

The Security Needs of International Students: An Analysis in Terms of the Securitization Theory*

Uluslararası Öğrencilerin Güvenlik İhtiyaçları: Güvenlikleştirme Teorisi Açısından Bir Değerlendirme

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Abstract

International students, who play a significant role in the internationalization of higher education, need a secure area in the host country, which is especially important for international students in higher education. In some states, these students are considered a potential threat to national security and subject to various inequalities of opportunity, however, ironically, the states do not adequately address the higher education policies regarding the security needs of international students. This study aimed to discuss factors that affect the higher education mobility process of international students based on securitization and analyze the security needs of these students in terms of the conceptual framework. As a result of the study, the findings regarding the military, political, economic, societal and environmental security needs of international students were revealed and all relevant education actors were invited to be questioned.

Key Words: International students, higher education, mobility, securitization.

Öz

Yüksek öğretimin uluslararasılaşmasında önemli rol oynayan uluslararası öğrenciler, ev sahibi ülkede güvenli bir alan ihtiyacı duymaktadır. Bu, yüksek öğretimde eğitim görmek isteyen uluslararası öğrenciler açısından önemli bir durum arz etmektedir. Bazı devletlerce uluslararası öğrenciler, ulusal güvenliği tehdit eden bir öteki olarak adlandırılmakta ve bu öğrencilerin çeşitli fırsat eşitsizliklerine maruz kalmaktadır. İronik bir şekilde, devletler bu öğrencilerin güvenlik ihtiyaçlarına ilişkin yüksek öğretim politikalarına yeterince yer vermemektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, yüksek öğretimde uluslararası öğrencilerin hareketlilik sürecini etkileyen unsurların güvenlikleştirme teorisi bağlamında tartışılarak, öğrencilerin güvenlik ihtiyaçlarını teorik çerçevede analiz etmektir. Çalışma sonucunda uluslararası öğrencilerin askeri, siyasi, ekonomik, toplumsal ve çevresel güvenlik ihtiyaçlarına yönelik bulgular ortaya konmuş ve ilgili tüm eğitim aktörleri sorgulanmaya davet edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Uluslararası öğrenciler, yükseköğretim, hareketlilik, güvenlikleştirme.

Introduction

Globalization is a fundamental dynamic of the migration concept because it is a driving force in realizing the migration intent of individuals. After con-

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sidering the impacts of technological developments in the communication field on migration during the 1970s, the corresponding situation became clearer.¹ This technological development allowed communication among immigrants to spread over various geographical regions, which began to be viewed as social capital. On the other hand, the proliferation of information technology and computer systems was key to reducing the entire world into a small village; however, the closely associated processes of globalization and the reformation of political and military power relations since the end of the Cold War began to correspond to a contemporary change—the new great transformation.² During this process, the need for education, in particular, rapidly increased.³

Globalization is a conceptual integration that cannot be considered separately from education.⁴ From their establishment, various universities have attempted to construct a dynamic structure that can respond to the diverse academic, social, and cultural needs of their students. The higher education reformation movements since the 1980s have accelerated this effort; therefore, globalization has had a larger impact on higher education reforms and supported student mobility since the second half of the 20th century.⁵ Globalization is a significant factor in students being able to attend higher education in other countries. Students are allowed to visit higher education institutions in other countries temporarily or throughout their education; however, there are certain risks for students in developing countries, such as gaps in formal education, low-quality and out-of-date educational programs and educators, and educational institutions without valid certificate/diploma.⁶

For students who play a key role in the internationalization of higher education, the need for a security area in the host country has become important in recent years⁷; however, the issues related to this security are rarely mentioned in national laws. Higher education policies do not include

- 1 Didem Daniş, “Küreselleşme Çağında Ulusötesi Göç ve Ulus Devlet”, *Küreselleşme ve Demokrasi: Küreselleşmenin Farklı Yüzleri*, Ö. Adadağ and C. Yıldızcan (Ed.), Dipnot Yayınları, İstanbul, 2011, pp. 271-273.
- 2 Stephen Castles, “Understanding Global Migration: A Social Transformation Perspective”, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 36, Issue 10, 2010, p. 1576.
- 3 Mahmut Tezcan, “Küreselleşmenin Eğitimsel Boyutu”, TED, *Eğitim Araştırmaları*, Vol. 6, 2002, p. 55.
- 4 Anthony Giddens, *Elimizden Kaçıp Giden Dünya: Küreselleşme Hayatımızı Nasıl Yeniden Şekillendiriyor*, Osman Akınhay (Çev.), Alfa Yayınları, İstanbul, 2000.
- 5 Stephen Wilkins, Melodena S. Balakrishnan and Jeroen Huisman, “Student Choice in Higher Education: Motivations for Choosing to Study at an International Branch Campus”, *Journal of Studies in International Education*, Vol. 16, No. 5, 2012.
- 6 Ozan Coşkunserçe, “Uluslararası Öğrencilerin Kültürel Uyum Sürecine Yönelik Bir Çevrimiçi Oryantasyon Uygulamasının Geliştirilmesi ve Etkililiğinin İncelenmesi”, Doctoral Dissertation, Ankara University, Ankara, 2014, p. 2.
- 7 Gülşah Taşçı, “The Impact of COVID-19 on Higher Education: Rethinking Internationalization Behind the Iceberg”, *International Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 2021.

addressing the security needs of these students. Thus, the aim of the study was to describe the conceptual framework related to security issues that were experienced by international students during higher education mobility. The factors affecting the security needs of international students are related to military, political, economic, societal and environmental dimensions. In this context, the method of documentary review was adopted, the related studies were associated, and the findings were synthesized. Securitization theory is selected within the context of international students based on the qualitative research method and is discussed with a critical view in the final section of this paper. The study has helped current recommendations, contributed to the determination of needs for the research, supported studies in the literature, and raised awareness of the international students.

