

## THE GLOBALIZATION OF EDUCATION: A STUDY ON INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN TÜRKİYE

### EĞİTİMDE KÜRESELLEŞME: TÜRKİYE'DEKİ ULUSLARARASI ÖĞRENCİLER ÜZERİNE BİR ÇALIŞMA

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**ABSTRACT:** The goal of this research is to investigate the consequences of globalization on the field of education. Within the context of these consequences, it is desirable to examine the change by analyzing statistical data on international students in Türkiye during the last five years (between 2018-19 and 2022-23). The distribution of numbers, education levels, departments and nationalities of these students is discussed using statistical data published by the Council of Higher Education (CHE). The document analysis method, one of the qualitative research methodologies, is used to analyze this data. Document analysis allows creating a large sample, as in survey research. To achieve more rational results, the scope of the investigation was limited to the last five years. According to the findings, it is observed that the number of international students in Türkiye is increasing year after year. While bachelor education is the most preferred level, the most preferred department is Business Administration. These students are mostly from Türkiye's neighboring nations, the Middle East, and Africa, yet when we look at graduation rates, we see that students from Europe are more successful. In addition to this study, it suggests that a thorough investigation of the topic through quantitative research techniques will be advantageous to the literature.

**Keywords:** Education, globalization, international students, multiculturalism.

**ÖZ:** Bu çalışmanın amacı, küreselleşmenin eğitim alanı üzerindeki etkilerini incelemektir. Bu etkiler kapsamında, Türkiye'deki uluslararası öğrencilerin son beş yıl (2018-19 ve 2022-23 arası) içerisindeki istatistiksel bilgileri ele alınarak, yaşanan değişimin gözlemlenmesi arzulanmaktadır. Bu öğrencilerin sayıları, eğitim düzeyleri, bölümleri ve uyruklarına göre dağılımları Yükseköğretim Kurulu (YÖK) tarafından yayımlanan istatistiksel veriler kullanılarak ele alınmaktadır. Bu verilerin analizinde nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden biri olan doküman analizi yöntemi kullanılmaktadır. Doküman analizi, anket araştırmalarında olduğu gibi geniş bir örneklem oluşturmaya olanak sağlar. Daha rasyonel sonuçlara ulaşabilmek için araştırmanın kapsamı son beş yıllı sınırlanmıştır. Elde edilen bulgulara göre, Türkiye'deki uluslararası öğrenci sayısının her geçen yıl arttığı gözlemlenmektedir. En fazla tercih edilen öğrenim düzeyi lisans olurken, en fazla tercih edilen bölümün ise İşletme Bölümü olduğu görülmektedir. Bu öğrencilerin genellikle Türkiye'nin komşu ülkelerinden, Orta Doğu ve Afrika ülkelerinden geldiği, ancak öğrencilerin mezuniyet oranlarına baktığımızda ise, Avrupa'dan gelen öğrencilerin daha başarılı olduğu gözlemlenmektedir. Bu çalışmanın yanı sıra, konunun nicel araştırma teknikleri ile kapsamlı bir şekilde araştırılmasının, literatüre fayda sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Eğitim, küreselleşme, uluslararası öğrenciler, çokkültürlülük.

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## GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

### Giriş

Yaşanan teknolojik gelişmelerin ışığında, küreselleşmenin her geçen gün daha da arttığı gözlemlenmektedir. Bu gelişmelerin ışığında, farklı kültürden bireylerin birbirleriyle etkileşime geçebilmesi daha da kolaylaşmakta ve böylelikle çok kültürlü yapıların varlığında da paralel bir şekilde artışların yaşandığı gözlemlenmektedir (Hussain, 2018). Yaşanan bu değişimler, yeni yaşam dinamikleri oluşturarak, dünya üzerindeki dengeleri değiştirmektedir. Çağın gerekliliklerini yakalamak isteyen bireylerin ve işletmelerin, bu yeni koşullara adaptasyon sağlamaları bir ihtiyaca dönüşmektedir (Kirchmeyer, McLellan, 1991).

Çok kültürlü yapıların artması, eğitim alanını da etkilemiş ve bu durum sonucunda, üniversitelerin yabancı öğrencileri bünyesine katarak, çok uluslu bir yapıya bürünmek istedikleri görülmektedir (Özkan, Güvendir, 2015). Ancak üniversitelerin çok kültürlü yapılarının hızlı bir şekilde artması, beraberinde hem olumlu hem de olumsuz sonuçlar doğurabilmektedir. Farklı kültürel değerlere sahip öğrenci profilleriyle zengin bir etkileşim havuzunun oluşturulması, hem öğrenciler açısından hem de akademisyenler açısından gelişimin yolunu açarak, eğitimin kalitesini artırabileceği ortaya konulmaktadır (Banks, 1993; Sharma, 2005). Ayrıca, eğitimdeki kalitenin ve sosyokültürel gelişmelerin yanı sıra ülkenin katma değerlerine de katkıda bulunarak, ulusal ekonomilerin gelişmesine de olanak sağlamaktadır (Urban, Palmer, 2014). Ancak kültürel farklılıklar sebebiyle yaşanacak olan anlaşmazlıklar ve çatışmalar, hem bireylere hem de kurumlara büyük dezavantaj oluşturmaktadır.

