

Experiences of international nursing students related with nursing education: A qualitative study

Uluslararası hemşirelik öğrencilerinin hemşirelik eğitimine ilişkin deneyimleri: Nitel bir çalışma

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine the opinions of international nursing students regarding nursing education. This study has a qualitative descriptive design. The sample of the study consists of foreign nursing students who receive nursing education at universities in Istanbul. The data was collected through semi structured in-depth individual interviews. Four main themes as “positive experiences”, “negative experiences”, “suggestions” and “career plan” and twelve sub-themes related with the main ones were determined in the study. Seeing the challenges faced by international nursing students from their perspective will help develop comprehensive discipline-specific support.

Keywords: International student, nursing education, nursing student, student experiences, qualitative research.

Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı, uluslararası hemşirelik öğrencilerinin hemşirelik eğitimine ilişkin görüşlerini belirlemektir. Bu çalışmada, tanımlayıcı niteliksel yöntem kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın örneklemini İstanbul'daki üniversitelerde hemşirelik eğitimi alan uluslararası hemşirelik öğrencileri oluşturmaktadır. Veriler, yarı yapılandırılmış derinlemesine görüşmeler yoluyla toplanmıştır. Araştırmada “olumlu deneyimler”, “olumsuz deneyimler”, “öneriler” ve “kariyer planı” olmak üzere dört ana tema ve ana temalarla ilişkili on iki alt tema belirlenmiştir. Uluslararası hemşirelik öğrencilerinin

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karşılařtıkları zorlukları onların bakıř açısından görmek, disipline özgü kapsamlı desteęin geliřtirilmesine yardımcı olacaktır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Uluslararası öęrenci, hemřirelik eęitimi, hemřirelik öęrencisi, öęrenci deneyimleri, nitel arařtırma.

1. Introduction

Education has turned into an enormous sector just like other commercial businesses. Parallel to social and economical developments in the world, local educational institutions have been founded in different destinations [1]. Studies on this issue suggested that developing international communication, reducing airway travelling expenses, expanding opportunities for international students, increasing globalization in labour markets and other factors have made more students prefer to receive their education in different countries [2]. Turkey, becoming rather efficient in certain areas like education throughout the world gradually, has transformed into a center of attraction in the field of education in recent years. Moreover, cultural diversity through internationalisation has been supported greatly by the Turkish government. Majority of international students come from Syria, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, Greece, Bulgaria and, although lesser in number, other European countries [3]. A number of economical and social factors affect the enrollment of an international student to a university such as the quality of education, living standards in target country, employment opportunities following graduation [4]. International students contribute to diversifying of academic and public facilities as well as the internationalization of the target country. In addition, contributions such as academic prestige, cultural exchange and financial income are also provided [5]–[7].

An international student means an individual moving to another country just to study in university, leaving his/her family and beloved ones behind. International students, having their own authentic cultures and education, encounter a new education system and a new culture as well [8]. Despite the presence of international differences in nursing education and practices, a series of mechanisms let the nurses receive education in other countries than their own country. Nursing is one of the various disciplines that have an increasing number of international students [5]. Today, there is a global demand for nurses with competencies such as knowing another language, intercultural understanding and having the skill of taking an active role in a permanently globalized world. Globalization of nursing education, health labour force capacity's getting stronger (staff, administrators, policy makers, academicians and researchers), increasing of language and cultural diversity among nursing professionals contribute greatly to the improvement of nursing practices [9]. Many international students face certain difficulties during their education period in other countries even though supportive policies and related infrastructure are prepared beforehand. Among the reasons for these difficulties are the target language, cultural differences, unfamiliar living conditions, financial problems and different educational backgrounds [7]. Studies on the issue emphasised the problems facing international nursing students under the headings of language and cultural differences. Furthermore, it was also demonstrated that although international students experienced psychosocial stress more seriously than their local counterparts, their opportunity to seek for help was lower [10]–[12]. This result revealed the fact that they needed more support than their local counterparts. In literature, information about the experiences of international nursing students is fairly limited. Understanding of students' experiences may provide unique information about academic, clinical and social support structures [13]. In addition, developing a comprehensive understanding about expectations, experiences and motivations of international nursing students may provide guidance in terms of strategies for the management of international student policies. This study was conducted to identify the views of international nursing students about nursing education. Identifying of difficulties faced by them is highly crucial to provide the support they needed.