Security, Securitization, and Security Perception

Security is a framework concept that differs according to national and international organizations that are concerned with international relations (IR) and aims to meet the needs of the environment in which individuals live. The concept of security is built on taking precautions for a threat and the perspective of defense. It contains interaction among the security of individuals, society, state, and international groups within the region.⁸ The concept of security is related to an emotion, perception, or policy, and because it is far from self-explanatory, the terms “threat” and “interest” are used as the dichotomy of security. The interests that shape national security policies determine the general strategies followed in foreign policy and related to the existence of the state. National interests also subordinate the interests of individuals, groups, or subnational organizations.⁹ Therefore, critical threats to security are primarily considered among the policy issues related to outside world perceptions because the perception of a threat to interests can be based on reality or can be securitized.¹⁰

From the securitization perspective, security is the ability to take action against a threat when faced with it. Insecurity, then, is the inability to act when faced with a threat. Not being a subject of security is the absence of any present threat. That is, “desecuritization”.¹¹ If an issue can be removed from the political arena and to a position that requires urgent measures, it can be reinstated and considered for desecuritization.¹² This securitization

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- 8 Beril Dedeoğlu, *Uluslararası Güvenlik ve Strateji*, Derin Yayınları, İstanbul, 2008, pp. 21-24.
- 9 Arnold Wolfers, “National Security as an Ambiguous Symbol”, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 67, No. 4, 1952.
- 10 Ralf Emmers, “Securitisation”, *Contemporary Security Studies*, Alan Collins (ed.), Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010.
- 11 Ole Wæver, “Securitisation and Desecuritisation”, *on Security*, Ronnie D. Lipschutz (Ed.), Columbia University Press, New York, 1995, p. 56.
- 12 Paul Roe, “Societal Security”, *Contemporary Security Studies*, Alan Collins (Ed.), Oxford University Press, 2016, pp. 215-220.

approach, put forward by Copenhagen School¹³ scholars, has brought a new perspective to security studies.

The Copenhagen School's adaptation of the securitization theory for the five sectors in which the security of human communities is affected is one of the most important contributions to security studies. To examine security based on the sector, the special relationship types among sectors must be defined and their interactions revealed. These sectors are related to military, political, economic, social, and environmental security. The military sector bases its relations on force and defense; the political sector has authority, management status, and relations to recognition; the economic sector contains trade, production, and financial relations; the social sector examines the relationships related to identity, and the environmental sector examines the relationships between human activities and the planet's biosphere.¹⁴

Concept of Security

Security is a concept that is difficult to describe, identify, and understand. There is no consensus on the definition of, and how to conceptualize security and the definition of security. Thus, it remains unclear whether security is a problem area, goal, discipline, or research method. Security could be categorized into various sub-dimensions, such as national security, international security, and human security, and each dimension would lead to a historical and philosophical discussion; therefore, security is a debatable concept that remains undefined.¹⁵ Security is sometimes defined as a state of being sure of anxiety and worry, without risk or worry in general,¹⁶ and as a fundamental concept that sometimes corresponds to the general framework and dimensions in social sciences and changes within individuals, subjects, and social customs and that adapts to historical conditions.¹⁷ Within this context, it is sufficient to address the following questions: whose security should be prioritized and should security of states, social groups, or individuals be prioritized? Naturally, the security politics of each state, social group, or individual depends on political, societal, cultural, and ideological ideas, or is shaped by these dimensions.

- 13 The Copenhagen School is a group of security scholars led by Buzan and Wæver, as well as Jaap de Wilde, Morten Kelstrup, Pierre Lemaitre, and Elzbieta Tromer, all working at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Research in Copenhagen. McSweeney first gave this school its name; this name was then adopted by both the members of the group and the academic circles. Başar Baysal and Çağla Lüleci, "Kopenhag Okulu ve Güvenlikte Teorisi", *Journal of Security Strategies*, Vol. 11, 2015, p. 70.
- 14 Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, Lynne Rienner, 1998, p. 7.
- 15 Walter B. Gallie, "Essentially Contested Concepts", *Philosophy and Historical Understanding*, Walter B. Gallie (Ed.), Chatto & Windus, London, 1964, p. 158.
- 16 Czeslaw Mesjasz, "Security as an Analytical Concept", *Paper presented at the 5th Pan-European Conference on International Relations*, in the Hague, Cracow University of Economics, 9-11 September 2004, Cracow, Poland, p. 4.
- 17 Hans G. Brauch, "Güvenliğin Yeniden Kavramsallaştırılması: Barış, Güvenlik, Kalkınma ve Çevre Kavramsal Dörtlüsü", *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol. 5, No. 18, 2008, p. 2.