### Yöntem

Bu çalışmada nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden biri olan doküman analizi yöntemi kullanılmaktadır. Doküman analizi yöntemi, araştırma bulgularının oluşturulabilmesi için, birincil ve ikincil kaynaklardan sistematik bir şekilde elde edilen verilerin analiz edilebilmesine olanak sağlamaktadır (Özkan, 2019). Yapılan araştırma kapsamında bilgiyi elde edebilmek ve anlamlı bir sonuca ulaşabilmek amacıyla, elde edilen verilerin incelenmesini ve yorumlanmasını gerektirmektedir (Bowen, 2009).

Bu çalışmada, Türkiye'deki uluslararası öğrencilerin sayılarının ve eğitim bilgilerinin analizi için, Yükseköğretim Kurulu (YÖK) (Council of Higher Education) tarafından yayımlanan istatistiksel veriler incelenmiştir. Küreselleşmenin her geçen gün katlanarak artması nedeniyle daha rasyonel bir analiz yapabilmek için son beş yıl içerisindeki veriler ele alınmaktadır. Bu veriler ele alınarak, Türkiye'deki uluslararası öğrencilerin sayılarının, öğrenim düzeylerinin, bölümlerinin ve bu öğrencilerin uyruklarının dağılımları karşılaştırmalı bir şekilde analiz edilmektedir.

### Bulgular

Araştırmanın bulgularını incelediğimizde, son beş yıl içerisinde Türkiye'deki uluslararası öğrencilerin sayısında istikrarlı bir artışın yaşandığı gözlemlenmektedir. 2018-19 eğitim yılında, uluslararası öğrenci sayısı 154.505 olurken, bu sayı 2022-23 eğitim yılında neredeyse ikiye katlanarak, 301.694'e ulaştığı görülmektedir. Bu öğrencilerin cinsiyet dağılımlarına baktığımızda ise, yıllar içerisinde kız ve erkek öğrenci sayısının paralel bir şekilde arttığı gözlemlenmektedir. Ancak 2018-19 eğitim yılında erkek öğrenci sayısı kız öğrenci sayısının neredeyse iki katı kadar iken, 2022-23 eğitim yılında erkek öğrenci sayısı hala daha fazla olsa da, aradaki farkın azaldığı görülmektedir. Bu öğrencilerin eğitim gördükleri öğrenim düzeylerini incelediğimizde ise, en fazla tercih edilen öğrenim düzeyinin lisans düzeyi olduğu görülmektedir. Ancak, son beş yıl içerisinde uluslararası öğrencilerin sayısında meydana gelen bu artış, tüm öğrenim düzeylerine paralel bir şekilde yansıtıldığı görülmektedir.

Ele alınan yıllar içerisinde, uluslararası öğrencilerin tercih ettikleri bölümlere göre dağılımlarına baktığımızda, en fazla uluslararası öğrencinin İşletme Bölümünde olduğu gözlemlenmektedir. İşletme Bölümünün ardından ise, Tıp ve Bilgisayar Mühendisliği bölümlerinin geldiği görülmektedir. Ele alınan beş yıl kapsamında, uluslararası öğrenci sayısının en çok arttığı bölüm ise %523.68 ile Fizyoterapi ve Rehabilitasyon Bölümü olduğu ortaya konulmaktadır.

Ele alınan bu öğrencilerin uyruklarını incelediğimizde ise, en fazla uluslararası öğrencinin Suriyeli olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmaktadır. Suriyeli öğrencilerin ardından ise, Azerbaycanlı ve İranlı öğrenciler yer almaktadır. Tüm sonuçlar ele alındığında, uluslararası öğrencilerin genellikle Türkiye'nin komşu ülkelerinden, Orta Doğu ve Afrika ülkelerinden geldiği gözlemlenmektedir. Ele alınan yıllar içerisinde,

İranlı, Mısırlı ve Kazakistanlı öğrencilerin sayılarının üç kattan fazla arttığı görülmektedir. Ancak öğrencilerin mezuniyet oranlarına baktığımızda ise, Avrupa'dan gelen öğrencilerin daha başarılı olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmaktadır.

## Tartışma ve Sonuç

İletişim ve ulaşım teknolojilerinin gelişmesi, eğitimin küreselleşmesindeki unsurların başında gelmektedir. Gelişen bu teknolojik yeniliklerle, öğrencilerin diğer ülkelerdeki eğitim faaliyetlerinden ve fırsatlardan haberdar olduğu ve bu ülkelere ulaşmalarındaki fiziksel engellerin ortadan kalktığı görülmektedir. Bu yeniliklerin etkisiyle, öğrencilerin yanı sıra ülkelerin eğitim sistemleri de birbirinden önemli ölçüde etkilenmektedir. Bir ülkenin eğitim sisteminde başarılı bir şekilde gerçekleştirilmiş reformlar, diğer ülkelerin eğitim sistemlerine de çok kısa süre içerisinde entegre edilebilmektedir. Yaşanan bu gelişmelerle birlikte eğitim sistemlerinin küreselleşmesi, uluslararası öğrencilerin sayısının artmasına olanak sağlamaktadır (Agarwal, Winkler, 1985).

Öğrencilerin, daha iyi eğitim ve yaşam koşullarına sahip olan ülkelerde eğitim alma düşüncesi veya istediği eğitim programının yaşadığı ülkede mevcut olmaması gibi faktörler, bu öğrencilerin farklı ülkelerde eğitim görmek istemelerinde önem arz eden konular olmaktadır. Bu öğrencileri bünyesine çekmek isteyen üniversiteler ve ülkelerin, sistemlerini geliştirerek ve büyük yatırımlar yaparak, bu öğrenciler için birer cazibe merkezi olmayı amaçladıkları görülmektedir. Bu gelişimler kümülatif bir şekilde ilerleyerek, eğitimin küreselleşmesinde etkili olurken, ülkeler ve eğitim kurumları arasında da rekabeti arttırmaktadır. En nitelikli öğrencileri bünyesine çekebilen ülkelerin ve eğitim kurumlarının itibarlarında, başarılarında, ekonomilerinde ve katma değerlerinde önemli ölçüde gelişmelerin meydana geldiği görülmektedir (Spring, 2008).

