

Being Student in a Foreign Country: Adaptation Problems and Solution Strategies

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Abstract. There are many factors affecting psychology, motivation and success status of students. Especially with fast communication in the global world, these factors spread more quickly and takes broad masses under influence. Individuals studying in a geography different than their country have to adapt to a new geography, climate and culture besides ordinary charges that every student confronts in education process. In the context of this study examining education process of foreign students, the adaptation problems of foreign students studying in 2018 at Iğdır University and their coping strategies are emphasized. The study included 122 foreign students enrolled at Iğdır University. Two data collection methods are used in the work. One is a field survey technique based on quantitative data, other is a questionnaire using Michigan Foreign Student Problem Inventory. According to findings, essential problems encountered by foreign students are related to housing, socio-cultural activity facilities, relations with institutions, health insurance and leisure activities. In this study, it has been investigated whether there are significant differences between adaptation problems that students face and demographic variables such as age, gender, nationality, education level, education field, income sources, type of accommodation, the duration of living in Iğdır, and it has been tried to determine the coping strategies developed by these students against problems they face.

Keywords: Foreign student, Higher education, Adaptation, Problems, Solution Strategies.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the global world with the economic, political and cultural integration a complex process occurs where the world becomes the one market (Sadık, 2017). In the world living information and communication age, information is distributed and consumed easily. This situation leads to the flow of information towards where the information is obtained. For this reason, people of different culture and economic backgrounds live in geographies away from their families and countries to get a better education (İnce, & Koçak, 2018). In order to keep up with the world and increase the quality, higher education institutions try to be known in the international area by educating students who know different geographies and cultures. International education effects form and quality of the education offered and enhances intercultural dialogue. Student circulation provides social, cultural, economic and political contributions besides quality (Sadık, 2017; Yıldırım, Özkan, & Büyükyılmaz, 2016). The idea of getting quality education increases international student mobility. Also, student mobility in higher education generally becomes from developing countries to developed countries (Sungur et al., 2016).

Statistics on the student population show that a great deal of effort is made on a global scale to spread higher education enterprise. All modern, modernizing, post-industrialization or developing societies are facing an increasing demand for higher education. Its reason is to train educated citizens in need of the economy based on knowledgeable skills and ability to use the data. Only higher education institutions can raise such a large number and various kinds of citizens without making a claim to monopolization (Sadlak, 2009).

The harmonization of universities with the international education system increases international student mobility. Due to the economic and political contribution of this mobility, most countries are trying to increase the number of international students (Kartal, Işık, & Yazıcı, 2018).

Higher education abroad proceeds with the expectation to gain benefits for students and preferred universities and countries. The student aims to establish a better future with his / her diploma and equipment; the country and the university aim to achieve economic and social gain from students (Usta, Sayın, & Güzelipek, 2017). It is not enough to get a share of the students, it is necessary to create the ideal conditions for them (Paksoy, Paksoy, & Özçalıcı, 2012).

Migrations also lead to student mobility. The impacts of migration on migrants and the community of migrated place are mutual. There may be experienced political, economic and social problems between the two sectors. If migrations are intense, there may be a threat of foreign and ethnic violence in countries, this situation may affect political, economic and socio-cultural structures negative. It causes a negative and unwilling point of view towards foreigners in the host country. Looking at differences, different or

foreigners may prevent communication with them. It is important to make the migrants known and understandable for elimination of this threat (Alagöz, & Geçkil, 2017).

The approach of universities to foreign citizens changes as words, international student word is more preferred than foreign student, rather than exclusivist meaning of foreign word, the university's international identity is highlighted (Yıldıran, Özkan, & Büyükyılmaz, 2016; Kumcağız, Dadashzadeh, & Alakuş, 2016). The difference between international students and foreign students is related to their main motives for going abroad. UNESCO and OECD look at international students as individuals going abroad for educational purposes. Foreign students refer to non-citizens enrolled in an educational institution without the need to cross the border in order to receive education. While international students live for educational purposes in a country, foreign students go abroad for different reasons. Term of international student is in fact a sub-group of foreign student category which has a larger content (Nada, & Araújo, 2018).

The student circulation is increasing. The number of foreign students in the world reached 3 million in 2006 (Kıroğlu, Kesten, & Elma, 2010), 4 and a half million in 2010, and this number continued to increase. It has reached 7 and a half million (Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı/YTB, 2018). In Turkey, according to the Council of Higher Education data, in the 2017-2018 academic period, there are a total of 7.5 million students in higher education, up to 125 thousand of them are foreign students. Most of these students are Turkic republics, Middle East and Asian countries (Yüksek Öğretim Kurumu/YÖK, 2018). It is economic, political, social, cultural and strategic needs rather than a historical responsibility for Turkey to accept international students (Sadık, 2017).