Arnold Wolfers initially analyzed security and described it as the presence or lack of threats against acquired values or fears about the existence of these threats. Wolfers has stated that the concept of security should include specifying the factors through which threats aim at what values, by which means, and at what cost will be eliminated.¹⁸ David A. Baldwin, referring to Wolfers, has stated that security could be defined using answers to questions of security for whom and for which values, and has considered security to be a concept that could easily be confused and one that was not adequately disclosed rather than being polemic. Baldwin orders the seven elements to be considered in the security definition as follows: security for whom and for which values, against which threats, by what means, at what cost, for how long, and to what extent. Baldwin has stated that it is not necessary to answer all of these questions in the definition of security, but it is essential to give absolute references to these threats, subjects, values, and levels of security.¹⁹

According to Barry Buzan, security is an intangible concept open to debate, as is love, freedom, and power. Security should be considered a task of liberation from threats and the ability of states, societies, and individuals to protect their independent identity and functional integrity from the changes that they consider hostile.²⁰ Bill McSweeney has identified security as a concept that resists definition, but could be associated with other concepts, such as peace, honor, and justice.²¹ Ole Wæver has indicated that security is a field in which states threaten one another, try to dominate others, protect their identity, and establish independence. Security indicates the presence of a threat and the specific measures against that threat, while insecurity indicates the presence of a security threat and the lack of adequate measures against that threat.²² Because security is idealized by several states as national security, the authorities try to use threats for domestic political purposes and to limit the democratic space by restrictions or controls; however, the aim of politics is the maintenance of regulations without an emphasis on extraordinary special threats.²³

The end of the Cold War period directly affected security studies and provided new approaches. With the end of the bipolar world, efforts to expand security studies that started earlier gained momentum.²⁴ The new security environment after the Cold War has led to an increase in the number

18 Wolfers, 1952, pp. 481-485.

19 David A. Baldwin, "The Concept of Security", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 1, 1997, pp. 13-14.

20 Barry Buzan, "New Patterns of Global Security in the Twenty-First Century", *International Affairs*, Vol. 67, No. 3, 1991, p. 432.

21 Bill Mcsweeney, *Security, Identity and Interests: A Sociology of International Relations*, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 13.

22 Wæver, 1995, p. 7.

23 Buzan et al, 1998.

24 Pınar Bilgin, "Güvenlik Çalışmalarında Yeni Açılımlar: Yeni Güvenlik Çalışmaları", *Stratejik Araştırmalar*, Vol. 8, No. 14, January 2010, 73-75.

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of approaches that have aimed to re-analyze the security concept in academic studies.²⁵ This environment has led to an emphasis on the securitization theory that has considered the concept of security as a comprehensive array of threats and expanded the concept to include new issues in security studies.

The Securitization Theory

Securitization was first introduced in the article “Securitization and De-securitization” published in 1995 by Wæver and was discussed in detail in *Security: A New Framework in Analysis* published in 1998 by Buzan, Wæver, and de Wild, the members of the Copenhagen School. Securitization was then mentioned by other Copenhagen scholars and established as the main framework of the school based on a basic hypothesis.²⁶ The factor behind the transformation of IR into a security issue is the basis of the securitization process. According to this view, security issues hinder political order and require spending maximum efforts against threats because they rapidly and significantly threaten national independence.²⁷ To identify an issue as a security threat, it should be defined by the authorized powers as one that aims at the existence of a subject and necessitate immediate measures outside regular political processes.²⁸ In other words, when an issue is declared a security threat by governing elites, it becomes such, and the authorities would use this tool for their interest.²⁹

The Copenhagen School attempted to construct security based on society using these different approaches and to assure legitimacy through the persuasion of the masses on national security policies. The school also expanded the securitization perspective and revised the theory based on security rhetoric, such as the regional security complex and sectoral analysis. Buzan, a Copenhagen scholar, has conducted an analysis of the concept of expanded security. According to Buzan, there are several theoretical discussions and unresolved debates on the meaning of security.³⁰ The expanded security approach has suggested that national security could not be only an outcome of military strategies but should be supported by large masses.³¹ In this context, the School questioned nonmilitary threats and the state-cen-

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- 25 Bilal Karabulut, “Küreselleşme Sürecinde Güvenlik Alanında Değişimler: Karadeniz’in Güvenliğini Yeniden Düşünmek”, *Karadeniz Araştırmaları*, Vol. 6, No. 23, Autumn 2009, p. 2.
- 26 Sinem Akgül-Açıkmeşe, “Algı mı, Söylem mi? Kopenhag Okulu ve Yeni Klasik Gerçekçilikte Güvenlik Tehditleri”, *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol. 8, No. 30, 2011, p. 48.
- 27 Barry Buzan, “Rethinking Security After the Cold War”, *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 32, No. 1, 1997, p. 5-8.
- 28 Sinem Akgül-Açıkmeşe, “Güvenlik, Güvenlik Çalışmaları ve Güvenlikleştirme”, *Küresel Siyasete Giriş: Uluslararası İlişkilerde Kavramlar, Teoriler, Süreçler*, Evren Balta (Ed.), İletişim, İstanbul, 2021, p. 242.
- 29 Wæver, 1995.
- 30 Buzan, 1997, p. 7.
- 31 Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations*, Harvester Books, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, Brighton, 1983.

