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The New Actors of International Migration: A Comparative Analysis of Foreign Students' Experiences in a Medium-Sized City in Turkey

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Additional information is available at the end of the chapter

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Abstract

International or foreign student migration is one of the topics that started to become a hot topic in many different countries because of various aspects. Lately, Turkey, especially in terms of higher education, can be seen as a country that sends students to study abroad but also attracts foreign students. With regard to Adnan Menderes University which is located in a medium-sized city (Aydın), the main focus of this study is based on experiences of foreign students regarding prejudice, discrimination and racism. In addition to this, the topics such as to what extent are foreign students having difficulty to adapt to the life in Turkey, to what extent are the students satisfied with their lives in the country, in what way could foreign students who currently study in Turkey help to increase the foreign student population or sustain the student migration were examined. In this context, six different categories, such as students from Africa, Asia, South Caucasia, Middle East, Europe/Balkans and Europe/Other, were created. Surveys were applied to participants of the study group in line with a quantitative research scope.

Keywords: foreign students, international migration, prejudice and discrimination, migrant networks, satisfaction, Turkey

1. Introduction

We live in an age where international migration movement grows because of changes of the global economy and increase in communication and transportation networks [1]. Foreign students are usually seen as a category of international migration [2–4]. International or cross-border student migration rapidly increased since the beginning of twenty-first century and is expanding. Thus, as many different fields are influenced by the rapid changes in the

world, higher education is also affected; many students leave their home country each year to study abroad and become a part of the international migration movement [5–9]. Kadioğlu et al. [5] emphasize that “increased efforts for development in underdeveloped countries, the necessity of qualified human power in developed countries, travel convenience due to globalization, increase in cooperation and interaction between countries, change in production relations, increased population [...] and many other reasons resulted as the fact that international student mobility reached a significant level” (p. 10). However, for some authors [4, 6, 10], although students became an important key figure regarding the global migration flood, foreign student migration was neglected in migration studies compared to other types of migration.

In this context, according to Çetinsaya [11], “student mobility is one of the most significant figures of internationalization process which should be evaluated within the frame of massification and universalization of access to higher education” (p. 143). Therefore, the increase in migrating for the sake of education all around the globe forced both the developed and developing countries to make new plans, develop new strategies and cooperation. Thus, a significant amount of the literature has emerged regarding various aspects of foreign student migration throughout the last 10–15 years [12–14].

Turkey was a country that sent students abroad to study at higher education institutions until recently, but due to changes in the world Turkey—while still sending students—also became a host country that attracts students. Although it is a slow process, the number of foreign students has started to increase, especially throughout the last 15 years [5, 7, 11, 15–17]. The story of hosting foreign students in Turkey began with the collapse of the Soviet Union as Turkey made efforts to strengthen its relationships with countries that declared independence including Turkic Republics (Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan, and Uzbekistan). Özdemir and Can [18] point out that the great student project (GSP), which began during the 1992–1993 academic year, caused a significant acceleration regarding international student migration. Later on other countries sent students to Turkey started to vary and a more cosmopolitan student profile emerged. Since Turkey faces new student migrations because of recent international developments, there is a need for developing short-, middle- and long-term projections on foreign students. Although international or foreign student migration happens to a larger scale in societies which are described as developed countries, the issue is important to Turkey and needs to be considered comprehensively because this issue has demographic, social, economic, cultural and political consequences for the country.

2. Content and problem of the research

Foreign students’ experiences and feelings which they will communicate will have an effect on people that are planning to migrate to Turkey for educational purposes or on people that consider the possibility to come. Therefore, the most significant issue is to create a positive

impression on existing foreign students and offers them respectable, suitable opportunities, and a good standard of living. These very aspects will also affect the decision of the existing foreign students to continue or not to a higher level of education when their current program is completed, or even to remain in the country, in other words, the permanence of the migration. The studies that focus on the status of foreign students in Turkey usually evaluate; academic, language, socioeconomic and adaptation problems, there are also difficulties with the process of arrival-applications, concerns regarding reasons for choosing Turkey, and degree of satisfaction of students.

In addition to these, all around the globe, students who go abroad for the sake of an education can face prejudices, discrimination, racism and adaptation problems in the cities in which they live. Thus, with regard to Adnan Menderes University, which is located in a medium-sized city (Aydın), the main focus of this study is based on (i) experiences of foreign students regarding prejudice, discrimination and racism in the city they live. It was also a consideration of ours to separate on campus and off campus experiences. The other questions guiding the study are as follows: (ii) To what extent are foreign students having difficulty to adapt to the life in Turkey? (iii) To what extent are the students satisfied with their lives in the country? (iv) In what way could foreign students who currently study in Turkey help to increase the foreign student population or sustain the student migration?

In this sense, this study examines foreign students' experiences in the host country Turkey from a broad perspective. Considering the fact that experiences of the foreign students might vary due to the different geographies they came from and the different cultures they were exposed to, students were classified regarding their region/country of origin and data were evaluated. Therefore, impressions and experiences of foreign students in Turkey were evaluated according to their region/country of origin. In this context, six different categories, such as students from Africa, Asia, South Caucasias, Middle East, Europe/Balkans and Europe/Other, were created and quantitative data gathered from field research were evaluated.

3. Scope and methodology of the research

The research is based on quantitative data which was gathered from foreign students that are registered for a 4 year program in Aydın Adnan Menderes University of Turkey during 2015–2016 period. There are 335 foreign students who are registered in a 4-year program; however, 54 of them are of Turkish origin and were excluded from the research. Therefore, *population* of the research is 281 foreign students who are studying at undergraduate level. Throughout this study, all of these students were tried to be reached. However, after excluding those who did not want to participate in the study due to various reasons, those whose surveys were invalid, and those not able to contact, the *study group* consisted of 182 foreign students that are studying in an undergraduate level.

Surveys were supplied to participants of the study group in line with quantitative research scope. The survey was conducted in February–March, 2016, and included responses from

182 foreign students. Surveys were prepared both in English and in Turkish, and students were asked to fill in the questions in the language which they feel most comfortable with. The collected data of the surveys were analyzed with the help of SPSS version 18.0 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software. The research data were summarized by means of frequency distribution tables. In this sense, frequency distribution tables are used to describe the basic features and imply a simple quantitative summary of the data set.

The study group includes students between 17 and 27 years of age. The amount of students that participated in the research was consistent of 71.4% males and 28.6% females. The gender distribution of the students in the research is comparable to the gender distribution of foreign students in Turkey. Regions from which these students came from are as follows: 38.5% are from Africa; 25.8% are from Asia; 11.5% are from Europe/Balkans; 11.0% are from South Caucasia; 9.3% are from Middle East; and 3.8% are from Europe/Other. The students which came from the mentioned regions are from 46 different countries.¹ The students who participated in the research are registered in 12 different units and 31 different majors.