Dil yeterliliğinin yanı sıra maddi, kültürel ve politik unsurlar da eğitim küreselleşmesinde önemli etkilere sahip olmaktadır. Ülkelerin uluslararası öğrenciler için maddi olarak uygun olması veya maddi olanaklar sunması, bu öğrencilerin tercihlerini büyük ölçüde etkilemektedir (Agarwal, Winkler, 1985). Kültürel yakınlık da, bu öğrencilerin gittikleri ülkelerde yaşamlarını ve eğitimlerini daha rahat bir şekilde devam ettirebilmelerinde önem arz eden bir faktör olmaktadır. Kendi kültürlerine yakın kültürlerde eğitim gören uluslararası öğrencilerin kültürlerarası adaptasyon sağlamanın, diğer uluslararası öğrencilere kıyasla daha çabuk olduğu gözlemlenmektedir. Bu adaptasyonun sağlanmasında kişilik gibi faktörlerin de önemli etkilerinin olduğu bilinmektedir (Altbach, 1991; Altbach, 2004).

Eğitimde küreselleşmenin önemi her geçen gün daha da artmaktadır. Teknolojik yeniliklerle birlikte paralel bir şekilde gelişen bu konu üzerine ülkelerin ve eğitim kurumlarının proaktif stratejiler geliştirerek, sürdürülebilir rekabet avantajını yakalayabilmeleri önem arz etmektedir. Atılacak her adım, ülkelerin ve eğitim kurumlarının iç ve dış çevresinde önemli değişikliklere sebep olacağından, alınan kararların rasyonel koşullara dayandırılmasının faydalı olacağı düşünülmektedir. Küresel bir kültürün yaygınlık kazanmaya başlamasıyla, yapılacak faaliyetlerin küresel vatandaşlık düşüncesi çerçevesinde gerçekleştirilmesinin de önem arz eden bir konu olduğu varsayılmaktadır. Tüm bu hususlar doğrultusunda, eğitimin küreselleşmesinin dünyanın daha iyi ve yaşanılabilir koşullara sahip olmasına yarar sağlayacağı umut edilmektedir.

Araştırmanın sınırlılıklarından biri, nitel doküman analizi yöntemini kullanarak, yalnızca mevcut durumun bir resminin sunulması olmaktadır. Konunun nicel araştırma teknikleri ile kapsamlı bir şekilde araştırılmasının literatüre fayda sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir. Bir diğer sınırlılık ise, araştırmanın yalnızca Türkiye'deki üniversiteleri kapsamasıdır. Eğitimin küreselleşmesi bağlamında, uluslararası öğrenci verilerinin farklı ülkeler bazında, karşılaştırılarak incelenmesinin konunun daha iyi anlaşılması açısından faydalı olacağı düşünülmektedir.

## INTRODUCTION

Culture is one of the most essential aspects that influence people's lives. This dynamic concept, which is active from the time we are born and is constantly changing throughout our lives, has a profound impact on people's understanding of what is good and wrong (Yeşil, 2009). When we look at the cultural structures of different nations, we can notice that there is a heterogeneous structure on cultural values. Each culture's truth may differ from one another (Hofstede, 1980). In this context, a behavior that is acceptable in one culture may be considered unacceptable in another. As a result of this condition, conflicts between individuals in intercultural relationships are unavoidable (Vashishtha, Garg, 2014).

The rapid advancement of technology has accelerated globalization more than ever before. As a result of these advances, it is becoming simpler for people from different cultures to engage with one another, and there is a parallel rise in the presence of multicultural structures (Hussain, 2018). These changes are altering global balances by introducing new life dynamics. Adapting to these new conditions is becoming a must for people and institutions who wish to keep up with the demands of the age (Kirchmeyer, McLellan, 1991).

The field of education has also been impacted by the rise in multicultural structures, and as a result, universities are attracting international students in an attempt to adopt a multinational structure (Özkan, Güvendir, 2015). However, the rapid increase in the multicultural structures of universities can lead to both positive and negative consequences. It has been demonstrated that creating a rich interaction pool with student profiles with different cultural values can increase the quality of education by paving the way for development for both students and academics (Banks, 1993; Sharma, 2005). Furthermore, it contributes to the country's added value, as well as the quality of education and socio-cultural advancements, allowing national economies to thrive (Urban, Palmer, 2014). However, disagreements and conflicts caused by cultural differences are detrimental to both individuals and institutions.

