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SOCIO-CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF STUDENT MIGRATION MOBILITY ON THE AXIS OF PUSHING AND PULLING FORCES: THE EXAMPLE OF IZMIR

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Abstract

Migration has been a significant part of human history, shaping civilizations, economies, and cultures. It has moved out of the national dimension also become an international issue. Migration has multidimensional dynamics in which all actors take part with the increasing impact of globalization. With the expansion of internationalization in higher education, there has been an increase in the tendency of university students to study abroad. The main purpose of this study is to analyze the attitude of university students mobility especially who migrated to İzmir for various reasons. Studying abroad presents both significant challenges and exciting opportunities for international students. Students study abroad to learn about cultures in different countries, develop foreign language skills, and learn to live in multicultural environments as well as gaining a new academic experience in different universities. However, it is also known that the experience of studying in a different country brings various opportunities and challenges to students. From this point of view, this qualitative study examined the factors that push and pull university students to study abroad and their perceptions about the possible challenges of this education. In this study, a survey techniques will be used to explain these attitudes. This study results in pulling factors for students to study in İzmir were more prominent than the push factors.

Keywords: Migration, İzmir, International Students, Push-Pull Factors, Sosyo-Cultural and Economic Factors

* This study is an expanded version of the Scientific Research Project (BAP) titled 'Socio-Cultural and Economic Analysis of Migration Mobility on the Axis of Driving and Attractive Forces: The Case of İzmir Democracy University' (HIZDEP/2405) conducted at İzmir Democracy University

Introduction

Migration is the movement of individuals or communities from their settlements of origin across borders or within the state in which they live. It can occur for various reasons, including social, political, economic, or environmental factors. Migration can be voluntary or forced, and it can happen on different scales, from local movements to international migration. There are multiple definitions of migration in the literature.

The phenomenon of migration has various social, economic, cultural, and political consequences before, during, and after the relocation itself. Migration is a geographical displacement event in which people move from one residence to another for a full or temporary period of time to spend all or part of their future lives.¹ The dynamics in the cause-effect relationship are intertwined in a historical and sociological context. This situation makes it impossible to define migration with a limited area and makes it difficult to understand the phenomenon in all its dimensions.²

Globalization refers to processes where by educational backgrounds and social relations acquire relatively distanceless and borderless qualities so that human lives are increasingly play out in the world as a single house. It is the global combination of technologies, nations, and economies in a free market capitalism at an unprecedented level.³ Currently, most universities have developed a variety of international programs that has a purpose of increasing the internationalization of higher education so that students can be prepared to meet the new problems of globalization.⁴ Migration arises as a result of the interaction of two different cultures, both segregation, melting and integration.

Globalization both accelerates the students mobility internationally and increases the student motivations of study abroad. Studying abroad offers numerous benefits such as cultural advantages (cultural skills, language skills, cultural awareness), career advantages (professional development, diverse career options or success) and social and personal advantages (social skills, gaining maturity, self decision making ability, becoming independent). For example, an important outcome of the global trends is the increasing number of international students⁵ which more than tripled between 1980 and 2009 and is estimated to reach 8 million by 2025.⁶

Sjaastad (1962) viewed migration in the same way as education: as an investment in the human agent. Migration and education are decisions that are indeed intertwined in many dimensions. Education and skill acquisition play an significant role at many

stages of an individual's migration.⁷ Education has an important role in reducing attitudes towards discrimination, prejudice, intolerance and attitude towards immigrants.⁸ The desire to acquire high-yielding skills in the host country, the country of origin, may be the important reason for migration. They make their choices about skill acquisition in the host country.

Furthermore, acquisition of education may be the only reason for a migration—student migrations are an example. The shift in the high student migration created a new markets to country. Although developed countries have quickly adapted to this new shift and adjusted their institutions accordingly, student migration to developing countries is a new field of research. Much studies has been done to understand the driving forces behind the motivation of students moving to developing countries. To illustrate, Turkey as a developing country has been a destination for student migration recently.

Turkey has been a country of immigrants throughout its history due to its geopolitical position, Since it is between Europe and Asia, Turkey had become a transit country for migrants for a long time therefore it experiences different types of migration phenomenon. Turkey keep hosting immigrants with different linguistic backgrounds, identity, language and religion.

The main research question of the research paper is ‘*What are the push and pull factors of the student migration in Izmir? What are the perceptions and expectations of students studying at a university in İzmir/Turkey about studying abroad?*’ The motivations of these students can be divided into two sides. Within the scope of the study, an economic, social and cultural analysis will be conducted based on the reasons that attract and repel foreign university students to Izmir. This research, which aims to reveal the driving and temporary elements of international migration, was conducted by focusing on the field study at the university in Izmir.

This article will be composed of four layers. The structure of this research paper is as follows: literature review, theoretical/conceptual analysis, method of the study and final part of the study. The literature section will be first part of the study. In this section, the contribution of article theoretical framework is presented to introduce the reader the details of the research as well to set clear boundaries as what will be researched and what not. What is written in the theoretical framework is visualized and summarized in the conceptual model. The push and pull factors theory will be main theory on this study. The conceptual model in this research paper is the basis of this research. The next chapter is the methodology chapter which includes which research method was chosen and as well why it was chosen. In the final section a reflection of the survey and interpretation of the result will be provided.

