start moving towards business and product management fields. Designers, if they decide to learn and practice entrepreneurship, will be expected to learn about basics of financial management, marketing, sales, and deep insight regarding the market they will be operating in at early stages. As the business continues to grow, and the complexity increases, it is expected of the design entrepreneur to continue to learn and expand the available knowledge and resources while available times become scarcer. At this stage, access to interdisciplinary networks of experts, entrepreneurs, and other designers going through the same learning process becomes very important as they can help in navigating the learning process.

Accelerator programs can often be organized in spaces where entrepreneurs have access to networks and tools to prototype their ideas to test them. These spaces can be very similar to what a studio space can be imagined in design education, or the kind of environment design thinking could be practiced. In both entrepreneurship and design thinking interdisciplinary knowledge exchange is very important and the information exchange between entrepreneurs taking residence in the incubation center is important in terms of accessing novel knowledge and different perspectives.

Entrepreneurs are often encouraged to develop scenarios of where their products and businesses would be in a year. Forecasting project outcomes and required business structure to sustain them is essential in exploring sustainability of

proposed projects. Even if practitioners of design thinking do not intent to become entrepreneurs, I think enabling designers with the skills and tools to interpret and what design decisions mean in terms of business operations and activities, and to forecast the outcomes of decisions in the future could be very beneficial to be more conscious regarding the consequences of decisions made during design thinking processes.

The aim of this study has been to understand social dynamics existing in accelerator programs, and whether they influence the development and sustainability of entrepreneurial communities following startup accelerator programs. The social dynamics between entrepreneurs as communities in general and in accelerator programs in specific is an understudied topic. Through this study, I found that entrepreneurial communities can be developed through accelerator programs, and they can influence development of participants taking part in these programs, accelerator programs as organizations, and entrepreneurship ecosystems. It also brings a more social perspective to understanding engagements of entrepreneurs in accelerator programs by including social dynamics related to development of social and emotional support, alongside knowledge and resource exchange in networks which are relatively more well researched topics.

REFERENCES

- A. Isabelle, D. (2013). Key Factors Affecting a Technology Entrepreneur's Choice of Incubator or Accelerator. *Technology Innovation Management Review*, 3(2), 16–22. <https://doi.org/10.22215/timreview656>
- Ács, Z. J., Autio, E., & Szerb, L. (2014). National Systems of Entrepreneurship: Measurement issues and policy implications. *Research Policy*, 43(3), 476–494. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2013.08.016>
- Acs, Z. J., Stam, E., Audretsch, D. B., & O'Connor, A. (2017). The lineages of the entrepreneurial ecosystem approach. *Small Business Economics*, 49(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-017-9864-8>
- Alvedalen, J., & Boschma, R. (2017). A critical review of entrepreneurial ecosystems research: towards a future research agenda. *European Planning Studies*, 25(6), 887–903. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2017.1299694>
- Au, M., Oliveira, Y., José, J., & Ferreira, P. (2011). Business Model Generation: A handbook for visionaries, game changers and challengers. *African Journal of Business Management*, 5(7). <http://www.academicjournals.org/AJBM>
- Audretsch, D. B., & Belitski, M. (2017). Entrepreneurial ecosystems in cities: establishing the framework conditions. *Journal of Technology Transfer*, 42(5), 1030–1051. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10961-016-9473-8>
- Auerswald, P. E. (2015). Enabling Entrepreneurial Ecosystems: Insights from Ecology to Inform Effective Entrepreneurship Policy. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, October, 31. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2673843>
- Bendickson, J. S., Irwin, J. G., Cowden, B. J., & McDowell, W. C. (2021). Entrepreneurial ecosystem knowledge spillover in the face of institutional voids: groups, issues, and actions. *Knowledge Management Research and Practice*, 19(1), 117–126. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14778238.2020.1768810>
- Bliemel, M., Flores, R., de Klerk, S., & Miles, M. P. (2019). Accelerators as start-up infrastructure for entrepreneurial clusters. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, 31(1–2), 133–149. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2018.1537152>
- Bøllingtoft, A., & Ulhøi, J. P. (2005). The networked business incubator - Leveraging entrepreneurial agency? *Journal of Business Venturing*, 20(2), 265–290. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2003.12.005>
- Boschma, R. A. (2005). Proximity and innovation: A critical assessment. *Regional Studies*, 39(1), 61–74. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0034340052000320887>

- Boyd, N. M., & Nowell, B. (2017). Testing a Theory of Sense of Community and Community Responsibility In Organizations: An Empirical Assessment of Predictive Capacity on Employee Well-Being and Organizational Citizenship. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 45(2), 210–229. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.21843>
- Breivik-Meyer, M., Arntzen-Nordqvist, M., & Alsos, G. A. (2020). The role of incubator support in new firms accumulation of resources and capabilities. *Innovation: Organization and Management*, 22(3), 228–249. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14479338.2019.1684204>
- Brown, R., Mawson, S., Lee, N., & Peterson, L. (2019). Start-up factories, transnational entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial ecosystems: unpacking the lure of start-up accelerator programmes. *European Planning Studies*, 27(5), 885–904. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2019.1588858>
- Brown, T. (2008). Design Thinking. *Harvard Business Review*, 86(June), 84–92.
- Cao, Z., & Shi, X. (2020). A systematic literature review of entrepreneurial ecosystems in advanced and emerging economies. *Small Business Economics*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-020-00326-y>
- Carpenter, M. A., Li, M., & Jiang, H. (2012). Social Network Research in Organizational Contexts: A Systematic Review of Methodological Issues and Choices. *Journal of Management*, 38(4), 1328–1361. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206312440119>
- Chavez, C. (2015). Conceptualizing from the Inside: Advantages, Complications, and Demands on Insider Positionality. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(3), 474–494. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2008.1589>
- Cho, D. S., Ryan, P., & Buciuni, G. (2021). Evolutionary entrepreneurial ecosystems: a research pathway. *Small Business Economics*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-021-00487-4>
- Cohen, S. (2013). What Do Accelerators Do? Insights from Incubators and Angels. *Innovations: Technology, Governance, Globalization*, 8(3–4), 19–25. https://doi.org/10.1162/inov_a_00184
- Cohen, S., Fehder, D. C., Hochberg, Y. v., & Murray, F. (2019a). The design of startup accelerators. *Research Policy*, 48(7), 1781–1797. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2019.04.003>