4. Conceptual framework

4.1. Cross-border student mobility and migration in the world

Many countries in the world started to display efforts for the sake of taking a share of the continuously expanding international or cross-border student mobility market. The number of students that were labeled as an international student all around the world was 800 thousand in 1975, 1.3 million in 1990, 2.1 million in 2000, 4.1 in 2010 and 4.3 in 2011 [19–21]. According to OECD reports in 2012 and 2013, approximately 4.5 million students were registered in an educational institution located outside of their country of citizenship, and 73% of these students were studying in an OECD country [20]. The number of foreign students all around the globe between 2005 and 2012 increased by 50% [7, 20]. In this sense, many higher education specialists claim that this increase will continue and might reach to 8 million in 2025 [11]. In this context, foreign students have become important to OECD countries in regards to social, economic and political aspects.

Number of foreign students in Turkey is about 1% of all international students [11]. According to UNESCO statistics, although Turkey was among the first 20 countries in 2000,

¹*Africa*: Ghana 8.8% (16); Kenya 5.5% (10); Somali 4.9% (9); Zambia 3.3% (6); Ivory Coast 2.7% (5); Malawi 2.7% (5); Ethiopia 1.6% (3); Senegal 1.2% (2); Guinea 1.1% (2); Nigeria 1.1% (2); 0.5% (1); Gambia 1.1% (1); Zimbabwe 0.5% (1); Algeria 0.5% (1); Morocco 0.5% (1); Egypt 1.1% (2); Sudan 0.5% (1); Democratic Republic of the Congo 0.5% (1).

Asia: Turkmenistan 11.5% (21); Afghanistan 5.5% (10); Pakistan 2.2% (4); Tajikistan 1.6% (3); Kazakhstan 1.1% (2); Mongolia 1.1% (2); China 0.5% (1); Indonesia 1.1% (2); Kirghizstan 0.5% (1); Malaysia 0.5% (1).

Europe/Balkans: Albania 2.7% (5); Bulgaria 2.7% (5); Kosovo 1.6% (3); Bosnia and Herzegovina 1.1% (2); Montenegro 1.1% (2); Macedonia 1.1% (2); Greece 1.1% (2).

South Caucasus: Azerbaijan 10.4% (19); Georgia 0.5% (1).

Middle East: Syria 2.7% (5); Palestine 2.2% (4); Jordan 2.2% (4); Yemen 2.2% (4).

Europe/Other: Russia 1.1% (2); Germany 1.1% (2); Spain 0.5% (1); Slovakia 0.5% (1); Moldova 0.5% (1).

and despite there being a significant increase in the number of students (from 17,654 to 38,590 between 2000 and 2012, i.e., 118%), Turkey was not among the first 20 countries that attracted foreign students in 2012 [5]. According to UNESCO data, by 2012, top five countries that send students abroad are China, India, South Korea, Germany and Saudi Arabia. Turkey is 11th in the same context [22]. From the mentioned countries, over 1.2 million students go abroad to study at higher education institutions [22]. Among the Organization of the Islamic Union, Malaysia is the leading country in the sense of attracting students, and Turkey is the fourth in the mentioned category [5]. In 2010, 13,579 students chose to come to Turkey, which is fourth among the members, for educational purposes of members of the Organization of the Islamic Union [5, 22]. We can still point out the fact, nevertheless, that Turkey's tendency towards being a part of international student market is becoming more important as of 2010.

4.2. Foreign student migration to Turkey

When the number of international or foreign students for the academic years 2000–2001 to 2014–2015 is checked, it can be seen that numbers increased more than four times in the last 15 years. While in 2000–2001, the student number was 15,805, it increased to 72,178 in 2014–2015. The increase, which started to escalate during the academic year 2009–2010, peaked in the academic year 2014–2015 (see **Figure 1**). The increase leaps to the eye as the biggest positive change.

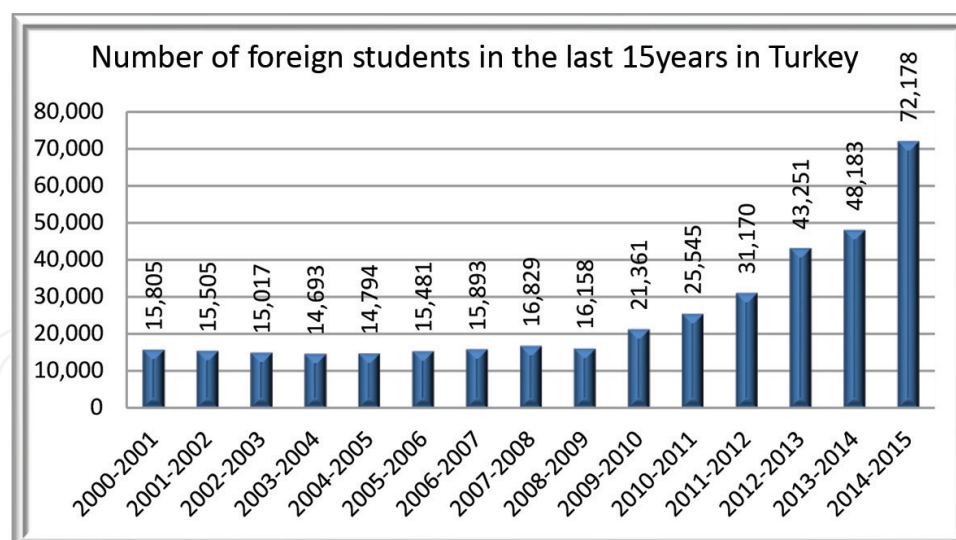


Figure 1. Number of foreign students in the last 15 years in Turkey. **Source:** Compiled from YÖK Student Statistics (between 2000 and 2016).

According to Council of Higher Education (YÖK) data, as of 2014–2015, out of 72,178 foreign students 68.8% males and 31.2% were females. When compared with the countries that have a high potential of foreign students, Turkey attracts especially male students. Also, 79.6% of

foreign students are registered at public universities and 20.4% are registered at private universities during 2014–2015.

During the 2014–2015 period, there are foreign students in Turkey from approximately 190 different countries [23]. When looking at the regions from which these students come, it was established that most come from areas close to Turkey, with which Turkey has strong geographical, historical and cultural bonds, or in which Turkish people live [5]. According to

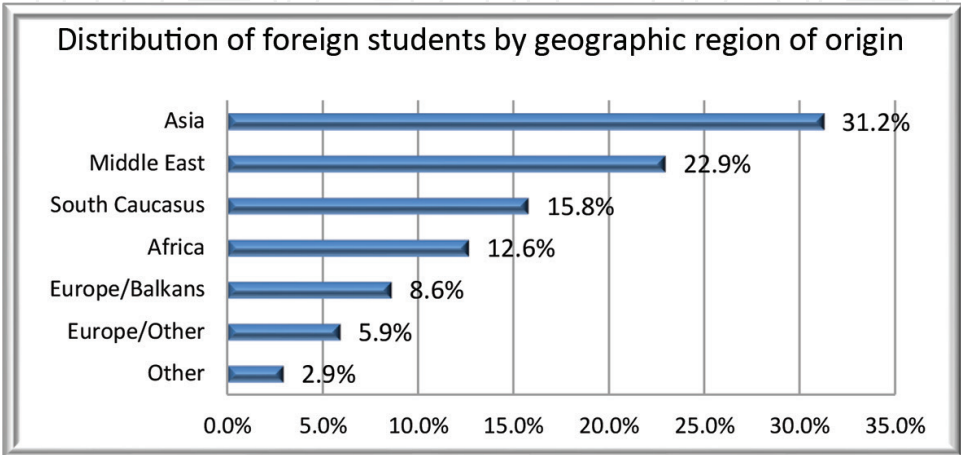


Figure 2. Distribution of foreign students by geographic region of origin. **Source:** Compiled from YÖK Student Statistics (period of 2014–2015).