What are the consequences of rising internationalization in Türkiye's education field as a result of increased globalization? The goal of this study is to uncover the effects and changes on international students studying in Türkiye as a result of the expanding globalization. In this study, the consequences and significance of globalization on education are discussed first by providing a brief description of the idea of globalization. Following these definitions, tables and graphs are used to explain the distribution of numbers, education levels, departments and nationalities of international students in Türkiye over the last five years (between 2018-19 and 2022-23). While there is a growing emphasis on globalization in the literature, the fact that the effects of this development on international students in Türkiye are not addressed is what distinguishes this study.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Knowledge is a component that can readily cross all global borders. As a result of technology advancements, this situation appears to be happening faster than ever before. These advancements have transformed the world into a global village, allowing people on distant continents to quickly exchange knowledge (Miah, Omar, 2012). Educational institutions appear to have a vital role in knowledge development and dissemination. Parallel to the development in globalization, the number of international students in educational institutions has increased significantly (Altbach, 1986). The phrase "international students" refers to students who begin or continue their education in another nation. These students have a critical role in the transmission of ideas, cultures, and values (Agarwal & Winkler, 1985).

Globalization is a concept that encompasses all aspects of global integration (Sever et al. 2018). As a result of advancements in communication networks, it can be seen that this multidimensional notion has begun to gain international traction. This condition is reflected in the global expansion and development of economies, social systems, mass media, science, and technology (Chiu, Duit, 2011).

Globalization is a notion that has a substantial impact on societies that are undergoing significant change. Globalization has made social, political, economic, and educational systems more vital than ever before. However, while these developing dynamics benefit countries who are able to adapt, they harm those that are unable to adapt (Rizvi, 2004). These new dynamics have a substantial impact on institutions and individuals as well. However, institutions and individuals that can adjust to these new conditions by employing their knowledge, skills, and abilities effectively and efficiently have a competitive advantage (Bakhtiari, Shajar, 2006; Spring, 2008).

Trade, science, and technology all play critical roles in countries establishing long-term economic advantage. The connection of education with these three aspects raises its significance in the globalizing world order. The exponential increase in the effect of education with globalization is seen as a gold ore in the growth of nations (Altbach, 1989).

Every country on the planet is affected by globalization, either directly or indirectly. These effects create opportunities for considerable changes in the countries' economy, political structures, and cultural components. In relation to all of these elements, significant changes may be noticed in the education systems of countries and institutions (Bakhtiari, Shajar, 2006). The nations and institutions where students choose to study are constantly changing as a result of changes in education systems. In addition to these changes, the fact that the desired education program is not available in their home country or at the institutions of their choice is one of the elements that motivate students to study abroad. For these reasons,

as globalization accelerates over time, the number of international students increase (Sever et al. 2018; Agarwal, Winkler, 1985; Altbach, 2004; Roga, Lapiņa, Mürsepp, 2015).

Third-World countries and developing countries are clearly playing an essential role in the globalization of education. Because the most effective educational institutions are often located in developed countries, students from these countries attend university in their own countries or in other developed countries (Altbach, 2004). However, students in Third World countries and developing countries are becoming increasingly interested in developed countries and educational institutions in these countries. It is revealed that these students want to improve their standard of living by receiving a better education and staying in these nations (Altbach, 1989). In contrast to this, it has been noticed that some students in developed countries wish to study in Third World countries and developing countries (Altbach, 1991; Glewwe, Kremer, 2006; Buchmann, Hannum, 2001).

English education programs are critical to the globalization of education. However, one of the most significant issues for international students is a lack of language proficiency. When international students study in different countries, they are unable to communicate due to language deficiencies in their education programs or living conditions. This condition may force those students to be unable to adapt in the countries or educational institutions in which they are enrolled and to depart. Furthermore, if international students do not have enough language abilities, the same outcomes can be obtained (Altbach, 1989; Güçlü, 1996).

Another issue is the monetary aspects. The fact that there are no or cheap tuition fees in the nations where international students study, as well as basic needs such as eating and accommodation, is seen as an advantage for these students. Aside from these factors, the job prospects available to students and the support they receive from their families play an essential role in the globalization of education. Furthermore, changes in the countries' economic conditions have a substantial impact on the globalization of education. It has been observed that international students prefer institutions and countries with lower costs but superior conditions (Agarwal, Winkler, 1985; Güçlü, 1996).

Cultural elements are also regarded crucial in addition to these variables. It is revealed that international students believe that they may live more comfortably in nations that are culturally similar to their own within the scope of their traditions and customs. This condition appears to have a substantial impact on the achievement of international students. It is clear that ideas such as intercultural adaptation and psychology play an essential role in the globalization of education, as cultural variables encompass numerous aspects ranging from individual interactions to lifestyles (Altbach, 1991).

Political issues, in addition to cultural elements, have a considerable impact on individuals' willingness to study in different nations. Some students in countries where the rules are strict and the necessary social opportunities are not provided want to continue their education in countries with more free conditions (Altbach, 2004). All of these criteria, however, can differ from person to person. Because it has been demonstrated that personality structures, which have a significant impact on individuals' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors, have a significant impact on these elements (Agarwal, Winkler, 1985). Within the context of these characteristics, it is clear that the personality structures of family members, as well as the personality structures of individuals, are vital (Altbach, 1991).

When we look at the impact of globalization on educational institutions in Türkiye, we can see that there have been substantial changes throughout the years. It has been noticed that the number of international students in these institutions is expanding on a daily basis, as is the diversity and quality of their educational programs (Sever et al. 2018). As a result, it is determined that these increases contribute positively to the country's economy by facilitating the development of elements such as intellectual capital, continuous learning skills, and business skills (Spring, 2008). It is believed to have a substantial impact on both individual and economic growth in the country. It's considered that via connecting with and managing variety across other cultures, people will better equip themselves for the rapidly changing global environment.