tered security approach and brought an approach that includes a broad understanding of security (individuals, social groups, states, and even all humanity) to the agenda. Although the mainstream security view ignores the reference objects, this perspective necessitated focusing on new reference objects in security studies.³²

The Copenhagen School positioned itself in the middle between traditional state-based security studies and post-structuralist security studies; however, it argued that the concept should not be limited to state-based military security. On the other hand, it cautioned that not everything that threatens the existence and condition of individuals can be considered a security problem.³³ In securitization, a socially constructed understanding of a threat through “discourse” is a valid approach. The more effectively the discourse shapes the permeability between subjects, the easier for an issue to be first brought to the center of the political field and then securitized as an existential threat.³⁴

The most significant contribution of the Copenhagen School to security was the application of the interactions among the five sectors that influence the security of society to the securitization theory. These security approaches are interrelated and should be analyzed individually and based on their correlations. The Copenhagen School created a functional, sectoral framework of analysis and focused on security within the military, political, economic, social, and environmental sectors. In other words, the securitization theory employed five sectors. The security sectors were lenses that highlighted a certain dimension of interactions and relationships among all units of the corresponding sector. These sectors are not present empirically. However, they are beneficial in the research as analytical tools to simplify concepts.³⁵ From the point of view of this study, we can say the same for securitization of international students in higher education.

The military sector deals with attacks from other nations, defense capacity, and the interaction of mutual perceptions of the states and focuses on power-based relationships for international students. The reference point of the political sector is the sovereignty of a state; however, nongovernmental organizations could serve to the students as a reference point of the political sector. The economic sector focuses on the issues that are necessary to access resources, finance, and markets that would serve state to reach acceptable prosperity and power for these students. The societal sector determines a consensus that stipulates threats to international students, the reference

32 Jef Huysmans, “Revisiting Copenhagen: Or, On the Creative Development of a Security Studies Agenda in Europe”, *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 4, No. 4, 1998, p. 487.

33 Akgül-Açıkmeşe, 2011, p. 66.

34 Michael C. Williams, “Modernity, Identity and Security: A Comment on the Copenhagen Controversy”, *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 3, 1998, p. 435.

35 Wæver, O. “Securitising Sectors? Reply to Eriksson”, *Cooperation and Conflict*, 34 (3), 1999, p. 334; Buzan et al, 1998, pp. 7-8, 368.

to which is the belongingness and loyalty of the masses. The environmental sector is concerned with the relationship between human activities and the environment for the students in higher education. This securitization approach is possible using a selective perspective through these sectors to draw a picture of only a particular dimension and relationships among specific units of interaction for international students.³⁶

The Security Needs of International Students in Higher Education Mobility

International students are those who have enrolled in higher education (undergraduate / graduate) outside their country of residence.³⁷ An increasing number of international students travel to other states for higher education. However, the international student mobility decreased due to the COVID-19 pandemic when compared to the previous academic years. Thus, various factors could affect the mobility decisions and motivations of these students.³⁸

International students immigrate to different countries temporarily or permanently for various reasons, such as better educational and employment opportunities; however, this immigration for academic reasons brings with it various psychological and sociological problems, like cultural differences and communication difficulties.³⁹ Each student brings his/her culture and habits arising from that culture to the relevant new educational environment. Living within a different culture, even for short-term education, can cause many changes in life of every student; therefore, students might experience culture shock, which is common, especially for international students encountering a new culture for the first time. However, past experiences before encountering other cultures can significantly reduce the shock of a new culture.⁴⁰ Thus, students live through a process by which to adapt to this new culture.

The studies from the literature on international students have focused on their cultural experiences and adaptation in host countries. Unfortunately, there are very few studies on the security of international students; however, the security risks that emerged after the Cold War political developments remain prevalent. For example, several security issues, such as the nuclear conflict in the Korean peninsula and the risk of military conflicts in the South China Seas in Asia, prevail, which affects international students, albeit indirectly and temporarily.⁴¹ This situation has affected the country

36 Buzan, 1983, p. 30.

37 Migration Data Portal, 2018. <https://www.migrationdataportal.org/>

38 Taşçı, 2021.

39 Betül Dilara Şeker and Emine Akman, "Uluslararası Öğrencilerin Psikolojik ve Sosyo-Kültürel Süreçleri", *Çukurova Medical Journal*, Vol. 41, No. 3, 2016, pp. 504-505.

40 Melanie Dunkley, "What Students Are Actually Learning on Study Abroad and How to Improve The Learning Experience", Faculty of Science, University of Melbourne, Australia, 2009, [Online], Retrieved on 28-April-2022, at URL: http://proceedings.com.au/isana2009/PDF/paper_Dunkley.pdf.