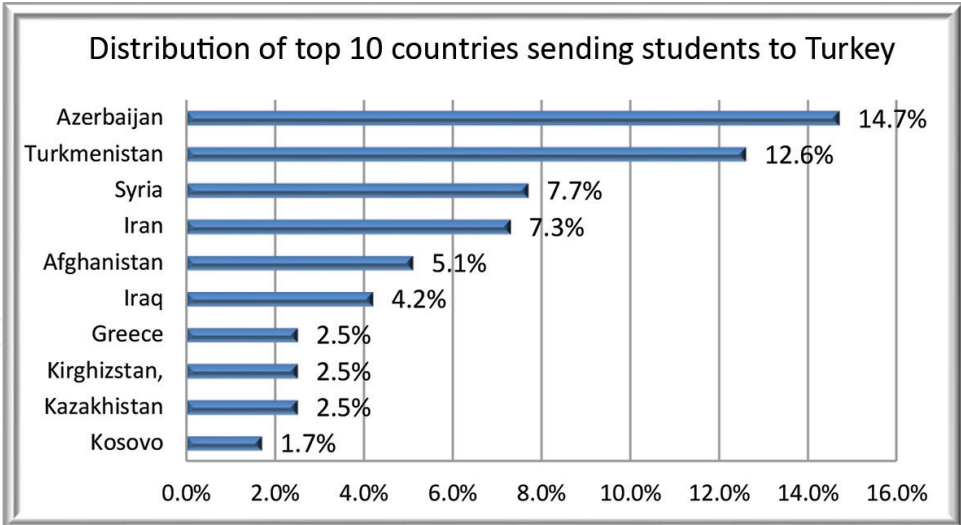


Figure 3. Distribution of top 10 countries sending students to Turkey. **Source:** Compiled from YÖK Student Statistics (period of 2014–2015).

this, the geographic regions are shown in **Figure 2**: Asia 31.2% (22,506), Middle East 22.9% (16,514), South Caucasus 15.8% (11,356), Africa 12.6% (9,109), Europe/Balkans 8.6% (6,188), Europe/other 5.9% (4,246), Other 2.9% (2,101).

As of the period 2014–2015, top 10 countries sending students to Turkey are listed as follows (**Figure 3**): Azerbaijan (10,638), Turkmenistan (9092), Syria (5560), Iran (5302), Afghanistan (3672), Iraq (3033), Greece (1826), Kirghizstan (1819), Kazakhstan (1799), Kosovo (1237). The top six countries sending students to Turkey constitute half of the total foreign students. Outside of the top 10, respectively, Nigeria (1176), Pakistan (1127), China (1088), TRNC, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (1069), Russian Federation (1048), Bulgaria (1011), Palestine (976), Somalia (915), Mongolia (912) and Albania (775) are the countries that sent the most students to Turkey [23]. Turkey attracts also students from the top 20 countries sending most students abroad: Germany, Iran, Russian Federation and Kazakhstan [22, 23].

Most of the students who chose to study in Turkey are from countries that have a similar language, history, culture and are geographically close to Turkey. As stated by Özdemir and Can [18], establishing intimate bonds between Turkey and cognate countries is not just a political choice or historical responsibility but also a necessity in the sense of economic, social, cultural, strategic and academic aspects. The great student project (GSP), which began during the 1992–1993 academic year, at first included five Turkic Republics; nowadays, it includes countries and groups from Asia and the Balkans along with five Turkic Republics [18].

For many countries, foreign students are seen as an economic resource. In many developed countries, educating foreign students plays a big part in the economy. Currently, in terms of Turkey, we could not assert that educating foreign students plays a big part in the economy. However, we can assert that in the near future foreign students will become a significant part of the economy in Turkey too. In Turkey, tuition fees² for the foreign students vary according to whether the university is private or publicly funded, its location and the course chosen [24]. Adnan Menderes University is a state university. The tuition fees for foreign students vary depending on the nature of the program. Approximate annual tuition fees for foreign students studying at Adnan Menderes University vary between 300 and 750 USD [25]. It can be said that Turkey offers excellent value for money, with living expenses and tuition costs comparable to developed countries. An average international student in Turkey will spend about 400–500 USD a month on accommodation, food, clothing, entertainment, transportation and telephone costs [24].

5. Findings and discussion

According to Tan and Goh [26], “as the world becomes increasingly interconnected and culturally diverse, the internationalization of education has become a major goal of many universi-

²Approximate annual tuition fees (2016-17 academic year) for the foreign students in Turkey are as follows [24];

State universities: (a) Universities where the medium of instruction is Turkish: Turkish nationals: 80-250 USD Foreign nationals: 240-750 USD; (b) Universities where the medium of instruction is English: Turkish nationals: USD 150-500 USD Foreign nationals: USD 450-1500 USD.

Foundation or private universities: Foreign nationals: 5000-20,000 USD.

ties” (p. 651). The increase in numbers of foreign students, who came to Turkey for educational purposes, creates a cosmopolitan structure in many different universities and cities. As stated by Lee and Rice [27], foreign students “increase the diversity of student populations, add new perspectives to classroom conversations, and, related, increase our awareness and appreciation for other countries and cultures” (p. 381). In this sense, Ramos et al. [1] indicate that foreign students are valuable asset or [capital] as they contribute academically, culturally and financially to universities and host countries. However, both the diversification of student profiles at university campuses and increase in the appearance of foreign students in some cities bring many problems with them. One of which is related to adaptation process of foreign students to the host society.

5.1. Social and cultural adaptation of foreign students

The differences of social and cultural aspects between countries of origin of the students and the country to which they came for educational purposes could make the adaptation process difficult [17, 28, 29]. There is a linear relationship between similarity of their own culture, the culture of the host country and the adaptation process. Looking at this point, adaptation to the values of the country to which students migrated for educational purposes is related to the social, cultural and religious backgrounds of students or the level of comfort they feel. The mentioned aspects are seen to have a significant value for determining the complexity of foreign students’ adaptation process. In this way, foreign students located in Aydın are evaluated in the sense of comfort regarding cultural and religious aspects.

Looking at **Table 1** and addressing the question, “Do you feel comfortable here in terms of culture and religion”; 12.6% of the students said they feel “very comfortable,” 45.1% said they feel “comfortable” and 25.3% said they are “neutral.” About 8.8% of the students said they “don't feel comfortable” and 8.2% of the students said they “don't feel comfortable at all.” When evaluated according to regions, students from Europe/Balkans, Asia, Europe/Other and South Caucasus feel more comfortable in terms of culture and religion than students from Africa and Middle East.

