The Effect of Activities Based on Interaction With Turkish Peers on the Acculturative Stress Levels of Migrant Preservice Teachers*

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Abstract

This study had two objectives: (1) allowing migrant preservice teachers to interact with their Turkish peers to help them gain pre-professional experiences and (2) using interactive activities to reduce migrant preservice teachers' acculturative stress levels. The study adopted a mixed-method research design (quantitative and qualitative). Participants attended eight weeks of interactive activity workshops on migration (intervention). The quantitative part adopted a pretest-posttest pre-experimental design. The qualitative part adopted a case study. Data were collected using activity evaluation forms, semi-structured interviews, and the Acculturative Stress Scale (ASS). The sample consisted of 11 migrant students from the education faculty of Ondokuz Mayıs University. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, dependent-groups t-test, and Wilcoxon signed-rank test. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive analysis. The quantitative data showed that participants had a lower mean posttest ASS subscale score than the pretest score. They also had a significantly lower mean posttest ASS "social isolation" and "perceived discrimination" subscale score than the pretest score. Participants stated that the intervention helped them value and socialize with people more. We think that our results will guide authorities in developing activities to help migrant preservice teachers cope with cultural adaptation and student-related problems.

Keywords: Migrant, Preservice Teacher, Acculturation, Acculturative Stress.

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INTRODUCTION

Intercultural communication, which is on the rise due to globalization and population movements, makes the concept of "intercultural tolerance" more relevant today than ever. Intercultural tolerance is defined as the propensity toward accepting other cultures without bias. Teachers play a key role in turning children into people who respect and cherish other cultures without prejudice and discrimination (Meyer, Sherman & Makinster, 2004). However, teachers should be interculturally tolerant and positively inclined towards intercultural experiences before they can help their students acquire those qualities (Boran & Arcagök, 2017). Universities are culturally diverse environments where students meet new people from different socio-cultural backgrounds, helping them overcome prejudices (Gürsoy, 2018). Moreover, students attend seminars and conferences and do internships, which also helps them interact with people from different socio-cultural backgrounds and get to know them well. These activities turn them into open-minded individuals who understand and respect cultural differences (Kaya, 2019). No matter how they end up in another country, all migrant students should be supported and accepted. Teachers play a vital role in this process. Migrant students supported by their teachers are more likely to overcome language barriers, adapt to school quickly, and interact with the host society more effectively (Atlıhan, 2019).

Immigrants are people who leave their country of origin to settle in another country permanently. Refugees are people who have been forced to flee their home country because of war, conflict, persecution, violence, or socioeconomic problems (Aslan, 2015; Harrell-Bond, 2000; Roxas, 2010; Şeker & Pynoos, Kinzie & Gordon, 2001). There are different types of immigrants: (1) foreigners who move to another country for tourism, health, and education purposes, (2) foreign entrepreneurs and workers, (3) legal foreigners who consider settling in another country, (4) illegal aliens who move to another country illegally, and (5) refugees (Akıncı, Nergiz & Gedik, 2015). According to the Turkish Statistical Institute (TSI, 2019), 677 thousand 42 people migrated to Turkey in 2019. However, Turkey has received millions of refugees from Syria since the war broke out in 2011 (Ereş, 2015). The number of international students in higher education institutions increased from 185,047 to 224,048 in 2021, 21% compared to the previous year (Sağıroğlu, Ünsal & Özenci, 2022).

Migrants need to adapt to a culture and language largely foreign to them. One of the most critical factors that may arise in this process is acculturative stress. Acculturative stress, expressed as the physical and psychological reaction of the individual to a new culture, is also one of the situations expected to affect the whole of life (Bekteshi ve Kang, 2020). School is the best place for migrants to learn the host language and adapt to the host culture. Migrant students who feel safe and confident are more likely to go through the adaptation process. Schools should be safe places where students can solve their problems (Şimşek & Kula, 2018). Therefore, both undergraduate education and in-service training should encourage students to communicate with those from other cultures (Esen, 2009; Sakız, 2016; Akman, 2020). Students who graduate with intercultural communication skills can solve problems that arise from cultural differences in their classrooms. Teachers who do not know how to deal with cultural differences face various problems. Therefore, teachers with intercultural communication skills are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward migrant students. Teachers should adopt multicultural education approaches to create a conflict-free school environment for migrant students (Akman, 2020). Migrant students have difficulty adapting to school due to language and cultural differences. Although they get along well with their classmates, they face problems due to cultural differences (Erdem, 2017; Yıldız, 2018; Çevik Kansu, 2019). Teachers should help migrant students adapt to the host culture and interact effectively with their classmates (Kardeş ve Akman, 2022). Although migration is a current issue, undergraduate curricula do not address it adequately. Therefore, this study aimed to raise public awareness of migration.