2. Methods

2.1. Aim

The aim of this study was to explore the views of international nursing students on nursing education.

2.2. Study questions

- What are the academic, social and cultural experiences of international nursing students in Turkey?
- What are their views on nursing education's getting stronger?
- What are the career plans of international nursing students in Turkey?

2.3. Study design

This study has a qualitative and phenomenological design. The Consolidated Criteria for Reporting Qualitative Research were followed by the authors throughout this study [14].

2.4. Participants

The sample of the study included 14 international nursing students enrolled in universities located in Istanbul. The inclusion criteria for the study were;

- Residing in Turkey at least one year,
- Studying in 2nd, 3rd or 4th grades of Turkish language nursing departments,
- Being an international student.
- Accepting to participate in the study.

The sample of the study was generated from the students of nursing departments coming from different countries, who had different reasons for coming to Turkey and have been studying at different grades in order to ensure maximum variety. The students were invited via phone calls and whatsapp messages. Snowball sampling method was used as a sampling method and students were asked, at the end of the interview, to invite others that might be related with the study.

2.5. Data collection tool

Data were collected using a semi-structured interview guide designed by the researchers [7],[10]–[13]. The guide involved some questions associated with students' demographic characteristics and their views on nursing education. These questions are:

- Can you introduce yourself? (Age, grade, country, the reason for coming to Turkey, your family background)
- What are your views on the nursing education that you received in Turkey? Can you please explain its positive and negative aspects?
- What are your suggestions for improving the nursing education provided in Turkey?
- What is your career plan following your graduation?

2.6. Data collection

Data were collected by the first two authors through in-depth face-to-face semi-structured interviews from November to December 2022. One researcher conducted the interview while the other researcher kept notes. The date and time of the interviews were planned collaboratively with those volunteer participants participating in the study. The required data were collected using a semi-structured interview guide. After the students answered these questions, the researchers further questioned the interviewees by asking either "Can you please explain a little bit more?" or 'what do you mean by this expression'? In addition, at the end of the interview, the researchers asked if there was anything they (international students) would like to add. Interviews were conducted in Turkish. Students studied in Turkish language. There were no communication problems during the interviews. The length of each interview was between 15 and 25 minutes. The interviews continued until the data saturation was fulfilled. The researchers terminated the interviews when they determined that the information related to the research was repetitive.

2.7. Statistical analysis

The data of the study was analysed using the content analysis method. In this research, content analysis was conducted with an inductive approach [15]. Content analysis is a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words, themes, or concepts within given qualitative data. In content analysis, the data was coded by being divided into meaningful sections, related codes were divided into categories and categories were gathered under a theme [15]. In the present study the content analysis was performed as follows; (1) coding of the data (2) identification of categories and themes (3) organization of categories and themes (4) definition and interpretation of findings. The content analysis was performed separately by two researchers and then the researchers came together and reached a consensus on all of the categories and themes [16].

2.8. Ethical considerations

This study was approved by Human Research Ethics Committee (04.11.2022 date, No: 2022/22). The research process was completely voluntarily and the data was encrypted in a digital environment, by hiding personal information and in encrypted files. The participants were explained the purpose of the study beforehand and the interviews were held after they have given written consent. The researchers performed the interviews face to face and an audio record of the interviews were taken with the permission of the participants.

2.9. Trustworthiness

To ensure data trustworthiness, Lincoln and Guba criteria of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability were used [17]. Two researchers received qualitative research training to gain interviewing skills. An early familiarity with the participants prior to the interview was developed to adequately understand the situation and establish a relationship of trust. Participants were encouraged to be open. All non-verbal information was recorded during the interview. The themes were discussed in detail between the researchers and the supervisor of this study before final decision to ensure reliability. We also avoided our own perspectives from influencing the study data by reading the interview transcripts, comparing the raw data with the themes, and double-checking the findings with the participants.

3. Results

The mean age of the international students was 23±1.8 years and 71.4% of them were female. International students study at three different universities. 57.1% of the students came to Turkey just to receive education and 71.4% of them lived in Turkey together with their families. Descriptive characteristics of the international students were presented at Table 1.

