

The Impact of Erasmus Programme on the Organizational Learning Capacity and Globalization

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Abstract

Globalization is among the most discussed subjects of research recently because it has both positive and negative impacts on all social structures and organizations. Many people consider globalization as a rescue to be embraced right away, while others have completely opposite thoughts. During globalization, countries struggle with a significant issue to offer an education system which would maintain the cultural and natural values as they provide the essential components of a global world such as acquisition of information, skills, attitudes and behaviors. Such education systems and organizations require a learning capacity in order to survive and success. Therefore, the present study aimed to examine organizational learning capacity and globalization through the mediator role of the Erasmus Programme in higher education institutions. The study data was collected using a survey-based method. SPSS and AMOS software programs were used for data analysis. The results showed that organizational learning capacity has a positive impact on globalization, in which the Erasmus Programme acts as a mediator.

Keywords: Organizational learning capacity, globalization, Erasmus, higher education institutions

1. INTRODUCTION

The introduction of Internet and social networks with the communication and information technologies has brought great transformations in social, political, economic and cultural life. Defined as the globalization process, such advances have improved people's opportunities to access experiences and information in other parts of the world easily. These opportunities have also led the world to become a global marketplace and a field of competition, and success in this marketplace and competitive environment has become possible with a sustainable and quality education. Typically defined as the process of achieving behavioral changes in individuals toward the desired course, education bears the responsibility to develop democratic consciousness and attitudes in individuals and to get individuals acquire the knowledge and skills as required by the time as well as create new knowledge and transfer cultural background.

For the last three decades, not just the very advanced industrial countries, but also the developing countries have been intensely experiencing the revolution of information technologies. The increasingly accelerated process of change has different influences on education, and changes are occurring at almost all stages of the education system, either in producing knowledge or sharing the produced knowledge. With the information age, knowledge has become the most significant source of all organizations. To have updated knowledge, organizations and especially higher education institutions have to search, develop and produce new information and possess the ability to learn. Such ability is called organizational learning capacity, and it is considered as a key element for organizations toward a competitive edge (e.g. Mavondo et al., 2005) since it facilitates understanding the customers' perspectives and opinions, learning from partners, past experiences, mistakes and current directions (Baker & Sinkula; 2007; Dibrell et al., 2014).

In recent years, the globalization term has been one of the concepts most commonly used to describe social issues and events. Globalization is a phenomenon with an increasing impact on economic, political and social domains. Social and economic policies, scientific disciplines have become affected by the path created by globalization. In this regard, multinational companies, international organizations such as the European Union (EU) and non-governmental organizations at the global level are considered as the important actors involved in the expansion and implementation of globalization policies. The terms such as adaptation capability and cultural and individual social experiences among those used to define globalization (Leisink, 1999) have been recently included in the field of application through educational policies. Therefore, the Erasmus Programme executed by EU can be considered as one of these fields of application.

Based on the above theoretical background, the aim of present study is to explore the relationship between organizational learning capacity and globalization in higher educational institutions, and the mediator role of the Erasmus Programme in this relationship.

2. ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING CAPACITY

Organizational learning refers to the availability of knowledge and competency in an organization at any particular time regardless of the people concerned (Senge, 1990; Voudouris et al., 2012). It is concerned about how organizations learn, and accordingly, how they enhance their competitiveness and innovativeness. The capacity of an organization to learn, organizational learning capacity, represents the ability to develop novel information as well as improve available information (Hult et al., 2002; Nevis et al., 1995).

A learning organization provides an organizational culture which induces and encourages learning at various levels such as individual, group and organization (Sunassee & Haumant, 2004). Knowledge transfer should also be enabled among these levels in such culture. Accordingly, a learning organization should be able to produce, obtain, transfer knowledge as well as modify its behaviors in order to represent new insights and knowledge (Garvin, 1994). Dodgson (1993) defines a learning organization as a company with strategies and designs to foster and maximize organizational learning. When there is not any process for the members to continuously learn, organizational learning is not expected to realize. Nevertheless, a transformation of individual learning is needed to turn into organizational learning. Such transformation can occur via individual and organizational memory (Chen et al., 2003). The knowledge obtained from individual learning are stored in a single memory. When such individual memory is turned into a part of the organizational memory, individual learning evolves into organizational learning. Thus, the occurrence of organizational learning is rare when organizational knowledge cannot be accessed.

