





Mapping of International Mobility Benefits in Strengthening Nursing Programs in Türkiye

Türkiye’de Hemşirelik Programlarının Güçlendirilmesinde Yararlanılan Uluslararası Mobilitenin Haritalandırılması

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Özet

Küreselleşmenin hem sağlık sistemini hem de eğitim sistemini etkilediği düşünüldüğünde, hemşirelik eğitimi küreselleşmeden büyük ölçüde etkilenebilir ve hareketlilik programları önem kazanmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, Türkiye’de hemşirelik bölümlerinde üniversiteler arasındaki ortaklıkları ve hareketlilik programları çerçevesinde uluslararası düzeyde öğrenci ve öğretim elemanı hareketliliklerinin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırma, çevrimiçi anket yolu ile uygulanan tanımlayıcı bir çalışmadır. Araştırma 2017–2018 eğitim öğretim yılında hemşirelik eğitimi veren 82 hemşirelik bölümü ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Hemşirelik eğitimi aktif olarak sürdüren fakülte ve yüksekokulların %70.7’si devlet üniversitesi olup, tamamında uluslararası öğrenci-öğretim elemanı hareketliliği programlarından biri bulunmaktadır. Bölümlerin %58.5’inin öğrenci hareketliliği ile ilgili olarak yurt dışına giden en az bir öğrencisi bulunduğu ve en çok tercih edilen ülkenin Polonya olduğu (%18.1) belirlenmiştir. Üniversitelerin %70.7’sinde yurtdışından kuruma gelen öğrenci bulunmadığı, toplamda 21 farklı ülkeden gelen öğrencilerin en fazla İspanya’dan geldiği tespit edilmiştir. Hemşirelik bölümlerinin yarısından fazlasında (%53.7) programlar kapsamında yurtdışına giden öğretim üye ve elemanı bulunmaktadır. Hemşirelik mesleğinin gelişiminde hareketlilik programları önem arz etmektedir. Hemşirelik eğitiminde bu etkileşim programlarının daha aktif bir şekilde kullanılması için öğrencilere ve akademisyenlere gerekli danışmanlıkların yapılması ve uluslararasılaşmanın teşvik edilmesi mesleki gelişim açısından önemlidir.

Anahtar sözcükler: ERASMUS, hareketlilik programları, hemşirelik eğitimi, küreselleşme, uluslararasılaşma.

Abstract

Considering that the acceleration of globalization has affected both the health systems and the education systems worldwide, nursing education has been greatly impacted in the process and mobility programs have greatly gained in importance. This study aimed to investigate the mobility of students and academicians at the international level, within the framework of partnerships between universities and international mobility BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing) programs in Türkiye. The study used a descriptive method with an online survey and was carried out on 82 BSN programs during the 2017–2018 academic year. The data in the study was collected by means of the “Student and Academician Mobility Information Form” and it revealed that 70.7% of the faculties with BSN programs were from State universities and that all these institutions had student and academician mobility programs. 58.5% of the departments had at least one student who went abroad in the context of mobility and Poland was the most preferred choice (18.1%). 70.7% of the universities had no foreign students and for those institutions who did, the country having the highest number of students who enrolled in Türkiye, from a total of 21 countries, was Spain. There were academic staff and faculty who went abroad within the scope of the programs in more than half of the BSN programs (53.7%). Mobility programs are important for the development of the nursing profession. In order to use these more actively in BSN education, internationalization can be encouraged, and the required guidance should be given to students and academics.

Keywords: ERASMUS, globalization, international mobility, internationalization, nursing education.

Since its accelerated emergence in the 1980s, the worldwide impact of globalization has become one of the most widely discussed issues in the world, today. While globalization was initially an economic phenomenon, it has shaped the world we know today with its social, political, eco-

nomical and cultural impacts triggering changes in many areas, ranging from health to education and from economy to politics. With the ease of international movement of capital, the world has become a global marketplace and the increasing competition among the countries trying to gain a place in this

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market, has caused a restructuring of the world economy (Ağrı, 2006; Aslan, 2004; Erdem, 2012).