The original value of the study is that it will determine the social, economic, cultural characteristics of student migration and reveal their experiences about adaptation to the Izmir province. Societies' own lifestyles, traditions, languages, culture or identity searches deeply affect immigrant integration. Individuals or societies can

¹ Mustafa, Mutluer & Demir, Uluslararası Göçler ve Türkiye. İstanbul: Çantay Kitabevi, 2003.

² Atilla, Göktürk & Sevilay Kaygalak : Göç ve Kentleşme , Sosyal Hizmet Sempozyumu, Ankara, 1999

³ Thomas, Friedman, The Lexus and the olive tree: Understanding globalization. Farrar, 2000.

⁴ Philip, Altbach, & De Wit, H, Are we facing a fundamental challenge to higher education internationalization? International Higher Education, 93, 2-4, 2018

⁵ Toshie, Habu. The irony of globalization: The experience of Japanese women in British higher education Higher Education, 39, 43–66. 2000.

⁶ Unesco, Internationalization of higher education and student mobility in Japan and Asia, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000266196> 2011.

⁷ Larry, Sjaastad, The Costs and Returns of Human Migration. Journal of Political Economy, 70, 80-93, 1962

⁸ Colin, Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters. 2001.

successfully realize the acculturation phase by integrating with new societies and or they can become marginalized by entering into their own identity search and rejecting the new culture and identity. In addition to evaluating the migration problem from the point of view of both the emigrating and receiving countries, it is important to research the economic, social and cultural elements of migration together.

The phenomenon of migration refers to the process of immigrants gaining new economic opportunities, acquiring cultural values and adapting to the social environment without losing their own culture, at the same time rejecting the identity of the country they emigrated from. Among the main problems faced by immigrants during the adaptation phase are basic topics such as language, religion and cultural differences, xenophobia, differences in everyday relationships or lifestyles. Acculturation, national identity, interaction and social, economic and political position are included in the adaptation and integration processes that begin with migration.

Literature Analysis of Study

People migrate from one place to another compulsorily or voluntarily for reasons such as war, epidemics, natural disasters, economic problems, or the search for better living conditions, jobs, or educational opportunities. It can be modern or primitive, forced or free, small-scale or large⁹ Turkey is a transit country for people due to its strategic location in the world. Turkey is located at the center of Southwest Asia, Arab countries and Central and Eastern European regions where international student migration mobility is intense.¹⁰ While several studies have been published on the effect of migration on university students, very little academic research compilation has been made on the migration issue in Turkey with constantly updated information flooding in via several news outlets.

In this context, when the countries of origin of international students who immigrated to Turkey are examined, it is seen that their citizenship belongs mostly to countries such as Syria Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan Iran, Afghanistan and Iraq. Looking at the geographical basis, it can be said that educational migrations towards Turkey are mostly from the Turkish Republics and near neighboring countries, as there are examples all over the world.¹¹ Migration can lead to a change in the skill base of both countries, affecting average educational levels and possibly creating new incentives for educational externalities and human capital investments.

This research is limited to explaining the attitudes of undergraduate level university students who are residing in Izmir as an immigrant. In the survey, demographic, residence, identity, profession, income and attitude of th students are regarded during the questionnaire. In the literature review, separate studies and researches on the link between migration and education have been reached. However,

there has not been any study or research in the domestic and foreign literature on the social, economic and cultural exclusion or inclusion of foreign students who migrate for educational purposes.

In this context, adding a new one to the existing studies conducted in this context reveals the importance of working to identify and solve a problem that has not been studied and identified before, since it will be nothing more than repeating existing studies and redefining identified problems. Thus, the purpose of this study is to collate and analyze the most recent information on migration and with the project, the micro-scale impact of an important social problem at the country or world level will be revealed. Migrants who come to the country and have not yet acquired citizenship¹² is a definition that covers all foreign nationals in a country.¹³

This study will prevail that studies in which the rationalities of international students to study abroad were analyzed using the theory of attraction. For example, Chen (2017), in his article examining the factors that push and attract Chinese students studying in Canada, concluded that popular discourses dominate students' decisions to go abroad and choose Canada and that they personally want to study in Canada because of the possible positive effects on their language development and future careers.¹⁴

Another study (Lee and Stewart, 2022) was conducted with international students studying in South Korea. The main reasons why students choose South Korea have been found to experience new cultures and meet new people from these cultures.¹⁵ Also, Eder (2010) examined the factors that repel and attract students from the United States (USA) in a study. While the factors that push students are the lack of personal development, language and career development in their own countries; the attractive factors have been the quality of universities in the USA, their geographical location and the culture of the country. (Eder, 2010).

An important study by Maringe and Carter (2007) examined the reasons why African students study in the UK, while the factors that push these students are the economic problems and political instability in their home countries, the factors that attract them are the international recognition and quality of British higher education institutions, learning environments, part-time study opportunities, easy application process to universities and post-graduation opportunities.

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¹² Saniye , Dedeoğlu, & Çisel, Gökmen, Göç ve Sosyal Dışlanma. Ankara: Efil Yayınevi.2011.

¹³ Nuray,Ekşi,1951 Yılından Bugüne Mülteci Kavramı. Türkiye Belediyeler Birliği İller ve Belediyeler Dergisi, 1(813), 10-17.2015

¹⁴ Ching-Huei Chen, & Zimitat, Craig,Understanding Taiwanese students' decision-making factors regarding Australian international higher education. International Journal of Educational Management 20(2): 91-100.2006

¹⁵ Kyungsuk, Lee, & William, Stewart, W.Destination, experience, social network, and institution:Exploring four academic exchange pull factor dimensions at a university in the Republic of Korea. Journal of International Students, 12(4).2022

⁹ Taylan, Akkayan, Göç ve Değişme, İstanbul Üniversitesi Ed. Fak. Yayınları,No:2573, Ed. Fak. Basımevi, İstanbul,1979.

