

# Nurse Migration in Newspaper Reports: The Role of Media and Its Impact on Public Opinion Over the Last Five Years

## Gazete Haberlerinde Hemşire Göçü: Son Beş Yılda Medyanın Rolü ve Kamuoyu Üzerindeki Etkiler

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### ÖZET

**Amaç:** Araştırmanın amacı, hemşirelikte göç kavramına ilişkin ulusal gazetelere yansıyan haberlerin retrospektif olarak incelenmesidir. **Yöntem:** Bu araştırma 01.01.2020-01.08.2024 tarihleri arasında online olarak yayınlanan ve 2023 yılı tirajı (net.satış) en yüksek olan beş gazetede 'hemşirelik ve göç' ile ilgili haberler incelenmiştir. Bu gazeteler sırası ile Sözcü, Hürriyet, Sabah, Milliyet ve Posta'dır. Gazetelerin internet adreslerindeki arşivlerine ulaşılarak "hemşirelerde göç, hemşire göçü, hemşire beyin göçü, yurt dışına hemşire göçü, yurt dışına hemşire transferi" anahtar kelimeleri ile tarama yapıldı. Araştırmanın evrenini, belirlenmiş tarihler arasında beş gazetede yer alan tüm hemşirelik haberleri oluştururken; örneklemini ise hemşirelik ve göç konulu 7 haber oluşturdu. Veriler, araştırmacılar tarafından ilgili literatürden edinilen bilgiler temel alınarak geliştirilmiş sekiz soruluk bir içerik analizi yönergesi aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Haberlerin türü, duygusal tonu (okuyucular üzerinde olumlu ya da olumsuz etkiler), kaynağı, içeriği, kamu üzerindeki etkisi, fotoğrafların varlığı, fotoğrafların konuya uygunluğu ve haberin ana konusu gibi yönleri analiz edilmiştir. Elde edilen nicel veriler sayı ve yüzde ile, nitel veriler ise tematik analiz yapılarak değerlendirilmiştir. **Bulgular:** Araştırma kapsamında değerlendirilen haberlerin %42,8'inin Hürriyet Gazetesi'nde yer aldığı, %57,1'inin haber tipinin göç politikası ve ekonomi haberleri olduğu, %42,8'inin haber duygu tonunun olumsuz olduğu, tamamının haber kaynağının ajanslar ve muhabirler olduğu, %71,4'ünün haber içeriğinin bilimsel olmadığı, %85,7'sinin kamuoyu üzerinde bilgilendirici etkisi bulunduğu, %85,7'sinde fotoğraf yer aldığı ve bu fotoğrafların tamamının konu ilgili olduğu, haberlerin konu başlıklarının %71,4'ünün Almanya'nın göçmen kalifiye çalışan talebi ile ilgili olduğu belirlendi. Tematik analiz sonucunda; göç durum tespiti, göçmen hemşire talebi ve teşvik politikaları ile göçmen hemşirenin hayvan sevgisi ana temaları saptandı. **Sonuç:** Son beş yılda hemşirelik ve göç konusunun gazete haberlerinde sınırlı sayıda yer aldığı, haberlerin hemşirelerin yurt dışına göçme durumları, göçmen hemşire talebi ve teşvik politikalarına ilişkin kamuoyunu bilgilendirici nitelikte olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Gazete haberler; göç; haber; hemşire; hemşire göçü

### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** This study aims to retrospectively analyze how the concept of nurse migration is represented in national newspaper reports. **Methods:** The study included online news articles published between January 1, 2020, and August 1, 2024, in the digital archives of the five highest-circulation newspapers (Sözcü, Hürriyet, Sabah, Milliyet, and Posta) in 2023. The internet archive search for these newspaper articles was conducted virtually between June 1, 2024, and August 1, 2024. The archives were searched using keywords such as "nurse migration," "nursing brain drain," "migration of nurses abroad," and "international transfer of nurses." The study sample consists of all nursing-related news in these newspapers over the specified period, with seven articles specifically addressing nursing and migration. Data were collected through an eight-question content analysis guideline, developed by the researchers based on insights from the relevant literature, to analyze aspects of the articles such as the type of news, emotional tone (positive or negative impact on readers), source, content, public impact, the presence of photographs, relevance of photographs to the topic, and the main article subject. Quantitative data were assessed by frequency and percentage, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. **Results:** Findings reveal that 42.8% of the articles were published in Hürriyet, with 57.1% classified under migration policy and economic news, and 42.8% exhibiting a negative emotional tone. All articles were sourced from agencies and journalists, with 71.4% lacking scientific basis. The study found that 85.7% of the articles were informative to the public, 85.7% contained relevant photographs, and 71.4% of titles referenced Germany's demand for skilled immigrant workers. The thematic analysis highlighted major themes, including the assessment of migration status, demand for migrant nurses, incentive policies, and expressions of migrant nurses' affection for animals. **Conclusion:** The study concludes that coverage of nursing and migration has been limited in newspapers over the past five years. Generally, these articles aim to inform the public about nurse migration, demand for migrant nurses, and policies encouraging such migration. **Keywords:** Migration; news; newspaper reports; nurse; nurse migration

## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the international migration of nurses from developing countries to developed countries has been increasing. Nurse migration constitutes one-third of international labor migration (1,2,3). A 2020 report by the World Health Organization identifies the primary factors influencing nurses; migration decisions as better job opportunities, higher salary levels, improved working conditions, and family opportunities. In contrast, discouraging factors include the lack of job opportunities in source countries, poor working conditions, and negative work environments (3,4,5).

The media plays a significant role in influencing nurse migration through health communication and the dissemination of information. Mass media helps disseminate information about the nursing profession internationally, assisting nurses in evaluating job opportunities abroad. By sharing news and personal experiences related to nurse migration, the media increases awareness in this area and highlights the attractiveness of the profession. Additionally, information provided through the media enhances the public's, especially nurses', understanding of health systems, working conditions, and living standards abroad (5,6). This information is a key factor in nurses' decisions to migrate. Moreover, media coverage allows for the sharing of both positive and negative experiences of migrating nurses, enabling potential migrants to gain more insight into the process. Thus, the media functions both as an informative tool and as a means to enhance the international visibility of the nursing profession, thereby shaping the dynamics of nurse migration (6,7,8).

A review of the literature on this subject indicates that while nurse migration has been increasingly addressed in recent years, studies examining its impact on public opinion from a media perspective remain limited. In response to this gap, the current study aims to retrospectively examine how news coverage in national newspapers has shaped public opinion on the concept of migration in nursing.

## MATERIAL AND METHOD

### Research Questions

1. What is the number of news articles on nurse migration in newspapers over the past five years?
2. What is the content of news articles on nurse migration in newspapers over the past five years?
3. What themes are presented in news articles on nurse migration in newspapers over the past five years?
4. What is the impact of the content of news articles on nurse migration in newspapers on public opinion?

### Research Design

This research is a descriptive study conducted in a retrospective design, examining news related to 'nursing and migration' in the five newspapers with the highest circulation in 2023 over the past five years.

### Location and Time of the Research

The internet archive search of newspaper articles was conducted virtually between June 1, 2024, and August 1, 2024.

### Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study consists of nursing-related news in the five newspapers with the highest circulation in 2023 (Sözcü, Hürriyet, Sabah, Milliyet, and Posta). The sample includes seven news articles on 'nursing and migration' that meet the inclusion criteria (published between 2021-2024).

### Inclusion Criteria

- News articles in the internet archives of Sözcü, Hürriyet, Sabah, Milliyet, and Posta newspapers
- Published between 2020-2024

- Containing terms such as ‘nurse migration, nurse brain drain, migration of nurses abroad, transfer of nurses abroad’ in the title or content

### **Exclusion Criteria**

News articles that did not specifically address nurse migration or lacked relevance to the study’s focus were excluded from the analysis.