Globalization is also interpreted as a result of advances in modern science and new technologies. Transportation opportunities and advancements in the information and communication technologies have caused the world to become smaller and has favoured the emergence of worldly consciousness. With globalization, people from different countries come together, exchange goods, services and ideas and benefit from each other's experiences. With the increase in transportation facilities, distances are shortened, transitions of countries and societies in the world increase and people are becoming more itinerant than ever (Aktel 2001; Balay, 2004; Karaman, 2010; Tarcan, 2001).

Globalization has imposed changes in education, in particular in higher education, as in many other structures of society. While the most important source of economic growth in agricultural societies and industrial economies is agricultural land, it is thought that information is the key for economic development in the 21st century, and lack of information is considered to be the principal obstacle to economic and social development. This perspective has laid the groundwork for higher education, considered to be at the center of information, production and distribution, to be considered among important resources for the economic development of countries around the world. In this context, with the effect of globalization as well as the emergence of the information society, new types of universities such as entrepreneurial, corporate and virtual universities have emerged. Relations between institutions have gradually increased with the establishment of new relationship networks, pluralistic institutional collaborations and focuses and universities have gained more international qualifications. Education programs such as the establishment of foreign universities, distance education and online education, are among the innovations brought by internationalization to education. Beside these, the mobility/mobilization of students and lecturers, which are an important aspect of internationalization in higher education, is increasing every day (Balay, 2004; Özdem, 2013; Council of Higher Education of Türkiye [CoHE], 2007, p. 251; CoHE, 2017, p. 84).

The mobility of students and academicians contributes to the acquisition of new information of the participating countries, with mutual interaction, the presence of more dynamic universities, the approximation and harmonisation of higher education systems all over the world, accelerating intercultural understanding and integration, establishing more pluralistic dialogue environments, increasing intellectual and aca-

ademic dialogue between cultures, as well as enriching and developing education. On the other hand, these universities are criticised for losing sight of their mission of spreading national culture and shaping citizens, while cultural differences are leveled under the effects of global cooperation networks, as well as not educating nations according to their priorities and further deepening the inequality of opportunity in education (Bayık Temel, 2011; CoHE, 2017, p. 84; Çelik & Gömleksiz, 2010; Çetin, 2007).

Globalization has affected the nursing profession and nursing education as well, as with all professions. With globalization, there have been changes in the nature of knowledge, educational institutions and the structure of nursing education (Davidson, Meleis, Daly, & Douglas, 2003). In an effort to adapt to these changes, it is thought that the number of schools providing universal nursing education will gradually increase. It is aimed to ensure that schools that provide nursing education become specialized in time and become internationalized with student exchange programs (Bayık Temel, 2011). New academic systems are developed by ensuring student mobility in pre-and post-graduate education in nursing schools and students are obliged to take part of their education in other countries (Glass, 2006). Nursing students go to other countries and discover the opportunity to experience, research and examine their profession. This internationally developing academic mobility enables people from all countries to easily connect with each other and to share intercultural knowledge and skills (Bayık Temel, 2011). The international mobilization that has been carried out has fostered students' sense of independence, personal development, communication skills and has served to increase their self-confidence. It has served to develop their ability to understand different cultures and to apply transcultural care, while observing and comparing other countries' health care systems and nursing practice. It has many additional positive contributions, such as learning another language and making new acquaintances (Button, Green, Tengnah, Johansson, & Baker, 2005).

In the context of student mobility, the number of international students across the world which was estimated at eight hundred thousand in the 1970s, accounted for some 4.5 million in 2012 and this number was estimated to reach 8 million by 2022 (CoHE, 2017, p. 84). Whereas the first steps of internationalization in higher education began in Europe in the 1980s, the acceptance of international students in higher education through the payment of tuition started for the first time in England as late as 1979. The European Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (ERASMUS)



program, which comes to mind when considering an increase in the mobility of international students and academicians and improving cooperation in education and research, both at the country level and throughout Europe, was created in 1987. The number of international students, which was less than one million in the world in 1975, reached 1.3 million in 1990 and 2.1 million in 2000 and this number was 4.1 million in 2010 (Arkalı & Nasır, 2016). This increase is expected to continue with acceleration and reach 8 million by 2022 (CoHE, 2017, p. 84). Recent changes in mobility indicate that the trend continues mostly towards Europe and the United States of America (USA). In 2013, the USA was the country accepting the highest number of international students around the world with 784,427 international students (Arkalı & Nasır, 2016). Despite the decrease in recent years, the USA retains its position as the most attractive destination in the world for international students and academicians (Ozer, 2017). While Türkiye sent 51,295 students to other countries in 1999, this number dropped to 44,964 in 2013. It was among the top thirty countries preferred by foreign students in 1999 and there was a significant increase in the number of students in 2013 (1999–2013 18,337 and 54,387, respectively); it was ranked seventeenth among the top thirty countries. When we look at the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OECD) rates (8%) among current students in the countries where students go, compared to many countries, Türkiye is far below the average with a rate of 1.9%. On the other hand, it hosts only 1% of international students (OECD, 2015).