41 Hylke Dijkstra, Petar Petrov and Esther Versluis, "Governing Risks in International Secu-

preferences of the students as it affects their security perception in case of war between countries. Also, Marginson et al. conducted one of the comprehensive studies that focused on the security issues and studied the security and welfare of international students, which made a significant contribution to the literature. The scholars have described the security of international students as self-determination and sustenance of a stable capacity for human ability and emphasized the significance of moral philosophy (based on Amartya Sen) and global moral–political discourses and institutions (those associated with the UN). In their study, the researchers have discussed the experiences and vulnerabilities of the students from a human rights perspective. Also, in a study based on the concepts of societal and economic security, have stated the development of policies that support the rights of these students. For example, cultural shock could become a threat to individual security or values.⁴²

Without societal security, there is no individual security. Because “belongingness” is one of the most important resources of security, it would be reasonable to presume that commitment to the family or cultural values is part of the requirement for belongingness. In particular, the issues associated with the sense of belonging and security are among the most significant problems that international students face in mobility. There are also those who approached the security needs of international students based on mobility and argued that student security is a responsibility shared by the four parties—host country, institution, parents, and students. Thus, security is a concept that is difficult to understand with different comments. A social life without security would be both meaningless and relatively dangerous, which is why security indicates both the presence of a security threat and measures against that threat.⁴³

Despite the expansion of the concept of security to include political, societal, environmental, and economic issues that determine the well-being of international students, it remains undefined in most disciplines and has not been addressed for international students in the literature. Because the security of international students affects the direction and content of their mobility, this topic deserves analysis based on various viewpoints. The mobility of international students is associated with those students. The impact of the concept of security overlapping with the decisions of international students in choosing a country is demonstrated in various studies. International students experience cultural and social problems in the host countries that national studies rarely encounter.⁴⁴For the securitization process to run, in-

ity”, *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 39, No. 4, 2018.

42 Simon Marginson, Chris Nyland, Erlenawati Sawir, and Helen Forbes-Mewett, *International Student Security*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2010, p. 60.

43 Kevin Clements, *Toward a Sociology of Security* (Working Paper 90-4), University of Colorado, Boulder, 1990, p. 2.

44 Christabel Zhang, James Sillitoe, and Janis Webb, “Positive Model: Facilitating Cultural

ternational students who accept securitization and are the “audience” must consent to the measures taken by the governments (host countries), known as securitizing actors, on behalf of the values (e.g. accommodation, identity, and social rights) protected as the “reference object” and whose security is stated to be in danger.

Securitization of International Students

The Copenhagen School has defined securitization as a successful speech act in which an inter-subjective understanding is built and recognized as an existential threat of a valued subject in a political community and allows the call for urgent and extraordinary measures against this threat.⁴⁵ Securitization has a discourse assumption that uses approaches from language theory; however, it has developed a speech act perspective with its characteristics by using political theory and social constructivism. Nothing absent in the discourse can be considered a threat. Securitization is as much a decisive factor in the emergence of threats as it is in the extent of the threats.⁴⁶ Securitization is a political and social action; hence, it requires compatibility under several conditions. Even if the discourse takes place with words, the securitization may not be realized. The purpose of securitization studies is to explain who did the securitization (actor), on what issues (threats), on whose behalf (reference object); why; the results it produced; under what conditions it was done; and whether it was successful.⁴⁷

Presenting something as an existential threat to a reference object (the object whose security is under threat) is insufficient to securitize the discourse. This is just one securitization step. A security problem can be spoken of only as securitization if the audience accepts it as a security problem. In other words, to enable securitization, the receptor community should be persuaded by the state that is being presented as an existential threat. When the issue is seen as a security problem, and when the audience considers the presentations of the securitizing actor to be sufficiently threatening, there must be consent to the use of extraordinary measures to overcome it.⁴⁸ For the securitization process to run, the necessary criteria are as follows: a securitizing actor (state/government), an object of reference whose security is stated to be in danger (protected value), and a receptive audience (people/nation) that will accept that the securitization.⁴⁹ The consent of the audience regarding the extraordinary measures to be taken on the corresponding issue

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Diversity in the First-Year International Business Students' Learning at Victoria University”, *Paper presented at the 18th IDP Australian International Education Conference*, October 5-8, 2004, Sydney, Australia, 2004.

45 Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003, p. 491.

46 Akgül-Açıkmeşe, 2011, p. 59-60.

47 Buzan et al, 1998, p. 32.

48 Buzan et al, 1998, p. 25.

49 Buzan et al, 1998, pp. 40-41.

is crucial.⁵⁰

Threat perception is a social construct based on discourse and is crucial in securitization. The effectiveness of discourse that shapes the intersubjective permeability would allow the centralization of an issue in the political domain and then would be securitized as an existential threat.⁵¹ In securitization, the actor (state/government), a reference object, the security of which is claimed to be threatened, and a receiving mass that accepts securitization (nation/people) are required for international students. It is of utmost importance that the receiving mass (i.e., society) would accept extraordinary measures to prevent threats. The reference object for international students in the securitization process is generally identity. Security issues, such as migration mobility, are considered a threat because it has been considered to harm national or transnational identity for international students.