Turkey with its unique geographic location between Europe and Asia, bears the traces of many civilizations. In this respect, the students come mostly from neighboring countries, Turkic republics, Europe and the Middle East to Turkey (Sungur et al, 2016). Proximity of Turkish and their languages has an important effect on students from Turkic and relative countries culturally close to Turkey to intensively come to Turkey. As a matter of fact, if foreign students do not speak Turkish, they are obliged to study Turkish for one year (Paksoy, Paksoy, & Özçalıcı). Turkey's position, its relations with other countries, belief structure, progress in economic and social fields has been effective in increasing the number of students (İnce & Kocak, 2018). Because of the developments in the Middle East in recent years, more students come from these regions (Sungur et al., 2016). In particular, as a result of refuge to Turkey from Syria, many Syrian youth study in universities in Turkey (Zavalsız, & Gündag, 2017).

Increasing number of universities, legal arrangements for international students, scholarships and student exchange programs, international recognition activities of Turkish universities and the development of accommodation facilities are effective in the preferences of international students (İnce, & Koçak, 2018). Foreign students receive education in Turkey in accordance with agreements with foreign countries. Special attention was given to the arrival of students from Turkic states. Within The Great

Student Project (BOP) launched in 1992, cooperation agreements were signed in order to contribute the Turkish and related communities to meet their needs of trained manpower, cultivate a young generation of friend of Turkey, build a bridge of permanent brotherhood and friendship with Turkish world, teach Turkish and to introduce Turkish culture, create a large umbrella by developing relations between Turkish countries (Şahin, & Demirtaş, 2014).

Scholarships are provided to students who are included in higher education quota within BOP in Turkey and placed in universities by YÖK. Students who are placed in an education program to study with their own resources are not accepted for government scholarship. State-Government Scholarships are lifted and united under the name of Turkey from 2012 (Sadık, 2017). Federation of International Student Associations, Religious Foundation of Turkey and some private universities provide scholarships to international students (Yardımcıoğlu, Beşel, & Savaşan, 2017).

International students, who come with their own means, are required to have the General Health Insurance (GSS) in order to register to the university. GSS of students studying under Turkey Scholarships is covered by Presidency of Turks Abroad and Related Communities (Sadık, 2017).

YURTKUR is obliged to allocate quota for international students with scholarship and international students who will benefit from international exchange programs carried out by YÖK. In 2013-2014 academic year, a total of 9,712 international students, including 3,279 girls and 6,434 boys from 131 countries, were accommodated in YURTKUR dormitories (Sadık, 2017).

Problems of Foreign Students

There are some problems that face students studying away from their country. The first of them is stress of racial discrimination, language problems, accommodation difficulties, separation reactions, dietary restrictions, financial crisis, misunderstandings and loneliness that can meet everyone living in a foreign culture. Secondly, there are difficulties that face all adolescents and young people, whether they are studying at home or abroad as this is a time of considerable vulnerability when the young person attempts to become emotionally independent, self-supporting, productive and a responsible member of society. Thirdly, there are academic stresses when students are expected to work hard with complex materials under poor conditions. Therefore, it is not surprising that many foreign students suffer from poorer mental health as they suffer additional stresses (Furnham, & Trezise, 1983).

Newcomers encounter all practical obligations that put pressure on them. Many struggles with language and cultural difficulties. The multiple challenges facing foreign students begin to develop as soon as they come in contact with a new environment and difference. Foreign students must deal with different sudden demands, such as adjusting to a new academic environment, society and country. The social support network plays a crucial role in the adaptation of foreign students through communication, friendship,

cultural modeling and dialogue. The language also represents a crucial aspect in the adaptation of foreign students into a new country. One of the fundamental aspects of successful training in the recipient country is knowledge of the language of studying. Not knowing the language of study can negatively affect the class content understanding, which will eventually affect students' grades and feelings of achievement. Language proficiency has a direct impact on students' socio-cultural and psychological adjustment. A low level of language proficiency may prevent students from communicating with the local community. Language outputs extend to the level of profound identity (Nada, & Araújo, 2018).

Difficulties faced by individuals from different cultures and staying in a foreign country are defined as cultural shock (Güçlü, 1996). Demographic difficulties in culture have different changes, and the culture difference especially the culture shock among international students can be liable to cause social crisis and accidents on and off at campus. A deeper understanding of the nature of cultural differences would be obvious as international students are carrier of their own culture. Social differences in new environment, the new social patterns give students feeling of uncomfortable environment (Sumra, 2012).