Arslan and Uslu (2020) found that almost half the migrant students understood some of their courses (46%), whereas a quarter understood the courses well (26%). However, less than a quarter of the migrant students had difficulty understanding the courses (13%), while less than a quarter understood the courses but could not perform well in exams. The researchers aimed to enable migrant

students to create an environment where they could get help by becoming sociable and help them face the problems they might experience in communicating with their students. Undergraduate students from different countries experience loneliness, incompatibility, shyness, and cultural shock. Therefore, we recruited migrant students with very few Turkish friends.

There is a large body of research on the adaptation process that migrant college students go through. Researchers have focused on socio-cultural problems (Bigss, 1999; Karaoğlu, 2007; Pirliyev, 2010; Üstün, 2011; Özçetin, 2013; Çevik-Kansu, 2019), academic problems (Allaberdiyev, 2007; Şahin & Demirtaş, 2014), language problems (Açık, 2008; Özyürek, 2009; Derman, 2010; Topsakal, Merey & Keçe, 2013), housing problems (Kıroğlu, Kesten & Elma, 2010; Dzansi & Mapesela, 2012), and economic problems (Sherry, Thomas & Chui, 2009; Perşembe, 2010; Malaklolunthu & Selan, 2011; Dzansi & Mapesela, 2012; Kılıçlar, Sarı & Seçilmiş, 2012). Some researchers have also investigated how satisfied migrant students are with college education (Karadağ & Yücel, 2017; Altunbaş, 2020; Koyuncu & Güneş, 2020).

These studies are primarily descriptive studies focusing on problems faced by migrant students. However, the present study adopted a mixed-method research design (quantitative and qualitative) to better understand the effect of interactive activities on acculturative stress in migrant preservice teachers. Despite two facts, there is limited research on migrant primary school students and teachers. First, there is a high number of migrant primary school students. Second, the teachers of migrant primary school students face numerous challenges. Preservice teachers can overcome those challenges before starting their profession or even during their undergraduate education. However, colleges do not offer undergraduate courses on migrant students and their education. Therefore, we think the activities prepared and implemented in this study will be exemplary. The goal was to allow migrant preservice teachers and peer Turkish preservice teachers to interact during workshops and find solutions to the challenges of the pre-professional adaptation process.

Purpose of the research

This study aimed to enable immigrant teacher candidates to gain pre-professional experiences by interacting with their Turkish peers and reduce their acculturative stress levels. Pre-service teachers should be able to cope with the problems of cultural differences experienced by immigrant and immigrant students. This project aims to bring migrant pre-service teachers together with their peers (Turkish pre-service teachers) to make them feel what they are going through, to develop their feelings of empathy and to gain experience on how they can guide their students as a pre-service teacher in solving this current problem. The following are research questions:

1. Is there a significant difference between the pretest and posttest acculturative stress levels scores?

2. What do participants think about the interactive activities?

3. What do participants think are the contributions of the interactive activities?

METHOD

This study adopted the exploratory sequential-mixed method design. In the first stage, quantitative data are collected and analyzed. In the second stage, qualitative data are included (Creswell, 2014, p.79). This study also had two stages: quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative stage adopted a pretest-posttest pre-experimental design. The qualitative stage adopted a case-study design. Researchers who adopt experimental designs can manipulate independent variables and establish cause-effect relationships by comparing scores. A pre-experimental design is a one-group pretest-posttest design with no random assignment and no control group (Büyüköztürk et al., 2013). In the study, the level of acculturative stress for migrant preservice teachers was taken as the dependent variable and the effect of the education given on this variable was examined. A case study is a research

approach used to generate an in-depth and multi-faceted understanding of a complex issue in its real-life context (Ozan Leymun, Odabaşı & Kabakçı Yurdakul, 2017). Researchers can employ a case study to explore individual, societal, and political situations and acquire more comprehensive data than other techniques (Yin, 2003).

Participants

Since the research was carried out as a project, the researchers made an announcement within the scope of the faculty for the prospective teachers who wanted to participate in the training to apply. Then, candidates who applied to this post voluntarily were determined. Participants were recruited using criterion sampling. During the application, students were administered the pretests [Acculturative Stress Scale (ASS)] and were interviewed (semi-structured interview form). The sample consisted of 16 students (preservice teachers) who received the highest ASS scores and had very few to no Turkish friends. However, five students were excluded from the study because they started working or had to work part-time during the first two weeks of the intervention. Therefore, the final sample consisted of 11 students. Table 1 shows all participants' sociodemographic characteristics.

Table 1. Sociodemographic Characteristics

Major		Classroom Teaching		Guidance and Psychological Counseling		Special Education Teaching		Science Teaching		Social Science Teaching		Preschool Teaching		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Gender	Woman	4	36.36	1	9.09	-	-	-	-	1	9.09	1	9.09	7	63.63
	Man	2	18.18	-	-	1	9.09	1	9.09	-	-	-	-	4	36.37
Grade level (year)	2	4	36.36	1	9.09	-	-	-	-	1	9.09	1	9.09	7	63.63
	4	2	18.18	-	-	1	9.09	1	9.09	-	-	-	-	4	36.36

All of the migrant preservice teachers aged between 20 and 34 have not seen their families for a long time due to the pandemic. Seven participants had Turkish friends but had not previously attended any projects with Turkish peers.