- Cohen, S., Fehder, D. C., Hochberg, Y. v., & Murray, F. (2019b). The design of startup accelerators. *Research Policy*, 48(7), 1781–1797. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2019.04.003>
- Cohen, S., Fehder, D. C., Hochberg, Y. v., & Murray, F. (2019c). The design of startup accelerators. *Research Policy*, 48(7), 1781–1797. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2019.04.003>
- Colclough, G., & Sitaraman, B. (2005). Community and social capital: What is the difference? *Sociological Inquiry*, 75(4), 474–496. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-682X.2005.00133.x>
- Cousin, G. (2005). Case study research. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 29(3), 421–427. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03098260500290967>
- Ding, T. (2019). Understanding the design of opportunities: Re-evaluating the agent-opportunity nexus through a design lens. *Journal of Business Venturing Insights*, 11, e00108. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbvi.2018.e00108>
- Emery, M., & Flora, C. (2006). Spiraling-Up: Mapping Community Transformation with Community Capitals Framework. *Community Development*, 37(1), 19–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330609490152>
- Escalfoni, R., da Silva, M. F., & Oliveira, J. (2020, November 3). Analyzing social relations in startup ecosystems. *ACM International Conference Proceeding Series*. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3411564.3411617>
- Fortunato, M. W. P., & Mclaughlin, D. K. (2021a). Interaction and Purpose in Highly Entrepreneurial Communities. *Entrepreneurship Research Journal*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.2202/2157-5665.1049>
- Fortunato, M. W. P., & Mclaughlin, D. K. (2021b). Interaction and Purpose in Highly Entrepreneurial Communities. *Entrepreneurship Research Journal*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.2202/2157-5665.1049>
- Galbraith, B., Mcadam, R., & Cross, S. E. (2021). The Evolution of the Incubator: Past, Present, and Future. In *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management* (Vol. 68, Issue 1, pp. 265–271). Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Inc. <https://doi.org/10.1109/TEM.2019.2905297>
- Gedeon, S. (2010). What is Entrepreneurship? *Entrepreneurial Practice Review*, 1(3), 16–35.
- Granovetter, M. S. (1973). The Strength of Weak Ties. *American Journal of Sociology*, 78(6), 1360–1380.

- Gray, D. E. (2004). *Doing research in the real world*. Sage.
- Greene, M. (2014). On the Inside Looking In: Methodological Insights and Challenges in Conducting Qualitative Insider Research. *The Qualitative Report*, 19(29), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2014.1106>
- Haneberg, D. H., & Aaboen, L. (2021). Entrepreneurial learning behaviour of community insiders. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research, ahead-of-p*(ahead-of-print). <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijebr-04-2020-0255>
- Harroch, R. (2020). *A Guide To Investor Pitch Decks For Startup Fundraising*. Forbes.Com. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/allbusiness/2020/06/20/guide-to-investor-pitch-decks-for-startup-fundraising/?sh=355f28c35a5a>
- Hochberg, Y. v. (2016). Accelerating entrepreneurs and ecosystems: The seed accelerator model. *Innovation Policy and the Economy*, 16(1), 25–51. <https://doi.org/10.1086/684985>
- Hyytinen, A. (2021). Shared problem solving and design thinking in entrepreneurship research. *Journal of Business Venturing Insights*, 16, e00254. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbvi.2021.e00254>
- Innocampus. (n.d.). *Innocampus*. Retrieved December 25, 2020, from <http://innocampus.org/en/>
- Innocampus. (2017). *InnoCampus YapLab Eğitimleri*. https://twitter.com/inno_campus/status/895699669002498049
- Innomate. (n.d.). *Innomate*. Retrieved December 25, 2020, from <http://innomate.co/>
- Isenberg, D., & Global, B. (2011). *The Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Strategy as a New Paradigm for Economic Policy: Principles for Cultivating Entrepreneurship I*.
- Jack, S. L. (2005). The role, use and activation of strong and weak network ties: A qualitative analysis. In *Journal of Management Studies* (Vol. 42, Issue 6, pp. 1233–1259). Blackwell Publishing Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2005.00540.x>
- King, N. (2012). Using templates in the thematic analysis of text. In C. Cassel & G. Symon (Eds.), *Essential Guide to Qualitative Methods in Organizational Resea* (pp. 256–270). SAGE Publications.

- Koh, J. H. L., Chai, C. S., Wong, B., & Hong, H.-Y. (2015). Design Thinking for Education. In *Design Thinking for Education*. Springer Singapore. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-287-444-3>
- Korsching, P. F., Allen, J. C., Vogt, R., & Sapp, S. G. (2007). Community Leaders, Business Ownership, and Support of Entrepreneurship Development: The Role of Macroentrepreneurs. *Community Development*, 38(4), 28–45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330709489817>
- Li, M. (2013). Social network and social capital in leadership and management research: A review of causal methods. *Leadership Quarterly*, 24(5), 638–665. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2013.04.005>
- Lyons, T. S., Alter, T. R., Audretsch, D., & Augustine, D. (2021a). Entrepreneurship and Community: The Next Frontier of Entrepreneurship Inquiry. *Entrepreneurship Research Journal*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.2202/2157-5665.1064>
- Lyons, T. S., Alter, T. R., Audretsch, D., & Augustine, D. (2021b). Entrepreneurship and Community: The Next Frontier of Entrepreneurship Inquiry. *Entrepreneurship Research Journal*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.2202/2157-5665.1064>
- Mack, E., & Mayer, H. (2016). The evolutionary dynamics of entrepreneurial ecosystems. *Urban Studies*, 53(10), 2118–2133. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098015586547>
- Malecki, E. J. (2018). Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial ecosystems. *Geography Compass*, 12(3), e12359. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gec3.12359>
- Merriam, S. B., Johnson-Bailey, J., Lee, M. Y., Kee, Y., Ntseane, G., & Muhamad, M. (2001). Power and positionality: Negotiating insider/outsider status within and across cultures. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 20(5), 405–416. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02601370120490>
- Motoyama, Y., & Knowlton, K. (2016). From resource munificence to ecosystem integration: the case of government sponsorship in St. Louis. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, 28(5–6), 448–470. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2016.1186749>
- Neck, H. M., Meyer, G. D., Cohen, B., & Corbett, A. C. (2004). An Entrepreneurial System View of New Venture Creation. In *Journal of Small Business Management* (Vol. 42, Issue 2, pp. 190–208). Blackwell Publishing Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-627x.2004.00105.x>

- Nijssen, E. J., & van der Borgh, M. (2017). Beyond the water cooler: using socialization to understand use and impact of networking services on collaboration in a business incubator. *R and D Management*, 47(3), 443–457. <https://doi.org/10.1111/radm.12261>
- Nowell, B., & Boyd, N. (2010). Viewing community as responsibility as well as resource: Deconstructing the theoretical roots of psychological sense of community. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 38(7), 828–841. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.20398>
- Nowell, B., & Boyd, N. M. (2014). Sense of Community Responsibility in Community Collaboratives: Advancing a Theory of Community as Resource and Responsibility. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 54(3–4), 229–242. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-014-9667-x>
- Omerzel, D. G., & Antončič, B. (2008). Critical entrepreneur knowledge dimensions for the SME performance. *Industrial Management and Data Systems*, 108(9), 1182–1199. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02635570810914883>
- Oosterbeek, H., van Praag, M., & Ijsselstein, A. (2010). The impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurship skills and motivation. *European Economic Review*, 54(3), 442–454. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eurocorev.2009.08.002>
- Owen, J. M. (2009). Communities of Practice. In O. J. Mackenzie, M. B. P. Bruza, R. Capurro, E. D. R. Day, M. H. A. M. Paci, & C. T. M. Thelwall (Eds.), *Knowledge Creation Diffusion Utilization* (Vol. 13). Springer Berlin Heidelberg. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-85424-1>
- Pauwels, C., Clarysse, B., Wright, M., & van Hove, J. (2016). Understanding a new generation incubation model: The accelerator. *Technovation*, 50–51, 13–24. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.technovation.2015.09.003>
- Pettersen, I. B., Aarstad, J., Høvig, Ø. S., & Tobiassen, A. E. (2015). Business incubation and the network resources of start-ups. *Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 5(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13731-016-0038-8>
- Prasastyoga, B., Harinck, F., & van Leeuwen, E. (2021). The role of perceived value of entrepreneurial identity in growth motivation. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research*, 27(4), 989–1010. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEER-03-2020-0170>
- Qian, H., Acs, Z. J., & Stough, R. R. (2013). Regional systems of entrepreneurship: The nexus of human capital, knowledge and new firm formation. *Journal of Economic Geography*, 13(4), 559–587. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jeg/lbs009>

