

# FAMILY BACKGROUND, STUDENT PERSPECTIVES AND ERASMUS+ MOBILITY PROGRAM

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# Introduction

- The Erasmus Programme in Europe is one of the best international mobility programme which accelerates the student and staff interest in international mobility (Marcotte, Desroches and Poupart, 2007).
- Thanks to Erasmus Programme, many students in Europe and candidate countries for EU have been benefiting from international studies for more than 25 years.
- After its 25 year of success. all the international mobility programs have been gathered under the name of Erasmus+ for the period of 2014-2020.
- Erasmus Student Mobility takes place under the title of “Learning Mobility of Individuals”.
- The overall budget of Erasmus+ is € 14.7 billion. It is expected that over 4 million people will benefit from this program and half of them will be among students at higher education institutions (European Commission, 2014a).

## Socio-Economic Background

- According to the findings of previous studies on students' mobility, the participation in Erasmus programme widened increasingly in the past few years.
- However, mobile students still came from privileged socio-economic backgrounds and academic family background played an important role in determining education abroad (European Commission, 2014b: 38).

## Socio-Economic Background

- According to Salisbury and his friends (2009), knowledge gained through a parent's postsecondary educational attainment would extend to, and help shape, a student's participation in educationally valuable experiences during college.

## Socio-Economic Background

- According to Salisbury and his friends (2009), access and interest in reading and writing can be concerned as both a symbolic and practical indicator of social and cultural capital.
- Books, magazines, and newspapers are primary sources of knowledge about networks and resources (social capital).



## Socio-Economic Background



- Individuals compare the monetary and non-monetary benefits and costs of each option while making decisions about “study abroad”.
- In order to cover the costs of study abroad, students also require adequate financial capital, which has been operationalized in previous studies using measures of income and the actual and perceived ability to pay of students and their parents (Salisbury, Umbach, Paulsen & Pascarella, 2009).

# Brief Information about AKU



- Afyon Kocatepe University (AKU) was founded on July 3, 1992 and since then, has been continuing its research and training activities. At the academic level, AKU offers a wide range of courses at undergraduate and graduate levels.
- According to 2014-2015 academic year data, 39.420 students study at AKU, integrating 1341 academic staff.
- In 2013-2014 Academic Year, about 8763 students graduated from the university.

# Erasmus Exchange Program at AKU

- Afyon Kocatepe University started its Erasmus Journey in 2005-2006 academic year. From then on, about 900 students benefited from Erasmus study mobility program.
- Now, the university has more than 120 Inter-Institutional Agreements with 23 different countries.
- Since 2013, International Relations Office has been organizing Erasmus+ International Staff Week, suitable for staff training and teaching staff programmes.





# The Purpose of the Study

- The aim of this study was to examine the impacts of students' family background with regard to education, socio-economical and cultural statue, and place of residence (city or town/village) on
- Sub-factors:



- Contribution to Provide Opportunity for Education Abroad

- Satisfaction of Academical Facilities

- Satisfaction of Financial Facilities

- Contribution to Individual Development

through the ideas of Erasmus students about their Erasmus mobility.

**The followings are the questions that guided the study**

**What is the frequency of “the difference between income and expenses” of our Erasmus students?**

**What is the frequency of place of residence of our Erasmus students?**

**What is the frequency of parents’ educational background of our Erasmus students?**

**How is the habit of “families’ reading news” of our Erasmus students?**

**What is the frequency of families’ income of our Erasmus students?**

**Are there any significant differences between the groups in terms of education, socio-economical and cultural statue, and place of residence?**

# Method

- The researchers followed and implemented the tenets of the quantitative research method in this study. There were a total of 73 Erasmus students studying at Afyon Kocatepe University involved in this study. These students studied abroad through Erasmus Programme at the fall semester, 2014-2015.
- 56.2% of them were male and 43.8% of them were female students from different subject areas, such as management, finance, economics, engineering, veterinary, education, science, fine arts, tourism.
- The researchers used a questionnaire which was developed, before by two researchers in 2010. The validity and reliability of the questionnaire was made by these two researchers, before.

# Method

- The questionnaire consisted of two parts. At the first part, there were general questions about the students in order to have information about them such as:

**Gender**

**Study Fields**

**The income and the expenses during the Mobility period**

**Families' income**

**Place of residence (city and town/village)**

**Parents' educational background**

**Families' Habit of Reading News**

# Method

- The second part included 31 Likert-type statements regarding the views of the participants (beneficiaries of the ERASMUS Programmes) on the mobility programmes, such as
- (Sub-factors)
- Contribution to Provide Opportunity for Education Abroad
- Satisfaction of Academical Facilities
- Satisfaction of Financial Facilities
- Contribution to Individual Development



# Data Analysis

- The Cronbach's alpha, coefficient of reliability, of the questionnaire was .808.
- After the collection of the quantitative data, the researchers used descriptive statistics, Independent samples t-test and One Way ANOVA for the analysis of the data.