Four main themes which are “positive experiences”, “negative experiences”, “suggestions” and “career plan” and twelve sub-themes related with the main ones were determined in the study (Figure 1). The first theme was associated with international students' positive experiences with lecturers, Turkish students and in the hospital. The main theme of negative experiences was related to the difficulties experienced by international students during the education process. This main theme related to language issues, socio-cultural differences, exclusion and differences in the teaching process. International students gave suggestions about nursing education in the third main theme. These suggestions included adaptation programs, teaching processes and standardization of university entrance conditions. In the last theme, international students' career goals were determined.

Table 1. Descriptive characteristics of students

No	Gender	Age (years)	Type of university	Grade	Nationality	Reason for coming to Turkey	Duration of residence in Turkey	Status of living with family
1	Male	23	State	2	Turkmenistan	Education	4	Living alone
2	Male	25	Private	2	Turkmenistan	Education	4	Living with family
3	Female	27	Private	2	Turkmenistan	Education	4	Living with family
4	Female	23	Private	3	Turkmenistan	Education	4	Living with family
5	Female	21	Private	2	Jordan	Familial reasons	3	Living with family
6	Female	21	Private	2	Morocco	Familial reasons	3	Living with family
7	Female	22	Private	4	Syria	War	6	Living with family
8	Male	25	Private	3	Syria	War	8	Living with family
9	Female	23	Private	4	Syria	Education	5	Living with family
10	Female	23	Private	4	Jordan	Education	5	Living alone
11	Female	21	Private	3	Turkmenistan	Education	4	Living alone
12	Female	21	Private	3	Iraq	Education	8	Living alone
13	Male	24	Private	4	Egypt	Familial reasons	6	Living with family
14	Female	23	Private	4	Iraq	Education	5	Living with family