The main originating point of securitization is identifying what makes an issue a security challenge in IR. Accordingly, because security problems are those that quickly and dramatically threaten the sovereignty or independence of a state, the protocol of the normal political order should be overridden, and maximum efforts against these threats should be allocated.⁵² According to Buzan and Wæver, the reference object focused on in the securitization process is, in general, identity. In addition, Huysmans also accepted this situation. According to him, even an issue such as immigration is considered a threat only if it is believed to eventually harm national or transnational identities, as in the case of the EU or national scale. Huysmans has stated that the concept of securitization increases the speed of people's attachment to a specific political community on the basis of the threat discourse that they emphasize.⁵³ The analysis of international students based on the views of the Copenhagen School requires an approach that includes the following five sectors of securitization: military, political, economic, societal, and environmental security. According to the sectoral approach to which the school has adapted the securitization theory, everything from A to Z is built into discourse as a security threat. The following can be considered to be security threats in the military sector: separatist, revolutionary, terrorist movements, and external threats in the classical sense; ideological threats and diplomatic nonrecognition issues in the political sector; preventing access to external resources in the economy sector; migration, integration, language, and culture change, hunger; and finally, natural disasters and human-made environmental problems that threaten humanity in the environmental sector. Even so, in all cases, the fundamental criterion for this qualification is

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50 Buzan et al, 1998, p. 36.

51 Williams, 1998, pp. 435-436.

52 Buzan, 1997, p. 13-14.

53 Jef Huysmans, "The European Union and The Securitization of Migration", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 5, 2000, pp. 751-777.

discourse.⁵⁴ The security sectors affect one another; these should be analyzed individually, and correlations among these factors should be determined to reach an outcome for international students. A holistic and critical security perspective could be achieved with this method. Thus, the discussion of security problems of international students who are mobilized as a securitized area/subject would emphasize these sectors in this study.

Military Security

According to the scholars of the Copenhagen School, the security concept contains destructive characteristics. According to Buzan et al., the definition of the security concept is easy for the traditional approaches in which security is considered equal to the military issues and power utilization; however, it is much harder for the ones considering security beyond the military sector. The efforts of military security alone could lead to security problems. For example, increasing the size of national military forces could lead to an armament race with other nations and may require new policies, such as further control of weapons. A large military capacity could encourage states to resort to military options even when it would be possible to use nonviolent means. Social groups respond to the perceived insecurity elements in two forms. The first is the transformation of the threat to the military security sector politically and potentially exposing the state to the security threat. This form of response to societal insecurity is meant to force the state to deal with the security issue and protect the threatened social group. The second is attempts by the social group alone against the threat. This form of response to societal insecurity refers to cases in which societies are forced to use nongovernmental tools for security.⁵⁵

The military dimension, which has been recently observed as mandatory internationalization, has revealed the importance of international students in military security. The most significant example is the forced migration of students from the host country Syria. The Syrian civil war forced students who wanted to attend local schools to choose more secure regions. The uprisings in the Middle East and Northern Africa, called the Arab Spring, forced students to leave countries (i.e., Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya), which provided another example of the military security dimension. In 2011, the social events in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and other countries within the region were on the global agenda. The question was who ensured the security needs of international students against military threats? Which macro policies should states have adopted for higher education institutions? Governments should be able to create solutions to the health, environment, culture, transportation, personal development, economic competition, and defense-related problems of international students. Which educational policies should be adopted by universities to improve the security of these students at the micro

54 Buzan et al, 1998, p. 7, 27.

55 Buzan et al, 1998.

level? To conduct scientific research, provide cultural diversity, and contribute to human capital development, universities should create the necessary environment in the host country.

Political Security

The most critical issue emphasized by the political security concept is the institutional stability and future of the states that have emerged after the politicization of societies, and the ideologies that states have considered as a source of legitimacy.⁵⁶ Although political security is involved in national security, it is not the focus. In other words, international relations and foreign policy affect the security of international students against political threats. International organizations, such as the UN, supranational organizations such as the EU, or nongovernmental organizations such as Amnesty International, are related to political security. The definitions of international students of international organizations, such as UNESCO, OECD, and EUROSTAT, or the reports on security needs or the activity reports of higher education institutions of states are applications related to the political security sector. In the securitization process, these practices constitute a dynamic that creates awareness of the political security of international students in the host country.

The most significant examples include the September 11, 2001 (9/11) attacks or Trump's policies regarding Muslim foreigner entry to the US. Although the number of international students in the US is constantly changing, its density continuously increased from 1954 to the 2000s among registered students; however, it is known that this situation changed because of the security practices after the 9/11 attacks; consequently, the number and density of these students has decreased.⁵⁷ This situation constitutes a crucial example in revealing the factors that determine the decision of international students in choosing a target country and the effects of the policies put forward by developed countries on these students. It was also interesting that the Trump administration's travel ban included Muslims. Such policies affected the mobility motivations and experiences of international students and led to negative feedback, and several international students experienced political security problems during that period. For example, the short-lived political crisis between Turkey and the US in 2017 affected those international students who traveled to the US.

Economic Security

Economic security is another dimension of securitization. People tend to trade for living in prosperity. This allows the implementation of reasonable economic security policies. Policymakers could use economic instruments to influence the leaders of other nations and improve the lives of people

56 Buzan et al, 1998.

57 Muhittin Sağırhı, "Eğitimin Küreselleşmesi", *Sosyal Siyaset Konferansları Dergisi*, Vol. 53, No. 1, 2007, pp. 460-461.

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throughout the world by signing mutual agreements based on individual actions and the factors behind these activities. Universities have a functional mission because they are economic tools of higher education in a world in which economic competition is the dominant discourse in an era of globalization. Hence, in the last 20 years in particular, higher education institutions have become both a playground and a player in the global economic market.⁵⁸ This transformation has made the universities a component of economic, instead of social, policy.⁵⁹ Moreover, the economic dimension of securitization would be realized with the political economy strategies by the host states within the framework of specific agreements and programs for international students who want to study at institutions of higher education.