Language is the primary of problems of international students. Problems related to friendship, health, cultural, economic, psychological, academic and social, and difficulties as dormitory, housing, drinking, home yearning and cultural differences, and discrepancies on these issues (Sungur et al., 2016; Zavalı, & Gündag, 2017; Kartal, Işık, & Yazıcı, 2018; Şahin, & Demirtaş, 2014); problems such as conflicts in social and moral values, social and professional relationship, feeling foreign and encountering new education system can be experienced. Students face emotional, social and academic problems, and they can be caught in mental and physical disorders (Güçlü, 1996; Gökyer, 2017). Also, students from Turkic countries face difficulties due to different alphabet (Kumcağız, Dadashzadeh, & Alakuş, 2016).

Different education system, different culture, inability to speak Turkish enough and economic problems make the adaptation of foreign students to the university and environment difficult and affect their academic success. While some of the students are adapting to these difficulties and adapting to university life, some of them have difficulty in adapting (Kartal, Işık, & Yazıcı, 2018; Gökyer, 2017).

Prejudices also disrupt foreign students' psychology and make their adaptation difficult. Cultural differences affect the adaptation process negatively, and as the cultural similarity increases, the level of adopting the new culture increases (Kıroğlu, Kesten, & Elma, 2010; Gökyer, 2017).

Insufficiency of language in international students brings significant problems with itself. For this reason, the student may feel inadequate and incomplete. This situation causes the student to feel that he is against the culture. As the expression and development of thought is with language, the language deficiency deteriorates the

motivation of student in socio-cultural and academic mean. Students can avoid social situations due to insufficient social language skills (Ercan, 2012).

Most students suffer financial difficulties. Students do not receive adequate assistance from their families because they often come from countries in lower level than Turkey economically. Many students have to work. Their academic achievements and socio-cultural adaptations are affected negatively as they do not participate in classes and social activities (Sadık, 2017).

One of the major problems of the students is housing. This problem is closely related to the economic situation. Lack of enough quota in state dormitories and expensive conditions of private dormitories, impels especially foreign students who have poor socio-economic level to stay with their friends from the same country. This situation may prevent foreign students from knowing target culture adequately (Kumcağız, Dadashzadeh, & Alakuş, 2016).

International students may be shy about wearing their country-specific dress in community they live in, or feel that there may be environmental pressure on this issue (Ercan, 2012). Students may have difficulties in eating and drinking. Problems such as expensive food prices, dislike of food due to cultural differences, and dislike of meals given in refectories in dormitory and university can be seen (Sadık, 2017).

Another problem is to study in the department or program. Especially placement of students in department or programs science and social fields that do not fit their academic background makes the students unsuccessful academically, and deterioration of motivation coming from reading the department that they do not want affects the students' expectations about future negatively. Individuals in this situation are likely to experience hopelessness and stress. Therefore, it is important that students make appropriate professional choices and have positive expectations for their future (Sadık, 2017).

Bureaucratic procedures are major problems for students. It is difficult to deal with many institutions and to remake many transactions due to deficiency and disconnection of information among institutions (Sadık, 2017). Therefore, the problems experienced by these students become complicated including technical and bureaucratic processes. The solution of these problems is possible with correct detection of problems and continuous regeneration (Usta, Sayın, & Güzelipek, 2017).

Students, after training in Turkey may not want to return to their countries immediately. Leaving their countries for a long period of time and breaking their ties with their countries, and their inability to know what to expect when they return increases their anxiety (Sadık, 2017).

The normal developmental anxieties that each student may encounter, international students may experience additional stress factors such as language, academic, social, financial and internal problems due to their cultural adaptation needs (Kumcağız,

Dadashzadeh, & Alakuş, 2016). The process of cross-cultural and psychological change between two or more cultural groups and their members is defined as culturalization. In the process of adapting to the culture of the new person or group, acculturation stress occurs. Factors of acculturation stress are the nature of the society, acculturating group, modes of culturing, the demographic, social and psychological characteristics of the individual. Stress levels vary according to differences or similarities between home and host country cultures (Cura, & Işık, 2016).

Foreign students, who are at a critical time in terms of adjusting to social roles and rules and meeting expectations of the society, try to connect the values coming from family and environment to their new lives during their education. Young people struggle with problems such as being a member of a group, adapting to a new city and environment (Alagöz & Geçkil, 2017). They need to adapt to the culture of the host country with the academic environment, which contains a new language and education (Cura, & Işık, 2016).