Data Collection Tools

The semi-structured interview questionnaire was based on expert feedback. It consisted of open-ended questions on the meaning of the word "migrant," possible intercultural problems, recommendations for activities on migration and migrants, and the contributions of the intervention.

The Acculturative Stress Scale (ASS) was developed by Bai (2012) and adapted into Turkish by Akdağ and Koçak (2020). The scale consists of 32 items and five subscales: inadequacy (ten items), social isolation (eight items), perceived discrimination (seven items), academic pressure (four items), and guilt towards the family (three items). The items are rated on a five-point Likert-type scale ("1=Never" to "5=Always"). Higher scores indicate higher acculturative stress levels. In the present study, the scale had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.95.

The participants, the project manager, and the research students filled out the activity evaluation form at the end of the activities. The form consisted of questions on what participants learned from the activities that week, how they performed in the activities, whether they had any difficulty, and how they could go over what they learned. The researcher also took notes and photographs to analyze student interaction more deeply.

Limitations

This study was produced from the project carried out within the scope of TÜBİTAK 2020/2, 2209-A University Students Research Projects Support Program. Only the data of migrant preservice teachers who participated in the activities in the project during the process were included in the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

Participants were interviewed and administered the pretest before the intervention. They were interviewed and administered the posttest after the intervention. Two scores were compared to determine the effect of the intervention on participants' acculturative stress levels. The quantitative data were analyzed together with the qualitative data to determine whether they supported each other. The quantitative data were analyzed using nonparametric tests on a statistical package program. The qualitative data were analyzed using descriptive analysis. Direct quotes provided an accurate and coherent picture of participants' views.

The skewness, kurtosis coefficients, and Kolmogorov-Smirnov/Shapiro Wilk values were used for normality testing. Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2. Skewness and Kurtosis coefficients and Kolmogorov-Smirnov/Shapiro Wilk Values

Acculturative Stress Scale (ASS)		Skewness	Kurtosis	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	Shapiro-Wilk
Language inadequacy	Pretest	.780	-1.043	.107	.052
	Posttest	.691	-.345	.200	.407
Social isolation	Pretest	.854	.107	.200	.315
	Posttest	.282	-.717	.200	.958
Perceived discrimination	Pretest	1.753	3.893	.096	.023
	Posttest	-.140	-.789	.200	.495
Academic pressure	Pretest	.193	-1.691	.200	.152
	Posttest	.178	-1.102	.200	.388
Guilt towards the family	Pretest	.395	-.133	.200	.975
	Posttest	-.427	.266	.200	.880
Total	Pretest	1.054	.306	.115	.108
	Posttest	-.046	-1.078	.200	.676

The Shapiro Wilk values were greater than .05 for two reasons. First, the skewness and kurtosis coefficients were between -2 and +2. Second, the sample was smaller than 30. Therefore, all but the third ASS subscale scores were normally distributed (Table 2).

Intervention

The intervention (workshops) lasted eight weeks. Participants attended the workshops for 3-4 hours every week. Participants took the pretest and posttest. They were also asked to describe what they learned from the workshops. Their views were noted and video-recorded. A literature review was conducted to determine the key points regarding migration. The intervention involved different methods and techniques (drama, educational game, drawing, demonstration, question and answer, discussion, STEM+A, improvisation, exhibition) to help participants develop 21st-century skills.

The intervention was applied for eight weeks after setting an appropriate day and hour. At the end of the intervention, participants were given certificates of participation. The project team and volunteers who supported the intervention received certificates of appreciation. The products developed by all participants were exhibited at the end of the intervention. Moreover, a primary school was visited, and cloth dolls made during the intervention were given to the migrant students as gifts.

The workshops' activities, interview forms and activity evaluation forms were prepared by taking the opinions of 1 assessment and evaluation expert, 1 program development expert, 1 classroom

education expert and 3 teachers. Experts were consulted prior to the intervention. The workshops and assessment forms were revised based on expert feedback. The activities were reviewed each week and performed with a sufficient number of consumables purchased based on the budget.

FINDINGS

This section addressed the results. First, the quantitative data were presented. Second, the qualitative data were presented. Third, the activity evaluation forms and records were analyzed.

Quantitative Findings

The descriptive and scale findings were presented, respectively.

Pretest and Posttest Acculturative Stress Scale Scores

This section presented the pretest and posttest ASS scores and related findings.