In a comprehensive study conducted by OECD on the future of higher education in the world in by 2030, it was stated that the higher education supporting and containing cross-border and transnational mobility of students, academicians and institutions would grow more (CoHE, 2017, p. 84; Şimşek & Bakır, 2016).

Nursing education, which is influenced by the globalization of both the healthcare system and education, also uses exchange programs in its bid to attain international qualifications (Bayık Temel, 2011; Ersin & Bahar, 2014). However, to the best of our knowledge, there are no studies in the literature that examine at what stage the nursing schools in Türkiye find themselves at this time, in the context of the international mobilization resulting from globalization. Therefore, in this study, it was aimed to investigate the mobilities of students and academicians at the international level, within the framework of partnerships between universities and mobility BSN programs in Türkiye.

Method

Study Design

The descriptive research method was used in this study.

Participants

The population of the study was composed of 124 faculties providing undergraduate education in BSN programs, affiliated with higher education institution in Türkiye. The plan included reaching the entire population and no sample selection was made. Within the scope of the study, BSN programs in Türkiye having international student and academician mobility program, as well as agreeing to participate in the study, were the only inclusion criteria. Universities who failed to complete the data collection forms were excluded from the study. Ultimately, the study was conducted with the participation of 82 BSN programs during the 2017–2018 academic year.

Data Collection

The data was collected between September 2017 and July 2018, using the “Student and Academician Mobility Information Form”, which consists of two sections and a total of thirteen questions, including three about the institution and ten about the mobility of student-academician. The form, prepared by the researchers, was sent to the faculty deans and heads of departments of the universities where the study would be conducted through official letters from the university of the researchers, as well as through e-mail. The deans and head of department of BSN programs of the target universities that did not respond within six months were followed-up on by the researchers and their responses were collected.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the study was assessed using the IBM SPSS Statistic 22.0 (IBM Corp., Armonk, NY, USA) packaged software in the environment. Descriptive and analytical statistical methods were used to evaluate the data and the value of $p < 0.05$ was considered as statistically significant.

Ethical Considerations

Attention was paid to ethical principles at every stage of the study. Prior to launch, Ethics committee approval was received from Erciyes University Social and Humanities Ethics Committee (EU/SBBEK-28). The institutions were informed about the study and responses were provided by the institutions that agreed to participate in the study.



Results

It was determined that 70.7% of the BSN programs were from State universities and included some 1023 academicians and 59,765 nursing students during the 2017–2018 academic year. All the institutions had student and academician mobility programs and university information centres. Among the mobility programs, the ERASMUS program was found to be present in all universities participating in the study and 85.4% of the schools were found to provide information about mobility program for the BSN programs (■ Table 1).

It was also determined that 58.5% of the departments had at least one students who went abroad in the context of student and academician mobility. Considering that the mobility started with the ERASMUS program, a total of 541 students benefited from the program and went abroad from 1987 to 2017; Poland being the most preferred (18.1%) one among 29 countries. It was found that 70.7% of the universities had no foreign students, whereas for those that did, a total of 159 students came to Türkiye from abroad to receive education; Spain had the highest number of students having come to Türkiye out of a total of 21 countries (Bulgaria, Poland, Belgium, Romania, Portugal, etc.). There were academicians who went abroad within the scope of the programs in more than half of the BSN programs (53.7%): 188 (17.2%) of the academicians went to abroad in the scope of mobility programs in all participating universities and among 30 visited countries (Poland, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Italy, etc.), Portugal was noted to be the highest preferred destination (■ Table 2).