¹⁰ Önder, Kethüda, Türkiye'deki uluslararası öğrenci hareketliliği üzerine bir araştırma. Yükseköğretim Dergisi, 5(3), 147-161.2015

¹¹ Hamadi, Nguluma,Osman, Titrek.& Zehra, Kotaoğlu,Implementation of Turkish Foreign Policies and Government Support as driving forces of promoting international Students. International Journal of Lifelong Education and Leadership 5(1), 32-45.2019.

easy application process to universities and post-graduation opportunities.¹⁶

Next research was conducted in the literature about student migration by Kondakci (2011) with international students in Turkey, the main factors that attract international students to Turkey are the cultural experience specific to Turkey, academic quality and inexpensive living conditions.¹⁷

According to a study conducted by Özoğlu (2012) with international students, the fact that students feel close to Turkey geographically, culturally, historically, religiously and ethnically are the factors that attract them to Turkey.¹⁸ Similarly, in a study conducted by Kondakci (2016) in which students from the Balkans were surveyed in Turkey, it was found that socio-cultural proximity was at the forefront of students' preference for Turkey compared to academic and economic reasons.¹⁹

Many students from different ethnic origins such as Irans, Azerbaijani, Kazakhstan, Syrians and Afghans are included in the Turkish educational system.²⁰ Looking at the geographical basis, it can be said that educational migrations to Turkey take place mostly from the Turkish Republics and near neighboring countries, as there are examples all over the world.²¹ When we look at the research conducted on international students in the field summer, it is possible to come across various studies on the reasons for emigrating to Turkey, migration experiences, social and academic lives of students who immigrated to Turkey.²²

This study aims to provide views on Turkish national education policies for immigrant communities based on the experiences of undergraduate students who emigrated to Turkey. For this purpose, their cultural experiences, opinion differences in practices, experiences in the environment, the adaptation process and, finally, educational and cultural expectations it has been researched and interpreted.

Theoretical Analysis of Study

Push and Pull Factors Theory

Migration mobility is explained by two important theory in academic literature such as push and pull factors theory that help to explain migration patterns by analyzing the interplay between these factors. It is a foundational framework used to understand the motivations behind of student migration. It categorizes the reasons that drive people to leave their home countries (push factors) and

the attractions that draw them to new locations (pull factors). Many academics have adopted the *push-pull* theory and terminology related to the theory to analyze international student mobility.²³

Almeida (2020) states in his research that the push-pull theory is an important theoretical framework that is often used in international student mobility research. This study, theories have a purpose to collectively offer a comprehensive understanding of migration, reflecting its multifaceted nature and the diverse factors that drive individuals to move. In general, push factors are characterized by personal or external factors. An example of this regarding student migration is that a student is forced to migrate due to the lack of a certain study at the place of residence but could also extend to conflicts at home which increased the will to leave their home.²⁴

It is important to emphasize that when the push factors outweigh the pull factors of the country of citizenship, people make their decision to study internationally. Another stage during the decision process come to fore is to choose host country: the receiving country. In this stage, attractive forces of hosting country has to be greatest, where the repelling forces of has to be smallest. The last stage of student migration is choosing the institution. This decision making process is the same as the decision making process when choosing the most attractive country.²⁵

In Ravenstein's migration theory to be a center of attraction of developed commercial and industrial areas and to be intensively the fact that there is migration from rural to industrial areas is one of the attractive and deceptive factors of migration. Lee's push-pull theory also takes its inspiration from Ravenstein's immigration laws in general.²⁶

According to Lee, it is repulsive and attractive both in places where people live and are considered to migrate there are factors.²⁷ It is a well known fact that push and pull factors are closely linked with each other. In other words, the repulsive factors are associated with the negative conditions in the students' own countries, and the attractive factors are associated with the positive aspects in the destination country.²⁸

It is envisaged that this study will contribute to such studies that can be conducted for foreign students in other educational

¹⁶ Felix, Maringe, & Steve, Carter, International students' motivations for studying in UK HE: Insights into the choice and decision making of African students. International Journal of Educational Management, 21(6), 459–475, 2007.

¹⁷ Yaşar, Kondakci, Ömer, Caliskan, Betül, Bulut-Sahin, B. Ali Yılık, M. A. & Cennet, Demir, Regional internationalization in higher education between Turkey and the Balkans. Bilig, 78, 287, 2016.

¹⁸ Murat, Özoğlu, Bekir, Gür, & İpek, Coşkun, Küresel eğilimler ışığında Türkiye'de uluslararası öğrenciler. Ankara: SETA, 2012.

¹⁹ Kondakci & Çalışkan, 2016.

²⁰ OECD (2021). Turkey in Education at a Glance 2021: OECD Indicators, OECD Publishing, Paris.

²¹ Nguluma, Titrek ve Kotoğlu, 2019

²² Yakup, Ertürk, Hayati, Beşirli H. & Tuncay, Dursun, Türk Cumhuriyetleri Öğrencilerinin Türk Dünyasına Bakışları. Ankara: Siyasal Kitabevi, 2004

²³ Mei, Li, & Mark, Bray, Cross-border flow of students for higher education: Push-pull factors and motivations of mainland Chinese students in Hong Kong and Macau. Higher Education, 53, 791–818, 2007.