- Reimers, C. (2015). *Accelerate Knowledge: How Knowledge is Shared with and Created by New Ventures in Early-stage Accelerator Networks*.
- Ritchie, J., & Lewis, J. (Eds.). (2003). *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. Sage.
- Romme, A. G. L., & Reymen, I. M. M. J. (2018). Entrepreneurship at the interface of design and science: Toward an inclusive framework. *Journal of Business Venturing Insights*, 10, e00094. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbvi.2018.e00094>
- Roundy, P. T., Bradshaw, M., & Brockman, B. K. (2018). The emergence of entrepreneurial ecosystems: A complex adaptive systems approach. *Journal of Business Research*, 86, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.01.032>
- Sarooghi, H., Sunny, S., Hornsby, J., & Fernhaber, S. (2019). Design Thinking and Entrepreneurship Education: Where Are We, and What Are the Possibilities? *Journal of Small Business Management*, 57(S1), 78–93. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12541>
- Shih, T., & Aaboen, L. (2019). The network mediation of an incubator: How does it enable or constrain the development of incubator firms' business networks? *Industrial Marketing Management*, 80, 126–138. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2017.12.002>
- Smith, W., & Chimucheka, T. (2014). Entrepreneurship, economic growth and entrepreneurship theories. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(14), 160–168. <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n14p160>
- Soetanto, D. (2017). Networks and entrepreneurial learning: coping with difficulties. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research*, 23(3), 547–565. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEER-11-2015-0230>
- Spigel, B. (2016). Developing and governing entrepreneurial ecosystems: the structure of entrepreneurial support programs in Edinburgh, Scotland. *Int. J. Innovation and Regional Development*, 7(2), 17–19. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJIRD.2016.077889>
- Sullivan, D. M., Marvel, M. R., & Wolfe, M. T. (2021). With a little help from my friends? How learning activities and network ties impact performance for high tech startups in incubators. *Technovation*, 101, 102209. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.technovation.2020.102209>
- Uhm, C. H., Sung, C. S., & Park, J. Y. (2018). Understanding the accelerator from resources-based perspective. *Asia Pacific Journal of Innovation and*

Entrepreneurship, 12(3), 258–278. <https://doi.org/10.1108/apjie-01-2018-0001>

Ünsal, M. (n.d.). *Profile [Linkedin]*. Retrieved December 25, 2020, from <https://www.linkedin.com/in/memet/>

Von Kortzfleisch, H. F. O., Zerwas, D., & Mokanis, I. (2013). Potentials of Entrepreneurial Design Thinking® for Entrepreneurship Education. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 106, 2080–2092. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.12.237>

Wenger, E. T. I. (2002). *Community practice: Learning, Meaning and identity*. Cambridge university press.

Wu, W., Wang, H., & Wu, Y. J. (2020). Internal and external networks, and incubatees' performance in dynamic environments: entrepreneurial learning's mediating effect. *Journal of Technology Transfer*, 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10961-020-09790-w>

Xu, X., Wang, Z., Zhou, B., & Zhang, Z. (2019). The empirical analysis of knowledge spillover effect measurement. *Knowledge Management Research and Practice*, 17(1), 83–95. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14778238.2018.1557998>

Yin, R. K. (2003). Applications of case study research. In *Social Research* (2nd Edition). Sage.

Zhang, S. X., & van Burg, E. (2020). Advancing entrepreneurship as a design science: developing additional design principles for effectuation. *Small Business Economics*, 55(3), 607–626. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-019-00217-x>

APPENDICES

A. Volunteer Participation Form

Research Volunteer Form

Merhaba,

Ben Yashar Kardar, Innocampus hızlandırma programı mezunu ve Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi'nde yüksek lisans öğrencisiyim. Bu araştırma, yüksek lisans tezimin bir parçası olarak Innocampus programlarının katılımcıları ile yapıldı ve amacı, toplulukların geliştirilmesi ve sürdürülebilirliği konusunda iletişim ve işbirliği araçlarının rolünü araştırmaktır.

Sorularınız için benimle iletişime geçebilirsiniz.

Hello,

My name is Yashar Kardar, graduate of Innocampus acceleration program and master student at Middle East Technical University. This research is done with participants of Innocampus programs as part of my master thesis and its' purpose is to explore and understand role of communication and collaboration means in development and sustainability of communities.

You may contact me regarding any questions you have.

By filling this form you indicate your willingness to participate in this research.

* Required

1. Name (Ad) *

2. Surname (Soyad) *

3. Which Innocampus program did you participate in? (Hangi Innocampus programına katıldınız?) *

4. Email (E-posta) *

5. Phone number (Telefon) *

Powered by
 Google Forms

Figure 5.1 Application form for participation in the study

B. Research Volunteer Consent Form (English)

This research is being conducted by **Yashar Kardar** as part of thesis in master program of Middle East Technical University department of industrial design under advisement of Assist. Prof. Dr. Harun Kaygan. This form has been prepared to inform you on the volunteering process of this study.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this research is to explore and understand role of communication and collaboration tools in development and sustainability of communities.

How do we expect your assistance?

If you accept to participate in this research, we expect you to participate in an approximately one-hour long interview discussing your experience regarding The Innocampus project. The interview will be voice recorded for documentation and further analysis purposes.

How will we use the data collected from you?

Your participation in the study is expected to be completely voluntary and on your free will. For this study, we will not be expecting any official documents or credentials from you. Your identity will be kept a secret and your responses will not be used in any way that might indicate your identity. Information gathered from all respondents will be analyzed together and be shared in scientific publishing.

To learn more regarding this study:

At the end of this study your questions regarding the research will be answered. We want to thank you for participating in this study. To learn more about this study,

Research Volunteer Consent Form (Continued)

you can contact Assist. Prof. Dr. Harun Kaygan (Email: hkaygan@metu.edu.tr) or master student Yashar Kardar (Email: yashar.kardar@metu.edu.tr).

I have read the information above and join this study completely voluntarily.
(You shall return the form to the conductor of the study after signing.)

Name Surname:

Date:

Signature:

C. Research Volunteer Consent Form (Turkish)

ARAŞTIRMAYA GÖNÜLLÜ KATILIM FORMU (TURKISH)

Bu araştırma, ODTÜ Endüstri Ürünleri Tasarımı Bölümü Yüksek Lisans öğrencisi Yashar Kardar tarafından Assist. Prof. Dr. Harun Kaygan danışmanlığındaki yüksek lisans tezi kapsamında yürütülmektedir. Bu form sizi araştırma koşulları hakkında bilgilendirmek için hazırlanmıştır.