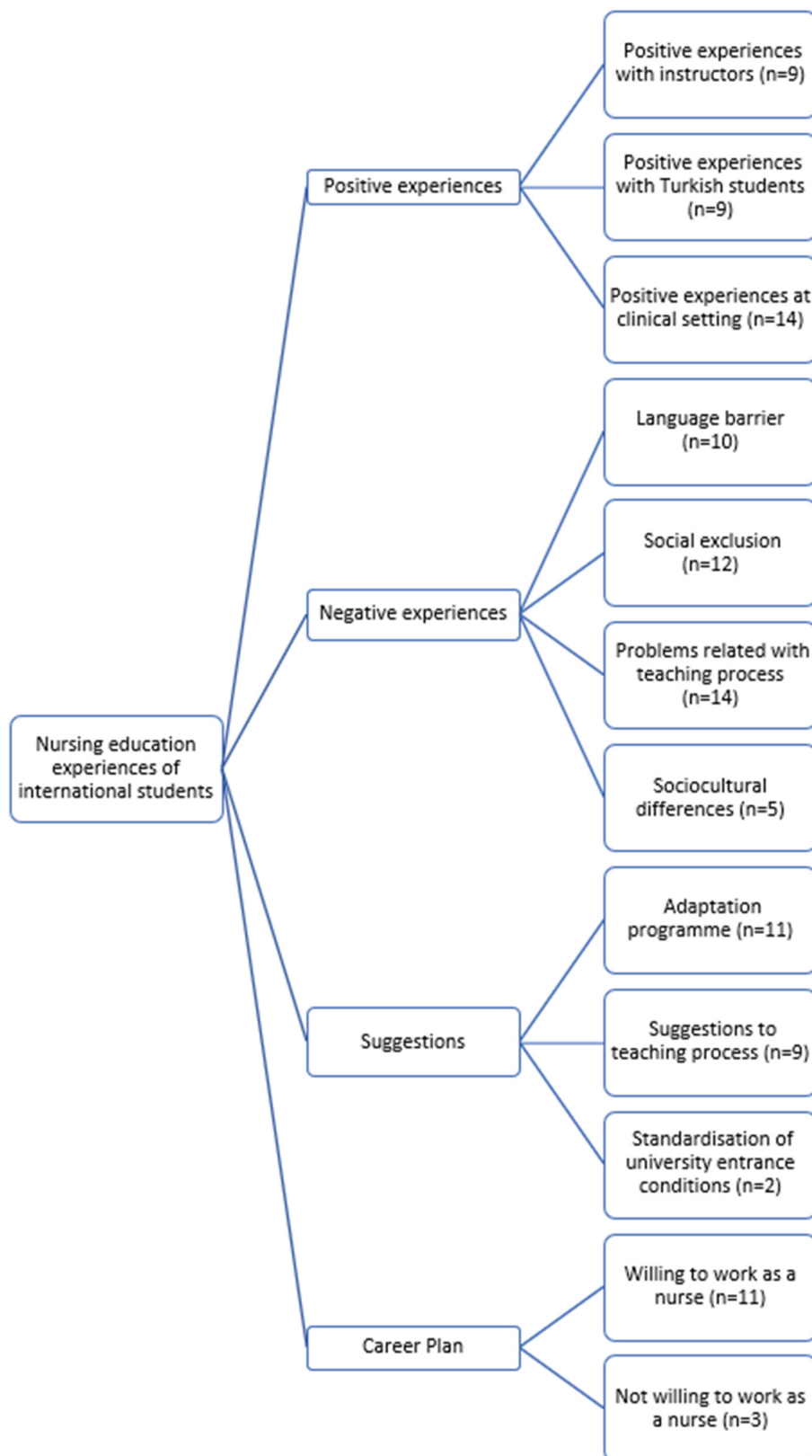


Figure 1. Themes and codes

Theme 1: Positive experiences

In this theme, positive experiences of international nursing students towards nursing education was examined. Three sub-themes were generated under this main theme. These are positive experiences with instructors, positive experiences with Turkish students and positive experiences at hospital.

- **Positive experiences with instructors**

Some International students stated that instructors realized both the educational competencies and their roles as counsellors as well as providing great support to them.

"...for example when we have certain problems related with the course our instructors always comfort us by saying to communicate with them whenever we want either by texting or calling. They always want to help us... so I have never seen the negatives from teachers... Thanks to their help" (Student 11, Turkmenistan)

- **Positive experiences with Turkish students**

Some International students stated that working with Turkish students at the hospital facilitated their integration process. Some International students also expressed that they were always paired with Turkish students at hospital and came together during social events. All of the five Turkmen students together with an Iraqi and an Egyptian student indicated that they had positive experiences with their Turkish counterparts. Two of the Syrian students on the other hand shared that they had positive experiences with some of their Turkish friends and negative experiences with others.

"... I was paired with a Turkish student in my first internship period. Our instructors matched a international student with a Turkish one. Because no matter how well you understand Turkish language, a international student still had a language barrier. However my Turkish partner helped me when I could not understand certain Turkish expressions..." (Student 3, Turkmenistan)

- **Positive experiences at hospital**

Positive experiences of international students was with "nurses", "patient" and "patient's family" in hospital.

A few nursing students remarked that they had positive experiences with nurses at hospital, and nurses always supported and presented a protective attitude towards them and also strived for providing efficient education as well.

"...I never had any problems with the nurses at the hospital. I mean, the nurses were better... more precisely, the nurses were teaching me.... They were teaching me. They were saying, "This is how you will do it." ... In general, they trusted me a lot... I mean, they trusted me... in the preparation of medicines or in the organization of documents. I was helping them because I understood the computer well. They were helping me. I never had any problems..." (Student 2, Turkmenistan)

A few students also expressed that they played the role of interpreter between international patients and health care professionals.

"...It was good... I mean good... because I am an Arab, I meet a lot of Arab patients in hospital... the nurses always call me to help with them to communicate... they ask me for help... because I am a foreigner, I am helping or treatment for the Turks... they see us differently... I mean you are working for the Turks. They tell me -you are tired for patients-..." (Student 10, Jordan)

A student expressed that Turkish patients appreciated them and uttered motivating expressions for them to stay in Turkey.