Table 3. Pretest and Posttest Acculturative Stress Scale Scores

Scale		Pretest				Posttest			
	n	$\bar{x}$	S	Median	Level	$\bar{x}$	S	Median	Level
Language inadequacy	11	2.71	1.34	2.20	Moderate	2.31	.98	2.10	Rarely
Social isolation	11	2.63	.89	2.50	Moderate	2.01	.69	2.00	Rarely
Perceived discrimination	11	2.87	.84	2.57	Moderate	2.06	.74	2.14	Rarely
Academic pressure	11	3.31	.88	3.25	Moderate	2.93	1.20	2.75	Moderate
Guilt towards the family	11	3.33	.88	3.33	Moderate	2.84	.95	3.00	Moderate
Total	11	2.86	.89	2.43	Moderate	2.31	.71	2.18	Rarely

The results showed that participants had a lower posttest mean ASS score than the pretest score, suggesting that the intervention reduced their acculturative stress levels.

Findings regarding Pretest and Posttest Scale Scores

Participants' pretest and posttest scale scores were analyzed using the Wilcoxon signed ranks test. Table 4 shows the results.

Table 4. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test Results

Scale	Posttest-pretest	n	Mean rank	Sum of ranks	Z	p	Sig.	r
Language inadequacy	Negative ranks	7	6.57	46	-1.15	.247	Insignificant	-
	Positive ranks	4	5.00	20				
	Ties	0						
Social isolation	Negative ranks	8	7.38	59	-2.32	.020	Significant	-0.70
	Positive ranks	3	2.33	7				
	Ties	0						
Perceived discrimination	Negative ranks	8	6.13	49	-2.19	.028	Significant	-0.66
	Positive ranks	2	3.00	6				
	Ties	1						
Academic pressure	Negative ranks	6	5.33	32	-1.13	.256	Insignificant	-
	Positive ranks	3	4.33	13				
	Ties	2						
Guilt towards the family	Negative ranks	7	6.71	47	-1.25	.208	Insignificant	-
	Positive ranks	4	4.75	19				
	Ties	0						
Total	Negative ranks	8	6.75	54	-1.86	.062	Insignificant	-
	Positive ranks	3	4.00	12				
	Ties	0						

Participants had a significantly lower mean posttest ASS "social isolation" (Z=-2.32 p=.020; p<.05, r=.70) and "perceived discrimination" (Z=-2.19, p=.028; p<.05, r=.66) subscale score than the pretest score. This result showed that the intervention helped participants become less socially isolated and reduced their perceived discrimination against other cultures.

Findings regarding Qualitative Data

This section presented the findings regarding the activity evaluation forms and interviews.

Findings regarding the First Week of the Intervention

Table 5 shows the participants' views on the contributions of the first week of the intervention.

Table 5. Participants' Views on the Contributions of the First Week of the Intervention

f	Participants' Views	Quotes
8	Making new friends	"I've learned what friendship is and what it's like to be together." (P10) "I've learned how to be happy about the little things in life, and I've learned that what matters is to be together, no matter where you're from. I've learned how to enjoy things together, and that communication is pleasing when there is mutual love and respect. I've also learned to laugh no matter the situation." (P4)
7	Professional competence	"The workshops have made me realize that everybody loves their childhood. Toys play a key role in child development. Games are a way of teaching things. Everybody has a little child in them. You can see that little child with love." (P3) "If I were a teacher, I would use these activities because they've made me realize that getting foreign students all together is a great activity." (P10) "I'll be a classroom teacher. I would like to do these activities with my students." (P11)
7	Creativity	"It was so much fun, but I've realized I'm not that creative. It was at the last moment that I could think of what to do with the Legos. It was all great. I will work hard to be creative. Hopefully. I'd never played such games before. I can say that I participated in all of them, and I enjoyed them all." (P6)

In general, participants liked the first week of the intervention. Most participants stated that the activities made them feel at home and helped them make new friends. They noted that the activities stimulated their creativity and encouraged them to develop professional skills. They added that they would like to provide their students with similar activities in their lectures when they start their careers as teachers.

Findings regarding the Second Week of the Intervention

Table 6 shows the participants' views on the contributions of the second week of the intervention.

Table 6. Participants' Views' on the Contributions of the Second Week of the Intervention

f	Participants' Views	Quotes
6	Creativity	"We've learned about paper marbling and ceramics. The intervention allowed us to develop creative thinking skills and come up with original work of arts." (P9) "Manual skills and imagination, I mean, the intervention helped me develop manual skills and boosted my imagination because I was supposed to come up with something in a certain period." (P2)
4	Professional competence	"I wanted to use the clay to create what I had in mind. I made a cactus out of the clay. I've always wanted to give it a try; I mean; I've watched a lot of videos on the Internet. But this workshop gave me the opportunity. I would like to thank you for that. Besides, things got easier thanks to those who walked us through things." (P11) "With ceramics, I can do fun things for my students, also with the clay. I did it in two activities. I made a man, roses, and a bear." (P10)

f		Quotes
2	Cooperation	"It was the first time I made paper marbling. A friend of mine helped me with it. I enjoyed it a lot." (P7) "The project team consisted of older students, so there's a lot I'm gonna learn from them." (P4)
1	Sociability	"I learned a lot about clay, and friends helped me with it. I would like to thank them. The video about paper marbling was very instructive." (P5)

In general, participants liked the second week of the intervention. Most participants stated that the intervention helped them develop professional, collaboration, and social skills.