Çalışmanın Amacı Nedir?

Bu araştırmanın amacı, iletişim ve işbirliği araçlarının toplulukların gelişmesinde ve sürdürülebilirliğindeki rolünü araştırmak ve anlamaktır.

Bize Nasıl Yardımcı Olmanızı İsteyeceğiz?

Bu araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ettiğinizde, The Innocampus projesiyle ilgili deneyiminizi tartışan yaklaşık bir saatlik bir görüşmeye katılmanızı bekliyoruz olacağız. Bu görüşme, belgelendirme ve daha ileri analiz yapmak amacıyla kayıt altına alınacak.

Sizden Topladığımız Bilgileri Nasıl Kullanacağız?

Çalışmaya katılımınızın kendi iradenizle tamamen gönüllü olması bekleniyor. Bu çalışma için sizden herhangi bir resmi belge veya kimlik belgesi beklemeyeceğiz. Kimliğiniz gizli tutulacak ve cevaplarınız kimliğinizi ortaya çıkaracak şekilde kullanılmayacaktır. Tüm katılımcılardan toplanan bilgiler birlikte analiz edilecek ve bilimsel yayınlarda paylaşılacaktır.

Araştırmayla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz:

Bu çalışmanın sonunda araştırmayla ilgili sorularınız cevaplandırılacaktır. Çalışmaya katıldığınız için teşekkür ederiz. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi edinmek için Assist. Prof. Dr. Harun Kaygan (E-posta: hkaygan@metu.edu.tr) veya

Research Volunteer Consent Form (Turkish) (Continued)

yüksek lisans öğrencisi Yashar Kardar (E-posta: yashar.kardar@metu.edu.tr) ile iletişime geçebilirsiniz.

Yukarıdaki bilgileri okudum ve bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum.

(Formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra uygulayıcıya geri veriniz).

İsim Soyad:

Tarih:

İmza:

D. Semi-Structured Interview Guideline (English)

PRE-INNOCAMPUS
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Would you tell me about yourself?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Ageb. Background/profession2. Had you done any projects, or did you have any entrepreneurship experience before participating in Innocampus programs / events?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. What was the project about?3. How was the role distribution in your team? What was your role?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Where you alone or with a team? Where did you know each other from?b. What were your roles during collaboration?c. Where were you collaborating? Why?d. What tools do you use to communicate/collaborate?e. Why were you doing these activities?4. How did you get introduced to innocampus?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. When did you join Innocampus?b. Which programs did you take part during your participation?c. Were you participating individually or in teams? Who were you participating with?d. Where was the program held? (city/place)5. Why did you join Innocampus?6. Did you have interactions before the program started (breakfast/emails, etc.) What was your first impression?7. How was the first time you met the Innocampus group?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. What were your expectation?b. Did they change after meeting the team?
INNOCAMPUS
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Would you tell me about the activities you were involved in during the program?

- a. What was the duration of the activities?
 - b. What was the routine during the activity (start, main, closing)?
 - c. Were you having interactions with organizing group/participants/mentors and instructors? For what purpose?
 - d. Did you find these interesting/useful/etc. what was their influence on you?
 - e. Did you have any responsibilities towards Innocampus during your participation?
2. Would you tell me about the other people you were participating in Innocampus with?
 - a. Can you tell me of a memory that you really like with them?
 - b. Would you tell me of a time where you didn't like your interaction with them?
 - c. How would these interactions influence you?
 - d. How would these interactions influence your activities/projects?
 - e. How would these interactions influence your participation?
 3. Would you tell me about your experiences with the organizing group in Innocampus? Can you tell me of a memory that you really like with them?
 - a. Would you tell me of a time where you didn't like your interaction with them?
 - b. Would you tell me of a time where you felt / didn't feel really supported by them?
 - c. How did these interactions influence you?
 - d. How would these interactions influence your activities/projects?
 - e. How would these interactions influence your participation?
 4. Would you tell me about your experiences with the mentors and instructors in Innocampus?
 - a. Can you tell me of a memory that you really like with them?
 - b. Would you tell me of a time where you didn't like your interaction with them?
 - c. Would you tell me of a time where you felt / didn't feel really supported by them?
 - d. How would these interactions influence you?

- e. How would these interactions influence your activities/projects?
 - f. How would these interactions influence your participation?
5. Is there anything else you would like to add about Innocampus program/s you attended?

POST-INNOCAMPUS

8. Have you continued your project/s after Innocampus ended?
- a. How? Would you explain further?
 - b. Are you alone or with a team?
 - c. How much time are you spending together for the project?
 - d. What are your roles during collaboration?
 - e. Where are you collaborating?
 - f. How do you communicate/collaborate? (Tools, apps, etc.)
9. Are you still in contact with other Innocampus participants?
- a. Who?
 - b. Through which communication tools?
 - c. What is the content of your conversations?
 - d. How often?
 - e. Do you have collaborations with them?
 - f. Can you tell us about a memorable event/occasion related to your interactions with other participants?
10. Are you in contact with the innocampus?
- a. Who?
 - b. How? (means)
 - c. For what purpose?
 - d. How often?
 - e. Do you have collaborations with them?
 - f. Anything else?
11. Are you in contact with other actors from entrepreneurship ecosystem?
- a. Which organizations?

- b. Which people?
- c. For what purpose?
- d. How often?
- e. Anything else?

12. How is Innocampus influencing your current activities? (What are your past interactions with Innocampus?)

- a. What are the ways in which you have benefited from Innocampus?
- b. What are the ways in which you have contributed to Innocampus?

13. How do you think participating in Innocampus has affected your activities?

14. Is there anything that you would like to add?

E. Semi-Structured Interview Guideline (Turkish)

INNOCAMPUS ÖNCESİ
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Bana biraz kendiniz hakkında bilgi verir misiniz?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Yaşınız?b. Meslek odaklı ve mesleki birikimleriniz?2. Innocampus programları ve etkinlikleri haricinde daha önce hiç girişimcilik deneyiminiz veya farklı projeleriniz oldu mu?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Proje veya deneyiminiz ne hakkında idi?3. Ekibinizdeki rol dağılımı nasıldı? Sizin rolünüz ne idi?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Projeyi bireysel olarak mı yoksa ekip çalışması ile mi yürüttünüz?b. İş birliği yaparken Görevleriniz nasıl dağılıyordu?c. Ne gibi durumlarda iş birliği yapıyordunuz? Neden?d. Nasıl iletişim kuruyordunuz / iş birliği yapıyordunuz? (Uygulamalar, Araçlar vs.)e. Neden bu aktiviteleri yapıyordunuz?4. Innocampus ile nasıl tanıştınız?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Innocampus'e ne zaman katıldınız?b. Katılımınız esnasında hangi programlarda yer aldınız?c. Bireysel olarak mı yoksa takım olarak mı katıldınız? Kimler ile katıldınız?d. Programın nerede gerçekleşti? (Şehir/ Mekan)5. Neden Innocampus'e katıldınız?6. Program başlamadan önce birbiriniz ile iletişime geçiyor muydunuz? (Kahvaltı/e-posta veya benzeri) İlk izleniminiz nasıl oldu?7. Innocampus ile olan ilk deneyiminizden bahsedebilir misiniz?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Beklentileriniz nelerdi?b. Innocampus ekibi ile tanıştıktan sonra Beklentileriniz değiştiler mi?
INNOCAMPUS
<ol style="list-style-type: none">8. Program süresi boyunca katıldığınız aktivitelerden bahsedebilir misiniz?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Gerçekleşen aktivitelerin uzunluğu ne kadardı?