Learning is improved when acquiring, distributing, interpreting and organizing knowledge are facilitated. In fact, organizational learning occurs in organizations in which the leaders strongly stimulate and encourage learning (Garvin, 1994). The culture of organizational learning allows development of the organization and enhances the capabilities of the organization where decisions are made collectively by the members (Teo & Wang, 2005). The organizational learning research demonstrates that there is a constant change in cognitive and behavioral elements of creating, retaining and transferring knowledge (Argote, 2012; Crossan et al., 1999). The organizational learning view proposes that there are several repositories in which the individually-learned knowledge is incorporated and stored. The primary repository of knowledge is individuals within an organization, which brings the difficulty to ascend that individual knowledge to the organizational level (e.g., Argote & Ingram, 2000; Crossan et al., 1999). Knowledge changes and modifies through learning. Then, the new knowledge is incorporated into the culture of the organization (Starbuck, 1992) and social networks (Dean & Kretschmer, 2007), and stored in the processes and technologies of the organization (Argote & Ingram, 2000).

An organization, which learns from its business partners' success, develops enhanced insight and novel information toward the process (Gulati & Higgins, 2003). With organizational learning, organizations can determine which emerging technologies are beneficial and develop competency in a short time, resulting in a leading place in the market (Walsh & Kirchhoff, 2002). As well, the learning capability enhances employee innovativeness and innovative processes within the organization (Senge, 1990). Therefore, learning and innovation are essential to an organization aiming at a competitive advantage in business (Senge, 1990; Crawford & Di Benedetto, 2010). Employee innovativeness has been shown to promote when there is a clear focus on organizational learning (Özçelik & Taymaz, 2004). Sustainable innovation is difficult when learning is not incorporated into the culture of an organization.

According to Teo and Wang (2005), the means to improve organizational learning capacity include system orientation, learning orientation climate, information acquisition, utilization orientation, knowledge sharing and distribution orientation. Schneckenberg et al. (2015) demonstrated that the complicated interaction of organizational knowledge sharing and organizational learning processes support innovative capabilities and allows an organizational competitive edge in a rapidly changing environment.

3. GLOBALIZATION

Globalization is defined by using several substitutes such as new world order, postmodernism, localization and neoliberalism (Sönmez, 2002). Globalization has turned into a magical word used to express the change in almost all fields of the world from economy to politics and from social politics to culture. It has been viewed as a concept that would open the doors of the past and future and become a slogan-like trend

expression. This phenomenon represents the integration of the world in political, economic, social and cultural domains by making the distance become less important in every field.

All sorts of information are now accessed immediately and rapidly due to technological developments; new global economies are shaped due to economic developments, and every social system undergoes a transformation so that new modes of communication and new social interactions would be created due to social changes. The new structure caused by globalization enables connections and bridges among people. Today, globalization is also defined as the association and collection of social relationships. Therefore, social relationships serve as a prerequisite during the globalization process and intercultural interactions gain importance (Cafoğlu & Somuncuoğlu, 2000).

Globalization has become a key feature of modern social life in recent years. It is not difficult to observe global issues, institutions and even global events everywhere (Holton, 1998). The world is becoming gradually small and this brings the necessity for societies to be more competitive in the international arena and act considering the cultural values of their individuals in order to continue their existence. In a nationally and internationally competitive environment, this can be achieved through effective education systems with the ability to provide the requirements of a global world. As globalization is a cultural and political process, it is obvious that education plays an important part in this process.

Globalization inevitably affects universities as is the case with other economic areas. A university graduate would have to possess the labor requirements and employee skills of global corporations in order to have a place in global economy. Otherwise, he/she would not be employed, or even he/she is recruited, he/she would not stay in that workplace for a long time. Universities should be engaged in global connections and should achieve international standards due to reasons such as the need to participate in international-scale projects, foreign student employment and employment of their graduates in international corporations. Therefore, internationalization comes into the picture as an important issue.

The education of today should have the characteristics of strengthening the social structure and activating the social dynamics besides occupation, skills and technology. It is a known fact that an education system based on only the assessment of concrete findings from technological and economic components would be deficient or ineffective. Education in a globalizing world is a process enabling continuous learning, knowing the information, being informed, producing knowledge and living with knowledge.