²⁴ Catherine, H., New recruits to self-employment in the 1980s. Employment Gazette, 97, 286–297, 1989

²⁵ Tim, Mazzarol, & Geoffrey, Soutar, "Push-pull" factors influencing international student destination choice. International Journal of Educational Management, 16(2), 82–90. doi:10.1108/09513540210418403, 2002

²⁶ Deniz, Özyakışır, İç Göç Hareketleri ve Geriye (Tersine) Göçün Belirleyicileri : TRA2 Bölgesinden (Ağrı, Kars, Iğdır, Ardahan) İstanbul'a Gerçekleşen Göç Üzerine Bir Saha Araştırması. Erzurum: Atatürk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü. Doktora Tezi, 2012.

²⁷ Lee, E. A Theory of Migration, Theories of Migration, ed. Robin Cohen, Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, s. 14–24, 1996

²⁸ Philip, Altbach, & De Wit, H. Are we facing a fundamental challenge to higher education internationalization? International Higher Education, 93, 2–4, 2018.

institutions, to determine the attractive and repulsive factors of migration based on Izmir province and to direct the study with an interdisciplinary approach, to national migration policies.

Push Factors of the Student Migration

The pushing factors initiate the student's decision to get an international education and occur in the student's own country; the attracting factors occur in the destination country and make that country relatively attractive for international students.²⁹ In other words, the repulsive factors are associated with the negative conditions in the students' own countries, and the attractive factors are associated with the positive aspects in the destination country.³⁰ Accordingly, the push-pull theory seems to be quite explanatory for classifying and capturing the dynamics behind country.³¹

The push factors such as economic development and economic wealth of the sending country play an effective role in motivating students to move to another country.³² For example, participants in our survey are originally coming from developing countries such as Syria, Afghanistan, Bulgaria and Azerbaijan which are also less developed countries than Turkey.

Secondly, lack of government support for undergraduate students in origin country is still a complex issue in the all over world. According to most of the interviews in the survey, they are escaping from unstable government structure, ethnic conflict and conflicted zone areas such as Syria and Afghanistan. Afghanistan has been struggling with universal poverty without having reliable resources to invest in development and education planning.³³ They are also complying about having lack of educational opportunities and governmental support on the education system. To illustrate that, the crisis in Syria has taken a devastating toll on education; leaving over 7,000 schools damaged or destroyed and about 2 million children out of school.³⁴

Education and skill acquisition play a significant role at many stages of an individual's migration decision. Differential returns to skills in the country of origin and destination country are the main drivers of migration. In the simplest possible form, the migration decision is based on a comparison of expected lifetime earnings in an alternative region where the immigrant has the opportunity to migrate. In most cases, immigrant students pay more attention to the acquisition of higher education rather than pursuing higher wages, and this is the main motivation for student migration.

Pull Factors of Student Migration

Student migration is a growing type of migration issue in the world. There are various factors play a vital role in the relocation of migrants or in the process of making a decision to move to a

new region. When studying the migration movement, the social networks that immigrants establish in the country they migrate to have a driving effect. A common bond established between decrepit immigrants, new immigrants and non-immigrants is being established.³⁵ When immigrants enable an emotional connection with the country they immigrate from, their integration processes also accelerate. The close emotional bond established by immigrants in the integration process produces more effective results when supported by language proficiency, education and state-sponsored integration programs.

According to the social networks theory, the leading migrants are to establish a migrant network with the emigrating society. The common bond established allows the deconstruction of the infrastructure between the country of oppression and the emigrating country. The common emotional bond, social bond or compatriot bond activating new migration ties leads to the duration of migration waves. Within the framework of this rule, the openness of the migration route reduces the costs and risks, significantly reduces the three differences, and the presence of a network of relationships affects the decisions and place choices of migrants.³⁶

The presence of migrant networks positively affects the feeling of loneliness, emotional depression or depression caused by migration, while also reducing the social cost. The theory of migrant networks, which plays an important role in the process of cultural adaptation, provides faster transfer of information, faster acceleration of the existing bureaucratic process and more efficient use of aid mechanisms. Migrant relationship networks have an important function in establishing a strong bond between societies. The role of social networks is crucial, as existing migrant communities can provide support and resources, encouraging more people to migrate from the same origin.

Cultural proximity is another appealing factor to consider the student migration mobility in the world. While migrants are moving their own cultures to other countries, they are also building socio-cultural and economic infrastructure in order to adapt to the cultures of the country they are in every day. It is important for immigrants to adapt to the culture, values and habits of the established society in the country where they immigrate. Migration and integration research appeared in the field of sociology at the Chicago Sociology school in 1920-1930.³⁷

The fact that the economic and legal process of immigrants comes to the fore more during the integration process leads to ignoring the socio-economic, socio-cultural and socio-psychological effects.

While immigrants integrate into the economic process by paying their taxes or the legal process by acting decently, they integrate into the cultural process by starting to master the language of the source country they immigrate from, communicating with the local

²⁹ Mazzarol & Geoffrey, "Push-pull" factors influencing international student destination choice, 2002

³⁰ Altbach, & De H. Are we facing a fundamental challenge to higher education internationalization? 2018

³¹ Ching-Huei Chen, & Zimitat, Craig, Understanding Taiwanese students' decision-making factors regarding Australian international higher education. *International Journal of Educational Management* 20(2): 91-100, 2006

³² McMahon, M. Higher education in a world market: An historical look at the global context of international study. *Higher Education* 24: 465-482, 1992.