	Africa (%)	Asia (%)	South Caucasus (%)	Middle East (%)	Europe/Balkans (%)	Europe/other (%)	Total (%)
I feel very comfortable	10.0	6.4	30.0	5.9	19.0	28.6	12.6
I feel comfortable	45.7	55.3	30.0	35.3	52.4	14.3	45.1
Neutral	22.9	19.1	30.0	41.2	19.0	57.1	25.3
I don't feel comfortable	11.4	10.6	5.0	11.8	.0	.0	8.8
I don't feel comfortable at all	10.0	8.5	5.0	5.9	9.5	.0	8.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 1. Do you feel comfortable here in terms of culture and religion?.

Yeh and Inose [29] find in their study, conducted in the US, that one of the most significant problems regarding cultural differences is that international students, who come from an eastern country, where a collectivist life style is accepted compared to a western country, where a personal life style is dominant, face a harder time with respect to their adaptation process regarding both academic and cultural aspects. The main argument is that if a foreign student faces a minimal cultural difference and behavior pattern between the host country and their homeland, then their adaptation process will be easier. Our research shows that foreign students, who come to Turkey from countries that are similar to Turkey in the sense of culture, religion and are close to Turkey geographically, will comparatively easy overcome the adaptation process. The following table demonstrates the results in relation to where the students come from.

Table 2 looks at the question “Do you have any difficulties in adapting to Turkey?” When evaluated, 8.8% of the students said they “have great difficulty,” 34.1% said they “have some difficulty” and 28.6% said they “have little difficulty.” About 16.5% of the students said they “have no difficulty” and 12.1% said they “have no difficulty at all.” When evaluated according to regions, students from Europe/Other, Europe/Balkans, South Caucasus and Asia have little difficulty in the adaptation process compared to students from Africa and the Middle East.

	Africa (%)	Asia (%)	South Caucasus (%)	Middle East (%)	Europe/Balkans (%)	Europe/other (%)	Total (%)
Have great difficulty	14.3	8.5	5.0	5.9	.0	.0	8.8
Have some difficulty	40.0	31.9	25.0	47.1	23.8	14.3	34.1
Have little difficulty	27.1	31.9	20.0	35.3	28.6	28.6	28.6
Have no difficulty	14.3	19.1	10.0	11.8	23.8	28.6	16.5
Have no difficulty at all	4.3	8.5	40.0	.0	23.8	28.6	12.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 2. Do you have any difficulties in adapting to Turkey?.

The problems or the potential problems that students experience when going to other countries for educational purposes are dependent on the students' personal features, personalities, countries from which they came and its culture. In this context, it can be claimed that students who came from Europe/Balkan, Europe/Other, Asia and South Caucasasia feel more comfortable in relation to culture and religion compared to students that came from other regions, hence, passing the adaptation process and problems more easily.

It is argued here that the level of adaptation is a determining factor for students to continue their lives in Turkey or to interrupt their educational career and to go back to their country of origin or to another country. The thought of returning or leaving might negatively affect

the process of adaptation to society. In this context, reasons for leaving or the thoughts about leaving are the main problems which can be classified as [9, 17, 29–35]: Language problems, cultural and religious barriers, academic and financial difficulties, interpersonal problems, discrimination, racism, loss of social support, alienation and homesickness, and psychological problems. All of these are the dominant factors which foreign students can experience.

5.2. Facing prejudiced, discriminating and racist behaviors

All around the globe, students who go abroad for the purpose of education can face prejudice, discrimination and racism in the cities in which they live. Prejudices, discrimination and racist behaviors are the key factors that negatively affect the students’ adaptation process and psychological well-being [27, 36]. Despite their growing importance, there have been too little studies focusing on these issues. Therefore, this study focused on foreign students from different countries concerning the level of prejudice, discrimination and racist behaviors that they face.

For Hanassab [37], “discussions of prejudice and discrimination tend to focus on the biases and negative perceptions of individuals toward members of other groups” (p. 158). Prejudice should not be categorized as discrimination although the two are closely related [38]. In fact, “prejudice is an unjustified or incorrect attitude (generally negative) toward an individual based solely on the individual's membership of a social group” [39]. In this sense, as discussed by Simpson and Yinger [38], “it may never involve overt action toward members of a minority group, either because no situation presents itself or, in situations wherein one might show antipathy, because other attitudes inhibit open expressions of hostility” (p. 22). In this context, students who participated in the research were asked whether they had faced prejudiced behaviors off university campus.

Table 3 addresses the question “Do you face any prejudiced behavior off university campus?” When evaluated 11.5% of the students claim they faced such behaviors “very often,” 31.9% claim they faced such behaviors “sometimes,” 25.3% claim they faced such behaviors “rarely” and 31.3% of the students claim they “never” faced such behaviors. When evaluated according to the regions, students from Africa, Middle East and Asia stand out as the groups which faced prejudiced behaviors off campus mostly. Students from South Caucasia, Europe/Other and Europe/Balkans, on the other hand, faced such behaviors comparatively less.

	Africa (%)	Asia (%)	South Caucasia (%)	Middle East (%)	Europe/Balkans (%)	Europe/other (%)	Total (%)
Very often	11.4	10.6	15.0	5.9	14.3	14.3	11.5
Sometimes	44.3	29.8	15.0	41.2	9.5	14.3	31.9
Rarely	20.0	31.9	20.0	29.4	28.6	28.6	25.3
Never	24.3	27.7	50.0	23.5	47.6	42.9	31.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 3. Do you face any prejudiced behavior off university campus?.

Table 4 examines the question “Do you face any prejudiced behavior on university campus?” When evaluated, 2.7% of the students claim they faced such behaviors “very often,” 22.5% claim they faced such behaviors “sometimes,” 26.9% claim they experienced such behaviors “rarely” and 47.8% claim they “never” faced such behaviors. When evaluated according to the regions, students from Africa, the Middle East, and South Caucasus stand out as the groups which faced prejudiced behaviors on campus mostly. Students from Europe/Balkans, Europe/Other and Asia, on the other hand, faced such behaviors comparatively less. In general, when evaluating prejudiced behaviors on or off campus, foreign students faced prejudiced behaviors to a greater extent off campus. When evaluated according to the country or region students come from, African and Middle Eastern students faced prejudiced behaviors more often both on and off campus compared to students from other regions.

	Africa (%)	Asia (%)	South Caucasus (%)	Middle East (%)	Europe/Balkans (%)	Europe/other (%)	Total (%)
Very often	5.7	.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.7
Sometimes	40.0	14.9	15.0	11.8	4.8	0.0	22.5
Rarely	24.3	29.8	35.0	47.1	14.3	0.0	26.9
Never	30.0	55.3	45.0	41.2	81.0	100.0	47.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 4. Do you face any prejudiced behavior on university campus?.