"... Most of the time it was very beautiful, very positive... So when the patients realized that I was a foreigner, they were curious about me. They said "when did you come", "you are a foreigner, where are you from" or "you speak Turkish very well". Of course, we started chatting with some of them during the administration of medication and treatment. I have never experience any adverse or negative behavior because I am a foreigner, but I have experienced such behaviors because I am a student, but I have never experienced such behaviors because I am a foreigner..." (Student 13, Egypt)

Theme 2: Negative experiences

In this theme, negative experiences of nursing international students towards nursing education was examined. Language barrier, social exclusion, sociocultural differences and problems related to the teaching process were gathered in four sub-themes.

- **Language barrier**

Some students indicated that they had difficulty in understanding the subject due to language barrier, because of this their duration of studying lasted longer and they felt stressful especially in hospital.

A few international students stated that they initially had difficulties in courses such as Anatomy and Physiology. They stated that they had difficulty in understanding Latin words used in the lessons.

"...Turkish course is so different.... I felt myself like a chair at first grade. Because the instructor speaks but I can not understand I ask myself -Is this Turkish? Are you sure?- Anatomy and physiology were the hardest issues for me ... I could not understand whether a word was Turkish or Latin...." (Student 6, Morocco)

Some students expressed that they had difficulty reading in Turkish. The students stated that they had to translate the lecture notes because they did not have enough command of the Turkish language and therefore they had time problems.

“... just normal communication.... I did not have any difficulties about communication but I had certain difficulties in reading especially at the beginning ... I always read in Arabic and studied in Arabic at the very beginning of the university.... but I do not need translation anymore.... (Student 14, Iraq)

Some students stated that they had difficulties because people were talking too fast.

“... When I started university. I learned how to talk to people. But it was a very difficult time. I mean, medical words were very difficult. Doctors speak too fast for us In fact we can understand when we communicate them but when they speak too fast we can not catch the point appropriately ...” (Student 5, Jordan)

- **Social exclusion**

Almost all of the international students signified that they experienced social exclusion by Turkish students, patients and caregivers.

A few international students implied that they experience social exclusion since they can not express themselves clearly and Turkish students do not want them to be included in group activities.

“...at first grade I had difficulties.... It is because of the language barrier. We as Arabic students were not sure about if we could do our homework properly or not.... Turkish students always came together with their own groups ...” (Student 13, Egypt)

Some international students stated that they were exposed to racist expressions and suffered social exclusion for being Syrian or Arabic or being regarded to be so.

“... everyone meeting me thinks me as Syrain. They do not like Syrian people so they behave in a rude way.... But I am from Jordan so close to Palestine ... When they hear that their behaviours change dramatically ...” (Student 5, Jordan)

The students stated that they were excluded by some Turkish students without any reason.

“... sometimes Turkish students look us as if asking why you are here? Isn't there a university in your own country? We just try to stay quiet... I mean here is their country in the last instance... we just say good morning but they don't sit with us... I can ask something, about the class. That's all we talk about... It's a bit difficult to be friends with them or they don't accept us. I don't know. They don't give us the opportunity ...” (Student 6, Morocco)

- **Problems related with the teaching process**

Almost all of the international students stated that they had difficulty with the teaching process. Among these difficulties were basic differences in education programmes, instructors' speaking too fast, teaching methods used by them, exam-related factors and being an intern.

A student stated that they experienced difficulties due to differences in pre-university education.

“... I think that all the international students had similar difficulties. For example, instructors teach a certain subject but they say –you already learned that in high school- but we did not! ... Then we need to ask it again and again that becomes weird for Turkish students and they think we know nothing on this issue. So that some of us can not ask the points that can not be understood ...” (Student 3, Turkmenistan)

Some students stated that they had time problems during the exams because of language barriers.

“...we had exam-related difficulties such as reading or writing ... in addition some of the instructors give shorter time limit for exams.... But we need more time to understand what we read and answer the questions so we can not arrange the timing during exams ...” (Student 7, Syria)

- **Sociocultural differences**

Some international students expressed that they experienced certain difficulties in socialization due to socio-cultural diversity and systemic differences between the countries.

“... since I do not know the local culture well, I do not know what to talk about with my classmates ...” “... I thought I knew the health care system in this country but I was wrong ... Everyone tried to apply what they learned in their own countries which is not right ... I think we should be provided an adaptation education especially for health care system ...” (Student 2, Turkmenistan)

Theme 3: Suggestions

International students made some suggestions on nursing education. Three sub-themes were identified under the main theme in this section which are; adaptation programmes, teaching processes and standardization of university entrance conditions.