When the students and academicians mobility statuses of the institutions having BSN programs were examined based on some characteristics, it was determined that there was no significant difference between the State and private universities, in terms of student and academician mobility characteristics ($p>0.05$). It was also determined that ERASMUS was the largely preferred program providing mobility and informing the department about mobility program, though it did not produce a significant correlation between the student and staff mobility ($p>0.05$) (■ Table 3).

Discussion

Nowadays, in discussions on internationalisation in higher education mobility, the focus is on student and academician from developing countries heading to developed countries (Kış & Konan, 2012; Özdem, 2013; Taşçı Kaya, 2014). It was noted therefore, that the USA holds its position as the most attractive destination for international students and academicians (Ozer, 2017) and the mobility trend is towards Europe and the USA (Arkalı & Nasır, 2016). It was seen in the present study that Poland, as a Northern European country, is preferred more by students, which is also supported in the literature. This is due to the fact that Poland attaches great importance to exchange programs and is one of the top five countries actively using the programs (Akkutay, 2017; Oflaz & Çavdar, 2017). In another study conducted in Türkiye, Poland was found to be the first to receive students from other countries (Arkalı & Nasır, 2016). The fact that the university and higher education sys-

■ Table 1. Characteristics of BSN programs.

Characteristics	n	%
University type		
State university	58	70.7
Foundation university	24	29.3
Total number of academicians: 1023 (2017–2018 academic year)		
Total number of students: 59,765 (2017–2018 academic year)		
Mobility programs*		
ERASMUS	82	100
Mevlana	52	63.4
Others (International student exchange programs, private partnership between universities)	5	6.0
Mobility programs information center at the universities		
Yes	82	100
Mobility programs information center at the programs		
Yes	70	85.4
No	12	14.6

*Multiple options are marked.



tems in the USA and European countries are perceived as more effective seems to affect students selecting these countries. They believe that they can find better employment opportunities with the education they received at these schools and they can work and attain better living conditions in those countries (Ozer, 2017).

It is aimed with the exchange of students and academicians among universities to develop cooperation between countries, to increase the quality of higher education, to enable different universities to come together and make collaborative studies, to support the spread of these studies in other universities and to harmonise curricula of the universities with curriculum improvement studies (Ağrı, 2006). However, when the situation of Turkish students is evaluated, it is found that very few head to foreign countries to do any part of their studies

(Akkutay, 2017). Students from Türkiye constitute 0.9% of students benefiting from the mobility program in the world. Although students are the most financially supported group, it was noted that though at least one student of more than half of the BSN programs went abroad, only 541 nursing students have benefited from ERASMUS program, within the past thirty years. The fact that the overseas experiences of the students did not cause any privilege for students in regards to their nursing profession and the mobility programs are not evaluated in exams, might be discouraging students from participating. In line with these results, it is thought that increasing the introduction of the mobility programs earlier and evaluating the nurses' status of benefiting from mobility programs at the start of their profession, will increase the participation to these programs.

Table 2. Characteristics of international mobility programs in BSN programs.

Characteristics	n	%
International student mobility programs		
Students going abroad		
Yes	48	58.5
No	34	41.5
<i>Total number of students going abroad: 541</i>		Min-max: 1-76
Countries		
Poland	98	18.1
Portugal	52	9.6
Spain	47	8.6
Others (26 countries)	344	63.5
Students from abroad		
Yes	24	29.3
No	58	70.7
<i>Total number of students from abroad: 159</i>		Min-max: 1-37
Countries		
Spain	37	23.2
Poland	31	19.4
Bulgaria	22	13.8
Others (18 countries)	69	43.3
International academician mobility programs		
Academicians going abroad		
Yes	44	53.7
No	38	46.3
<i>Number of academicians: 224</i>		Min-max: 1-33
Countries		
Portugal	52	18
Poland	41	14.2
Spain	19	6.5
Others (27 countries)	112	38.8

Table 3. International mobility characteristics of BSN programs.