Cultural, economic, and sociological frameworks have become more complex as a result of increased internationalization. This situation clearly affects not only countries and institutions, but also students. Students who can adapt to changing conditions are more likely to succeed, whereas students who cannot adapt face difficulties in both their academic and personal lives (Alagöz, Geçkil, 2017). Furthermore, even if internationalization does not result in a total change in the country's structure, it can provide opportunities for minor changes (Güçlü, 1996). Students need to learn to manage these changes in order to gain an advantage in the fast changing world of today. Thus, it can adapt to a society in which multiculturalism is unavoidable and growing by the day.

## METHODOLOGY

Various elements such as education quality and cost, as well as country demographic, economic, and cultural aspects, all play a significant role in the future planning of international students' education. The purpose of this study is to examine the changes in the number and educational information of international students studying in Türkiye over time. For this reason, it is observed how globalization in education influences educational institutions in Türkiye.

### Research Design

In this study, the document analysis method, one of the qualitative research methods, is used. The document analysis method allows the data obtained from primary and secondary sources to be systematically analyzed in order to create research findings (Özkan, 2019). To gather information and reach at a significant conclusion, the research needs to analyze and evaluate the data that was collected. (Bowen, 2009).

### Research Universe and Sample

The universe of the study represents the group that is discussed in order to achieve a result that is consistent with the research's goal. Because the universe is generally exceedingly large and inaccessible, a sample is a subgroup produced to represent the universe using specific criteria (Çaparlar, Dönmez, 2016).

Document analysis allows creating a large sample, as in survey research. The researcher can use the abundance and density of written and visual materials available today as an opportunity. As a result, one of the most significant drawbacks of qualitative research methodologies, generalization, has been partially solved (Bailey, 1994). This study's universe is made up of international students in Türkiye. The accessibility of the entire universe eliminates the requirement for sample for the purpose of the research.

### Data Collection and Analysis

In this study, statistics data provided by the Council of Higher Education (CHE) were studied for an analysis of the number and educational information of international students in Türkiye (CHE, 2023). Because globalization is increasing at an exponential rate, statistics from the last five years (between 2018-19 and 2022-23) are being analyzed in order to conduct a more rational analysis. The distribution of the number, education levels, departments and nationalities of these students in Türkiye is examined using these statistics. The statistical data obtained was analyzed using the Microsoft Office Excel application. Document analysis deals with the examination of relevant documents in a way that creates an integrity. This qualitative research method displays a subjective-interpretive process aimed to deal with data effectively (Seale, 1999; Baltacı, 2019).

## FINDINGS

The results are analyzed in this section of the study. The findings in this context are as follows; “number of international students in Türkiye over the last five years”, “distribution of international students in Türkiye by educational levels over the last five years”, “increase rates of international students in Türkiye over the five years by educational levels”, “distribution of international students by department in Türkiye over the last five years”, “increase in international student rates in Türkiye over the last five years”, “nationalities with the highest number of international students over the last five years”, “distribution of nationalities of international students with the most graduates over the last five years”, “graduation rates of international students by nationalities over the last five years”.

Table 1 displays data on the distribution of international students over the last five years. While there were 154,505 international students studying in Türkiye during the 2018-19 academic year, the number of these students has steadily climbed over the years, nearly doubling to 301,694 in the 2022-23 academic year. When we look at the gender distribution of these students, we can observe that the number of male and female students has increased in parallel throughout the years. While the number of male students was nearly twice that of female students in the 2018-19 academic year, the number of male students remains larger in the 2022-23 academic year, but the big discrepancy has lessened.

Table 1.

*Number of international students in Türkiye over the last five years*

Years	Male	Female	Total
2018-19	100.220	54.285	154.505
2019-20	119.611	65.436	185.047
2020-21	142.998	81.050	224.048
2021-22	162.108	98.181	260.289
2022-23	179.670	122.024	301.694

Source: Council of Higher Education. <https://istatistik.yok.gov.tr/>, (Date Accessed: 30.05.2023).

Table 2 shows the distribution of data on international students' educational levels during the last five years. It has been observed that the number of international students has gradually increased throughout the years at all educational levels. Over the last five years, the bachelor level has seen the highest number of international students each year. When the 2022-23 academic year is considered, it is concluded that the number of international students at the bachelor level exceeds two-thirds of the total number of international students in that year. The PhD level has the lowest number of international students in the years studied. While the number of associate, bachelor, and master degree students has increased significantly over the last five years, the increase in the number of PhD students has been quite minimal in comparison to other educational levels. While the number of associate students was almost twice as high as the number of PhD students in the 2018-19 academic year, it is observed that this difference increased almost fourfold in the 2022-23 academic year.

Table 2.

*Distribution of international students in Türkiye by educational levels over the last five years*

Degrees	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Associate	14.667	20.611	27.944	33.306	40.832
Bachelor	109.825	132.232	158.538	185.732	217.810
Master	21.616	22.966	27.795	30.499	31.980
PhD	8.397	9.238	9.771	10.752	11.072
Total	154.505	185.047	224.048	260.289	301.694

Source: Council of Higher Education. <https://istatistik.yok.gov.tr/>, (Date Accessed: 30.05.2023).

Figure 1 depicts the rate of growth in the number of international students in education levels over the last five years. When we look at the associate degree, we can see that the most growth occurred in the 2019-20 academic year (40.53%), while the least growth occurred in the 2021-22 academic year (19.19%). When we look at the bachelor level, we can see that the annual growth rate ranges between 17 and 20% for the time period under review. At the master's level, the maximum growth rate was 21.03% in 2020-21, while the growth rate stayed below 10% in the other years covered. While the growth rate at the PhD level was 10% in 2019-20 and 2021-22, it was significantly lower in the other two years. The education level with the largest growth rate from the 2018-19 academic year to the 2022-23 academic year is the associate degree level, with 178.39%. Although the number of international students at all levels of education has increased over the years studied, fluctuations in these increases indicate that stability has not been attained.