³³ IOM (2024). *World Migration Report*, UN Migration, p. 151

³⁴ Unicef For Every Child, Syrian Arab Republic, Challenges, 2018.

³⁵ Savaş, Çağlayan, Göç Kuramları, Göç ve Göçmen İlişkisi. *Muğla Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi (İLKE)*. 17: 84-85, 2006

³⁶ Christian Dustmann, & Albrecht, Glitz, 'Immigration, Jobs and Wages: Theory, Evidence and Opinion', London, CEPR-CReAM, 2005.

³⁷ Friedrich, Heckmann, *Integration von Migranten: Einwanderung und neue Nationenbildung*. Bamberg: Springer-Verlag, 2014.

community and living together with them.³⁸ The interaction of individuals with different cultures with each other has revealed the policy of multiculturalism on an international basis. Adaptation to the migration process is a process of establishing balance in both societies and should not be perceived as the denial of their own culture by societies. In this context, the host country should ensure that immigrants can integrate into the new society faster by exhibiting constructive behavior, rather than exclusionary.

In addition, cultural factors such as language skill, common historical ties and similar identity issues play a vital role in both the exclusion and inclusion process of immigration. From the individual's point of view, adapting to a new culture and a new school system is one of the main challenges of education. In other words, cultural differences or similarities significantly affect immigrant students' school adjustment and success.

According to this survey, the language barrier has played an significant role in the communication of students in a country. As a result of having lack of communication, students feel themselves as excluded from any kind of activities and express themselves in a easy way.³⁹ While some participants such as Azerbaijani students don't have any difficulty in communicating with Turkish society, others such as Syrians might have an trouble in sharing their ideas with local community in the city. More to say, a large majority of the participants stated that similar ethnic structure and common historical connection affect life satisfaction in Turkey and play an important role in making their decision on Turkey. For example, one of the participants in the survey coming from Iran, stated that *"our language is close, our cultures are almost the same and people are also warm-hearted. This is very important for us. Aside from other countries, Turkey comes after Iran for me."*

Next, geographical proximity is the another pull factor that plays an significant role in student mobility. To illustrate that, Mazzarol and Souter (2002) mentioned in the literature because some of the participants are more prone to traveling thus geographical proximity matters a lot.⁴⁰ For example, Bulgarian or Azerbaijani students are willing to visit their country in a specific holidays so that they choose Turkey as a destination for study. Environmental situation or having better climate conditions can be seen an another attractive force for student migration mobility. For example, İzmir has a nice climate environment when comparing with Balkans or Central Asia countries and also one of the best places for tourist attraction with its proximity to well known touristic places. To illustrate that, some students in the survey made their choices on studying in İzmir because of the destination and also having better climate conditions to socialize. In addition to this, students emphasized that they feel legally secured in Turkey and that they have the opportunity of feeling secure in Turkey in this sense.

Moreover, having quality education opportunities with less cost is the main driver of student migration in Turkey. According to students who came to our country from different region explained that they think of Turkey as a country where they can get qualified education according to their specialization. In addition, there have

³⁸ Hamza, Ateş, & Ömer, Yavuz, (G)öçmen (Ö)tekileştirme ve (Çok) (k)ültürlülük, Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi, (22), s.1287-1301.2017.

⁴⁰ Timm, Mazzarol, & Geoffrey, Soutar, "Push-pull" factors influencing international student destination choice. International Journal of Educational Management, 16(2), 82-90.2002.

been those who have stated that they want to specialize in their own fields after completing their undergraduate education and that they prefer Turkey again. Another factors that encourage students to study abroad is the opportunity to see different perspectives in academic terms and create new connections.

Lastly, having cheap economic opportunities and less cost of living standart is an important push factor of student migration to another country. Most of the students who are not a full time worker are barely acquiring their basic needs in a country. They are economically depend on their family. Students make their choice in terms of cost and benefit analysis so that they are planning to have a quality education with less cost in a hosting country. Especially, providing free education can be a driving force behind of the decision for students. Immigrants stated that education expenditures in the country are more economical than in alternative countries, and scholarship opportunities provided by agreements between countries have a significant impact on their preference for Turkey.

Conceptual Analysis of Study

In the conceptual model, it is important to understand how the immigrant population is resettled in the host city information about migration events. The transition can be viewed from macro and micro perspectives. In the macro perspective, the immigrant is considered a passive individual who reacts to the structural forces that determine their mobility; it is thought to be effective by emphasizing the individual characteristics of the migrant in the micro perspective the factors for the decision and the way the individual interacts and adapts new environment. Therefore, this research focuses on the second perspective personally the characteristics and attitudes towards the host country are the most relevant⁴¹

Table 1 shows the conceptual model based on the theoretical framework.

Table 1. Push and pull factors for migration⁴²

Push Factors of international students who wants to leave the country of origin.

Economic Factors: Lack of economic development /economic wealth

Educational Factors: Lack of government support on education/ Rise of unemployment

Political and Geographical Factors: Ethnic conflict/War /Feeling Insecure/ Bad weather conditions

Pull Factors of international students who choose the destination country

Political and Geographical Factors: Feeling secure and Freedom/ Geographical proximity to multiple tourist places/ Transit route to Europe/Legal Rights/Suitable environment

Educational Factors: Quality Education Opportunities/ Specialization

⁴¹ Álvarez, Anal. L. & Müller Eie, Daniella. Residential conditions for immigrant population. Sustainable Development Studies, 13(2), 2018, 268-280.