- b. Bu aktivitelerin genel seyri nasıldı? Veya bu aktiviteler nasıl ilerliyordu? Veya bu aktivitelerin rutini nasıldı?
 - c. Organize eden gruplar/katılımcılar/danışmanlar ve eğitmenler ile etkileşime geçiyor muydunuz? Hangi amaçlar doğrultusunda etkileşime geçiyordunuz?
 - d. Bunları ilginç/yararlı veya benzeri buldunuz mu? Sizin üzerinizdeki bıraktığı etkiler nelerdi?
 - e. Katılım süresince Innocampus'e yönelik bir sorumluluğunuz oldu mu?
9. Innocampus'e beraber katıldığınız diğer insanlardan bahseder misiniz?
- a. Bana beraber katıldığınız insanların da dahil olduğu ve sizi hoşnut bırakan bir hatıranızdan bahseder misiniz?
 - b. Bana iletişiminizden hoşlanmadığınız bir zamanınızdan bahsedebilir misiniz?
 - c. Bu etkileşimler sizi nasıl etkiledi?
 - d. Bu etkileşimler sizin aktiviteleriniz ve projelerinizde nasıl bir etki bıraktı?
 - e. Bu etkileşimler katılımınızı nasıl etkiledi?
10. Bana biraz Innocampus'ün organizatör ekibinden bahseder misiniz?
- a. Bana onları barındıran güzel bir anınızdan bahseder misiniz?
 - b. Onlar ile etkileşime geçerken hoşnut kalmadığınız bir anınızdan bahsedebilir misiniz?
 - c. Onlar tarafından gerçekten desteklenmediğinizi hissettiğiniz bir anınız oldu mu? Oldu ise bana bundan bahsedebilir misiniz?
 - d. Bu etkileşimler sizde nasıl bir iz bıraktı?
 - e. Bu etkileşimler sizin aktivite ve projelerinizi nasıl etkiledi?
 - f. Bu etkileşimler sizin katılımınızı nasıl etkiledi?
11. Bana Innocampusteki danışmanlar ve eğitmenler hakkında neler bahsedebilirsiniz? Veya Innocampusteki danışmanlar ve eğitmenler hakkında konuşabilir miyiz?
- a. Bana onları içeren ve hoşnut kaldığınız bir anınızdan bahsedebilir misiniz?
 - b. Bana onlar ile etkileşiminizden hoşlanmadığınız bir zamandan bahsedebilir misiniz?
 - c. Onlar tarafından desteklenmediğinizi hissettiğiniz bir zamandan

bahsedebilir misiniz?

- d. Bu etkileşimler sizi nasıl etkiledi?
- e. Etkileşimler sonucunda aktiviteleriniz ve projeleriniz nasıl etkilendi?
- f. Bu etkileşimlerden katılımınız nasıl etkilendi?

12. Katıldığınız Innocampus program veya programları hakkında eklemek istediğiniz başka bir şey var mı?

INNOCAMPUS SONRASI

13. Innocampus bittikten sonra projenize devam ettiniz mi?

- a. Nasıl? Daha detaylı açıklayabilir misiniz?
- b. Projenizi bireysel olarak mı yoksa takım olarak mı yürüttünüz?
- c. Projeniz için beraber ne kadar zaman geçiriyordunuz?
- d. İş birliği yaparken rol dağılımınız nasıl oluyor?
- e. Nerelerde iş birliği yapıyordunuz?
- f. Nasıl iletişim kuruyordunuz ve iş birliği yapıyordunuz?

14. Diğer Innocampus katılımcıları ile halen iletişim içerisinde misiniz?

- a. Kimler? Kim?
- b. Nasıl iletişimde kalıyorsunuz? İletişim kanallarınız neler?
- c. Konuşmalarınızın içeriği nelerden oluşuyor?
- d. Ne sıklıkla iletişime geçiyorsunuz?
- e. Onlar ile nasıl iş birliği yapıyorsunuz?
- f. Bana diğer katılımcılar ile etkileşiminiz sonucunda ortaya çıkmış hatırı sayılır bir etkinliğiniz veya anınızdan bahsedebilir misiniz?

15. Innocampus ile iletişim içerisinde misiniz?

- a. Kim?
- b. Nasıl? İletişim için kullandığınız araçlar nedir?
- c. Hangi amaç doğrultusunda?
- d. Ne sıklıkla?
- e. Onlar ile iş birliği yapıyor musunuz?
- f. Eklemek istediğiniz başka bir şey var mı?

16. Giriřimcilik ekosisteminden diđer aktörler ile iletişim içerisinde misiniz?
- Hangi kurumlar?
 - Hangi insanlar?
 - Hangi amaç/lar doğrultusunda?
 - Ne sıklıkla?
 - Eklemek istediđiniz başka bir şey var mı?
17. Innocampus sizin řu andaki aktivitelerinizi nasıl etkiliyor? Innocampus ile program sonrası etkileřiminiz neler?
- Innocampus'ten nasıl faydalandınız? Ne gibi faydalar gördünüz?
 - Innocampus'e ne gibi katkılarda bulundunuz?
18. Innocampus'e katılmanın aktivitelerinizi nasıl etkilediđini düşünöyorsunuz?
19. Eklemek istediđiniz herhangi bir şey var mı?

F. Analysis Data in Turkish

1. Her ay dört kere, beş kere, altı kere ziyaret ettiğim zamanlarda oldu Bir ayda altı kere bir öğrencinin seyahat etmesi Gaziantep-İstanbul uçak biletlerine baktığım zaman da gayet masraflı bir durum...21 ve 22 yaşındaki biri için bunlar kolay şeyler değil. Ama Innocampus diye bir şey çıkıyor; hafta sonları senin şehrine geliyor, senin şehrine; senin İstanbul'da dinlemeye gittiğin kişileri ayağına getiriyor. Sen sabah evinden çıkıyorsun ve o kişiyi dinlemeye gidiyorsun ve 1000 kişilik konferans salonunda değil; on beş kişilik toplantı salonunda dinliyorsun, yirmi kişilik bir alanda
2. Ben ilk gittiğimiz süreçte çok gergindim, bir de projeleri dinliyoruz, 'benim burada ne işim var? ne alaka böyle? Sonra ilk temmuzdaydı; temmuzda Innocampus' e gittik. Herkes tanışma aşamasında projesinin sunumunu yaptı. Biz de. Ben böyle terk ederek, koşarak uzaklaşmak istiyorum.
3. İlk kez bir hackaton sırasında sponsorların logolarını üzerimizde taşıdığımız tişörtler giymedik. Gittiğimiz diğer markaların hackaton' larında neredeyse alnımıza kadar markaların adını yazacağımız şeyler; pazarlama faaliyetleri oluyordu. Kolumuza onların bantlarını takıyorduk. Onların tişörtlerini giyip fotoğraflar çekiliyorduk. Ama burada bize dediler ki "İş fikrinizi geliştirin".
4. Bir kalıba girmeniz gerekmiyor oraya katılmak için, olduğunuz insan olarak katılabiliyorsunuz. Ve onlar sizi olduğunuz insan olarak tanıyorlar. Ancak, diğer eğitimlerde siz belli kalıplara girmek zorundaydınız
5. Suriyelilerin ilk kez [city name]'e geldiği günleri biliyorum. Hiçbir Suriyeli ile iletişim kurmadım ben hayatımda. Hep kaçtık, bize yol soranlara bile yol göstermedik. Çünkü, bize zarar vereceklerini düşündük. Çünkü, basında ve Twitter' da öyle takip ediyoruz. Twitter' da "Geldi, ev sahibini bıçakladı" gibi haberler okuyoruz. O yüzden