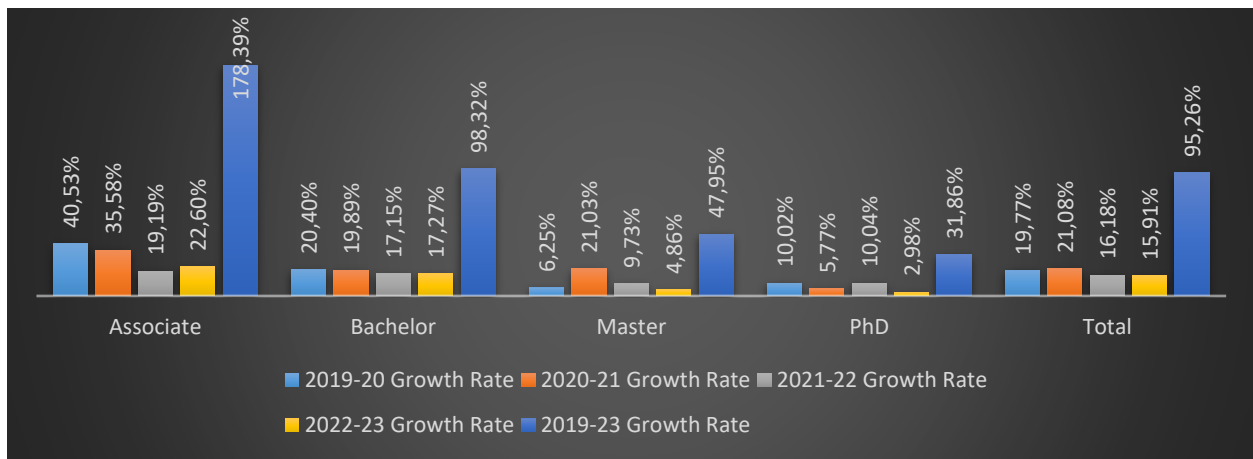


Figure 1. Increase rates of international students in Türkiye over the five years by educational levels

Table 3 shows the distribution of departments favored by international students in Türkiye over the last five years. This table was generated by taking the ten departments with the most international students in the 2022-23 academic year into account. Across all years examined, the most chosen department by a wide margin is Business Administration. When we look at the 2022-23 academic year, the Business Administration department has 20,959 international students, the Medical department has 12,940 international students, and the Computer Engineering department has 12,195 international students. When we look at the number of students in these ten departments over the years, we can see that there has been a consistent increase in all of them.

Table 3.

*Distribution of international students by department in Türkiye over the last five years*

Department	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Business Administration	10.063	12.137	14.297	17.369	20.959
Medicine	6.960	7.827	9.159	10.840	12.940
Computer Engineering	4.528	5.745	7.668	9.756	12.195
Civil Engineering	5.607	6.504	7.266	7.625	7.862
Architecture	3.682	4.496	5.216	6.024	6.989
Dentistry	2.167	2.729	3.807	5.289	6.823
Electrical-Electrical Engineering	3.654	4.290	5.100	6.059	6.749
Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation	1.064	1.822	2.939	4.582	6.636
Economics	4.841	5.283	5.719	6.079	6.428
Theology	4.045	4.797	5.496	5.911	6.391

Source: Council of Higher Education. <https://istatistik.yok.gov.tr/>, (Date Accessed: 30.05.2023).

Figure 2 depicts the rate of rise in the number of international students in the departments examined throughout the years. The Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation department has seen the most growth in the last five years. From the 2018-19 academic year to the 2022-23 academic year, the number of international students in this department increased by a remarkable 523.68%. Following the Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation department, Dentistry ranks second with 214.86%, and Computer Engineering ranks third with 169.32%. According to the years discussed, the growth rates of Civil Engineering, Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation, and Theology departments have significantly decreased, while other departments have continued to grow at nearly the same rates.

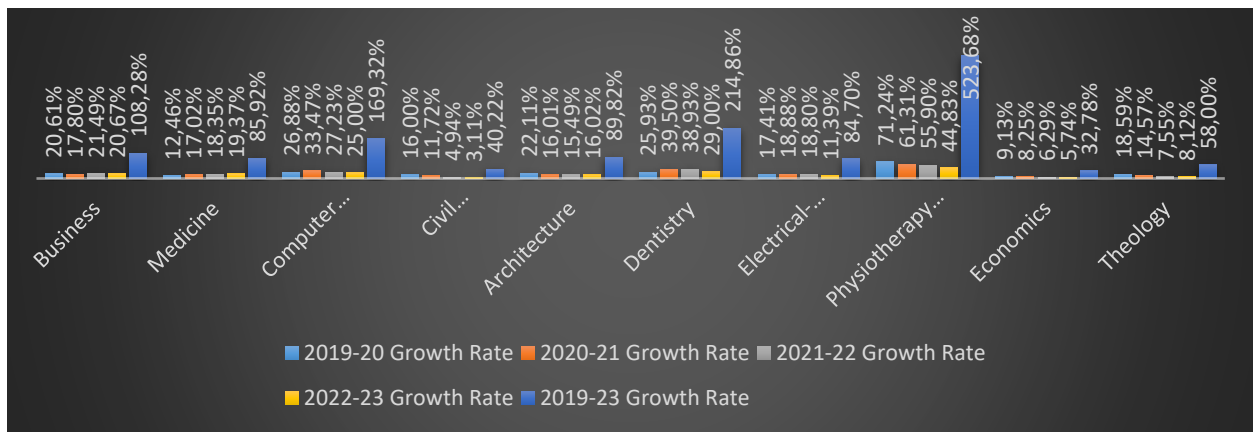


Figure 2. Increase in international student rates in Türkiye over the last five years