Marginson et al. (2010) have explained the welfare of international students within the concept of societal and economic security based on in-depth interviews conducted with those students in Australia. In addition, international students in higher education have expressed that they have experienced security problems and have demanded policies that prioritized their rights. Another example of economic security is that international students from developing countries prefer developed nations, such as the US, Canada, Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, and Norway, in higher education because of the more concrete promise of a future.⁶⁰ For example, the US economic power, and technological development, have been considered a center in which scientific knowledge is produced, and its top state in the published lists in university ranking and research output has made the US the main attraction for international students. Thus, the US has become the country that has attracted the most international students for many years. In addition, Germany considers the educational expenditures of the country to be an investment in the future and provides tuition fees for international students from public resources.

Societal Security

Societal security reflects the security concerns that several states have with various ethnic minorities, and it is beneficial in understanding the relationships between the current regime and minority groups. For several states, it could be observed that the most significant threats are internal in globalization. Thus, the effects of culture and migration affect security; however, religious and secular effects may trigger other security issues.⁶¹ Factors

58 Hans de Wit, *Internationalization of Higher Education in The United States of America and Europe: A Historical, Comparative and Conceptual Analysis*, Conn: Praeger: Greenwood Press, Westport, 2002.

59 Jan Currie, Richard Deangelis, Harry de Boer, Jeroen Huisman, and Claude Lacotte, *Globalizing Practices and University Responses*, Praeger, London, 2003.

60 Marginson et al, 2010.

61 Gary Bouma, Ali Haidar, Chris Nyland, Chris and Wendy Smith, "Work, Religious Diversity and Islam", *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, Vol. 41, No. 1, 2003; Helen Forbes-Mewett, and Chris Nyland, "Cultural Diversity, Relocation, and the Security of International Students at an International University", *Journal of Studies in International*

that affect international students are attitudes and cultural differences.⁶² International student mobility increases the social roles of higher education institutions to create a secure area. How to create those areas in different cultures, the expectations of international students, the conditions, and the policies have been discussed in the host country. Thus, the issue of who will provide the secure area has changed from one nation and culture to the other. For example, individuals are responsible for their security in the US, while those in Europe accept that society is the primary source of security, and it is believed that the state should provide societal security in China. It has been suggested that the security of international students be addressed within the framework of social policies, which was especially true during the COVID-19.⁶³

On the other hand, states could ask minorities to abandon all or part of their cultural differences during the nation-building process during which the minorities are assimilated. This reveals the significance of societal security for international students in the host country. Racism against Turks in Europe is an example of societal security. Another example is the discrimination of international students because of their religious beliefs or countries of origin. Several studies on such discrimination have underlined this fact.⁶⁴ For example, a student from Turkey who wants to receive higher education in a different country could return because of ethnic discrimination. Or, as observed in recent years, international Muslim students have suffered from Islamophobia in Europe. International students frequently experience security problems associated with issues such as cultural adaptation, culture shock, discrimination, and solitude. Unfortunately, cultural differences and alienation have led to societal security problems. Within this context, societal security affects the mobility choices of international students; therefore, higher education institutions should determine how they would ensure the societal security of these students.

Environmental Security

The environment is the main contradicting field in the contemporary age in which we live. Rapidly increasing world population, unplanned industrialization and disordered urbanization, nuclear bomb trials, wars and crises, artificial fertilizers, pesticides used to increase agricultural yield, and the use of chemical agents generate more and more environmental pollution, which leads to environmental issues. The idea that environmental issues threaten

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Education, Vol. 12, 2008,

62 Yuefang Zhou, Divya Jindal-Snape, Keith Topping, and John Todman, "Theoretical Models of Culture Shock and Adaptation in International Students in Higher Education", *Studies in Higher Education*, Vol. 33, No. 1, 2008.

63 Taşçı, 2021.

64 Jenny Lee and Charles Rice, "Welcome to America? International Student Perceptions of Discrimination", *Higher Education*, Vol. 53, No. 3, 2007; Ly Tran, Huyen Bui and Varsha Devi Balakrishnan, *Forms of Racism and Discrimination Faced by International Students*, Council of International Students Australia Inc., Melbourne, 2020.

the presence of societies, the continuity of the states, and the safety of individuals have led to the emergence of the environmental security concept. Environmental security covers a broad field. Resource scarcity, climate change, drought, hurricanes, and other environmental disasters and resulting losses are among the issues faced for environmental security, and various environmental problems could have global effects. In addition, the results of environmental problems affect disputes and lead to both internal and international problems. The COVID-19 which had global effects during the last two years is one of the significant examples of environmental security because, during the pandemic, international students experienced several problems in the nations that were affected by the virus.⁶⁵ In particular, the significance of the environmental conditions was once more understood with the spread of the virus to several nations. Thus, how can the environmental security of international students be ensured? The question is important and should be answered by educational policymakers.