### **Data Collection**

A content analysis guideline prepared by the researchers based on the literature was used in the study (10,11,12,13). The analyzed news articles were examined under the headings of the type of news, the tone of the news, the source of the news, the content of the news, the impact of the news on public opinion, the presence of photographs in the news, the relevance of the photographs to the topic, and the subject of the news. The study applied thematic analysis as a phase of content analysis, which allowed the researchers to identify and categorize key themes in the news content systematically. The thematic analysis, in this context, also supported descriptive analysis by providing a structured understanding of the narratives and patterns within the articles.

### **Data Evaluation**

Quantitative data obtained from the study were evaluated using numbers and percentages, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The newspaper archives are web-based and accessible to researchers. Since the news shared in these archives was used, ethical approval was not required.

### **Limitations of the Research**

The study included online news articles published between January 1, 2020, and August 1, 2024, in the internet archives of the five newspapers with the highest circulation in 2023. The study is limited by the small number of news articles (seven) that met the inclusion criteria. This limitation reflects the narrow scope of national media coverage on nursing migration during the study period. Additionally, the inclusion criteria, which required articles to explicitly address both "nursing" and "migration," restricted the sample size. However, despite the small number of articles, they provide a focused and systematic analysis of how nursing migration has been portrayed in the media.

### **FINDING**

The study included a total of seven news articles that met the research criteria: two from Sözcü Newspaper, three from Hürriyet Newspaper, and one each from Sabah and Posta Newspapers (Table 1). It was found that 42.8% of the news evaluated were in Hürriyet Newspaper, 57.1% were from 2024, 57.1% were current news, 42.8% had a negative tone, all were sourced from agencies and reporters, 71.4% were not scientific, 85.7% included photographs, and all photographs were relevant to the topic, and 85.7% had an informative impact on public opinion (Table 2)

The thematic analysis of the news content resulted in three main themes (Table 3):

- The love of animals by migrant nurses: This theme emerged from one article in which a migrant nurse's emotional bond with animals in the host country was highlighted. The theme "the love of animals by migrant nurses" was identified in one of the seven news articles retrieved using the study’s keywords. Although this theme may appear tangential, it was included because it met the research criteria and highlighted a unique aspect of nurse migration by shedding light on personal and cultural dimensions of the migrant nurses' experiences

**Table 1.** General Characteristics of the News Articles

News Title	Date	Type of News	Emotional Tone of News	Source of News	Content of News	Impact on Public Opinion	Presence of Photograph	Relevance of Photograph to the Topic	Subject of the News
<b>SÖZCÜ</b>									
1. <b>She Took the Puppies She Adopted from the Shelter to Germany</b>	August 2024	Human Story	Positive	Agency/Reporter	Non Scientific	Informative	Present	Yes	Nurse Migration, Animal Adoption
2. <b>All-Time Record Broken in Turkish Doctors' Migration.</b> More than 3,000 Turkish doctors, mostly specialists, went to Germany. Turkish doctor migration is followed by Turkish nurse migration.	January 2024	Health News	Negative	Agency/Reporter	Over 3,000 Turkish doctors have migrated to Germany. It is emphasized that following the migration of Turkish doctors, the migration of Turkish nurses has also followed	Informative	Present	Yes	Health Migration, Doctor Migration, Nurse Migration, Specialist Shortage
<b>HÜRRİYET</b>									
3. The Scope of the Migration Law in Germany is Expanding, ,	January 2024,	Migration Policy & Economy News	Neutral The expansion of the migration law could make Germany an attractive destination for nurses and other healthcare workers, potentially increasing migration trends in public opinion.	Agency/Reporter	The expansion of the Skilled Migration Law, which came into effect in Germany in November 2023, by March 2024; changes that will facilitate the migration of skilled workers to Germany, along with new regulations for nurses and caregiving staff working in the healthcare sector."	Informative	Present	Yes	Migration Law, Nurse Migration, Skilled Workforce, Germany, Healthcare and Care Sector
4. <b>Right to Free Movement for Blue Card Holders</b> The new Qualified Migration Law implemented in Germany, as the name suggests, aims to promote the migration of skilled labor. We would like to share this .	November 2023	Migration Policy & Economy News	Neutral (It could raise public awareness about the migration of skilled labor and be encouraging for nurses considering migration.)	Agency/Reporter	With the implementation of the Qualified Migration Law in Germany, the right to free movement granted to EU Blue Card holders and the regulations encouraging the migration of skilled labor. Among the professional groups expanded under the new law are nurses and healthcare sector workers.	Informative	Present	Yes	Migration Law, Blue Card, Skilled Workforce, Nurse Migration, Healthcare and Care Sector