Findings regarding the Third Week of the Intervention

Table 7 shows the participants' views on the contributions of the third week of the intervention.

Table 7. Participants' Views on the Contributions of the Third Week of the Intervention

f	Participants' Views	Quotes
3	Professional competence	"I've learned how to use materials, write stories, and put them on stage. The intervention also helped me develop manual skills." (P2) "I've learned how to write stories, and I've learned about drama." (P11) "I've learned how to act and perform." (P7)
3	Cooperation	"Now I know that cooperation is very important because we got to do many activities together." (P2) "I've learned some stuff, like making paper planes. I did it with a friend. He is from a different country. We met and worked together." (P7)
2	Sociability	"We came together and came up with a story, which helped me express myself." (P5) "I've learned about friendship." (P3)
2	Creativity	"I've learned how to act and use my imagination." (P2) "I've learned how to turn my imagination into reality by making paper planes." (P5)

In general, participants liked the third week of the intervention. Most participants noted that the intervention helped them develop professional and cooperation skills. They also added that the intervention made them more sociable and creative.

Findings regarding the Fourth Week of the Intervention

Table 8 shows the participants' views on the contributions of the fourth week of the intervention.

Table 8. Participants' Views on the Contributions of the Fourth Week of the Intervention

f	Participants' Views	Quotes
8	Professional competence	"I've learned how to dance *zeybek* and *halay*. I've also learned about the origin of different kinds of *halay*. Now I know a lot about Turkish culture." (P5) "Today, I've learned about Turkish *zeybek* and *dabke*. At first, they were hard, but they got easier with practice. I want my students to do the same activities because they're so much fun." (P7)
5	Sociability	"The workshop's taught me the importance of friendship and culture." (P10) "I've got dance skills and learned more about culture." (P2) "I've learned the importance of folk dances for society." (P3)

In general, participants liked the fourth week of the intervention. Most participants stated that the intervention helped them develop professional and social skills.

Findings regarding the Fifth Week of the Intervention

Table 9 shows the participants' views on the contributions of the fifth week of the intervention.

Table 9. Participants' Views on the Contributions of the Fifth Week of the Intervention

f	Participants' Views	Quotes
6	Sociability	"I've learned what it's like to think like a human being. I've learned about love and humanity and how to put them into practice." (P11) "The workshop allowed me to socialize with people from different cultures." (P3) "I've learned how to socialize and express myself." (P9) "The workshop has helped me realize that our race or where we come from is not important. I've also learned that we're one big family and that we can get altogether and make common decisions." (P1)
3	Respecting differences	"The workshop's taught me that we shouldn't discriminate against people because of their differences." (P3) "I've learned the names and characteristics of different countries, and I've also learned that no matter where we're from, we're all humans with the same wants and needs." (P1)
3	Professional competence	"The workshop has taught me the importance of freedom. I've also learned how to use drawings to teach things to children. I think that we should use objects to teach what we need to teach our students." (P10) "I've learned how to solve puzzles and play group games." (P7)
1	Cooperation	"I think that the workshop has taught me how to work in groups, boosted my imagination, and helped me develop communication skills." (P2)
1	Empathy	"Working in groups. I've realized that migrant students need attention and help." (P6)

In general, participants liked the fifth week of the intervention. Most participants stated that the intervention made them more sociable and taught them to respect differences. They also noted that the intervention helped them develop professional, cooperation, and empathy skills.

Findings regarding the Sixth Week of the Intervention

Table 10 shows the participants' views on the contributions of the sixth week of the intervention.

Table 10. Participants' Views on the Contributions of the Sixth Week of the Intervention

f	Participants' Views	Quotes
4	Professional competence	"I've learned how to play group games, like 'find your home.'" (P9) "I've learned about the existence of projects like PIKTES (Promoting Integration of Syrian Kids into the Education System) and the studies carried out in Turkey." (P3) "I've learned a lot about migration. I've learned what Turkey has been doing about migration, migrants, and refugees." (P8) "I've learned how Turkey has been helping out migrants and refugees, and I've learned all about the ongoing projects. I've realized that some things I thought were right are actually wrong." (P6)
3	Sociability	"I've appreciated humanity once again." (P9) "I can't speak much because of the language barrier, but it's getting much easier as I spend more time with people from different cultures." (P11)
1	Importance of family	"I've realized that family matters a lot. The workshop has made me think that the things I dream about will come true one day" (P10)
1	Empathy	"I've learned that I shouldn't hurt people's feelings for nothing" (P4)

In general, participants liked the sixth week of the intervention. Most participants stated that the workshop helped them develop professional and social skills. They also noted that the intervention made them realize the importance of family and empathy.

Findings regarding the Seventh Week of the Intervention

Table 11 shows the participants' views on the contributions of the seventh week of the intervention.