Adjustment process vary according to variables such as age, gender, ethnic structure, marital status, home country, living time in the host country, language competence, economic situation, socio-economic level of families, political and educational background, moral values, religious beliefs and norms, psychological counseling and guidance services, nutritional and health problems, feeling of self-confidence, student-reading department and the university. The length of living time is parallel to adjustment. The individual chooses how he will respond to these difficulties and exhibit the position, thus determines the adaptation process himself (Ercan, 2012).

The student, who goes to a more developed socio-economic geography compared to his country, has a lack of self-confidence and has difficulty in giving motivation to problems with weak morale. Intercultural differences are decisive in the adaptation process. As cultural similarities increase, students' level of adapting new culture increases (Ercan, 2012; Sadık, 2017). Ideological approaches also affect the adaptation process. This situation may affect the student's psychology and communication with the social environment negatively (Ercan, 2012).

Giving social support to a person in difficult or stress-increasing situation when he/she needs plays an important role in the process of acculturation and trusting in society. Because of their separation from their own country and culture, their relationship with their families and friends is reduced and as a result they lose their support. This situation leads to stress and increases the level of psychological discordance and academic decline of adjustment in higher education (Cura, & Işık, 2016).

Social support can be another effective element in the adaptation process, as it can increase social ties for international students and provide them with culturally adequate skills to reduce socio-cultural adaptation difficulties and perceived cultural distance. In addition to the cultural distance, perceived social support can be a variable affecting the adaptation of students. Many of the studies investigating social support and adjustment

reveal the relationship between the two variables. In general, gender, acculturation stress, coping ability, cultural distance and perceived social support are the factors predicting the university adaptation process of international students. Social support can help facilitate the current situation, create more positive circles and avoid negative consequences. Belongingness itself can meet the needs for a normal and healthy life. Centers serving international students in universities should know what students experience in a foreign country (Otlu, 2010).

Importance of Research

In recent years, increasing human movements and reality of increasing number of foreign students in higher education and the problems of these students make it compulsory to investigate the matter. As the problems will affect the students directly in the academic sense also will affect how they will feel during their university education and adaptation to social life. Therefore, it is important to examine life satisfaction and social adjustment of foreign students (Sungur et al., 2016). It is important for the quality of the education service for a university to provide an environment where the student can easily adapt to. It is important to determine the factors that affect students' academic and social adaptation status, to identify the problems they face and to learn their expectations, in terms of revealing the points to be considered in the services that will be provided to them (Kartal, Işık, & Yazıcı, 2018).

Guidance and counseling services for foreign students are important. To realize this, it is necessary to know student' problems and needs. Aims of this study is to examine the social and cultural status of foreign students studying in a public university, to determine their problems and expectations, to identify the problems they face and to find solution suggestions, and to determine the factors affecting the adaptation processes. In addition, to show ways to integrate the students with the local people determining foreign students' expectations of the university and the city, to use the findings to solve the problems of foreign students who will come to the university in future and to improve the current situation.

It was assumed that the answers of the students to the questionnaire were correct and sincere. Due to regional characteristics, it cannot be said that the findings of this study represent the problems of international students across the country.

Purpose of Research

The aim of this study is to determine the adaptation problems of foreign students studying at Iğdır University and their coping strategies. Iğdır was chosen for such a study because Iğdır at the eastern corner of Turkey has an important and strategic location, it has borders with three countries and it is a gate for Turkey to Asia and Turkic states (WEB1). In this context the study is looking for answers to these questions:

1. What are the adaptation problems faced by foreign students enrolled in any higher education program of Iğdır University's associate, undergraduate and graduate?

2. Are there significant differences between the problems faced by foreign students enrolled in any higher education program of Iğdır University's undergraduate and graduate, and demographic variables such as gender, age, nationality, education level, education field, sources of income, type of accommodation, time of living in Iğdır? Hypotheses related to the second purpose of the study will be analyzed at a level of 0.05 significance in this article.

3. What are the coping strategies that Iğdır University develops against the problems faced by foreign students enrolled in any undergraduate, graduate or postgraduate programs?

2. METHOD

This research aims to determine the coherence problems faced by foreign students attending a higher education institution, coping strategies with the problems and relationships between variables. For this purpose, the study is a descriptive study sample for status detection. Descriptive studies can be done with quantitative or qualitative approaches. In both approaches, the aim is to draw conclusions about a specific situation. In quantitative research, objectivity and mechanical techniques are underlined, measures are made by numbers and data are analyzed by statistics. The aim here is to control or eliminate the human factor. Qualitative research emphasizes the reliability of an idea parallel to objective standards in quantitative research design. This makes the research reliable and credible (Neuman, 2017).