Antonovsky [40] states that “discrimination may be defined as the effective injurious treatment of persons on grounds rationally irrelevant to the situation” (p. 81). For Nieto [41], discrimination refers to negative or destructive behaviors that can result in denying some groups’ or individuals life necessities. Lee and Rice [27] claim that “discrimination becomes, seemingly, justified by cultural difference or national origin rather than by physical characteristics alone and can thus disarm the fight against racism by appealing to natural tendencies to preserve group cultural identity” (p. 389). In this sense, students were evaluated in relation to discriminating behaviors off campus.

Table 5 explores the question “Do you face any discriminating behavior off campus?” When evaluating the total number of students, 7.7% claim they faced such behaviors “very often,” 20.9% claim they faced such behaviors “sometimes,” 19.8% claim they faced such behaviors “rarely” and 51.6% claim they “never” faced such behaviors. When evaluated according to the regions, Africa is again the leading region and the second region is Middle East. Students from Europe/Other claim they never faced such behaviors. Therefore, according to data provided in **Table 5**, students from Africa and the Middle East stand out as the groups which faced discriminating behaviors off campus most.

The next question is explored in **Table 6**, the question to be answered was “Do you face any discriminating behavior on campus?” When evaluating the total number of students, 3.8% claim they faced such behaviors “very often,” 16.5% claim they faced such behaviors “sometimes,” 27.5% claim they faced such behaviors “rarely” and 52.2% claim they “never”

faced such behaviors. When evaluated according to the regions, students from Middle East and Africa stand out as the groups which faced discriminating behaviors on campus most.

	Africa (%)	Asia (%)	South Caucasus (%)	Middle East (%)	Europe/Balkans (%)	Europe/other (%)	Total (%)
Very often	10.0	6.4	5.0	11.8	4.8	.0	7.7
Sometimes	32.9	6.4	15.0	29.4	4.8	.0	20.9
Rarely	20.0	25.5	20.0	23.5	14.3	28.6	19.8
Never	37.1	61.7	60.0	35.3	76.2	71.4	51.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 5. Do you face any discriminating behavior off university campus?.

	Africa (%)	Asia (%)	South Caucasus (%)	Middle East (%)	Europe/Balkans (%)	Europe/other (%)	Total (%)
Very often	5.7	2.1	5.0	5.9	0.0	0.0	3.8
Sometimes	24.3	14.9	5.0	23.5	4.8	0.0	16.5
Rarely	24.3	27.7	40.0	47.1	14.3	14.3	27.5
Never	45.7	55.3	50.0	23.5	81.0	85.8	52.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 6. Do you face any discriminating behavior on university campus?.

Table 7 looks at the question “Do you think your lecturers at university are discriminating against you?” When evaluating the total number of students, 3.8% claim “most of them” are discriminating, 18.7% claim “some of them” are discriminating and 77.5% claim that “none of them” are discriminating. When evaluated according to the regions, students from the Middle East, South Caucasia and Africa stand out as the groups which mostly claimed that they faced discriminating behaviors in courses. Students from Europe/Balkans, Europe/Other and Asia, on the other hand, claimed that they did not face discriminating behaviors very often.

	Africa (%)	Asia (%)	South Caucasus (%)	Middle East (%)	Europe/Balkans (%)	Europe/other (%)	Total (%)
Most of them	8.5	1.4	5.0	5.9	0.0	0.0	3.8
Some of them	19.1	11.4	35.0	47.1	4.8	14.3	18.7
None of them	72.3	87.1	60.0	47.1	95.2	85.7	77.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 7. Do you think your lecturers at university are discriminating against you?.

In a research which was conducted on foreign students in Ankara, it is seen that 4.3% of students feel uncomfortable due to behaviors of academics towards them [42]. The findings of a study conducted by SETA (Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research) also indicates that some academics display negative behaviors based on cultural, religious and ethnic prejudices against foreign students [17]. Another study which was conducted by Poyrazli and Lopez [43] in the US indicates that international students face discrimination to a greater extent than national students, and there is a relation between the level of experiencing discrimination and race. Some studies that were conducted in the US find that students from Europe face comparatively less prejudices and discriminating behaviors compared to students from other regions [43, 44]. Poyrazli and Lopez [43] claim that this could be based on the fact that students who come from other than European regions display more apparent features regarding their race and ethnicity.

Table 8 discusses the question “Do you face any racist behavior off campus?” When evaluating the total number of students, 10.4% claim they faced such behaviors “very often,” 11.5% claim they faced such behaviors “sometimes,” 18.1% claim they faced such behaviors “rarely” and 59.9% claim they “never” faced such behaviors. When evaluated according to the regions, students from Africa and the Middle East stand out as the groups which faced racist behaviors off campus most.

	Africa (%)	Asia (%)	South Caucasus (%)	Middle East (%)	Europe/Balkans (%)	Europe/other (%)	Total (%)
Very often	17.2	6.4	5.0	11.8	4.8	0.0	10.4
Sometimes	17.1	6.4	10.0	17.6	4.8	0.0	11.5
Rarely	21.4	8.5	25.0	17.6	14.3	42.9	18.1
Never	44.3	78.7	60.0	52.9	76.2	57.1	59.9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 8. Do you face any racist behavior off university campus?.

Table 9 discusses the question “Do you face any racist behavior on campus?” When evaluating the total number of students, 5.5% claim they faced such behaviors “very often,” 4.9% claim they faced such behaviors “sometimes,” 14.8% claim they faced such behaviors “rarely” and 74.7% claim they “never” faced such behaviors. When evaluated according to the regions, students from Africa and the Middle East stand out as the groups which faced racist behaviors on campus most.

When facing prejudiced and discriminating behaviors are evaluated according to being on or off campus, it can be seen that these behaviors occur more off campus than on campus. Similarly, the findings of a study conducted by Hanassab [37] in the US indicate that international students experience more discrimination off campus than on campus. When our data are evaluated in relation to country or region, it is seen that both, on campus and off campus, such behaviors are more experienced by African and Middle Eastern students compared to

	Africa (%)	Asia (%)	South Caucasus (%)	Middle East (%)	Europe/Balkans (%)	Europe/other (%)	Total (%)
Very often	8.6	4.3	5.0	0.0	4.8	0.0	5.5
Sometimes	8.6	2.1	0.0	11.8	0.0	0.0	4.9
Rarely	17.1	6.4	30.0	17.6	9.5	14.3	14.8
Never	65.7	87.2	65.0	70.5	85.7	85.7	74.7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 9. Do you face any racist behavior on university campus?.

students that came from other regions or countries. On the other hand, experiences of racist behaviors both on and off campus are comparatively very low; however, some African and Middle Eastern students experience them to a minor degree.

It is thought that the skin color of African students and the established cultural bias or prejudice against Africans is the main result for such experiences. Poyrazli and Grahame [45] discover in their studies, conducted in US, that students who are not white definitively face discrimination off campus. Similarly, Sodowsky and Plake [44] find in their study that Africans perceived more prejudice than other student groups. The results of the study, conducted by Hanassab [37] in the US, suggest that international or foreign students from the Middle East and Africa experienced more difficulty regarding discrimination.