BSN programs	International mobility programs					
	Students going abroad		Students from abroad		Academicians going abroad	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
University type						
State university	43	15	22	36	38	20
Foundation university	5	19	2	22	6	17
ρ	0.064		0.160		0.092	
Name of international mobility programs						
ERASMUS	48	34	24	58	44	38
Mevlana	37	15	20	32	34	18
Others	1	4	0	5	1	4
ρ	0.066		0.065		0.077	
International mobility information center						
Yes	43	27	24	46	39	5
No	5	17	0	12	32	6
ρ	0.093		0.079		0.052	

Internationalisation in higher education will not only improve the quality of higher education institutions, it will also provide significant contributions in the economic, social and cultural fields of the countries. For this reason, countries need to make efforts to become an important attraction centre in internationalisation in higher education, at both student and academician levels. Despite all this, it is reported in the literature that the number of European students coming to Türkiye is quite low and a great majority of those students have come with short-term exchange programs (Ozer, 2017). Similar to the literature, it was determined in the results of the present study that 70.7% of the BSN programs in universities had no foreign student at all using the exchange programs, and that only 159 students had come from abroad to BSN programs in Türkiye in order to receive education, during the examined period. This may be associated with the fact that the BSN programs of the universities in Türkiye have not been sufficiently publicized to foreign students. In addition, higher education institutions and research centres prepare projects to attract successful people at both student and academician level to their countries and make huge investments in these projects (Ozer, 2017). In line with this information, it can be thought that the BSN programs and higher education in Türkiye have not formulated a sufficient amount of initiatives.

It was determined in this study that the students who have come to BSN programs in Türkiye through exchange programs came mostly from Spain. The reason for this may that

in the previous academic year, this country sent some 37,235 students to another country (Akkutay, 2017), more than any other. In another study, it was seen that Spain was in the sixth place among the countries sending the highest number of students specifically to Türkiye (Arkalı & Nasır, 2016).

Higher education is one of the areas where global values are placed. Mobility, especially in international arenas, provides these through their students, academicians, projects, studies and personnel working in higher education (Akkutay, 2017; Kış & Konan, 2012; Oflaz & Çavdar, 2017; Özdem, 2013). Countries are particularly careful to strengthen both their education quality and research capacity by attracting international faculty members to their countries (Knight, 2007). Along with the number of international students, the number of foreign faculty members has an important role in internationalisation (Arkalı & Nasır, 2016). In terms of the number of personnel participating in the ERASMUS personnel mobility program, Türkiye was in second place, right after Poland, in the first five countries (Oflaz & Çavdar, 2017). The UK, Spain, Germany, Italy and Portugal are shown as the most popular five places for personal training (Akkutay, 2017). In this study, Portugal was also seen to be the most preferred place to go abroad within the scope of mobility programs for the BSN programs academicians in the universities. Since the effect of the increase in the mobility of international academicians will naturally reflect on the number of international students, it can be asserted that the changes should increase.



Conclusion and Recommendations

Internationalisation in higher education creates individuals who are open to the events and developments taking place around them, who have an improved culture of common living, have the ability to look at the events with a different perspective and provide contribution in the development of a new generation looking to ensure universal goodwill and harmony. It ensues the necessity to give importance to mobility programs, increase promotion activities and apply programs that will make mobility attractive, in order for the nursing profession to contribute to the development and change of the country. In addition, governmental incentives that will attract foreign students, international partnerships and promotional activities of universities should be increased. Exchange programs are also important in graduate education as in undergraduate education, therefore it is recommended to develop graduate exchange programs in nursing.

Limitations

Due to the confusion of meaning in the data collection form, the questions about the academicians from abroad could not be answered correctly by many participating universities. For this reason, the information about the academicians coming from abroad was not included in the data and the lack of evaluations on this issue was considered as a limitation of the study. Inadequate records of mobility programs in universities and inaccessibility of these records through websites have made the data collection process difficult, which can be considered as another limitation.

Yazar Katkıları / Author Contributions: HYK: Fikir, tasarım, danışmanlık / denetleme, veri toplanması, veri analizi, bulguların yorumlanması, kaynak taraması, makalenin yazılması; ND: Tasarım, danışmanlık / denetleme, veri toplanması, veri analizi, eleştirel inceleme; ÖC: Danışmanlık / denetleme, bulguların yorumlanması, eleştirel inceleme; YS: Veri toplanması, veri analizi, eleştirel inceleme. / *HYK: Project idea, conceiving and designing research, study monitoring, data collection, data analysis, interpreting the results, literature search, writing manuscript; ND: Conceiving and designing the study, study monitoring, data collection, data analysis, critical reading and final check of the manuscript; ÖC: Study monitoring, interpreting the results, critical reading and final check of the manuscript; YS: Data collection, data analysis, critical reading and final check of the manuscript.*

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