**Table 1. continued**

<b>5. The Need for Foreign Labor in the German Healthcare System is Increasing</b> The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the significant shortage of doctors, nurses, and healthcare workers in Germany, as well as the crucial importance of foreign labor for the healthcare system, with the need for it expected to grow even more	December 2021	Health News & Migration	Negative The increasing importance of foreign healthcare workers and the potential perception of deficiencies in the healthcare system could be created; it may be motivating for those wishing to migrate.	Agency/Reporter	The increase in the shortage of doctors, nurses, and healthcare workers in Germany due to the COVID-19 pandemic; the rising demand for foreign labor. It is noted that the number of foreign nurses and caregivers working in Germany has surpassed 200,000, with this number particularly increasing due to workers coming from Turkey and Eastern European countries.	Informative	Present	Yes	Healthcare System, Foreign Labor, Nurse Migration, Caregiver Shortage, Coronavirus Impact
<b>POSTA</b>									
<b>6. Europe's Persistent Challenge: Migration</b> As of 2024, the population of the European Union has reached 449 million, with a significant portion of this growth attributed to migration. Migration influences the political atmosphere, bolstering far-right movements	July 2024	Migration Policy & Economic News	"Negative	Agency/Reporter	The inadequacy of Europe's healthcare system and the shortage of personnel	Neutral	Not Available	Yes	The Domino Effect in Europe
<b>SABAH</b>									
<b>7. Germany's Worker Recruitment</b> An investigation into application requirements, deadlines, and demanded professions is underway. Germany is one of the most preferred destinations for those seeking employment abroad. With a proposed plan expected to eliminate language requirements, job opportunities will increase. Additionally, the German government is reportedly set to recruit 2 million workers with minimum and maximum salaries of €2,100 and €37,000, respectively.	October 2023	Migration Policy & Economic News	Positive	Agency/Reporter	Germany workforce recruitment	Informative	Present	Yes	Overseas Nurse Recruitment, Nurse Migration, High-Salary Nurse Employment

- **Migration status assessment:** This theme focused on how the news articles portrayed the challenges and opportunities faced by nurses during their migration process. Topics such as legal status, bureaucratic hurdles, and professional recognition in host countries were discussed, providing insights into the structural aspects of nurse migration.

**Table 2.** Distribution of Newspaper and News Content Characteristics

<i>Newspaper Name</i>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Sözcü</i>	2	28,6
<i>Hürriyet</i>	3	42,8
<i>Sabah</i>	1	14,3
<i>Milliyet</i>	0	0
<i>Posta</i>	1	14,3
<b><i>Year of Publication</i></b>		
<i>2020</i>	0	0
<i>2021</i>	1	14,3
<i>2022</i>	0	0
<i>2023</i>	2	28,6
<i>2024</i>	4	57,1
<b><i>News Type</i></b>		
<i>Current News</i>	6	85,8
<i>Editorial</i>	1	14,2
<i>Interview</i>	0	0
<b><i>Emotional Tone of the News</i></b>		
<i>Positive</i>	2	28,6
<i>Negative</i>	3	42,8
<i>Neutral</i>	2	28,6
<b><i>Source of News</i></b>		
<i>Healthcare Personnel</i>	0	0
<i>Patient</i>	0	0
<i>Agency-Reporter</i>	7	100
<b><i>Content of News</i></b>		
<i>Scientific</i>	2	28,6
<i>Non-Scientific</i>	5	71,4
<b><i>Photograph Status of News</i></b>		
<i>Present</i>	6	85,7
<i>Absent</i>	1	14,3
<b><i>Relevance of Photograph to Topic</i></b>		
<i>Relevant</i>	7	100
<b><i>Impact of News on Public</i></b>		
<i>Informative</i>	6	85,7
<i>Misleading</i>	0	0
<i>Neutral</i>	1	14,3