- **Adaptation programmes**

As for the adaptation programmes of international students were to organize social events, to arrange various programmes helping to improve Turkish language competency, to develop programmes ensuring adaptation between Turkish and

international students, to provide education on management processes of Turkey and to organize programmes about cultural diversity in Turkey.

“... when a international student is first accepted to the department ... I think a international students should firstly be provided education on the culture of the target country... It will be a cultural education, so it was not only Turkish education ...” (Student 2, Turkmenistan)

“... Actually I don't know how these problems will end. For example more international students in the classroom ... or I don't know ... Racist views among Turkish students should be eliminated ... they should be provided education on this issue ...” (Student 9, Syria)

“Each of the Turkish students groups should include a international student so that we can observe them just like an in-service training... so that we could see how Turkish students work... we can learn how we should work ...” (Student 13, Egypt)

- **Teaching processes**

Some international students suggested that the duration of practical trainings should be increased and different training methods should be used. International students suggested that trainings should be given to introduce students to the exam system in Turkey and demonstrate the types of questions that may be asked in exams.

“... I can suggest that there should be more laboratories for students... practice opportunities should be more prevalent ...I think practising in labs and in real life settings foster permanent learning... We can not make do much things in hospital...” (Student 3, Turkmenistan)

“... they should help us about the exams. Because we are international students ...I mean we should be handed out various worksheets, notes and some clues because we do not know how can certain type of questions be asked (Student 7, Syria).

- **Standardization of university entrance conditions**

A few students suggested a standardization in university entrance conditions. They also suggested a higher barrier of entry for the language condition and an university entrance exam for international students.

“... I entered the university in Turkey without an exam. I demand that students should be accepted to universities by international students university entrance exam. It is no good to enter the university without an exam. International students should have basic knowledge to pass the exam just like Turkish students ...” (Student 4, Turkmenistan)

“... C1 language degree is not enough.... I mean some international students have difficulties in comprehension. I was one of them in my first year ... For example, in the first year I passed anatomy in this case. But I say how did I pass because I didn't understand much. My Turkish was very inadequate ...” (Student 2, Turkmenistan)

Theme 4: Career plan

Students were divided into two groups; those who want a nursing career and others who seek a career in other jobs.

- **Willing to work as a nurse**

In the first group only the students from Turkmenistan plan to return to their own country while others plan to establish a nursing career in Türkiye, Germany, England or the USA.

“... I do not want to stay here but I want to migrate to Germany ...” (Student 4, Turkmenistan)

“... I will work here because my family live here and my siblings study in this country ...” (Student 6, Morocco)

“... I plan to stay here and get married ... I get used to this country and told my family about my preference for living in this country in Istanbul ...” (Student 9, Syria)

- **Not willing to work as a nurse**

Three of the international students stated that they plan to establish a career in other jobs not in nursing.

“... I will study medicine as soon as I graduate ...” (Student 3, Turkmenistan)

“.... I want to study psychology that is my childhood dream ...” (Student 6, Morocco)

3.1. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to identify the views of international nursing students about the nursing education. Relevant literature on this issue suggested certain difficulties for international students however the nature of those difficulties involve difference distinctive features. While some studies focus solely on academic and language difficulties, others focus on cultural and financial burdens [2],[18],[19]. We focused not only on the difficulties experienced by international nursing students but also on their positive attitudes. According to results of the current study, students were rather pleased with the understanding and positive approaches of the instructors. They could easily reach the instructors and share their opinions. Such a result implied that nursing instructors accepted the existence of international students and made an

effort to raise qualified nurses regardless of their nationalities. The experiences of majority of the participants about the support of their friends, together with professionals during clinical practice were positive. In clinical practice, working with Turkish students was absolutely advantageous in order to interpret cultural expressions as well as to understand local expressions in communicating with patients. In hospital, supportive behaviours of nurses and other professionals, including international students to care practices and answering their questions willingly were highly encouraging factors. Another important point was the role of Arabic students as translators between health care professionals and patients. As it is known, Arabic population in Turkey dominates other immigrant populations because of Syrian immigrants and health tourism policies. Arabic students make the communication between patients and health care professionals easier by acting as translators. Perception of international students regarding the communication to Turkish patients were fairly positive and patients' expressing appreciation following the caring process was rather gratifying.