Names of 157 foreign students are registered in the International Students Office of Iğdır University. 122 of them are students who have made new registrations or renewed registrations in the 2018-2019 academic year. Among the 122 active foreign students, 62 are from Azerbaijan, 31 from Somalia, 11 from Syria, 3 from Ghana, 1 each from Uganda, Jordan, Morocco, Hungary, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe nation. The remaining students are in the other category.

The research population consists of 122 foreign students enrolled in Iğdır University. The distribution of students to faculties, vocational high schools, high schools and institutes was determined with the help of the information received from the Department of Student Affairs of the institution.

Table 1.

Distribution of Foreign Students by Nationality

Country	Frequency	Percent
Azerbaijan / Nakhichevan	62	51
Somalia	31	25
Syria	11	9
Other	18	15

Total	122	100
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Although the population was desired to be reached in the study, the sample consists of 63 foreign students. In addition, focus group interviews were conducted with 7 foreign students.

Table 2.

Distribution of Participants by Nationality

Quantitative Interview			Qualitative Interview
Country	Frequency	Percent	Frequency
Azerbaijan / Nakhichevan	28 / 8	44,4 / 12,7	1 / 1
Somalia	11	17,5	1
Syria	10	15,9	2
Other	6	9,5	2
Total	63	100,0	7

Data Collection Instruments

Two different data collection methods were used in the study. The first data collection instrument is a field study used a survey technique based on quantitative data. The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part covers the demographic information of the participants such as gender, age, nationality, education status, education field, monthly income, working status, scholarship status, accommodation and residence times. The second part of the questionnaire consists of the questions created by using the Michigan Foreign Student Problem Inventory in order to determine the adaptation problems faced by the participant foreign students. This inventory was developed in 1962 by Porter in order to determine the adaptation problems of foreign students in America and was revised and reorganized in 1977. Porter assumes that this inventory was developed specifically for foreign students and therefore culturally independent (Güçlü, 1996).

In the study, in order to measure the intense of the problems faced by foreign students, a 5-point Likert scale was used. The problems were ranked from the least violence to the most violence. All substances are numbered from 1 to 5 according to the intense of the problem.

Table 3.

Score Ranges of 5-point Likert Scale

Grade	Score Ranges	Options
1	1.00–1.80	Absolutely I agree
2	1.81–2.60	Agree
3	2.61–3.40	Undecided
4	3.41–4.20	Disagree
5	4.21–5.00	Strongly disagree

The second data collection instrument is a field study using focus group interview technique based on qualitative data. The focus group interview involves organized discussion with a selected group of individuals to provide information about their views and experiences in the problem area. Such an interview is suitable for obtaining various views on the same subject. It also serves to understand the common understanding of individuals in everyday life and the ways in which individuals are influenced by others within a group. The main purposes of these focus group interviews are to reveal the attitudes, emotions, beliefs, experiences and reactions through interaction and social creation that can not be obtained by other methods. In the focus group interview, semi-structured open-ended questions classified as sub-headings were used to determine the strategies of foreign students to cope with basic problems such as social, economic, cultural and academic. These questions were obtained by transformation of the structured questions used in quantitative research into open-ended questions. The role of the researcher in the focus group interview is to relieve participants and to facilitate interaction as much as possible. An interactive environment will allow participants to ask each other questions and reconsider their own experiences, making it easier to obtain detailed data on the topic. In qualitative interviews, the interviewer is not seen as an answer storehouse and a reality mediator, the reality is constructed by the interviewer (Kuş, 2009).

Data Collection and Analysis

In order to collect the data, 122 questionnaires were delivered to the participants through Iğdır University foreign student representatives. 52% of the questionnaires were submitted to the researchers by the representatives because of the students who left after registering and who did not want to participate. The data obtained from the questionnaire forms were coded by SPSS 23 program and analyzed. The reliability analysis for the scales of the problem inventory was calculated using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient before the analysis. For the analysis of demographic variables, the frequency and percentage distribution were calculated. Averages and standard deviations were calculated for the answers to the main problems that constitute the second part of the questionnaire. Independent T-Test and One-Way Anova Test were used to determine the significant differences between variables and problem areas. In the focus group interview, the answers given to the questions of coping with the

problems faced by the participants were classified in terms of problem area by taking notes according to the demographic characteristics such as nationality and gender.

3. FINDINGS

In this part of the study, the results obtained by analyzing the data are arranged in tables and evaluated. The first part of the findings consists of the frequency and percentages of the demographic variables, the second part of the problem areas' averages and the relationships between the demographic variables, and the third part is the coping strategies for the problem areas according to the data obtained from the focus group interview. In the focus group interview, similar topics with the questionnaire were asked and results were written on this text.