A knowledge-based society requires individuals who are creative, examiner, thinker and producer. Accordingly, the role of education institutions in the knowledge-based society is undergoing a change. The education of the information age primarily aims to educate creative and innovative individuals. Today, it is focused on teaching how individuals can access the required information rather than directly transferring information to the individual. Thus, an important notion here is learning how to learn. An individual can reach any information needed if he/she knows how to learn.

In light of this background, the present study develops the following hypothesis:

H₁: Organizational learning capacity has a positive impact on globalization.

4. THE ERASMUS PROGRAMME

The Lifelong Learning Programme, as funded by the European Commission, provides support for various activities of training and education throughout Europe and offers opportunities for lifelong learning from all stages. As part of this, Erasmus serves as the leading program of educational exchange regarding higher education. The purpose of this program was to increase student mobility across Europe. Since its introduction, the Erasmus Programme has been encouraging student and teacher mobility in higher education institutions throughout the European Union. The Programme has changed considerably since its introduction. The Erasmus Programme designed for 2014-2020 will include higher education, school level, job training and adult education. Furthermore, the regional scope of the Programme will also be expanded to non-European Union countries (European Commission, 2013). Since the beginning of the Erasmus Programme, the student mobility activities have included 3 million individuals.

Erasmus is a program benefited by the higher education institutions of 47 countries which are member states of the European Union (EU); Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway which are not member states of the EU but members of the European Economic Area (EEA), and Turkey which is a candidate state for EU. The purpose of the program is to improve the higher education quality across Europe and enrich the European dimension. With the Erasmus Programme, it is aimed to encourage transnational cooperation between

universities, enable student and academician exchange within Europe, academic recognition of the studies and degrees in participant countries and contribute to develop transparency. The program also aims for universities providing high-quality higher education service in Europe to educate individuals who are equipped and able to respond more to the expectations of the business world as an ultimate goal (Duman, 2001).

The most important feature of the Erasmus Programme is to encourage academician and administrative personnel exchange (mobility). The program provides students, academicians and administrative personnel with the opportunity to gain international experience by receiving education for minimum one year or being engaged in different practices at the higher education institutions in different countries (Kondakçı, 2003).

In order to realize a mobility activity within the scope of the Erasmus Programme, one of the parties must be a member state of the EU. As Turkey is not a member state yet, the partner institution must be from the EU member states. The mobility activities take place either between the higher education institutions or between higher education institutions and enterprises or organizations. As part of Erasmus+, student mobility of the students registered in formal education in the higher education institutions happens either as learning mobility or placement (internship) mobility. Within the framework of bilateral agreements to be signed by the higher education institutions, the Erasmus Programme aspires to enable students and academicians to advance their academic knowledge, participate in studies and become closely acquainted with cultures of the European countries by spending a part of their education/training time at the partner universities in other participant countries.

Review of the literature reveals different studies regarding the assessment of the Erasmus Programme. For instance, Ünal (2011) evaluated the EU Erasmus Student Mobility Programme for Learning and the training program covered in this context with the perspective of Erasmus coordinators and students based on the context, input, process and product (CIPP) model. İşeri (2005), in turn, examined the effects of the Erasmus Programme on higher education programs, and academician and student exchange using a qualitative research method. Şahin (2007) explored the extent to which the Erasmus Programme meets student expectations, whether the individual goals of the Programme are achieved, and the degree to which the participant students change their attitudes and beliefs toward the Europe. From this standpoint, the present study develops the following hypotheses:

H_2 : The Erasmus Programme has a positive impact on globalization.

H_3 : The Erasmus Programme mediates the relationship between organizational learning and globalization.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1. Research Goal

The aim of the present study is to determine the relationship between organizational learning capacity and globalization, and the mediating impact of the Erasmus Programme on such relationship. According to the model developed for this purpose, it is assumed that organizational learning capacity has a positive effect on globalization, and the Erasmus Programme mediates the relationship between organizational learning capacity and globalization.