⁴² Pu A.L. Alvarez & D. Müller,-Eie, Residential Conditions For Immigrant Population, Int. J. Sus. Dev. Plann. Vol. 13, No. 2 ,268-280, 2018

Cultural Factors: Having relatives /Common Links/ The existence of large social migrant networks/- Having a large number and types of social and cultural activities

Economic Factors: Cheap education opportunities/Government support in education

Cultural Factors: Cultural Proximity/ Religion/Language/Identity

Method

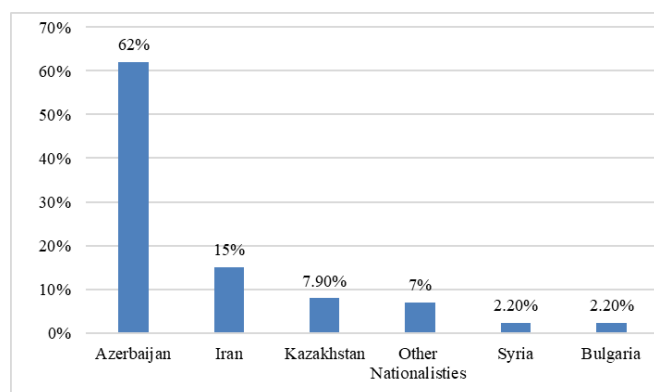
In this study, data were conducted using online survey method. Descriptive and content analysis approaches were used in the analysis of the data. In the study, a survey was applied to 300 students studying in different undergraduate programs at Izmir Democracy University. There are 21 questions in the survey form. In these questions, the demographic, socio-cultural and economic conditions of the students were determined, and the push and pull factors affecting migration were observed. The survey questions consist of multiple choice and open-ended questions. While closed-ended questions facilitated the analysis of data, open-ended questions provided a deeper understanding of the participants' views⁴³

In terms of ethical considerations, a consent form was used to ensure the participants' anonymity and increase the feeling of comfort and decrease the feeling that the participant felt insecure around a researcher. Also, survey was applied to international students who are voluntarily answered the questions. Another important issue to consider during the survey is to be neutral and not judge anyone according to their answers to the questions. Ethical approval was obtained for this research by the Ethics Committee of Izmir Democracy University Rectorate with the decision dated 06/03/2024 and numbered 673189. Interviews with the participants in the study were conducted on a voluntary basis.

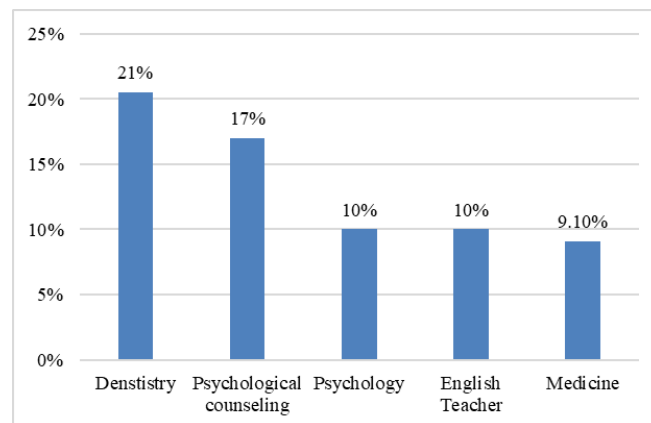
Findings

The data obtained from 300 foreign students within the scope of the survey are summarized below. 67.4% of the students participating in the survey are male and 32.6% are female.

Graphic 1: Origin Country of Students



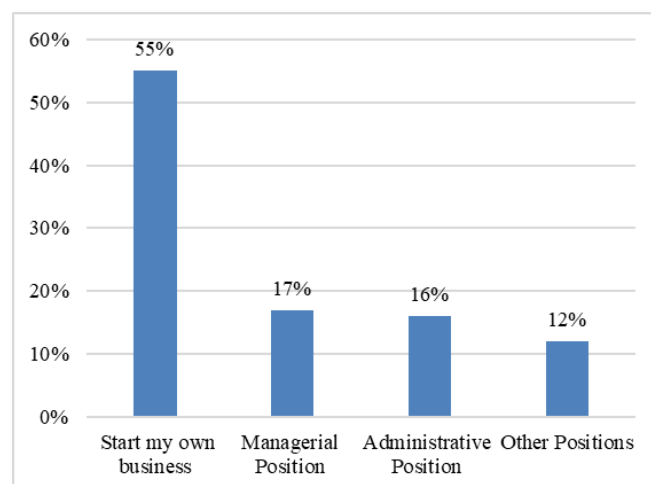
Graphics 2 : Sections that students are studying.



In the Graphic 2: In this survey conducted at Izmir Demokrasi University, Dentistry, Guidance and Psychological Counseling, English Teacher and Special Education departments are included in the ranking of the departments studied by foreign students. In this research, 53.9% of the students surveyed are first graders, 21.3% are second graders, 14.6% are third graders, 5.6% are fourth graders. The number of students is increasing every passing year and it seems that these students will mostly graduate without an extension. It was determined that the students who participated in the survey mostly rented a house with their friends (46.1%) or stayed at their family's house (21.9%). However, there are also students who stay in a private or state dormitory and live with relatives. In this survey study, the answers to two questions posed to students in the form of do you work full-time and do you work part-time were presented. According to this, 93.3% of the students are not working full-time, 13.5% of them are working part-time.