Findings Related to Demographic Characteristics of Foreign Students

According to the results of the study, 90,5% of the participants are male and 7,9% are female. The reason for the low number of female participants in the sample is the fact that they are low in the population. When the education level of the participants is examined, it is seen that 85,7% of the students have license, 6,3% of them associate degree and 1,6% of them have master's degree. 57,1% of them are studying in social field and 39,7% are in science education. When the participants are analyzed according to their income status, it is understood that 50,8% have 0-499 TL, 28,6% 500-999 TL, 1,6% 1000-499 TL and 1,6% 1500-1999 TL. Looking at living period in Iğdır, 44,4% of the participants in 0-1 year, 28,2% in 1-2 years, 6,3% in 2-3 years, 4,8% in 3-4 years, 11,1% in 4 years and more are living in Iğdır. It is seen from the data about work status of participants to earn additional income that 87,3% of the participants do not work in any job and 12,7% work in their jobs at partial times. While 95,2% important part of the participants do not receive any scholarship, only 4,8% benefit from the scholarship. Participants stay in 87,3% rented houses, in 4,8% state dormitories, in 6,3% private dormitories and in 1,6% other accommodation places. The majority of the participants are mostly Azerbaijan / Nakhichevan with 57,1% as they are close to the border. The remaining are 17,5% of Somali nationals, 15,9% of them are Syrian nationals and 7,9% of them are nationals of other countries.

Table 4.

Distribution of Participants by Demographic Characteristics

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Age	Frequency	Percent
Male	57	90,5	18-24	49	77,8
Female	5	7,9	25-30	10	15,9
Total	62	98,4	Total	59	93,7
System	1	1,6	System	4	6,3
Total	63	100,0	Total	63	100,0

Education Status	Frequency	Percent	Education Field	Frequency	Percent
Associate	4	6,3	Social	36	57,1
Undergraduate	54	85,7	Science	25	39,7
Graduate	1	1,6	Total	61	96,8
Total	59	93,7	System	2	3,2
System	4	6,3	Total	63	100,0
Total	63	100,0			

Income status	Frequency	Percent	Living duration	Frequency	Percent
0-499	32	50,8	0-1 year	28	44,4
500-999	18	28,6	1-2 years	18	28,6
1000-1499	1	1,6	2-3 years	4	6,3
1500-1999	1	1,6	3-4 years	3	4,8
Total	52	82,5	4+	7	11,1
System	11	17,5	Total	60	95,2
Total	63	100,0	System	3	4,8
			Total	63	100,0

Work status	Frequency	Percent	Scholarship status	Frequency	Percent
Working	55	87,3	Taking	3	4,8
Part time	8	12,7	Not taking	60	95,2
Total	63	100,0	Total	63	100,0

Accommodation	Frequency	Percent	Nationality	Frequency	Percent
State Dormitory	3	4,8	Azerbaijan / Nakhichevan	28	44,4
Private Dormitory	4	6,3	Azerbaijan / Nakhichevan	8	12,7
Rental House	55	87,3	Somali	11	17,5
Other	1	1,6	Syria	10	15,9
Total	63	100,0	Other	6	9,5
			Total	63	100,0

Findings Related to the Problems Faced by Foreign Students

The average of the answers of the foreign students who participate in the study in about the problem area was listed according to their intensity in the table below. In this ranking, question for the thought of staying in İğdir after being graduated, in order to measure the perceptions of the foreign students participating in the study about the city they live in, is considered to be the highest with 3.65 intensity. In the questions related

to the basic problem areas, the foreign students reported that they encountered problems related to accommodation, after that socio-cultural activities and relations with institutions as the most important problem area. The benefit from health facilities, leisure activities, communication with other foreign nationals, security, use of Turkish, approach to the foreigner in the city, communication with university staff, living religious beliefs, adaptation to nutrition and clothing culture and communication with other students follows them.

Table 5.

