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INTERNATIONALIZATION POLICIES OF TURKEY'S HIGHER EDUCATION AREA A RESEARCH ON TURKEY GRADUATES

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Abstract

The higher education which had elitist qualities until the 1950's has entered into a massification process under the influence of globalization. And with this momentum from elite education towards mass education, the higher education entered into an internationalization process during the times when the Cold War ended and thus began to transform into one of the most global phenomenon of the 21st century. Naturally, the neoliberal policies of the 1980's were what accelerated that momentum the most. The globalization race also escalated during those years and since then, serious steps have been taken towards the marketing of information in the field of higher education and, to that end, new education models have started to be produced.

With the global markets promoting financial power, new and highly effective inventions in technology and the introductory influence of the media, some countries have been able to create more appealing educational opportunities in the massification process of their higher education infrastructures. Consequently, a movement of migration towards those countries with better higher education institutions has begun. These developments have also transformed higher education into an organ of public diplomacy. In fact, certain countries, more particularly developed ones, started studies on how to strategically plan and maintain supporting their foreign policies by their graduate international students.

Surely, student mobility is usually from developing countries to those developed countries. However, developing countries have also joined this process and they have gravitated towards new structurings. As a country which has been sending students to developed countries and receiving students from developing ones for many years, Republic of Turkey is also trying to have a strong part in this process. The interest in Turkish universities started in the 1960's with international agreements and has gained acceleration since the 1990's with the raising interest from students from the Balkans and the Central Asia. It has been concluded that the historical, cultural, religious and linguistic bonds have been quite effective on this rise of interest.

"Türkiye Scholarships" that were founded in line with the afore-mentioned purposes has also started to become a brand. And this study is based on a research study conducted with the aim of testing the potency of this brand. This study focuses on Kyrgyzstan citizens that had studied in Turkey by means of Türkiye Scholarships. By presenting their structural qualities as well as identifying the levels of their relations with Turkey after graduation on the basis of quantitative and descriptive analysis, this study aims to determine -within the framework of this sampling-how successful Türkiye Scholarships has been in reaching its targets.

Keywords: Internationalization of Higher Education, Public Diplomacy, Educational Diplomacy, Student Mobility, Turkey Scholarships, Kyrgyzstan.

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