Besides such positive experiences, some negative ones exist about being an international nursing student in Turkey. Similar to results of other studies, language and academic adaptation of participants posed a barrier for them [20],[21]. The medium of instruction in majority of nursing programmes is Turkish and international students must attend Turkish preparatory classes for at least one year. International students' performing well in target language is a key factor to adapt a new education system as well as a new cultural environment. Moreover; it aids communication with patients in hospital and enhances the chance of finding a good job after graduation. According to the results of the study, international nursing students felt themselves insufficient in terms of language and experience language-related difficulties in courses and in hospital. Instructors' speaking too fast makes it harder for them to comprehend. Their expectations from instructors are to speak slower and make frequent repetitions in their courses. Even if they were sufficient in the colloquial language, writing academically and during exams remained a real challenge for international nursing students. Other studies on this issue reported similar results. The major challenge experienced in academic success and adaptation was demonstrated as the language barrier [2],[7],[21]. In addition to language barrier, another factor affecting the comprehension process in courses was their readiness levels. Each of the international nursing students graduated from different education systems of their countries. In fact the basic problem of institutions accepting international students is the recognition of prior learning as being the same for all students. During the acceptance process, assessment of prior learning in terms of basic education and the use of language may increase the success of education programmes.

According to the results of the study some of the international students reported that they felt themselves excluded both in class and outside of school. Social exclusion is a term used in sociology and psychology to describe a process in which individuals or groups are shut out from the rights, opportunities or resources that are available to other members of society [11]. Social exclusion is caused generally by classmates, patients and caregivers. Verbal abuses by classmates, irritating questions such as 'why are you here? Isn't there an university in your country?', international students' not being included in group works were some of the examples regarding social exclusion. As for group work, Turkish and international students' being divided into different groups that is challenging especially for the international students owing to language and cultural insufficiency. Mixing of Turkish and international students in group work and in in-class activities might be a solution in terms of both interaction and language/cultural guidance of Turkish students in order to create an efficient study environment. In hospital, disturbing questions such as "where is your family? What is your income?" reduced their motivation of being involved in caring processes. In another study, it was reported that international students frequently encountered prejudice, discrimination and racism [11]. In particular, the discrimination encountered in clinical practices caused sadness and lower self-esteem that led to reluctance in performing their duties [18]. In the study carried out by Mattila et al. [22] it was reported that international nursing students experienced similar emotions and sometimes asked themselves whether if nursing might be the wrong career for them. In conclusion, international nursing students have unique learning needs so they need support in a considerable extent to meet their clinical expectations.

3.2. Study limitations

This study has certain limitations. Firstly, all of the students have been studying in Istanbul. A wider network around the country should be established for future studies. Secondly, since the students did not use their mother-tongues during the interviews, a kind of fluency problem occurred in communication. Language-related difficulties should definitely be considered in future studies. The short duration of the interviews and the participation of two researchers in the interviews were accepted as a limitation.

3.3. Conclusion

It is obvious that international nursing students have concerns regarding language barriers, sociocultural differences, social exclusion and teaching processes. Language is the most challenging area in which students have difficulties. In order to overcome language barriers, the number of local language courses should be increased. International students should be encouraged about the use of the target language that will help learning processes and increase their success. What is more, assessment of prior learning and elimination of deficiencies on this issue is a critical factor for the increase in the level of success. In addition, structured orientation programmes may contribute towards adaptation and integration processes to a greater extent.

4. Author contribution statement

All authors contributed collecting data, writing of the article, and evaluation of the results. Özgül Eycan and Ayfer Ekim made the revisions.

5. Ethics committee approval and conflict of interest statement

This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of Istanbul Arel University by decision number 2022/22 on 04.11.2022. The research process was completely voluntarily, and the data was encrypted in a digital environment, by hiding personal information and in encrypted files. The participants were explained the purpose of the study beforehand, and the interviews were held after they have given written consent.

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