5.2. Participants and Procedure

A sample of 186 participants working in the higher education institutions was selected by convenience sampling. Study data were collected using questionnaires. The questionnaires were completed online and collected over a period of 8 weeks. The first part of the survey involved a set of questions to establish the demographic characteristics of the participants. Of the individuals who completed the research survey, 54.5% were female, 78.2% were aged 30 and above, 82% were academicians involved in training activities, 18% were academicians with managing positions, 80% were academicians with a minimum 3-year experience.

5.3. Measures

Organizational learning capacity was measured using a 21-item instrument developed by Teo-Wang et al. (2006). The questions were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). Sample items from this instrument include "All activities that take place in business transaction processes are clearly defined" and "My firm is susceptible to new technology and/or method to do business". The Cronbach's alpha of the scale was >0.70 .

Globalization was measured using the scale from the study by Tatlıdil and Esgin Günder (2013). The scale consisted of 6 items to measure the effect Globalized Values on Educational Institutions. The sample items include "Education should be a lifelong activity" and "Education system should give students a sense of global citizenship". The items were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree").

The Erasmus Programme was measured using a scale from the study by Özdem (2013). The scale consisted of 6 items (e.g., “The Erasmus Programme provides individual contributions to the participants”, and “The Erasmus Programme contributes to globalize the higher education institutions”), which were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”).

6. RESULTS

6.1. Statistical Data Analysis

SPSS for Windows 22.00 and AMOS 22.0 software programs were used to analyze and interpret the responses collected in the research. Factor analyses were applied to the research questionnaires and the Cronbach's alpha values were calculated. The adequacy of three instruments for the factor analysis was assessed in SPSS program, and confirmatory factor analyses were conducted separately in AMOS program. The path analysis of the model created using structural equation modeling was performed using AMOS software program. The reliability analysis was conducted using the Cronbach's Alpha model and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were found close to the original coefficients of the instruments. Regarding the questionnaires used to collect data, the translate-back translate method was applied to those other than used in the Turkish literature.

6.2. Scales and Construct Validity

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted for the construct validity of the scales used in the model. With confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), whether measurement models were significant for each scale was investigated using AMOS 22.0 software program. The results revealed that the measurement models were significant. Later, the adequacy of the whole model was evaluated using fit indices.

6.3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Erasmus Scale (ERS Scale)

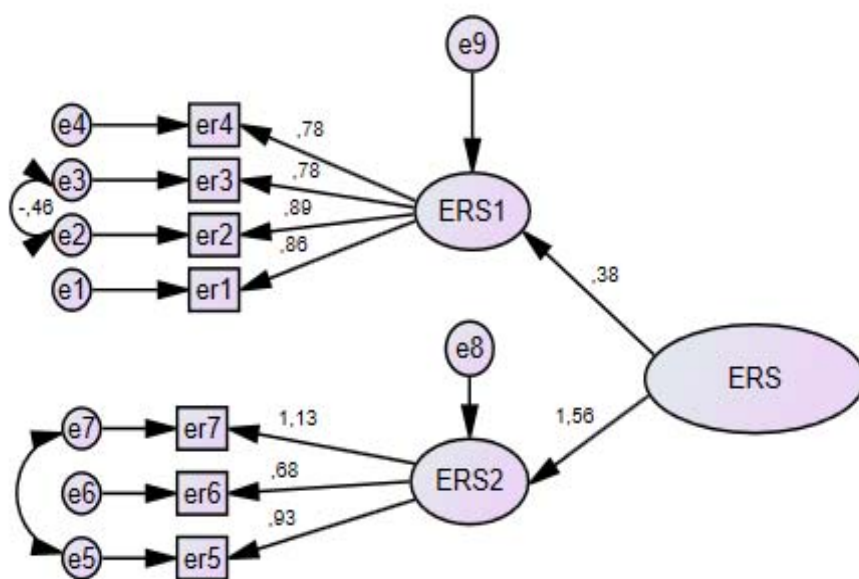


Figure 1. Erasmus Scale CFA

The confirmatory factor analysis of the 7-item Erasmus scale revealed that the data had an excellent fit to factor analysis with its two-factor structure, KMO=.838 and Bartlett's test p value ($p < 0.05$). The variance explanatoriness rate was 78.167%. The reliability analysis of the 7-item Erasmus scale revealed a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .900, indicating high reliability of the Erasmus scale.