çekiniyoruz. Yaş olarak da 19-20-21 yaşındasın. Çekinmekte de haklısın yani. Bir de şey, yani güçsüz duruyorsun aslında baktığın zaman onun karşısında da hani o yüzden iletişim kurmadık. Ama o yol soran adamla 48 saat vakit geçirdiğin zaman, işte o iletişim noktasında da bayağı bayağı ısınmaya başladık. Kültürleri birbirine çok yakın bu iki milletin yani... Hani şey olur, sevdiğim bir futbol takımı olur, televizyondan izlersin. Bir gün havalimanına gidersin, onları karşıyorsun, canlı görürsün, fotoğraf çekilirsin ve futbolcunun da senin gibi biri olduğunu anlarsın. O da senin gibi sıradan bir insan, sadece futbolcu olduğu için onu tercih etmiş ve ünlü olmuştur. Onun farkına varırsın. Biz, aslında o hackaton sırasında da bunun farkına varmıştık. Bugün, basında mülteci Suriyeli olarak adlandırdığımız kişilerin, aslında arkadaşımız olabileceğini gördük.

6. Programa dönüp şöyle bir baktığımda, eğer sadece iş fikriniz varsa, bir takımın varsa, o program boyunca o iş fikrinin MVP'ini çıkarabilecek kadar zamanında mentor desteğimiz ile hatta Innocampus sonunda yatırım imkanı da vardı. Dolayısıyla bugün sıfır olarak giren kişi, oradan bir olarak çıkar. O sıfır ile bir arasındaki fark gerçekten değerli bir fark.
7. Ama ben sadece o 3D printeri gördüm ve heyecanlandım, bu amaçla katıldım yani. Daha sonra baktım ki hani burada sadece 3D printer değil, bazı insanları sosyal medyadan takip ediyorsun; Erhan Erkut falan vardı takip ettiğim mesela. O zamanlarda, abi bir baktım; bizim programda konuşmacı olarak onu getirmişler. Bayağı çok şok oluyorsun. Adam, girişimcilik üzerine sohbet yaptı bizimle. Bunlar da programın içeriğinde hiçbir şekilde haberdar olmamama rağmen programın bana kattıklarından hiçbir şekilde aslında beklentim yoktu.
8. Biz üst yönetimden genelde çekiniriz. Genel Müdür, Genel Müdür Yardımcısı, CFO. Tuğrul Abi üst yönetimden biriydi, üst yönetimden birilerinin de bizden biri olduğunu aştı. Bizim de üst Yönetimden

birileri ile oturup, bir akşam bir şeyler içip, sohbet edebileceğimizi bize gösterdi. Bu bize özgüven aşıladı.

9. Co-working spacelerde doğal olarak oluyor zaten, Kolektif House falan filan. Oralara hep aynı kişiler gidiyor ve birbirinin işlerini çözerek, kendilerini bir seviyeye taşıyorlar, bir üst levelle geçiyorlar. Ama öyle bir şey olmasaydı, o seviyede işte atıyorum, üçüncü levelde aylarca takılı kalacaktı. Ama bunun sayesinde hem arkadaşı hem kendisi dördüncü levelle geçmiş oluyor ertesi gün.
10. Mesela Çanakkale grubunun sunumları gayet güzeldi. Onlara mesela nasıl bunu yaptıkları ile ilgili soruyorduk, bakmaktan ziyade her şeyi sorarak değil de yaptıklarını görerek. Çünkü sunum yapıyorsun onların yaptıkları metotları görerek aslında etkileniyorsun. Böyle bir fiziksel sormaya da gerek yok zaten, arkadaşız sorabiliriz ama onun da gelişimini izliyorsun ya hem kendi gelişimin var hem de diğer ekiplerin de gelişimini görüyorsun. Ve onları gördükçe ‘aa bu şekilde yapmış’, ‘şimdi böyle yapmış’ ve o yaptığı değişikliği takip ediyorsun, aldığı tepkiye de bakıyorsun. Aslında doğruyu ve yanlışı da görmüş oluyorsun.
11. O etkinliklerde başka takımın üyesi ile mesela ben eşleşiyordum. Orada takım oluyorduk. Onunla birlikte çalışıyorduk ama bu şey değil de oradaki iş fikrimiz ile ilgili değildi. Tamamen farklı bir konu yani. O an oyun oynuyorduk sadece onunla ilgiliydi. Orada da şunu fark ettim: Ben, kendi ekibim ile çok iyi çalışıyorum, bir problem yok. Ama gün olacak farklı ekiplerle de çalışacağım. Zorunda kalacağım bunu istemesem de farklı ekipler içinde kalacağım. Çalışmak zorunda olacağım. Mesela, orada o ekibe uyum sağlama konusunda öyle bir faydası olmuştu. Arkadaşım değil ama mesela o an iki dakika içerisinde ekip oluşturup tamamen o ekibin menfaatleri doğrultusunda o oyunu, yarışı kazanmaya çalışıyorduk mesela. Oradan böyle bir çıkarım elde ettim.

12. Zaten de bir ekibin nasıl oluşturulduğunu görüyorsun, bizde bir hata varsa atıyorum; tartışıyoruz. Az önce bahsettim; iyi bir ekibin ne olması gerektiğini anlıyorsun, onları da gördükçe iyi ekip kavramını, iyi insan ilişkilerini daha çok tartma, karşılaştırma oluyor. Aslında iyi, faydalı bir durum. Sen, daha farklı bir şekilde bir şeyler yaşayacakları göreceksin. Ya da ben yaşayacağım onlar görecektir, bu şekilde öğrenme bunların hepsi.
13. Ya bunun olması o kadar önemli değil aslında. Çünkü, bizim orda hedefimiz bir network kurmak gibi bir şey, iş ilişkileri devam ettirmek değil; bir işi başarmak ve daha sonra kimsenin kimseyi görmesi gibi bir amacı yok zaten. O anda, o insanların yardım reflexi olabilmesi için de daha fazla bu kültürün içinde olmaları gerekiyordu.
14. Çünkü mentörlerin eğitiminden sonra gündüzleri akşam 5'ten sonra kendi işlerimizi devam ettiriyorduk, herkes canla başla konteynerden çıkmıyordu. Orada da mesela ekipler arası iletişim kuruluyor. Onun da bir etkisi var şüphesiz. Bazı gruplardan mesela birbirinden yazılım öğreniyorsun. Burada mentör- öğretmen- öğrenci ilişkisi değil; ekip arkadaşı olarak ya da başka bir ekipten birisin. Burada öğrendiğimizi hatırlıyorum; yani birbirimize soruyoruz. Bence öğrenme sürecinin orada da devam etmesi önemli bir şey.
15. İnnocampus takımı sağladı. Bize ilk başladığımız sırada hackaton sırasında da asla şu imajı vermediler: İşte, buradan birileri kazanacak, birileri elenecek gibi bir süreç olmadı aslında. Burada herkesin tek bir hedefi var, fikri var ve o iş fikrini müşterileri ile buluşturmak istiyor. Buranın kritik noktası bu. Eğer yapabilirseniz, buraya gelen mentörler ile kişisel bir network kurabilirsiniz ve kurduğunuz network ile işinize büyütebilirsiniz ya da buradaki diğer start-uplar ile bir partnerlik ilişkisine bile gidebilirsiniz.
16. "Buradayım" dediğiniz, aslında sen fiziksel olarak oradasın ama mental olarak da burada hissettiğin için geçtiğin haftayı birkaç satırla