But it is not only the skin color which seems to induce prejudices and discriminating behavior. The result for Middle Eastern students to experience more negative behaviors can be linked to issues of asylum-seeking and refugee status that recently transpired in Turkey [46]. Turkey is experiencing an extreme influx of refugees, especially recently, due to civil wars in Iraq and Syria. That is why there is a negative attitude towards Middle Eastern citizens (especially against Syrian refugees). There are over 3.1 million refugees most of which are from Syria and Iraq who are registered in Turkey [47]; over 2.7 million of these refugees are from Syria. Some studies that are conducted in Turkey concerning how Syrian refugees are considered show negative attitudes in society [46, 48, 49]. These sentiments concur with the results of our study. Great numbers of refugees or displaced people might cause limitations to resources and might affect the stability of host country. It can be claimed that immigration movements, even though people were forced to leave, especially Syrian refugees, aggravated the general negative attitudes towards refugees. In the sense of negative opinions becoming widespread, it is important to consider the way the media portrays the situation. Some reports demonstrate refugees as poor people, fugitives, criminals, problematic people, causing harm to the country, increasing the crime rate, being killer, or rapist, thief, create the negative attitudes and help the distribution of these discriminating, hateful, hostile statements against refugees [46, 50]. As discussed by Ünal [46], the obscurity factor caused by Syrian refugees' temporariness and/or permanence status is a variable that results in people feeling insecure, being concerned about their economic status, and leading them to use refugees as scapegoats who should be driven out of the country.

These negative attitudes, which are developing mostly against Syrian refugees, also cause an attitudinal change and a negative perception against all immigrants from the Middle East to rise. In this context, it can be claimed that many foreign students who came from the Middle East faced more biased, prejudiced and discriminating behaviors compared to students from other regions. Poyrazli and Grahame [45] also find in their study that students who physically look like Middle Eastern people were identified and treated as terrorists after the 9/11 attack. In a study that researched the experiences of international and local students enrolled at three different Australian Universities, it was seen that two thirds of Asian students described discrimination and bias as a significant problem [51].

Summarizing this part of our study, it can be said that some foreign students, in this case African and Middle Eastern students, faced, more than other students, negative behaviors, prejudices, discrimination and racism because of their ethnicity and cultural background. According to Ramos et al. [1], "they are often targets of racism, face several other forms of discrimination and are also victims of exclusion, isolation and unfriendliness from domestic students" (p. 402). However, it must also be stated that the degree of these negative behaviors towards foreign students in Turkey is not very high.

5.3. Foreign students and migrant or migration networks

Migration or migrant networks can be described as a sum of various interpersonal relations among immigrants. For Massey et al. [52], "migrant networks are sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants and nonmigrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship and shared community origin" (p. 448). Migration networks can also be described as a social capital that can help the foreigners to solve many problems they face in an environment in which they are strangers but may benefit from these networks through various aspects [52, 53].

Maundeni [54] indicates that along with many positive effects, immigrant networks do also have some negative functions. Immigrant networks might cause a person to isolate from the society in which s/he lives. A person who is a member of an immigrant network will spend his/her time mostly with people that are alike. To spend time with people that are alike might be a conscious or unconscious act, yet although sometimes it happens as an obligation, most of the time it is a voluntary act. This situation will cause an isolation problem and has a negative effect on the individuals because they will not integrate or acculturate adequately. Yalçın [55] suggests immigrants will keep living inside their own community unless the opposite is required; as a consequence, their relation with the host country will be weak so that they cannot bond with the host country.

If foreign students do not go out of their migrant networks then communication and interaction with the host society will be limited, hence, weakened, as a consequence, the possibility of experiencing prejudiced and discriminating behaviors might be increased. Another aspect of the situation is that students who face discriminating behaviors are forced to stay within their own networks and might feel to not leave the network unless necessary. For instance, Cederberg [56] points out that "migrant networks fill important functions, not least

by providing support and some opportunities for people experiencing exclusion from various aspects of majority society” (p. 65). Similarly, Ramos et al. [1] claim that perceiving discrimination leads people to avoid the host society and to decrease their ties with the host culture and local people. In other words, they [1] state that “perceiving discrimination is associated with foreign students’ perception that they cannot leave their minority group and be part of the host group.” This perception in turn increases “individuals’ willingness to avoid the host group while increasing a desire to maintain their own culture” (p. 415). Looking at issues of integration, it is important to evaluate in which level foreign students participate within the immigrant networks. In this sense, the subject/person with whom foreign students spent their time in extracurricular hours was evaluated.

Table 10 asks the question “Extracurricular time—with whom do you prefer to spend it?” Looking at the findings, 25.8% of the students prefer to spend their time with students from the same country/region, and 14.8% of the students prefer to spend their time with other foreign students. When evaluated according to the regions, Africa is leading, that is, 32.9% of the students prefer to spend their time with students from the same country/region, and 24.3% prefer to spend their time with other foreign students. In relation to spend time with people of their own background, the second region is South Caucasia with 30.0%, third is Asia by 27.7% and fourth is the Middle East by 23.5%.

	Africa (%)	Asia (%)	South Caucasus (%)	Middle East (%)	Europe/Balkans (%)	Europe/other (%)	Total (%)
Almost with all of them	31.4	42.6	35.0	23.5	47.6	85.7	37.9
Students from my own country/region	32.9	27.7	30.0	23.5	4.8	.0	25.8
With host students	7.1	17.0	20.0	23.5	38.1	14.3	16.5
Foreign students from other countries	24.3	10.6	5.0	11.8	9.5	.0	14.8
Nobody	4.3	2.1	10.0	17.6	0.0	0.0	4.9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 10. Extracurricular time—with whom do you prefer to spend it?.

Table 11 examines the question “If you encounter any problem in Aydın, who do you initially consult with and ask for help?” Looking at the aspect, 56.0% of the students prefer to seek help from the students who come from the same country/region, and 14.3% of the students prefer to seek help from other foreign students. When evaluated according to the regions, students who prefer to seek help from other foreign students, and/or prefer to seek help from the students who come from the same country/region have a high ratio in all regions except for the students from Europe/Other.

	Africa (%)	Asia (%)	South Caucasus (%)	Middle East (%)	Europe/Balkans (%)	Europe/other (%)	Total (%)
Friends from my own country/region	61.4	55.3	40.0	58.8	61.9	28.6	56.0
My other foreign friends	15.7	12.8	15.0	17.6	14.3	0.0	14.3
My Turkish friends	4.3	19.1	30.0	0.0	14.3	42.9	13.2
Other	7.1	4.3	10.0	0.0	4.8	28.6	6.6
Our foreign student representative	7.1	6.4	0.0	11.8	0.0	0.0	5.5
My advisor at school	1.4	0.0	5.0	5.9	0.0	0.0	1.6
The school management	1.4	2.1	0.0	0.0	4.8	0.0	1.6
Foreign relations office personnel	1.4	0.0	0.0	5.9	0.0	0.0	1.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 11. If you encounter any problem in Aydın, who do you initially consult with and ask for help?.