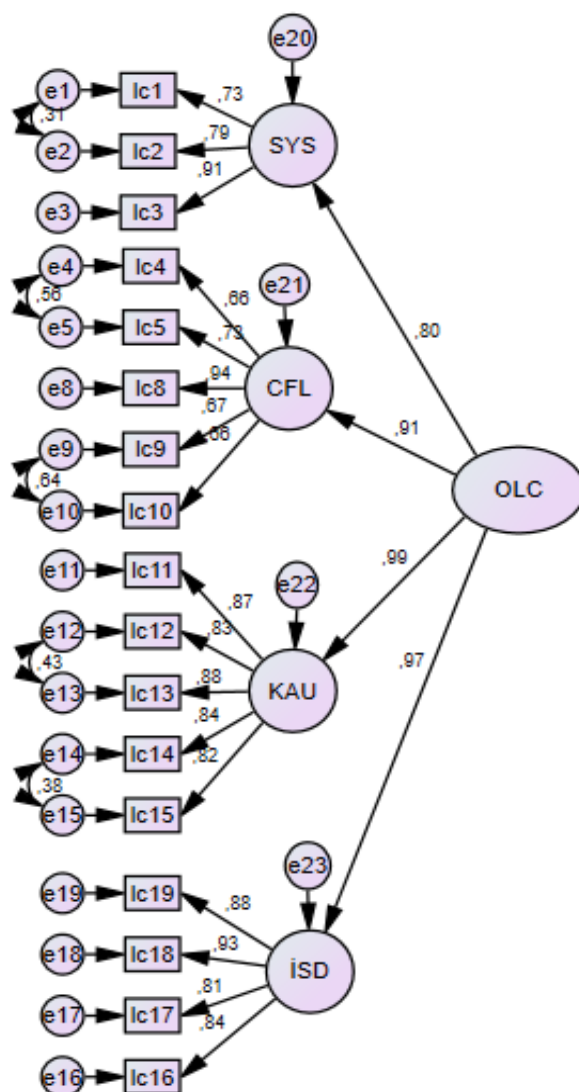
The confirmatory factor analysis of the Erasmus scale was found statistically significant since the model test values from the confirmatory factor analysis were $\chi^2 (40.394)$, $\chi^2/df (4.038)$ and $p < 0.05$. The goodness of fit indices [**GFI** (.954), **CFI** (.978) and **RMSEA** (.080)] were within the acceptable limits, and therefore, the CFA result of the Erasmus scale was applicable.

Table 1. ERS subdimensions and items (?)

No	Factor	Items
1	ERS(1) Personal Interests	1. The Erasmus Programme provides individual contributions to the participants.
2		2. The Erasmus Programme provides academic contributions to the participants.
3		3. The Erasmus Programme has social impacts.
4		4. The Erasmus Programme contributes to the linguistic skills of the participants.
5	ERS(2) Academic Interests	5. The Erasmus Programme has cultural impacts on the participants.
6		6. The Erasmus Programme contributes to globalize the higher education institutions.
		7. The Erasmus Programme brings higher education stakeholders a vision.

6.4. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Organizational Learning Capacity

The confirmatory factor analysis was applied to 17 items remained after removing 4 items of the Organizational Learning Capacity (OLC) Scale due to low factor loadings, and the analysis revealed that the data had an excellent fit to factor analysis due to its four-factor structure, KMO=.911 and Bartlett's test p value ($p < 0.05$). The variance explanatoriness rate was 75.156%. The reliability analysis of the 17-item organizational learning capacity scale revealed a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .965, indicating high reliability of the OLC scale.

**Figure 2. Organizational Learning Capacity Scale CFA**

The confirmatory factor analysis of the organizational learning capacity scale was found significant since the model test values from the confirmatory factor analysis were χ^2 (456.04), χ^2/df (4.108) and $p < 0.05$. The goodness of fit indices [**GFI** (.902), **CFI** (.9503) and **RMSEA** (.078)] were within the acceptable limits, and therefore, the CFA result of the organizational learning capacity scale was applicable.