özetliyorsun. Bir çember şeklinde oluyordu, bence onun çember şeklinde, daire şeklinde olması da kritik. Ve orada şey yapıyorsun, geçtiğimiz haftayı özetliyorsun. Bu haftadan beklentilerini söylüyorsun. Başına iyi ya da kötü bir şey geldiyse orada paylaşıyorsun. Ve orada duygusal paylaşımlar da oluyordu. Hastalığı olan bir kişi, geçirdiğinde onu paylaşıyordu, sen de onunla mutlu oluyordun. Ve ‘Buradayım’ diyordum. ‘Sen buradayım’ dediğinde mental olarak oradaydım,

17. Mesela orada bir taşla takılıyorsun ve herkes bir anda duruyor Tanımadığım bir kişi bir anda sana çarpıyor, sen ona çarpıyorsun. Bu şekilde, normalde fiziksel temas etmeyeceğim kişiler ile fiziksel temas ediyorsun ve ortak bir amacı gerçekleştirmeye çalışıyorsun. Parkuru bitirmek ve o gözü açık rehber de bir şekilde doğru komut veriyor, herkesin kulağı orada oluyor. Daha önce hiç dinlemediğin birini dinlemek zorundasın orada. Bence böyle yakınlaşmalar sağlıyordu.
18. Ben, şunun duvarında bana yardımcı olur musun?’’ diyordum. Hep böyle sürekli birbirimizin duvarları vardı; İnnocampus’ u bölmüştük. Benim duvarım tam arkamda kalan yerd, herkese destek oluyorduk ama ben mesela kendi duvarımı çok iyi kullanmıyordum, hep böyle başkasına yardım ediyordum, ben kendi duvarımda çok çalışmıyordum. Hep Drive’ dan yürüyordum, o yüzden çok interaktif şeyi kendime taşımadım tahtaya, logo bulma sürecinde mesela ama birlikte çalıştık, başka da böyle şey hatırlamıyorum, diğerlerine çok yardımcı oldum ama.
19. Normalde bir insanı sevmediğim de ortamdan uzaklaşabiliyorum ama burada ortamdan uzaklaşamıyorum yani burada birlikte olmamız gerekiyor, bazen el ele tutuşmamız gerekiyor, bazen bir aktivitede beraber çalışmamız gerekiyor. Sürekli konuşup iletişim kurmamız lazım. O yüzden biraz daha şey yapıyordum; kendisine sorular daha yöneltip cevaplarını vererek kendisini çeliştirmeyi çalışıyordum, kendisi fark etsin diye o durumlara. Bak diyordum mesela; ‘bunu

söyledin ama dün bunu söylüyordun yani, hani, falan'', ''bunu çok kendini tanıtıcı anlatıma dönüştürme'', diyerek. Artık onu yapabiliyordum. Nasıl diyeyim? terk etmiyordum ortamı.

20. Normalde ben hep şey yani birisini görüp kötü bir insanı algıladığımda; ya bana zarar vermesin, hiçbir şekilde de muhatap olmayayım, çünkü öyle yetişmişim. ''Bu saatten sonra döndüremem; hayatım, zamanım çok daha önemli'', diyerek başka bir yöne giden insandım ama orada birlikte çalıştığım bir projeyi beraber geliştirmek adına iyi geçinmemiz gerekiyordu en azından süreci baltalayan insana bir ufak uyarı ya da onu toplayabilmek için iyi davranmam gerekiyor. Onun gibi düşünmem gerekiyor, empati kurmam lazım; orada biraz böyle onun gibi yaklaşarak sorunu çözmüştüm.
21. Hatırlıyorum, mesela 'Yalın Kanvas' konusunda eğitim almıştım, Yalın Kanvas' dan sonra çok detaylı bir şekilde girişimcilik ekosisteminde yerinin olduğunu görmüş oldum. Arkasından bakacak olursak tasarımla ilgili eğitimler almıştım, 3D printer baskı eğitimi almıştım. Şu anda aslında bildim, 2020'de; günümüzde çok güncel olan şeylerin eğitimini biz dört sene önce almışız aslında. Ve oradaki baskıyı yapabilecek düzeydeyiz biz. O yüzden aslında bakacak olursak çok da şanslıyız.
22. Çünkü ben aslında gerçekten girişimcilik yapısında olduğumu fark ettim. Ürün çıkarmaya, kendi işimi kurmaya, ürün geliştirmeye şu an hiç hayatta olmayan bir ürünü hayata koymaya ve yeni bir ürün yaratmaya aslında yatkın bir yapım olduğunu fark ettim. Bu aslında basit gibi görünüyor ama çok büyük bir özellik bence. Ben mükemmelim demiyorum ama herkesin kendine has bir özelliği var. Örnek veriyorum: Doktorların tıp bilgisi var, benim de yeni bir ürün çıkarma. Ve iş kurmaya özel bir yeteneğim olduğunun farkına vardım, yeteneğimin farkına varmamı Innocampus sağladı.
23. Atölye İstanbul'a mesela bir Arap arkadaşımı götürdüm, tanıştırdım ve Innocampus' ün bütün duyurularını yaptım. WhatsApp' dan toplu

mesajlar, paylaşımlar. Hatta bazı arkadaşlar, kampüs yeniden olsun diye bekliyorlar, ‘paralı olsun yine geliriz’, diyenler vardı. Ben, bayağı kendi projemmiş gibi reklamını yaptım.