Table 11. Participants' Views on the Contributions of the Seventh Week of the Intervention

f	Participants' Views	Quotes
9	Professional competence	"I think I can get my students to draw pictures to help them express themselves." (P10) "I've learned how to make a kite. I can teach that to my students, too." (P3) "I've developed some professional skills like I've learned how to draw pictures, make a kite, and work in groups." (P2) "It'd been so long since I did activities where I could share my stories with my peers. I believe that I can get my students to find pen pals." (P7)
4	Cooperation	"The workshop's taught me the importance of cooperative learning." (P9) "I've learned how to cooperate with others and work in groups. The workshop has also helped me develop manual skills. (P2) "We can cooperate in any shape and form. There is neither language nor cultural barriers between us." (P7)
1	Sociability	"The workshop reminded me of my childhood and the times when I used to dream about things. It's not easy for me to talk to a stranger about myself, but I've realized that it made me feel good writing a letter to a friend of mine. I mean, writing down my dreams in letters, talking about my family to strangers, and finding out about their dreams is like a whole different dimension of friendship." (P1)

In general, participants liked the seventh week of the intervention. Most participants stated that the workshop helped them develop professional and cooperation skills. They also noted that the intervention made them more creative and sociable.

Findings regarding the Eighth Week of the Intervention

Table 12 shows the participants' views on the contributions of the eighth week of the intervention.

Table 12. Participants' Views on the Contributions of the Eighth Week of the Intervention

f	Participants' Views	Quotes
6	Professional competence	"I've learned how to make baby dolls and fix hair." (P5) "I've learned how to make toys. I think I'll teach it to my students and children, too." (P3) "I've learned how to make toys, like all stages of it. It was the first time I used a thread and a needle to make a toy." (P2) "I've developed manual skills. The workshop was an exemplary activity that could help children develop manual skills." (P9)
5	Sociability	"The workshop made me happy and felt like I just can do anything I set my mind to." (P10) "Today was pretty different. Our teachers also participated in the activities. I am happy that the children will get the dolls we made during the activities. We socialized and mingled and became friends. We had so much fun. Most importantly, we were on a project. I hope we'll get to participate in similar projects." (P4) "I would like to participate in similar projects in the future. I would like to contribute to them. I'm happy I attended this project, which was very motivating." (P6) "I've made new friends, which has made me so happy." (P8)
3	Cooperation	"I've learned how to cooperate with others." (P2) "I've learned that helping each other and doing things I like make me happy." (P10) "We made baby dolls together." (P8)
2	Creativity	"I've discovered the power of imagination and creative thinking." (P2) "The workshop has taught me to be brave and confident, to think about creativity. I will work harder to improve myself in that respect." (P6)

In general, participants liked the eighth week of the intervention. Most participants stated that the workshop helped them develop professional, cooperation, and social skills. They also noted that the intervention made them more creative. This may be because the types of activities included in the 8-week practices both cooperate with Turkish preservice teachers and that the activities are mostly carried out as group work.

Interview Findings

Participants were asked what the word "migrant" made them feel. Table 13 shows the results.

Table 13. Participants' Feelings of the Word "Migrant"

f	Participants' Feelings	Quotes
3	Those who leave their homeland	"A migrant is a person who moves from one place to another for a certain reason." (P1) "A migrant is a person who has to leave their country for problems and special situations. A migrant is a person who is forced to leave their homeland." (P4) A migrant is a person who is forced to leave their homeland. Someone who moved from their country to here." (P6)
3	Guest	"Being a nomadic, a student." (P3) "It reminds me that I'm a guest." (P5) "It'd be more reasonable to use the word 'guest' instead of the word 'migrant.' A migrant is someone who has been excluded." (P9)
2	Stranger	"Statelessness, foreign land." (P2) "It reminds me that I'm a stranger." (P5)
1	Cultural change	"I feel lucky because I get to learn about new cultures and customs." (P10)
1	Friendship	Migrants are people who come from different cultures and geographies. It makes me think about good friendships and fraternity." (P10)
1	Weakness	"The word 'migrant' makes me feel weak and needy." P7)
2	Other	"The word 'migrant' doesn't make me feel good. It makes me feel weird." (P8) "The word 'migrant' makes me feel bad, very sad." (P11)

Most participants stated that they longed for their families. Most participants had to leave their homeland for various reasons and study abroad. Some participants noted that leaving their homeland adversely affected their interpersonal relationships, while others remarked that living in a different country improved their lives.