6.5. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Globalization Scale

The confirmatory factor analysis of the 6-item Globalization scale revealed that the data had an excellent fit to factor analysis with its two-factor structure, KMO=.757 and Bartlett's test p value ($p < 0.05$). The variance explanatoriness rate was 74.8%. The reliability analysis of the 6-item globalization scale revealed a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .801, indicating high reliability of the globalization scale.

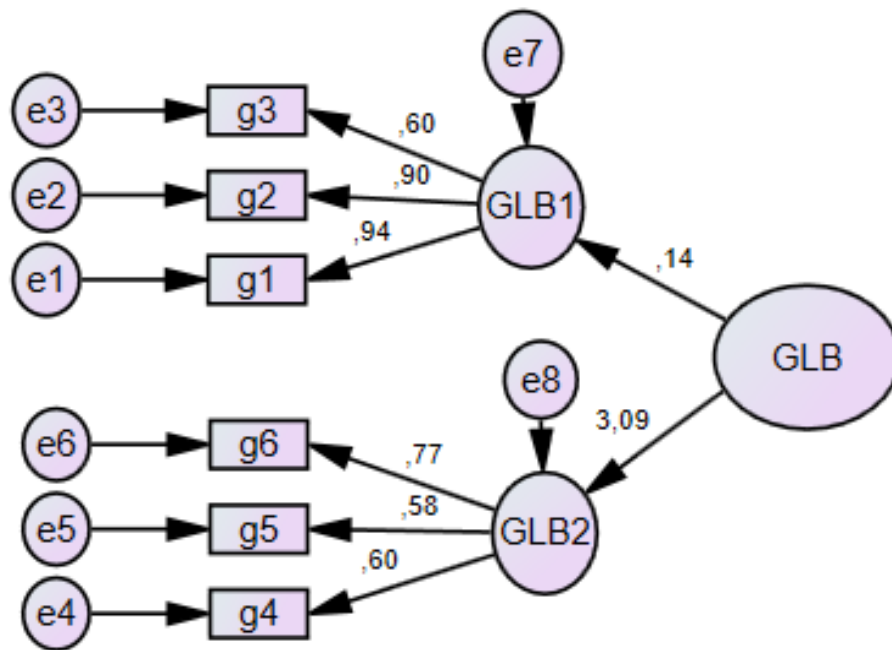


Figure 3. Globalization Scale CFA

The confirmatory factor analysis of the globalization scale was found statistically significant since the model test values from the confirmatory factor analysis were χ^2 (19.233), χ^2/df (2.404) and $p < 0.05$. The goodness of fit indices [**GFI** (.979), **CFI** (.983) and **RMSEA** (.069)] were within the acceptable limits, and therefore, the CFA result of the globalization scale was applicable.

Table 2. GLB subdimensions and items

No	Factor	Items
1	GLB(1) SPECIFIC BENEFITS	1. Education should be a lifelong activity.
2		2. Education should always exist in anytime, anywhere and all parts of the life.
3		3. Education should focus on critical thinking, communication and problem-solving skills.
4	GLB(2) OVERALL BENEFITS	4. As learning is an important factor for social development, education should have the characteristics of investing in social development.
5		5. Education system should give students a sense of global citizenship.
6		6. Education should enable the ability to establish partnerships between individuals and institutions.