Table 4 shows the distribution of international students by nationality over the last five years. In the 2022-23 academic year, there are the most Syrian students among international students. While Syrian students lead the way with 58,213 students, Azerbaijan comes in second with 34,247 students, while Iran comes in third with 22,632 students. The number of Iranian and Kazakhstani students nearly doubled in the 2022-23 academic year compared to the 2021-22 academic year. It is shown that in comparison to the 2021–22 academic year, there were less students from Iraq, Somalia, Germany, and Greece in the academic year 2022–23. When we examine the distribution of total international students, we can observe that the bulk of these students come from neighboring countries, as well as the Middle East and Africa.

Table 4.

*Nationalities with the highest number of international students over the last five years*

Nationalities	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
1-Syria	27.034	37.236	47.482	53.097	58.213
2-Azerbaijan	19.383	21.069	23.770	28.922	34.247
3-Iran	7.154	8.776	11.223	14.886	22.632
4-Turkmenistan	17.571	18.016	19.384	15.578	18.250
5-Iraq	7.608	9.752	14.799	17.010	16.172
6-Somalia	3.764	6.104	8.141	11.074	10.043
7-Egypt	2.910	4.109	5.821	7.847	9.597
8-Afghanistan	6.804	7.517	8.428	9.002	9.203
9-Kazakhstan	2.191	2.349	2.909	4.857	8.864
10-Yemen	3.076	4.386	5.829	7.714	8.198
14-Bulgaria	3.010	3.688	4.432	4.734	5.120
18-Germany	4.378	4.637	4.959	4.822	4.448
19-Pakistan	2.115	2.368	2.948	3.816	4.171
24-Greece	2.713	2.874	2.827	2.768	2.614

Source: Council of Higher Education. <https://istatistik.yok.gov.tr/>, (Date Accessed: 30.05.2023).

Table 5 illustrates the number of international students who graduated in the last five years by nationality. With 2354 graduates in the 2021-22 academic year, Syrian students are the international students with the highest number of graduates. It is believed that the high number of Syrian students in comparison to other countries has a significant role in the creation of this result. It can be seen that Azerbaijan has the second highest number of international students graduating, with 2339 students, after Syria. The fact that Azerbaijan has the second biggest number of international students is regarded to have contributed to this result. Iraq appears to be the third nationality with the most graduates, despite being the

fifth nationality with the most international students. Iran is observed as the sixth nationality with the highest number of graduates, despite being viewed as the third nationality with the most international students. The situation is believed to be caused by the fact that, in comparison to the previous year, the number of Iranian students more than doubled in the 2022–2023 academic year.

Table 5.

*Distribution of nationalities of international students with the most graduates over the last five years*

Nationalities	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
1-Syria	817	921	1335	2354
2-Azerbaijan	1301	1783	1888	2339
3-Iraq	1022	895	1028	1744
4-Turkmenistan	732	890	1177	1581
5-Afghanistan	501	646	720	889
6-Iran	589	697	538	727
7-Germany	469	499	533	635
8-Bulgaria	167	224	337	501
9-Greece	249	292	340	397
10-Pakistan	298	355	305	377
11-Egypt	98	185	235	344
14-Somalia	145	248	239	328
16-Yemen	81	151	204	269
20-Kazakhstan	200	254	211	199

Source: Council of Higher Education. <https://istatistik.yok.gov.tr/>, (Date Accessed: 30.05.2023).

Figure 3 depicts the graduation rates of the nationalities with the biggest number of international students over the last five years. When we examine the data, we can see that Pakistani students experienced the greatest increase in graduation rate during the 2019-20 academic year. It has been observed that the graduation rate of students from Turkmenistan, Bulgaria, and Greece has been steadily increasing over the years. Despite the fact that the majority of international students are from the Middle East and Africa, European countries are at the top of the list of nationalities with the highest increase in graduation rates.