Average and Standard Deviation of Perceptions towards Problem Areas

Problem Area	Frequency	Average	Standard Deviation
The Thoughts of Living in Iğdır	63	3,6508	1,12391
Accommodation	63	3,5873	1,27804
Socio-cultural Activities	63	3,5556	1,18835
Relationship with Institutions	63	3,4444	1,14691
Health Assurance	63	3,3333	1,06256
Leisure Activities	63	3,3016	1,21330
Communication with Foreign Students	62	3,0806	1,23206
Security Status	62	2,6935	1,13929
Using Turkish	63	2,6825	1,21583
Approach to the stranger	62	2,5484	1,01912
Communication with University Staff	61	2,5082	,97678
Religious Beliefs	61	2,4754	1,23297
Nutrition and Clothing	63	2,4603	1,30539
Communication with Students	63	2,3492	1,00256

Findings Related to the Analysis of Demographic Variables and Problem Areas

The second aim of the study is to find out whether there is a significant difference between the demographic variables of foreign students and the problems they face. For this purpose, by taking the average of the problem areas, relationship between demographic variables and the average were examined. The Independent T-test, due to it is two-option, was used measuring the relationship between the gender and education field variable and the problem areas, and One-Way Anova Test was used measuring the relationship between other variable of more than two options and the problem areas the relationship between the variables was tested at 0.05 significance level. As a result of the tests, all hypotheses were accepted except for H4 hypothesis. In the H4 hypothesis, it

was determined that there was a significant difference between Azerbaijan, Somalia and Syrian students and the other foreign students. It was understood that other foreign students had more difficulty in the problem areas than the students of Azerbaijan, Somalia and Syria.

Table 6.

Testing Hypotheses

Null Hypothesis	Test Result
H1: There is no significant difference between the problems faced by students and their gender. ($0.685 > 0.05$)	Accepted
H2: There is no significant difference between the problems faced by students and their education fields ($0.196 > 0.005$)	Accepted
H3: There is no significant difference between the problems faced by students and their age groups ($0.705 > 0.05$)	Accepted
H4: There is no significant difference between the problems faced by students and their countries ($0.001 < 0.05$)	Denied
H5: There is no significant difference between the problems faced by foreign students and their education level ($0.866 > 0.05$)	Accepted
H6: There is no significant difference between the problems faced by foreign students and their income ($0.280 > 0.05$)	Accepted
H7: There is no significant difference between the problems faced by foreign students and their working status ($0.172 > 0.05$)	Accepted
H8: There is no significant difference between the problems faced by foreign students and their scholarship status ($0.568 > 0.05$)	Accepted
H9: There is no significant difference between the problems faced by the foreign students and their accommodation types ($0.189 > 0.05$)	Accepted
H10: There is no significant difference between the problems faced by foreign students and their living duration in Iğdır ($0.720 > 0.05$)	Accepted

Findings Related to the Coping Strategies of Foreign Students

In this part of the study, the data obtained from the focus group interview made to determine the coping strategies of the problems encountered by foreign students was revealed. For this purpose, deep interviews were realized with semi-structured questions for problem areas. The data obtained at the end of the interview were listed according to the intensity of the problem.

The researcher prepared semi-structured open-ended questions to reveal strategies for coping with the highest problem areas according to quantitative research results. The

participants were numbered K1, K2, K3... and the answers of each participant to the questions were recorded by the researcher under the heading of the related problem. These records were classified and analyzed according to the problem title. The main questions asked to the participants in the interview are as follows:

After graduation in Iğdır, do you expect to stay in Turkey?

How do you solve the housing problem?

Do you participate in socio-cultural activities?

How is your communication with the institutions?

How do you solve your health problems?

How do you spend your free time?

Can you use Turkish enough?

Can you live your religious beliefs and cultural habits freely?

Within the framework of these questions, graduation, housing, socio-cultural activity, communication with institutions, health problems, leisure time, use of language and culture categories were created and analyzed through these categories.

Graduation

At the interview, the foreign students said that they did not positive about the idea of staying in Iğdır after graduation. The main reason why they think in this way is deficiency of technical infrastructure to perform their profession and besides the lack of employment opportunities where they can make good income. They said that they will have significant advantages in their own countries after graduating from here, for having completed their studies abroad. Therefore, foreign students reported that returning to their country rather than staying here would be better both economically and professionally. However, they say that they can evaluate if they are faced with important opportunities in Turkey's developed cities.

Housing Problem

It is understood that the one of the main problems faced by foreign students is the housing problem. The fact that Iğdır is a border province a significant number of foreign students are in Azerbaijan / Nakhichevan nationality, and also there are students from African countries such as Somalia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Ivory coming through the agencies arranging foreign educational organizations. As stated, these agencies place students in educational institutions and also take housing problems of the students they brought. However, there is no auxiliary resource to lead this problem. The limited quota in the state dormitories causes foreign students to search for other ways to solve housing problems. Rental house is their most preferred form of housing. However, in a foreign city where they come for the first time, both foreigners and the environment are perceived as a risk. Therefore, the housing problem that needs to be solved urgently is

generally solved by the preference of private dormitories organized by religious organizations. According to their own phrases the students do not think these kinds of dormitories sustainable due to some adaptation problems, they see them as a process that will give the time to move to a rental house. The rental house option is used as a permanent solution strategy solving the housing problem for the students after knowing enough in two or three months both the environment and the persons to be moved to a house together.