During the survey, some personal questions are contacted to students. For example, what is your family's monthly income? When the question was posed, 24.7% of the students surveyed stated that they earned income at the minimum wage level, 23.000-30.000%, and 10% at the 31.000-40.000 level. According to this result, the income level of a large part of the students surveyed is low. In addition to that, the answers given by the students to the question of what is your monthly income if you are working are included. As a result, 86.5% of the students do not work and therefore do not earn additional income, 10.1% of them work at minimum wage, the highest level for other options, which express 1% tranches, is in the range of 51.000-60.000.

Graphic 3: Students' Choice of Job After Graduation

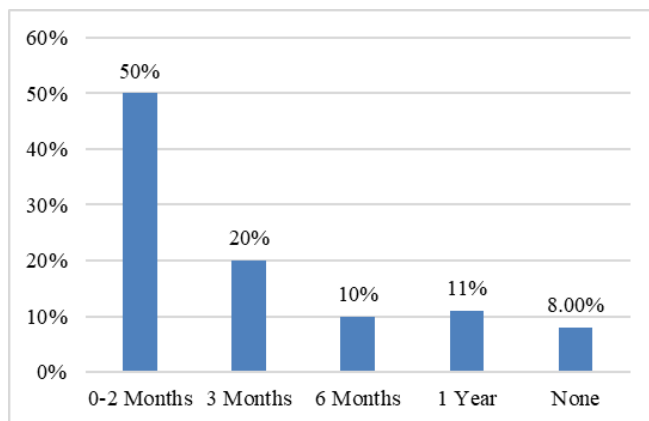


In Graphic 3: The students participating in the survey are presented with the answers to the question of what kind of task would like to work in when you graduate. According to this, 55.1% of the

⁴³ Çıkrıkçı-Demirtaşlı, N. Comparing the test information obtained through multiple choice, open-ended and mixed item tests based on item response theory. *Elementary Educational Online*, 11(1), 251-262, 2012.

students stated that they would like to start their own business, 16.9% would like to work as an administrator-administrator, and 16.9% would like to work as a civil servant.

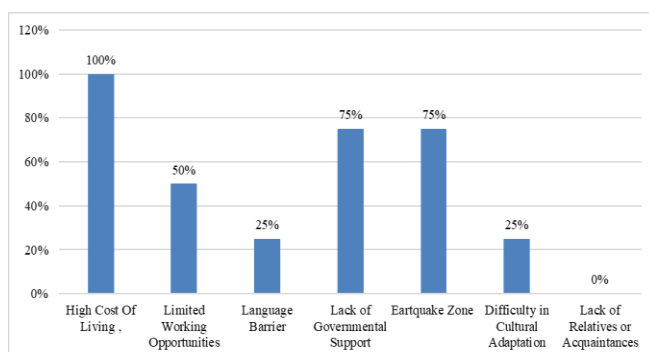
Graphic 4: Students' Adaptation Process to Izmir



In Graphics 4: How long did it take you to adapt to Izmir in terms of socio-cultural and living conditions, different answers were given to the question. Immigrants may acquire minority status in the destination country, which they reach over time.⁴⁴ In other words, it is possible to say that the phenomenon of migration is the name of the struggle for a better life worthy of human dignity from the perspective of those who migrate. The students who participated in the survey answered this question as 0-2 months at a rate of 50.6%, 3 months at a rate of 20.2%, 11.2% 1 year, 10.1% 6 months. 7.9% of the students stated that they have not yet been able to adapt in Izmir.

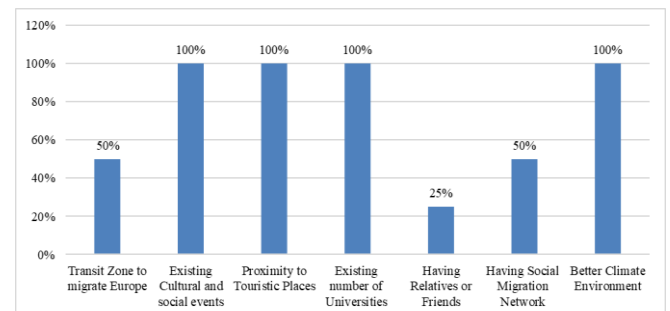
Moreover, the answers given to the question of will you continue to live in Izmir after graduation, which was asked to the students participating in the survey, are included. Within this scope, 37.1% of the students stated that they would continue to live in Izmir, 37.1% were undecided, 23.6% would not continue to live in Izmir and 2.2% did not have an idea yet. Also, information about the municipalities where the students participating in the survey reside is presented. It is observed that students mainly stay in Karabakh (29.2%) and Buca (2.8%) municipalities. The students who participated in the survey gave different answers to the question of which municipality borders you would like to reside in if you stay in Izmir after graduation. According to this, 34.8% of the students stated that they definitely would not stay in Izmir, 12.4% stated that they wanted to reside in Karabakh, 12.4% in Bornova mand 10.1% in Konak.

Graphic 5: The Push Factors of Student Mobility in Izmir



Graphic 5 shows the answers given by the students who participated in the survey to the question of what are the driving aspects of Izmir Province according to you. In the question posed about the driving factors of Izmir province, the high cost of living ranks first. In this context, the fact that it is in the earthquake zone and the inadequacy of government assistance appear as other common problems that come to the fore. It was also among the most important outputs that the working opportunities were not limited and the use of language did not cause any problems decently. Also, the cost of living in foreign countries, including housing, food, and healthcare, can be significant. Hence, international students often face higher tuition fees compared to local students at abroad. The ease of cultural adaptation is also not identified as a driving factor.