Also, an indicator of the immigrant networks is “foreign or international students associations” which aim to reunite immigrant groups in a country. Today in Turkey, there are 53 different international or foreign student associations located in 44 different cities and most of the foreign students are members of these associations [57]. The aim of these associations is to break ice between foreign students and help them to solve probable social or financial problems.

Tan and Goh [26] argue that “a review of the literature suggests that although universities continue to celebrate the cultural diversity of their student population, cross-cultural interaction among students remains alarmingly low” (p. 651). In this context, our findings show the tendency that foreign students prefer to spend their time with students who are similar to themselves, see people within immigrant networks as the first people to cooperate with in case of need, and the existence of other foreign students is important to them. Several studies suggest [26, 58, 59] that foreign students are constantly building support groups or immigrant networks, which are usually ethnicity based, with very little mixing of cultures. But there is a warning by Ramos et al. [1] “although individuals increase their commitment to their minority group and receive psychological shelter from this group membership, they may see the consequences amplified as they compromise their development of competencies and opportunities in the mainstream” (p. 415). Whatever the reasons, it can be assumed that

foreign students' high dependence on immigrant networks will probably have a negative effect on their relations with the host society. We can emphasize the fact that these networks will cause foreign students to gather in environments where they reunite as groups and to live a life which is independent from the host country.

However, as mentioned, migrant networks have a significant function for the adaptation of immigrants of values of the host society, solving many problems which they face after arrival. Maundeni [54] emphasizes that "members of students' social networks play various roles (both supportive and non-supportive) in their [the students] adjustment." Most network members provide some form of helpful information. Others provide emotional, recreational, financial and spiritual support" (p. 272). As Kashima and Loh [60] state, ties with other international students are significant in terms of their psychological adjustment. Cederberg [56] asserts that migrant networks play various functions such as "providing practical and emotional support, giving access to social information, providing a sense of community and security as well as an opportunity to reproduce one's linguistic and cultural heritage, and facilitating access to further networks and opportunities, including some employment opportunities" (p. 63). In this context, our findings show that foreign students have comparatively little difficulty in adapting to the city in which they live. It is assumed that this may be due to the fact that they participate in such an immigrant or migrant network.

5.4. Sustainability and stability of the foreign student migration

The sustainability and stability of foreign student migration to any country or city is dependent on the nature of relations and interactions between pioneer immigrants and others through established or to be established social networks. For Haug [53], "social networks provide a foundation for the dissemination of information as well as for patronage or assistance. Interactions within the social networks make migration easier by reducing the costs and risks of moving" (p. 588). According to Arango [61] "many migrants move because others with whom they are connected migrated before" (p. 291–292). Considering the multi-dimensional effects of social networks [through the relations between pioneer immigrants and potential immigrants] chain migrations are supported [53]. In this context, definition of network migration can be described as a terminology used for describing the chain migration process. Namely, Wilpert [62] emphasizes that pioneer immigrants primarily build a bridge between societies of emigration and immigration; new migration waves activate already established networks and immigrants benefit from the experiences of pioneer immigrants.

Immigrant networks are significant tools because they hold a status of a good news channel for those who stayed in the homeland and also for displaying a significant structuring for controlling sustainability and speed of migration [55]. In this way, we can say that many studies regarding migration demonstrate that social networks are an important determination factor for people to decide to migrate and to choose where to [53, 62, 63].

As is the case with the all migration attempts, people tend to immigrate for a particular purpose. To what extent immigrants are satisfied will be decided on the basis of the quality and the scope of the chain migration and immigration networks. Therefore, how the migrants evaluate their experiences in the place they migrated to is of great importance because the

experiences of the foreign students, as to whether their expectations are met or not, will play a key role in the continuation and the scope of further immigrations. The level of foreign students' satisfaction, their negative and positive impressions and general perceptions are important. Therefore, the research tried to examine students' level of satisfaction regarding living in Turkey.

Table 12 asks the question "In general, how satisfied are you with living in Turkey?" When evaluating the total, 13.7% of students are "very satisfied," 46.2% "satisfied" and 30.2% are "partially satisfied." On the other hand, 6.6% of students are "not satisfied" and 3.3% are "extremely dissatisfied." When evaluated according to the regions, students who claimed to be "satisfied" and "very satisfied" are those from Europe/Balkans (85.7%), Europe/others (71.4%), Asia (61.7%), South Caucasasia (55.0%), Africa (54.3%) and the Middle East (47.1%), respectively. It was seen that students from different countries are generally quite "satisfied," yet their satisfaction levels are different. On the other hand, the ratio of students who are "not satisfied" is very low with respect to all regions.

	Africa (%)	Asia (%)	South Caucasasia (%)	Middle East (%)	Europe/Balkans (%)	Europe/other (%)	Total (%)
Very satisfied	8.6	12.8	30.0	11.8	19.0	14.3	13.7
Satisfied	45.7	48.9	25.0	35.3	66.7	57.1	46.2
Partially satisfied	37.1	25.5	35.0	41.2	4.8	28.6	30.2
Not satisfied	7.1	6.4	5.0	11.8	4.8	0.0	6.6
Extremely dissatisfied	1.4	6.4	5.0	0.0	4.8	0.0	3.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 12. In general, how satisfied are you with living in Turkey?.

The very same aspect will affect the decision of the foreign students to continue or not to a higher level of education when their current program is completed, or to keep living or not in the same country (Turkey); this relates to the stability of the migration. In trying to explore this point, students who participated in the research, were asked, if given the chance would they like to stay in Turkey, and to what extent would they be willing to live the rest of their lives in Turkey.

Table 13 investigates the question "If offered the possibility, would you like to stay/live in Turkey for the rest of your life?" About 13.7% of the students stated their opinion as "I would very much like to," 24.7% stated their opinion as "I would like to" and 39.6% stated that they are "not sure" concerning the matter. On the other hand, 15.4% of the students stated their opinion as "I would not like to" and 6.6% of the students stated their opinion as "I would never like to." When evaluated according to the regions, students from Europe/Balkans, the Middle East, Asia and South Caucasasia stated that, if given the chance, they would like to stay in Turkey and maintain their lives in Turkey. Students from Africa and Europe/other, on the other hand,

displayed a comparatively lower interest in staying in the Turkey. In general, foreign students show a tendency of 38.4%—which is a significant rate—to stay in Turkey permanently.

	Africa (%)	Asia (%)	South Caucasus (%)	Middle East (%)	Europe/Balkans (%)	Europe/other (%)	Total (%)
I would very much like to	11.4	12.8	25.0	23.5	9.5	0.0	13.7
I would like to	14.3	27.7	25.0	29.4	52.4	14.3	24.7
Not sure	51.4	27.7	40.0	23.5	33.3	57.1	39.6
I would not like to	15.7	21.3	10.0	11.8	4.8	28.6	15.4
I would never like to	7.1	10.6	.0	11.8	0.0	0.0	6.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 13. (If possible) Would you like to stay/live in Turkey for the rest of your life?.