# The Difference between Income and Expenses

- The frequency table of “the difference between income and expenses” of our Erasmus students:

Difference

	Frequency	Percent
Income=Expense	32	43,8
100-150 euro	22	30,1
150-350 euro	19	26,0
Total	73	100,0

# Place of Residence

- The frequency table of place of residence of our Erasmus students:

**Place of Residence**

	Frequency	Percent
City	46	63,0
Town/Village	27	37,0
Total	73	100,0



# Parents' Educational Background

- The frequency table of parents' educational background:

**Parents' Educational Background**

	Frequency	Percent
University Graduate	52	71,2
Non-University Graduate	21	28,8
Total	73	100,0

# Habit of Families' Reading News

- The frequency table of habit of “families’ reading news”:

**Habit of Reading Newspaper**

	Frequency	Percent
Read Hard Copy News	28	38,4
Read News on the Internet	31	42,5
Both	14	19,2
Total	73	100,0

# Families' Income

- The frequency table of families' income of our Erasmus students:

## Income

Income (per month) euro	Frequency	Percent
270 – 400 €	19	26,0
400 – 750 €	21	28,8
750 – 1000 €	16	21,9
1000 and more than 1000 €	17	23,3
Total	73	100,0

# Findings

- Is there any significant difference between the groups in terms of “the difference between income and expenses”?

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Contribution to Provide Opportunity for Education Abroad	Between Groups	61,195	2	30,598	1,491	,232
	Within Groups	1436,722	70	20,525		
	Total	1497,918	72			
Satisfaction of Academical Facilities	Between Groups	39,593	2	19,797	1,108	,336
	Within Groups	1251,037	70	17,872		
	Total	1290,630	72			
Satisfaction of Financial Facilities	Between Groups	52,990	2	26,495	1,614	,206
	Within Groups	1149,037	70	16,415		
	Total	1202,027	72			
Contribution to Individual Development	Between Groups	143,305	2	71,653	,848	,432
	Within Groups	5911,325	70	84,447		
	Total	6054,630	72			

# Is there any significant difference between the groups in terms of “the difference between income and expenses”?

- There is no **significant difference between the groups in terms of “the difference between income and expenses”**. ( $p > 0.05$ ) (Creswell, 2012: 188)
- **It means that the difference between the income and the expenses of these students do not affect their ideas on**
- Contribution to Provide Opportunity for Education Abroad
- Satisfaction of Academical Facilities
- Satisfaction of Financial Facilities
- Contribution to Individual Development
- This factor (**the difference between income and expenses**) is not a **determinant one on their ideas about the satisfaction of academical and financial facilities, contribution to provide opportunity for education abroad and individual development.**

# Findings

- Is there any significant difference between the groups in terms of “place of residence”?

**Independent Samples Test**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Contribution to Provide Opportunity for Education Abroad	Equal variances assumed	,245	,622	,077	71	
	Equal variances not assumed			,078	57,455	,939
Satisfaction of Academical Facilities	Equal variances assumed	,164	,687	-,302	71	,938
	Equal variances not assumed			-,310	59,089	,764
Satisfaction of Financial Facilities	Equal variances assumed	,005	,947	-,144	71	,758
	Equal variances not assumed			-,143	54,148	,886
Contribution to Individual Development	Equal variances assumed	,234	,630	-,799	71	,887
	Equal variances not assumed			-,817	58,445	,427

# Is there any significant difference between the groups in terms of “place of residence”?

- There is no **significant difference** between the groups in terms of “place of residence”. ( $p > 0.05$ )
- It means that living in a city or in a village do not affect their ideas on
- Contribution to Provide Opportunity for Education Abroad
- Satisfaction of Academical Facilities
- Satisfaction of Financial Facilities
- Contribution to Individual Development
- This factor (**place of residence**) is not a determinant one on their ideas about the satisfaction of academical and financial facilities, contribution to provide opportunity for education abroad and individual development.

# Findings

- Is there any significant difference between the groups in terms of “parents’ educational background”?

## Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Contribution to Provide Opportunity for Education Abroad	Equal variances assumed	,828	,366	-,074	71	,941
	Equal variances not assumed			-,068	31,671	,946
Satisfaction of Academical Facilities	Equal variances assumed	,342	,560	,114	71	,910
	Equal variances not assumed			,110	34,728	,913
Satisfaction of Financial Facilities	Equal variances assumed	2,343	,130	-,786	71	,435
	Equal variances not assumed			-,733	32,300	,469
Contribution to Individual Development	Equal variances assumed	1,836	,180	-1,220	71	,227
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,360	47,600	,180



## Is there any significant difference between the groups in terms of “parents’ educational background”?

- There is no significant difference between the groups in terms of “parents’ educational background” .( $p > 0.05$ )
- It means that students’ parents having bachelor degree or not do not affect their ideas on
- Contribution to Provide Opportunity for Education Abroad
- Satisfaction of Academical Facilities
- Satisfaction of Financial Facilities
- Contribution to Individual Development
- This factor (parents’ educational background) is not a determinant one on their ideas about the satisfaction of academical and financial facilities, contribution to provide opportunity for education abroad and individual development.

# Findings

- Is there any significant difference between the groups in terms of habit of “families’ reading news”:

## ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Contribution to Provide Opportunity for Education Abroad	Between Groups	22,677	2	11,339	,538	<b>,586</b>
	Within Groups	1475,241	70	21,075		
	Total	1497,918	72			
Satisfaction of Academical Facilities	Between Groups	21,355	2	10,677	,589	<b>,558</b>
	Within Groups	1269,275	70	18,133		
	Total	1290,630	72			
Satisfaction of Financial Facilities	Between Groups	38,835	2	19,418	1,169	<b>,317</b>
	Within Groups	1163,192	70	16,617		
	Total	1202,027	72			
Contribution to Individual Development	Between Groups	393,310	2	196,655	2,432	<b>,095</b>
	Within Groups	5661,320	70	80,876		
	Total	6054,630	72			

## Is there any significant difference between the groups with regard to habit of “families’ reading news”:

- There is no **significant difference between the groups with regard to the “habit of “families’ reading news”** ( $p > 0.05$ ).
- **It means that students’ parents’ reading newspapers online or reading hard copy news or both do not affect their ideas on**
- Contribution to Provide Opportunity for Education Abroad
- Satisfaction of Academical Facilities
- Satisfaction of Financial Facilities
- Contribution to Individual Development
- **This factor (habit of “families’ reading news) is not a determinant one on their ideas about the satisfaction of academical and financial facilities, contribution to provide opportunity for education abroad and individual development.**

# Findings

- Is there any significant difference between the groups in terms of families' income of our Erasmus students?

## ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Contribution to Provide Opportunity for Education Abroad	Between Groups	156,464	3	52,155	2,683	,053
	Within Groups	1341,453	69	19,441		
	Total	1497,918	72			
Satisfaction of Academical Facilities	Between Groups	35,502	3	11,834	,651	,585
	Within Groups	1255,128	69	18,190		
	Total	1290,630	72			
Satisfaction of Financial Facilities	Between Groups	81,125	3	27,042	1,665	,183
	Within Groups	1120,903	69	16,245		
	Total	1202,027	72			
Contribution to Individual Development	Between Groups	384,297	3	128,099	1,559	,207
	Within Groups	5670,333	69	82,179		
	Total	6054,630	72			

# Is there any significant difference between the groups in terms of families' income of our Erasmus students?

- There is no **significant difference between the groups with regard to the “habit of “familys’ reading news”** ( $p > 0.05$ ).
- **It means that students’ parents’ reading newspapers online or reading hard copy news or both do not affect their ideas on**
- Contribution to Provide Opportunity for Education Abroad
- Satisfaction of Academical Facilities
- Satisfaction of Financial Facilities
- Contribution to Individual Development
- **This factor (habit of “familys’ reading news) is not a determinant one on their ideas about the satisfaction of academical and financial facilities, contribution to provide opportunity for education abroad and individual development.**

# Discussion

- Otero and McCoshan's (2006) aimed to give an overview of the socio-economic situation of students who participated in the ERASMUS programme during the academic year 2004/05.
- Data from ERASMUS students for the year 2004/05 was gathered by means of an online survey. The link to the online survey was provided to all participant universities in the programme, who distributed the links amongst the students participating in the programme in the year of reference. Overall, 15,513 valid answers from 30 countries were received (Otero & McCoshan, 2006).

# Survey of the Socio-Economic Background of ERASMUS Students

- The survey gathered data on the students' assessment of the ERASMUS period, their socio-economic background and their financial situation.
- Over 60 % of ERASMUS students in this study were between 21 and 23 years of age.
- Over 40 % students had undertaken an ERASMUS study period of between 5 and 6 months in length.