Socio-cultural Activity

Another problem area encountered by foreign students is the lack of socio-cultural activities. Students stated that they were quite bored because the lack of activities and places such as cinema, theater and concerts where they would have entertaining time were not at the desired level. They said that in order to overcome this situation, they mostly visited friends in other houses and sometimes they spent time in the city center.

Communication with Institutions

Another problem that foreign students complain the most is communication with institutions. The students stated that they were endeavoring much to carry out their bureaucratic procedures, their official transactions were frequently postponed, they could not find the addressee, the related personnel could not solve the problem because of not knowing the legislation and therefore they lost time by being directed to different units.

Health Problems

One of the issues that foreign students complain about is health. They stated that the high sum which they should pay to benefit from the general health insurance put them in difficult status financially, so they had cheaper private insurance but they could benefit limited from this kind of insurance. As Iğdır University's foreign student profile consists mostly of students from low-income neighboring countries and under-developed African countries, insurance amount is high for students.

Leisure Time

Foreign students said that they spend their free time in their social environment instead of in the city. During the interviews, foreign students from African countries stated that they did not participate much in social life in the city, but rather spent time with friends from their own countries. For these students, the city has turned into a disturbing situation, especially because of the presence of people watching them with curious eyes. As far as it is observed they behave in small groups closing all their senses towards the environment and in an anxious mobility, in the city center. In fact, when they communicate with the city people they are approached with a warm and helpful attitude, but they do not see themselves as part of this city. One of the possible reasons for this situation is that a small city like Iğdır meets with so many black students for the first time.

Ability to Use the Language

The usage of foreign language emerges as one of the main problem areas in the studies made on the adaptation problems of foreign students. However, in this study, the low level of the problem of using Turkish is mainly due to the fact that a significant number of foreign students in Iğdır University are Azerbaijan / Nakhichevan citizens and they know Turkish. During the interviews, it has been noticed that foreign students from African countries have experienced significant problems in using Turkish. These individuals who have the basic Turkish knowledge to meet their daily needs are also trying to overcome this problem in the academic sense with the Turkish preparation program they continue.

Culture

Since almost all of the foreign students enrolled at Iğdır University were Muslim, they stated that they can live their religious beliefs freely and did not encounter any restrictions on this subject. Likewise, because eating habits have similarities, they also stated that they did not experience a negative situation. Foreign students stated that both university staff and other students had very good relations with them and they were helped when they needed.

4. RESULTS, DISCUSSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In this research, adaptation problems of foreign students who are attending a higher education institution and coping strategies with these problems are examined. As can be seen from the findings of the study that the problem of housing is the primary problem faced by foreign students. Later, the problem areas of socio-cultural activities, relationship with institutions and health insurance compose the problem areas according to their importance. It is understood from the findings that foreign students especially coming from African countries have difficulties about using Turkish in both daily life and academically. The findings related to the demographic characteristics of the foreign students show that almost all of the students do not receive any scholarship from any place, and the income levels are also very low.

Interventions to the main problem areas faced by foreign students will help to reduce impact of the factors that will make the adaptation process more difficult. In particular, the problem of housing one of the first problem areas which they encounter often turns into a difficult process that they cannot solve on their own. Assistance measures to overcome this process necessitate both inter-agency cooperation and taking responsibility by intermediary agencies. Increasing the quota of foreign students in state dormitories will be an important step towards solution of this problem. Otherwise, in the process of social-cultural adaptation to fight against such physical conditions will both delay and make the adaptation process of the students difficult.

The activities that will ensure students not to feel foreign about social and cultural interaction are not only for the university, but also an important solution for all other

institutions and organizations to take steps. Therefore, steps should be taken to facilitate their interactions with the public and to help them to see themselves as part of this city. In particular, making arrangements that will facilitate foreign language students coming from African countries to overcome language problems will reduce the difficulties they face in using Turkish. Organizing activities that will increase the levels of using Turkish by foreign students and encouraging participation will help them to use the language effectively and will make a positive contribution to both academic success and social adjustment process.

The social integration of foreign students starts from the moment they arrive at the country. Therefore, the moves that will turn this process into an advantage should be started as soon as they arrive. Otherwise, being in position to cope with a number of problems for students will cause them to become pessimistic and asocial. In this case, it is important to pre-organize the orientation programs that will ensure the adaptation to the university and the society, and to provide professional consultancy services that will provide the guidance function effectively.

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