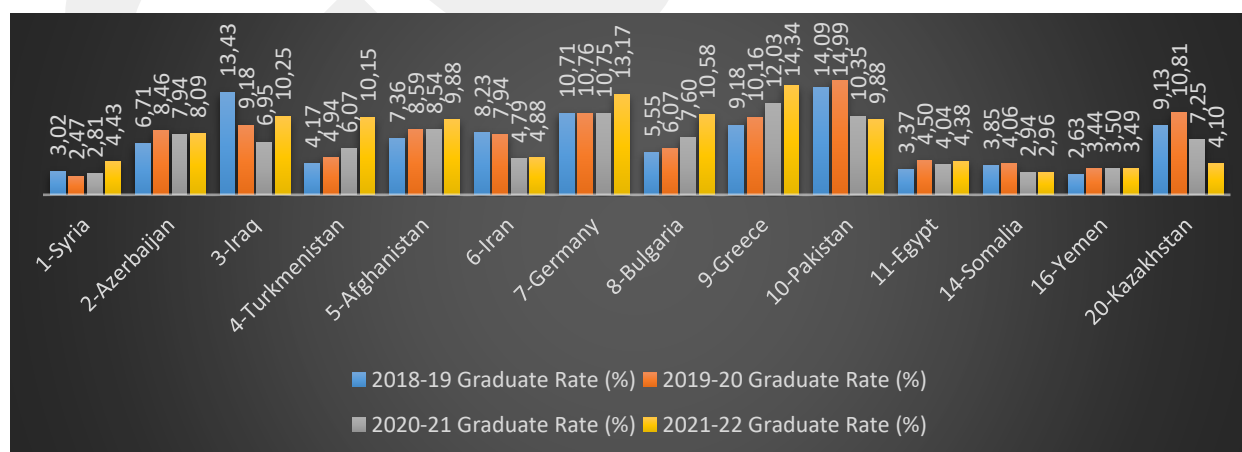


Figure 3. Graduation rates of international students by nationalities over the last five years

## DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION and IMPLICATIONS

When we examine the research findings, we can see that the number of international students in Türkiye has steadily increased over the last five years. Over the past 20 years, there has been an exponential increase in the number of international students worldwide (Glass, Cruz, 2023; Wilczewski, Alon, 2023). When we consider the enormous growth in the number of international students worldwide, it is not surprising that the number of international students in Türkiye has expanded dramatically over the last five years.

When we look at the education levels of these students, we can see that the bachelor's degree is the most preferred. The explanation for this condition can be attributed to the larger number of bachelor education programs compared to associate, master, and PhD levels. However, the increase in the number of international students over the last five years appears to be paralleled across all educational levels.

The department of Business Administration has the highest percentage of international students when we look at the distribution of these students according to their preferred departments. The reason international students choose the Business Administration department in Türkiye is because it provides abundant employment prospects, is accessible to all educational levels, and is offered in the majority of universities in Türkiye.

When we look at the nationalities of these students, we find that Syrians have the highest number of international students. Following the Syrian students are students from Azerbaijan and Iran. Considering all of the results, it is clear that international students generally come from Türkiye's neighboring countries, Middle East countries, and African countries. It is anticipated that these students acquire their education in Türkiye due to sociological, cultural, and economic issues. Besides, the fact that studying in North American and Western European countries is more expensive and requires more prerequisites is regarded to play a significant role in these students' decisions. However, when we look at student graduation rates, we can see that students from Europe are more successful. It is believed that this is because these nations have greater educational standards than other nations (Altbach, 1991; Altbach, 2004).

Globalization has become one of the world's most important topics in recent years. This dynamic notion, which has significant influence on economic, social, political, and cultural elements, has far-reaching implications in practically every industry, from health care to finance, from law to the arts. In addition to all of these fields, globalization has been shown to have a significant impact on educational systems (Rizvi, 2004).

One of the driving forces behind the globalization of education is the advancement of communication and transportation technologies. With these evolving technology breakthroughs, students are becoming more aware of educational activities and opportunities in other nations, and physical barriers to reaching these places have vanished. In addition to students, the effects of these innovations have a significant impact on the education systems of countries. Successful reforms in a country's education system can be quickly incorporated into the education systems of other countries. Along with these advancements, the globalization of education systems allows for an increase in the number of international students (Agarwal, Winkler, 1985).

Factors such as the desire to study in nations with better education and living conditions, or the fact that the desired education program is not accessible in their home country, are key motivators for these students to study abroad. It can be seen that institutions and nations that want to attract these students try to be a center of attraction for these students by expanding their systems and making substantial investments. While these advances contribute to the globalization of education by progressing cumulatively, they also promote competition between countries and educational institutions. It can be seen that the nations and educational institutions that can draw the best students have seen significant improvements in their reputation, success, economies, and added value (Spring, 2008).

Even though the thought of studying abroad is appealing, it is not at all simple. While English language proficiency is crucial, particularly in the globalization of education, it is very challenging for people without this language skill to pursue a course of study abroad. It is clear that educational institutions that don't emphasize language proficiency in their educational programs fall behind in this dynamic environment of competition and are unable to benefit from the growing globalization (Güçlü, 1996).

In addition to language ability, monetary, cultural, and political factors have a significant impact on the globalization of education. The fact that countries are financially suitable or provide financial opportunities for international students has a significant impact on these students' preferences (Agarwal, Winkler, 1985). Cultural proximity is also an essential component in helping these students to continue their lives and study in different nations. It has been discovered that international students studying in cultures similar to their own cultures gain intercultural adaptation faster than other international students. It

is known that factors such as personality have a significant impact on ensuring this adaptation (Altbach, 1991; Altbach, 2004).

The importance of globalization in education is growing by the day. To achieve a sustainable competitive advantage, countries and educational institutions must develop proactive strategies on this issue, which evolves in conjunction with technological innovations. Because each step will cause significant changes in the internal and external environments of countries and educational institutions, it is thought that basing decisions on rational conditions will be beneficial. As a global culture spreads, it is assumed that the realization of activities within the framework of the concept of global citizenship is an important issue. In light of all of these concerns, it is hoped that globalization of education will benefit the world by providing better and more livable conditions.

One of the research's limitation is that it only presents a picture of the current state of affairs through the use of the qualitative document analysis method. It suggests that a thorough investigation of the topic through quantitative research techniques will be advantageous to the literature. Another limitation is that the study only includes universities in Türkiye. It is believed that studying international student data by comparing them based on various countries will be helpful for a better understanding of the issue in the context of education globalization.

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