Participants were asked what the word "Turkish" made them feel. Table 14 shows the results

Table 14. Participants' Feelings of the Word "Turkish"

f	Participants' Feelings	Quotes
	Power	"Powerful, disciplined, conventional…" (P1) A free country. It's like my own country because I'm originally from Turkmenistan." (P6) "It reminds me of the actual Turkishness. Spiritual values." (P9)
	Pride	"I'm a Turkman, too, and I'm proud of being a Turk. I'm a Turkman, too. I'm proud of that word. We have a glorious history." (P4)
	Nation	"A unity of a nation" (P2) "A nation" (P3)
	Hospitality	"A hospitable country" (P3)
	Trust	"To me, the word 'Turkish' means trust, helping those in need, and brothers of the desolate." (P7) "To me, the word "Turkish" means love and trust." (P8)
	Cooperation	"Brotherhood, cooperation" (P2)
	Unity	Unity, togetherness, and peace make you feel every possibility of learning about life. The word 'Turkish' means a state. (P10)
2	Other	"The word 'Turkish' makes me feel like I don't belong to it." (P5)

Most participants stated that they liked Turkey and the Turkish people because they were originally from Turkic Republics. Most participants noted that the word "Turkish" made them feel happy.

Participants were asked what problems they thought might arise between two people from different countries. Table 15 shows the results.

Table 15. Participants' Views of Possible Problems between Two People from Different Countries

f	Possible problems	Quotes
12	Culture	"There may be a cultural problem." (P1) "I think that when two people from different countries come together, they may sometimes argue and misunderstand each other because they have different traditions." (P7) "At first, there may be some problems because of cultural differences." (P8) "There may be some conflicts at first, but they can overcome them with time." (P9) "Cultural differences may cause problems from time to time." (P2) "Cultural differences, like food culture." (P4) "Cultural differences" (P6)
10	Language	"There may be language problems because they don't know each other's language. So, only language problems" (P6) "There may be language problems." (P1) "Language problems" (P2) "Language problems" (P4) "Some language problems and some anxiety. I mean, language and speaking" (P10) I'm shy when it comes to talking to Turkish people, so, I can't speak Turkish well. It's the language barrier; that's the cause of all problems. (P11) "Language problems" (P5) "There may be some language problems at first, but they can overcome them with time." (P9)
1	Communication	"Communication problems because it's not their mother tongue, so they can't express themselves properly" (P5) "They may have difficulty meeting and getting to know each other." (P3)
1	Alienation	"Alienation" (P3)
3	None	"I don't think they'll have any problems. There are many cultural similarities." (P8)

Participants stated that they had at least one migrant student in their classrooms. They noted that those migrant students got along well with teachers and Turkish and other migrant classmates. However, they remarked that they had been unable to socialize with Turkish peers for three semesters due to distance learning introduced as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. For participants, the greatest challenge was language and communication. In this context, they were asked what should be done to help them improve their relationships with Turkish peers. Table 16 shows the results.

Table 16. Participants' Recommendations

f	Recommendations	Quotes
6	Orientation activities	"Universities should offer orientation activities about countries, cultures, languages, and education." (P4) "Students should be encouraged to share their cultures and traditions." (P7) "There should be activities on cultural differences. I think that such activities are important for acculturation." (P2) "There should be activities where students meet and get to know one another. (P3) There should be activities where students get to know one another. (P5)
4	Projects	"Group activities. Universities should offer projects to help migrant students feel welcome and make sure that they don't feel excluded. It could be picnics, going out, taking walks on the beach, etc." (P6) "Universities should offer projects where students work in groups on different subjects. There should be trips, group games, and activities that would strengthen communication." (P9) "Projects have a great impact on such situations. There should be like free-style things, like activities and training programs." (P4) "Universities should offer different types of projects like the TUBITAK project, like trips, activities, and competitions." (P8)
2	Courses	"Universities should provide migrant students with courses to help them develop academic skills. They should provide them with different activities and programs." (P1) "Course-related activities" (P3)
1	Professional activities	"I wanna speak for my department. It should provide attractive materials or mock-ups to migrant students to motivate them." (P10)
1	Other	"I would like to thank you. I suggest that universities offer projects, such as the one we've participated in." (P2)

Participants recommended that universities offer projects and activities to reduce migrant students' acculturative stress levels. They noted that such activities could help them develop communication and adaptation skills. Participants were asked what the intervention contributed to them. Table 17 shows the results.

Table 17. Participants' Views of the Contribution of the Intervention

f	Contribution	Quotes
6	Sociability	"The intervention has taught us that we can be friends even though we're from different countries" (P1) "I've learned about Turkish culture and the cultures of other countries. I've realized that I can make friends with people from other countries" (P2) "The workshop's allowed me to make new friends and socialize with them. (P3) "More than I can count…because the intervention has had numerous contributions, like communication, culture, getting to know others, social activities…"(P6) "Most importantly, the workshop's taught me the importance of friendship and making new friends." (P10) "I've made new friends and socialized with them." (P11)
4	Human value	"The workshop's helped me learn that we're all human beings, regardless of color, age, and race, and that we can love one another and become friends because we're all human beings. The most important thing is love." (P4) "I've learned to look into the concept of 'human.'" (P5) "I've learned the value of humanity and that getting to know people from different cultures is important. (P9) "The workshop's helped me develop a different perspective." (P8)
1	Other	"The workshop's made significant contributions, like language skills and getting to know different cultures." (P11)

Participants stated that the intervention helped them appreciate humanity and respect differences. They noted that the intervention helped them develop social and language skills and get to know people from different cultures. The photographs and video records supported the participants' statements as they treated each other with respect, love, and understanding.