Higher education institutions have a critical role in the construction of societal values. While universities generally lag behind the working industry in adapting to changing environmental conditions, they have taken the initiative to apply the principles of sustainability⁶⁶ and have made sustainability a part of their higher education mission and vision. They have led the way in creating a sustainable lifestyle for society in terms of environmental, social, and economic aspects during their educational activities.⁶⁷ Hence, several universities that can be considered leaders worldwide have focused on interdisciplinary and holistic/systematic thinking and planned education related to sustainable development in the relevant departments.⁶⁸ For example, higher education institutions in some states, such as the University of Cincinnati in the US, Cambridge University in the UK, Griffith University in Australia, Umwelt-Campus Birkenfeld in Germany, Stockholm University in Sweden, and the University of Oslo in Norway, are preferred by international students because of their high educational standards and sustainable and environment-friendly green buildings.

Conclusion

- 65 Dodzi Amemado, "COVID-19: An Unexpected and Unusual Driver to Online Education", *International Higher Education*, No. 102, Special Issue, 2020; Hans de Wit and Philip Altbach, "Internationalization in Higher Education: Global Trends and Recommendations for Its Future", *Policy Reviews in Higher Education*, 2020; Laura E. Rumbley, "Coping with COVID-19: International Higher Education in Europe", The European Association for International Education (EAIE), 2020, <http://www.eaie.org/>
- 66 James Merkel and Larry H. Litten, "The Sustainability Challenge", *Advancing Sustainability in Higher Education: New Directions for Institutional Research*, Larry H. Litten and Dawn G. Terkla (Ed.), Wiley Periodicals, 134, San Francisco, 2007.
- 67 Luis Velazquez, Nora Munguia, Alberto Platt, and Jorge Taddei, "Sustainable University: What can be the Matter?", *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Vol. 14, No. 9-11, 2006,
- 68 Richard A. Fenner, Charles M. Ainger, Heather J. Cruickshank, Peter M. Guthrie, "Embedding Sustainable Development at Cambridge University Engineering Department, *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, Vol. 6, No. 3, 2005.

In recent years, because of the transformation in higher education induced by internationalization, the security areas for international students in a chosen host country have led to differences more significant than those in previous years. Thus, international students lack social citizenship rights outside their country of residence and require security areas. In the study, the factors that affect the security needs of international students in higher education are discussed based on securitization and dimensions of military, political, economic, societal, and environmental security. Within this context, the following questions could be indicated based on the study findings:

- First, which actors should ensure the military, political, economic, societal, and environmental security of international students? Here, the main actors are governments. Governments must produce solutions that rely on accurate and consistent information on the security issues of international students in environment, health, culture, transportation, personal development, economic competitiveness, and advocacy in an education-oriented atmosphere. This should produce an outlook commensurate with the quality and reliability of universities that have a functional role as higher education institutions. Governments, as they apply to their citizens, should prioritize higher education to make international students understand the *lingua franca* of the world, culture, methods to conduct work, and the working conditions better, as well as widen their horizons.

- Second, what are the liabilities of higher education institutions in ensuring the security of international students? For international higher education, which is a model that focuses on the researcher, specialist, and educational unit of the enterprises of universities, the following conditions are necessary: establishment of joint academic programs, conducting scientific research suitable for our time, sources of cultural costs, maintaining the use of human capital and disposing international property surrounding good researchers and regional and national specialists, establishing research centers, creating an environment where the security demands of international students, who are a means of transferring critical resources in terms of the high-utilization workforce, to ensure both knowledge production and economic constraint. The most functional task in this field is expected to be completed by the universities.

- Third, what should the national laws include to ensure the security of international students in the host country? Host countries should also create and regulate laws and regulations to meet the security needs of international students. Relevant laws must

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define international students, their rights and responsibilities, resources, and social state. Furthermore, within the framework of international treaties, such laws should bring forth relevant provisions, making them suitable for working within the governmental and private sectors after the end of their education. During these actions, if contributing to the country's economy and improving its reputation are pursued, the country's image will also be increased by creating brand value for the host country. Providing scholarship opportunities and creating part-time working conditions for international students could be considered among the provisions in relevant future legislation.

Given that studies on the security needs of international students are insufficient, future comprehensive studies are necessary to bridge the gap, contribute to the literature, and establish a theoretical framework because it is a much-needed requirement for international students. Furthermore, researchers and scholars should lobby and negotiate for the implementation of policies to create security areas for international students. Within this context, the following measures should be adopted to ensure the security needs of these students:

- Necessary measures should be taken for international students based on the military, political, economic, societal, and environmental dimensions of securitization. When we consider the theory of securitization with all its sectors, it has been argued that the problems of international students can be overcome within the framework of human and society-oriented cooperation and that host countries can develop only with this cooperation. That is, the national security in the host country should not be separated from political, economic, societal, and environmental factors apart from military factors. As the security sectors affect one another, a holistic and critical security domain can be obtained with this perspective in the securitization process of international students.

- Higher education policies for international students in host countries should be planned and implemented by policymakers and other authorities in the securitization process based on the mission of international higher education. The international students, a community accepting and comprehending securitization, should accept the precautions taken by the governments for the securitization process. Here, the governments are the securitizing actors, and precautions are taken for the reference objects to be protected (accommodation, identity, and social rights) because these are objects with endangered security. Thus, adapting to the conditions by analyzing the innovations worldwide regarding international students

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is necessary either by activating scientific statistical institutes that will work on this topic as necessary or by assigning a mission to an existing institution.

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