# Survey of the Socio-Economic Background of ERASMUS Students

- Around 60 % of respondents were female, 40 % male. **It is vice-versa in our study.**
- Just over 95 % of students had enjoyed an ERASMUS grant.
- 82% per cent of our respondents were the first in their families to study abroad.
- Almost two thirds of students had at least one parent who held an occupation as an executive, professional or technician.



# Survey of the Socio-Economic Background of ERASMUS Students

- Around 58% of students in this survey had at least one parent who had experienced Higher Education. In our survey about 70 % of students had a least one parent who graduated from the university.
- A large majority of ERASMUS students reported the income status of their parents as being on or above the average income in their country. We also reached the same result in our study.
- Only 14% of students reported their parents' income status as being lower or considerably lower than average. In our study 26 % of students' parents' income status is lower than the average. This percentage is higher than the percentge of the study by Otero & McCoshan.

# Survey of the Socio-Economic Background of ERASMUS Students

- Overall, 37 % of the students considered their financial situation during the ERASMUS period good or very good, 44% considered it fair and 19% considered it poor or very poor.
- 55 % of students reported that the ERASMUS grant financial contribution was insufficient for their mobility period abroad. Likewise, in our study we found that about 56 % of students' income and expenses do not match with each other, which means that about 56 % of the students find their Erasmus grant insufficient.

# Survey of the Socio-Economic Background of ERASMUS Students

- There is a clear relationship between the economic situation of parents and the financial situation of students during their ERASMUS period.
- There are, still, however, many students that cannot participate in the programme due to financial reasons. Over half of the ERASMUS students that participated in the programme in 2004/05 knew other students who had been deterred from participating in the programme mainly due to financial reasons.

# BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT

## HOW TO COPE WITH EUROPEAN MOBILITY FINANCIAL CUTBACKS

- According to Ventura and Silva's (2011) study, there are big differences between students of a lower economic background, with less educated parents, and students of a higher economic background and with more educated parents. The former are naturally disadvantaged in:
  - mastering the language
  - their attitude to learning
  - other cultural features of education
- However, in our study, there are not significant differences between the students who have lower economic and academic family background in terms of **the satisfaction of academical and financial facilities, contribution to provide opportunity for education abroad and individual development.**



# The non-mobile Student Perspective

- European Commission investigated the reasons for not taking part in Erasmus mobility programme.
- For 58% of non-mobile students, the reason for not going abroad is uncertainty with regard to costs of the study abroad (European Commission, 2014b: 38).



- Mutlu, Alacahan and Erdil's study (2010) tries to measure and evaluate the cultural and personal changes of Turkish and Polish students and compare these changes.
- The Turkish students participated in this research studied in Poznan, Poland and the Polish students are from Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland.
- 257 Erasmus students participated in this study and there had been interviews with 102 randomly selected students through a 29-question form.
- 77 students are from European Union member countries while 25 students are Turkish students.

- In Mutlu, Alacahan and Erdil's study (2010) 49 % of them are female whereas 51 % of them are male.
- 75 % of students stated that their family income is at an average level.
- 12 % of Turkish students reported that their family income is above the average whereas 20.8 % of the EU member students indicated that their family income is above the average. However, in our study 44 % of the students declared that their family income is above the average.
- According to this study, it can be said that Turkish students who study abroad through Erasmus programme do not have a high financial status.

- In Fombona, Rodriguez and Sevillano's study (2013), their purposes were to find out Erasmus students' opinions about their motivation which make them participate in an exchange program and determine their level of satisfaction. 377 Erasmus students from the University of Oviedo participated in this research.
- The grant the students had for the exchange program covered the expenses of 63.6 % of the students. This aid was supported by family income for 57 % of the students. The students' mean expenses were between 500 - 700 €. **In our study, the grant of the students covered the expenses of about 43 % of the students.**





# According to Salisbury and his friends' study (2009)

- The socioeconomic status of a student's family is positively related to intend to study abroad. Lower income students are less likely to plan to study abroad than higher income students.
- This study suggests that finances not only serve as a barrier, but lack of resources shapes student expectations about studying abroad.
- Level of parents' education is positively related to the probability of planning to study abroad.

# Conclusion

- According to our study, it can be concluded that the residence of place, the difference between income and expenses, the family academic and economical background of our erasmus students do not have any positive or negative effect on our erasmus students' the satisfaction of academical and financial facilities, contribution to provide opportunity for education abroad and individual development.
- Contrary to given results about academic and economical family background by European Commission in 2014, less than 50 % of our students came from privileged socio-economic family backgrounds.

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