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Every year, more and more international students prefer to study in Turkey (Mete & Özgenel, 2021; Yılmaz, 2018; Yılmaz & Güçlü, 2021; YÖK, 2020). Therefore, it is necessary to reduce migrant preservice teachers' acculturative stress levels before entering the profession. This study provided an intervention involving interactive activities and workshops.

Acculturative stress affects how migrant preservice teachers, especially international students, adapt to the host culture. Our participants had a lower mean posttest ASS score than the pretest score, suggesting that the intervention reduced their acculturative stress levels. Participants also had a significantly lower mean posttest ASS "social isolation" and "perceived discrimination" subscale score than the pretest score. However, there was no significant difference between the pretest and posttest ASS "guilt towards the family" subscale scores. This may be because all participants live far from their families. This is supported by the fact that they talked a lot about their longing for their families. There was also no significant difference between the pretest and posttest ASS "academic pressure" subscale scores. This may be because participants cannot express themselves academically because they have difficulty understanding their courses due to the language barrier. Therefore, they suggested that universities offer in-class activities to help them develop language skills. Akdağ and Koçak (2020) also found that migrant preservice teachers experienced acculturative stress because they had a guilty conscience about their families. Başaran Alagöz and Geçkil (2017) also observed that migrant students longed for their families and countries.

Although research shows that the language barrier is the greatest challenge for international college students (Aubrey, 1991; Oropeza & Fitzgibbon, 1991; Redmond & Bunyi, 1993; Yeh & Inose, 2003), they have moderate difficulty communicating with their teachers and peers. In this respect, our

results are different from what has been reported by Akdağ and Koçak (2020). We can state that migrant preservice teachers who experience moderate social isolation are socially challenged. Our interviews showed that participants socialized mostly with their fellow country people and spoke their native languages when they spent time together. Although some researchers report social isolation as a critical stressor (Eustace, 2007; Chen, 1999; Bradley, 2000), others argue that it is rarely a stressor (Akdağ & Koçak, 2020)

Our participants had moderate acculturative stress levels regarding perceived discrimination for two reasons. First, participants are treated lovingly and respectfully by their peers and supported by their teachers. Second, their university has a significantly high number of international students. Researchers argue that perceived discrimination is prevalent among migrant students (Westwood & Ishiyama, 1990; Pedersen, 1995; Baker, 2011; Snoubar, 2015; Zavalsız & Gündağ, 2017; Dinler, Hacıfazlıoğlu, 2020). However, our participants noted that they never discriminated against their teachers and peers and were never discriminated against by them.

Our qualitative results showed that most participants liked the interactive activities. Research shows that preservice teachers meet new people, understand them better, and communicate better with them when they work together in activities (Sezgin & Yolcu, 2016; Yılmaz, 2020; Çetin & Ağçam, 2021; De Jong, 2020). Research also shows that interactive activities help preservice teachers develop professional and social skills (Sezgin & Yolcu, 2016).

The effect of migration on the social structure depends on its reason. For example, refugees sometimes cause socioeconomic and psychological problems because they flee their homeland without any preparation or prior knowledge of the country of destination (Tümtaş & Ergun, 2016; Altunbaş, 2020; Sarvan & Efe, 2020; Ulaş, Baydaş & Demi, 2020). Cultural differences and adaptation problems affect the education of refugee students. We must avoid racist rhetorics and provide refugee students with well-equipped teachers to help them have better academic experiences. Most research emphasizes that we must create an inclusive cultural atmosphere for refugee students (Alkalay, 2020; Çetin & Ağçam, 2021). Teachers who respect multiculturalism are more likely to provide their students with an inclusive classroom setting (Soylu, Kaysılı & Sever, 2020). We should inform teachers about the integration problems that refugee children might experience (EU, 2012; Ereş, 2015; Sakız, 2016; Kiremit, Akpınar & Tüfekci Akcan, 2018; Ağcadağ Çelik, 2019; Dolapcı & Kavgacı, 2020; Gülcegül, 2020; Şahin, 2020). Teachers who are in one-to-one contact with students and monitor their mental health, adaptation, and acculturation are more likely to have positive attitudes toward their migrant students and their parents (İşigüzel & Baldık, 2019; Öztürk, 2019; Keleş, 2020).

Researchers should conduct further studies and develop projects to ensure that migrant children can adapt to the host culture quickly and smoothly. More research is warranted about inclusive education and multiculturalism. Future studies should focus on the components of "academic pressure" and "guilt towards the family." Authorities should design psychosocial support programs. Universities should provide international preservice teachers with activities to help them learn by doing and living with their peers. Researchers should also focus on active citizenship and provide teachers, preservice teachers, and even parents with opportunities where they can work together with international students.

Ethical Statement: This study was conducted with the approval of Ondokuz Mayis University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee dated 28.05.2021 and numbered 2021/474.

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