The data regarding the decision of the foreign students to continue or not to a higher level of education when their current program is completed, or to keep living or not in Turkey displays a significant potential of foreign students to acquire a permanent residency. Although foreign student migration is seen as a kind of temporary migration, it might turn into a permanent one after a while.

In the end, positive and negative experiences of foreign students throughout their education career in Turkey, their feelings and impressions which they will tell when they go back to their homeland, have a determinative power on people who plan to come to Turkey to study. Thus, information conveyed by foreign students in Turkey based on their experiences will have a great influence on other students who want to “migrate” to Turkey for educational purposes. In this context, students located in Aydın were asked if they would recommend studying in Turkey to a relative of theirs who is planning to study abroad.

Table 14 analyses the question “Would you recommend Turkey to someone close to you who decides to study abroad?” About 51.6% of the students stated their opinion as “yes, I would,” 25.3% stated their opinion as “perhaps I would” and 11.0% stated that they are “not sure.” On the other hand, 12.0% of the students stated their opinion as “no, I would not.” When evaluated according to regions, it was seen that there is a positive tendency of all regions to recommend studying in Turkey.

People studying in foreign countries face a variety of experiences, both negative and positive. Some students overcome the problems easily, for others it could be difficult, and for some it may be impossible to overcome the problems. In this process to adapt, personal and demographic features of students, economic, cultural, religious and geographical conditions of both in the homeland and in the host country play facilitating or complicating roles. In one way or another, students will reach a general conclusion or opinion during their time in the

host country. According to our findings, it can be claimed that foreign students, who stayed in Aydın, will play a positive role in relation to sustaining student immigration and making Turkey a more permanent to live. This conclusion is based on our foreign students' general satisfaction with Turkey. In other words, the level of foreign students' satisfaction regarding education and living in Turkey will be a positive reference for those who are willing to become an actor for cross-border mobility for educational purposes.

	Africa (%)	Asia (%)	South Caucasus (%)	Middle East (%)	Europe/Balkans (%)	Europe/other (%)	Total (%)
Yes I would	47.1	59.6	50.0	17.6	81.0	42.9	51.6
Perhaps I would	30.0	19.1	15.0	47.1	14.3	28.6	25.3
Not sure	14.3	6.4	15.0	11.8	0.0	28.6	11.0
No I would not	8.6	14.9	20.0	23.5	4.8	0.0	12.0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 14. Would you recommend Turkey to someone close to you who decided to study abroad?.

6. Conclusion

Recently, the interest of international or foreign students to study in Turkey has become a trend because of Turkey's historical and cultural profoundness, geographical advantage; intercultural and multi-cultural status grab attraction both from Eastern and Western countries. For Kadioğlu et al. [5] foreign students become a significant tool of development and production goals by staying in the host country after completing their education or become a cultural ambassador, after returning, through building political, social, cultural or trading relationships between the host country and their homeland. In this context, when evaluated through social, economic, cultural and political aspects, international or foreign students' importance gradually increases for the host countries. Judging from this point, countries compete with each other to attract more foreign students. They also try to apply future plans and strategies for the sake of the same goal, that is, attracting foreign students. In this context, countries promote themselves by using profile-raising activities, and the impressions left on current students become significant. In the same aspect, use of today's information technology and the flow of personal information enable people to share their experiences concerning countries and cultures easily and rapidly. Therefore, students who have thoughts about studying abroad are primarily using online social networks and platforms (these platforms are mainly online websites in which students who study or studied abroad share their personal experiences) to gather information regarding the country which they are planning to go to. Thus, since such a flood of information reaches many people quite rapidly, these tools become way more important than information and promotion executed by countries on an institutive basis. Because information that comes directly from a person based on his/her experiences and feelings are seen much more valuable compared to information which is corporate and not based on real experiences.

To that end, this research was based on the experiences of foreign students who came from different regions/countries and were enrolled in Adnan Menderes University of Aydın, a medium-sized city in Turkey. When data regarding the level of experiencing prejudices and discriminating behaviors is evaluated, it was seen that students faced such behaviors more in their lives off than on campus. According to the region or country the students came from, it was found that students from Africa and the Middle East recorded both on and off campus experiences to a higher degree than students from other regions and countries. Both on and off campus racist behaviors is seen at very low levels. However, it can be stated that students from Africa and the Middle East experience, although at low ratios, some behaviors that can be considered to be racist. It is thought that the skin color of African students and the established cultural bias against Africans is the main result for such inconveniences. Similarly, the reason for Middle Eastern students to face such negative behaviors is being linked to recent problems of asylum seekers or refugees in Turkey. Some of the negative attitudes directed especially against Syrian refugees are also reflected in other immigrant groups coming from the Middle East, and it is possible to claim that there is a general negative attitude towards the whole region. Therefore, it is possible to claim that foreign students who come from Middle Eastern countries might face biased, prejudiced, discriminating behaviors at a larger scale compared to foreign students coming from other regions. However, despite everything, the degree of these negative behaviors towards foreign students is not very high.

In general, it was seen that foreign students choose to spend most of their time with students that come from the same country or region and, although they do not have a problem with students of the host country, they still have limited interaction and communication with them, that is, during course hours most of the time. The tendency of foreign students to spend their time with other foreign students in a foreign country could be seen as normal. However, the fact that foreign students do not go out of their immigrant network causes them to have limited interaction and communication with members of the society in which they live; hence, it weakens their connection with the society. The situation could be seen as a variable which increases the possibility of facing prejudiced and discriminatory actions. Also, from the foreign students' perspective, facing such behaviors might cause them to form closer connections with their immigrant networks and not to leave it. Therefore, there is a two-sided relationship between immigrant or migrant networks and facing discriminating behaviors. As a function of social networks, these networks are a key factor for foreign students to solve many problems that they face in their chosen society and try to survive in a new environment. Our results show that foreign students had little difficulty in adapting to the city in which they live, and this could be explained by a fact that they are a part of such an immigrant network.

Finally, it was seen that foreign students who come from different regions/countries of the world have generally a positive impression of Turkey, and their experiences were optimistic regarding the country and their studies. The limited amount of prejudiced, discriminating actions or statements that were faced by foreign students did not affect their impressions or feelings about Turkey. But it can be stated that students coming from Europe/Balkans, Europe/Other, Asia and Africa had generally a more positive attitude compared to that of students coming from the Middle East and South Caucasia.

The assumption that positive impressions and experiences of foreign students may have an effect on students who are coming or are planning to come to Turkey is important. The tendency of foreign student migration to study in Turkey will gradually increase because, internationalization of education, growth of mass communication and transportation, increasing density of relations between pioneer student immigrants and potential student immigrants, will all have an increasing effect on speed and sustainability of immigration for educational purposes. With many negative and positive functions, immigrant networks are an important social mechanism that increases the desire of people to migrate, speed of migration and sustainability of migration. This can be seen clearly in the increased number of foreign students in recent years that are enrolled at universities in Turkey. Therefore, data of the research proves that, based on the example of Aydın Adnan Menderes University, foreign student migration to universities located in medium-sized cities will increase over time, can gain sustainability and frequency and will boost the student profile to be more cosmopolitan in future.

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