24. Herhangi bir şey olursa, ne sıkıntı olursa eğitimle ilgili; her konuda görüşebiliyoruz. Teknik konular da herhangi bir zaman sıkıntımız olduğunda Mehmet Hoca’ya da mail atabiliyoruz, bu hafta üç-dört kere mail atmışım. Yaptığımız şeylerle ilgili mesela. Mehmet Hoca’ya yazıyoruz; bir eğitim olunca, etkinlik olunca mail atabiliyoruz fikrini almak için. Tacettin’in ile hala kullandığımız cihazlarla ilgili bilgisi bayağı fazla bu konuda; ‘‘Bu cihazı alabiliyorsanız bu zaman almalısınız’’ ‘‘Bu cihazı burada bulabilir miyiz?’’ tarzında her zaman konuşuyoruz. Ne zaman sıkıntı oluyorsa yani veya malzeme isteme konusu olursa, bir şeye ihtiyacımız varsa Mehmet Hoca’yı arayıp isteyebiliyoruz ya da Tacettin’i arayıp isteyebiliyoruz.
25. Zaten, onlar özellikle hafta sonları gelebiliyorlardı işlerinden kaynaklı ama konteynerde oldukları için onları ziyaret ediyorduk. Hatta konteynerin içerisinde sabahlıyorduk. Konteyner de iş fikri geliştiriyoorduk. Bu şekilde, dediğim gibi tam bir aile olduk. Onlar gittikten sonra bile hala irtibatı koparmıyoruz. İletişimlerimiz sağlam duruyor aslında.
26. [İsim 1] ve [İsim 2]; böyle daha yaratıcı şeylerle uğraştıkları için, yaratıcı derken yani hem ürün tasarımı hem böyle makerlik hem de onlar bizim ilgi alanımıza daha yakındı ve İstanbul’dalardı. O yüzden daha sonraları da görüştük hala da görüşürüz. Ama orada, ne bileyim daha iyi yazılım kodlama ağırlıklı insanlar da vardı ve onlar sadece kodla ilgileniyorlar ve atıyorum işte yurtlarla ilgileniyorlar, e-ticaret ilgileniyorlar. Onlarla da orada çok iyi arkadaş olduk sonra daha çok yakınlaşmalar ilgi alanları sayesinde oldu.
27. Özellikle neler yapıldığını, neler yaptığımızı, ilerleme durumu merak ediyorlar. Kapsamda bir araya geliyoruz, yine Innocampus mezunları

dediğinizde yaklaşık 18 veya 20 şehir gezdiği için bu konteyner; Türkiye'nin hemen hemen her yerinde bir mezunu var aslında. Bizleri bu insanlarla tanıştırmak için bir network oluşturuyoruz.

28. Mesela ben tasarım kollarıyla ilgilenen sosyal medya sorumlusuydum. Grafikerde iyiydim, tüm tasarım işleri. Eğitim işleriyle farklı bir ekipten arkadaş ilgileniyordu. Robotik kodlama işleriyle yine farklı bir arkadaş ilgileniyordu. Halkla ilişkiler yine farklı bir arkadaş tarafından yürütülüyordu, bu şekildeydi. Birbirimizin eksiklerini tamamlayarak bir iş fikri çıkardık.
29. Çünkü sürekli onlarla vakit geçiriyordum, dediler ki ‘‘Program bitti’’. Oradaki çocuk geliyor, işte ‘’ abi çok teşekkür ederim. Harika insansın’’. Senin iletişimini alıyor, sana bir zarf veriyor, sana mektup yazmış okuyorsun, sarılıp ağlıyorsun, yani bundan dolayı duygusaldı. İnsanlar hatırlanmak için sana mektup gibi program sonunda bir şey veriyor, yani seninle ilgili düşüncelerini yazıyor, seninle ilgili anılarını biriktirmiş. Bir haftada o kadar çok anı birikiyor, ondan sonra sana zarf veriyor. Ben sorumsuzluk yapıp kaybettim, bana verilen zarfları kaybettim. Bir anı olarak biriktirebilseydim ama okurken falan tüylerim diken diken oluyor. Ben, nasıl hayatlara dokunmuşum diyorsun.
30. Çünkü, bu insanlar geldiler, bizlere zamanlarımızı harcadılar. Rapor verdiler, belki de çocukları ile yapacakları kahvaltıdan ödün vererek; Gaziantep'e gelerek hiç tanımadıkları bizlere fikirlerini aktarmaya çalıştılar. Biz bu insanlara borçluyuz. Biz bu insanlara bir start-up borçluyuz bence. Onlardan aldıklarımızı onlara vererek, toplumla paylaşarak, onlardan aldığımızı biri topluma on olarak sunmamız gerekiyor. Ben kendimi onlara karşı borçlu ve sorumlu hissediyorum.
31. İnnocampus’ e karşı hiçbir sorumluluğum yoktu ama en ufak bir şey söylediklerinde yapıyordum, resmen itaat etmişim zaten...Orada neden derlerse, ne derlerse hazır bir şekilde yapacağım, bana belki çok kötü şeyler de yaptırabilirlerse de ben kabul edecektim ama öyle bir şey

istemeditiler yoksa ben her şeyi yaptım ve çok da memnun oldum.

Mesela Mehmet abi bir şey söylesin, Tacettin bir şey söylesin, Durmuş söylesin fark etmez yapardım yani öyle bir şeyler düzenlenmesinde falan, hep kolektiftik yani.

32. Normalde evindeki masaya zarar versem üzülmem ama oradakine verdiğim için üzül müştüm. Oraya karşı bir sorumluluğun vardı, mesela ben kişisel olarak kullandığım bir cihazın açıkçası zarar görmüş mü? görmemiş mi? hor kullanırım, çok önemsemem. Ama mesela oradaki üç boyutlu yazıcıyı kullanırken dikkatli kullanıyordum. Çünkü o program bana karşılıksız bir kullanım veriyor, benden sonrakiler için de öyle bir kullanım veriyor. O yüzden olabildiğince aldığım gibi bırakmaya çalışıyordum. Onun dışında etkinliklere de katılacaksın, şunu yapacaksın etkinlik için bunu yapacaksın, hiçbir zorlama yoktu.
33. Tetikleyici unsurlarla insanlar yavaş yavaş iş fikirlerini anlatmaya başladı. Tabii biraz da mentörlere de iş fikirleri anlatıldığı için; tabii bu insanların hepsi bilgili insanlar tarzı düşünmediğimiz için biraz açıkçası aştık o fikri. Görüşü aşmamız bizim için aslında güzel oldu. Çünkü girişimcilik ekosistemi sadece bir üzerinde ilerleme dayatmıyor yani hayat üzerinde farklı fikirlerin olabilir ve bu girişim fikrinin çalışıp çalışmayacağını ya da gerçek hayatta bazı insanların görüşlerine ihtiyaç duyuyoruz. Feedbacklere ihtiyaç duyuyoruz ve bu feedbackleri almak zorundasın. Bu feedbackleri almak için de insanlara projeni net bir şekilde anlatmalısın. İnsanların kafasında soru işareti kalmayacak şekilde anlatman gerekiyor ki insanlar senin projene destek verebilsinler veya 'bu proje olur' ya da 'bu projenin eksiklikleri bunlar', 'bunları verirsen proje tutabilir' geri dönüşlerinde bulunabilsinler.

G. Innocampus Accelerator Program Promotion for Şanlıurfa Accelerator Program (English Translation)

The entrepreneur of future is in Şanlıurfa now!

Introduction meeting 5th of October

13:00, at Engineering Amphitheatre

If you have an entrepreneurial idea, or dream of becoming a good entrepreneur, Innocampus is near you.

Apply now, realize your idea!

Last Application Deadline: 19th of October 2017

For detailed info and application: innocampus.org

Funding support will be provided to successful teams