- **Demand for migrant nurses and incentive policies:** This theme examined how host countries actively sought to attract migrant nurses through incentive programs, including higher salaries, better working conditions, and opportunities for professional growth. The articles highlighted the increasing demand for migrant nurses, particularly in countries like Germany, where shortages in healthcare staff were evident.

**Table 3.** Thematic Analysis of News Content

<i>News Themes</i>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Migration Status Assessment</i>	3	42,9
<i>Demand for Migrant Nurses and Incentive Policies</i>	3	42,9
<i>Animal Affection of Migrant Nurses</i>	1	14,2



## DISCUSSION

This study aimed to better understand the international migration dynamics in the nursing field by examining the impact of increasing nurse migration on public opinion through media over the past years. The findings reveal the content of media news on nurse migration and its impact on public opinion.

The distribution of the news evaluated in the study shows that the five newspapers examined follow an active publishing policy on health issues. Especially the 42.8% rate of Hürriyet Newspaper reflects the media's interest in nursing and migration topics and their efforts to inform the public about these issues. Other newspapers also contribute to raising awareness on this topic by providing various information about nurse migration. The role of the media in this area helps nurses evaluate job opportunities abroad and informs the public about the general health system (6). In the analyzed news articles, the health systems of countries such as Germany, which actively seeks to attract skilled migrant nurses, were prominently featured. These articles highlighted Germany's demand for qualified healthcare professionals and the policies implemented to address workforce shortages. In this context, clearly expressing the factors affecting the migration decisions of health professionals can enable potential migrants to act more consciously and prevent negative perceptions in the public, thereby maintaining trust in health services.

The findings show that 57.1% of the news is from 2024, highlighting a notable increase in coverage compared to previous years. This suggests that the topic of nurse migration and healthcare worker transfers has gained prominence in recent media discussions. The increased reporting in 2024 may reflect the growing relevance of nurse migration in shaping public opinion, influencing decision-making processes, and guiding country preferences among potential migrants.

This can be seen as an indicator of the changes in health systems and the need for nurses remaining on the media agenda after the COVID-19 pandemic (3). Additionally, the 42.8% negative tone reflects how the challenges and poor working conditions faced by nurses abroad are portrayed in the media, which is an important factor affecting the social perception of nurse migration.

The media also allows for the sharing of personal experiences related to nurse migration. Hashish and Ashour (2020) emphasize that information provided through the media contributes to nurses' awareness of health systems and working conditions abroad. This can have a significant impact on the decision-making processes of potential migrants. However, alongside this positive information, highlighting negative experiences also plays a role in shaping the social perception of the challenges faced by migrating nurses (7,14,15).

The limitations of the study include the data being obtained from only five newspapers and being limited to the content from 2021-2024. This may limit the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the diversity of information and opinions in the news can make it difficult to evaluate the media's impact on nurse migration from a broader perspective. Future research is recommended to expand to include different media outlets and social media platforms to comprehensively examine perceptions and information on nurse migration.

## CONCLUSION

This study shows that nurse migration has limited representation in the national press and is mainly addressed within the framework of migration policies and economy news. Although the media has informed the public about the migration of nurses abroad and the demand for migrant nurses, it was found that the news content mostly lacked a scientific basis. It is thought that addressing the topic of nurse migration more extensively and in-depth in the media will contribute to increasing social awareness and strengthening the impact on health policies. These findings provide important clues for future research and emphasize the need for greater visibility of nurse migration in the media.

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest related to this study.

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