Graphic 6: Pull Factors of Student Mobility in Izmir



Graphic 6 shows the answers given by the students who participated in the survey to the question of what are the pull factors of Izmir Province according to you. When we consider the attractive factors of Izmir province, its proximity to tourist attractions, its proximity to numerous and various social and cultural events and its warm climate are in the first place. The high number of universities is also among the other Deceptive factors. Although no definite conclusion has been reached in terms of serving as a transit route for migration to Europe, there are more people who are not of this opinion than those who are. The challenges of student migration are vast, but with proper support systems and adaptive policies, these challenges can be mitigated to create a more enriching experience for both international students and the host countries they join.

Conclusion

International migration is a multidimensional political, economic, social and cultural process that outlines two or more locations within a large number of nation-states. It is an event or phenomenon that has micro, effects in addition to macro effects. The main objective of this study is to determine the socio-cultural and economic processes that foreign students live in the province where they migrate, analyzing the current situation for foreign students in this context, while providing information on migration policies planned both on a provincial and national scale, and will contribute to institutions and literature conducting immigration research. Qualified educational opportunities that cannot be met in the countries where people live or the desire to study in a different country often lead them to seek education abroad.

The study analyzed the push and pull factors of international students residing in Turkey and the perception of immigrants according to demographic variables. This article contributes to the literature in terms of multiple data collections and different survey methods. It is very important to conduct such studies in countries

⁴⁴ Nebile, Özmen, Çokkültürlü Toplumda Sosyal Entegrasyon ve Din. İstanbul: Çamlıca Yayınları, 2012.

that give and receive brain drain, such as Turkey, and to identify the factors that push and attract students.

This study not only focuses on the reasons of the international mobility of students also divides the effects into different parts. Among the appealing forces for the migration of international students, similar traditions, historical ties, and quality of education, proximity of touristic environment, suitable weather conditions, free education opportunities enabled many immigrants to study in Izmir. The availability of prestigious institutions, cutting-edge research, and diverse programs that appeal to international students as well. Opportunities to participate in cutting-edge research projects or be part of internationally recognized academic programs are important elements for student in enrolling foreign universities. If degrees are obtained from internationally recognized institutions, it can also be a good chance to open new doors in global career opportunities around the world.

On the other hand, among the driving forces behind international migration for undergraduate students are the high cost of living standards, lack of economic development, lack of government support in education such as bursary or aid programmes. Thus, the important factor that attracts international students is that the cost of education is cheaper compared to other countries such as in Europe and the American continent, and various scholarship opportunities provided by international contracts are used.

In the research, international students stated that they can get along with their own scholarship opportunities and a certain fee they receive in Turkey, but they have been struggling economically recently.

Moreover, the opportunity to experience and learn from different cultures, which can enhance both personal growth and career development. In this research, findings reveal that the similar culture and common religious structure between the countries are other factors affecting the student circulation in question. Students may face racism, discrimination, or xenophobia, which can further complicate their adjustment to a new environment. It has come to the fore that the students did not experience problems in their cultural adaptation during their stay in Turkey and left satisfied with their professional education. The participants stated that they easily adapt to the cultural differences in question in Turkey and are satisfied with the experiences they have had.

As a matter of fact, many students who study outside their own country have the opportunity to get to know different cultures and learn many languages in the society they migrate to. Another important result of the study is that university students living in Izmir have a positive perception of studying in Izmir. In addition to that, university students feel themselves secured and uncomfortable with living other nations in Izmir. Findings have been reached indicating that international students coming to Turkey from nearby geographical regions do not have problems in building friendships and they also do not have difficulty getting used to Turkish cultures such different foods, traditions and customs and also participation in social cultural events in the city. These factors vary in significance depending on the student's background, the country they are from, and the destination country they are considering. The international graduate students stated that they had a common language and common religious values with the Turkish society; that their profession was well-respected and that their education costs were inexpensive, and finally that they felt happy in Turkey.

In conclusion, in this study, the perceptions, expectations of students studying at Izmir Democracy University in Turkey about studying abroad and the factors that push and attract them to study abroad were investigated. At a time when studying abroad is becoming increasingly important, this study aims to reveal the views of university students about studying abroad. In this study, it was observed that the participants' approaches to studying abroad during their undergraduate education or due to graduate education were positive. With the increasing importance of concepts such as "having a worldview" and "being a world person" under the influence of globalization, students expect that being abroad, especially for educational purposes, will bring them various achievements socially, culturally, academically and economically.

Among the factors that attract participants to study abroad, curiosity about the social, cultural and historical riches of other countries and the advantages of studying abroad in career planning and economic gains were generally mentioned. In addition to all the possible advantages, students have also detailed various academic, economic, political and socio-cultural difficulties or problems. Some of these are difficulties that will be brought by differences in the education system, lack of scholarships, difficulties such as the possibility of being discriminated against. Also, the possible factors that encourage students to study abroad are focused on social and economic capital gains that will be obtained by having an overseas experience and cannot be achieved by studying only at Izmir Democracy University.

It is very important to conduct such studies, especially in brain drain countries such as Turkey, to identify the factors that push and attract students. The combination of push and pull factors makes international student migration a complex and multifaceted phenomenon.

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