6.6. The effect of Organizational Learning Capacity (OLC) on Globalization (GLB) (Model I)

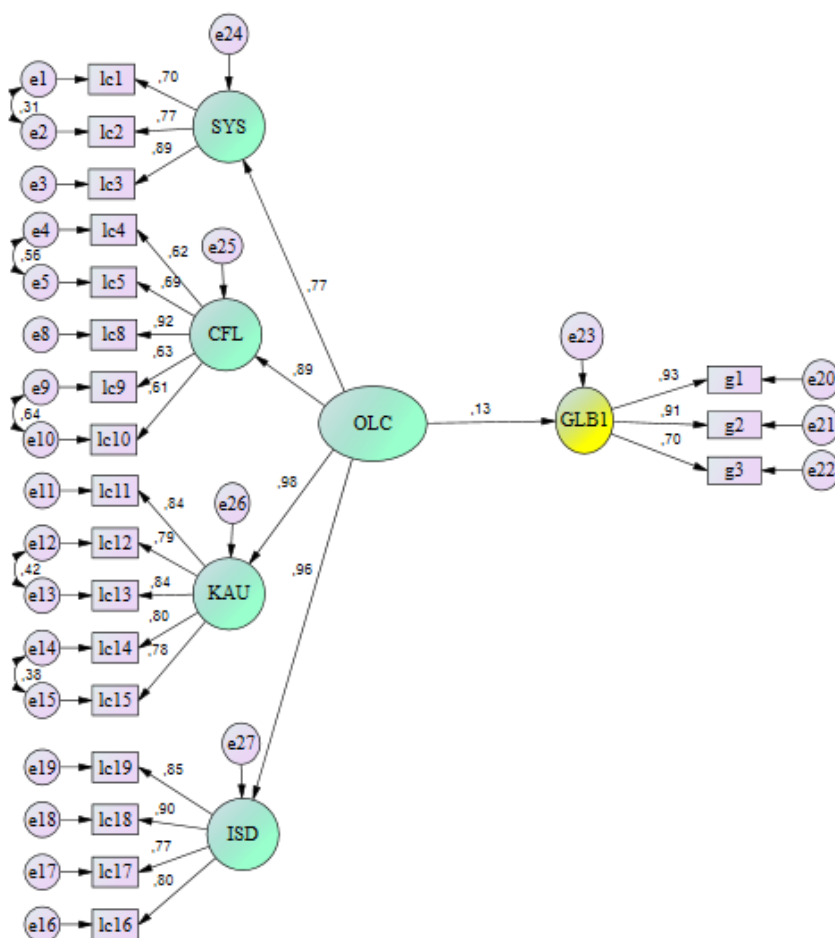


Figure 5. The effect of OLC on GLB1

The model for the effect of organizational learning capacity (OLC) on globalization (GLB1) was found significant since the model test values were χ^2 (588.116), χ^2/df (2.987) and $p < 0.05$. The goodness of fit indices [**GFI** (.901), **CFI** (.961), **RMSEA** (.070) and **SRMR** (.047)] were within the acceptable limits, and therefore, the structural equation modeling the effect of organizational learning capacity (OLC) on globalization (GLB1) is considered valid.

6.7. The effect of Erasmus Programme (ERS) on Globalization (GLB) (Model II)

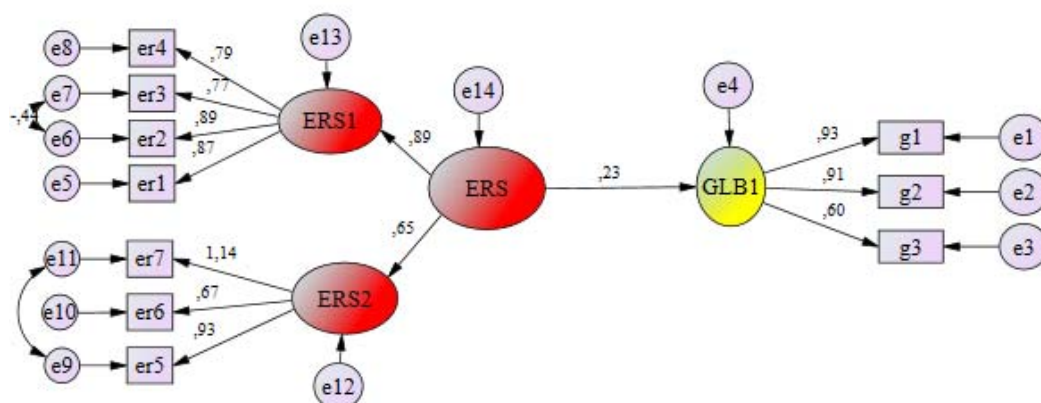


Figure 6. The effect of ERS on GLB1

The model for the effect of Erasmus Programme (ERS1) on globalization (GLB1) was found significant since the model test values χ^2 (115.940), χ^2/df (3.865) and $p < 0.05$. The goodness of fit indices [**GFI** (.937), **CFI** (.955), **RMSEA** (.069) and **SRMR** (.043)] were within the acceptable limits, and therefore, the structural equation modeling the effect of Erasmus Programme (ERS1) on globalization (GLB1) is considered valid.

6.8. The effect of Organizational Learning Capacity (OLC) on Erasmus Programme (ERS) (Model III)

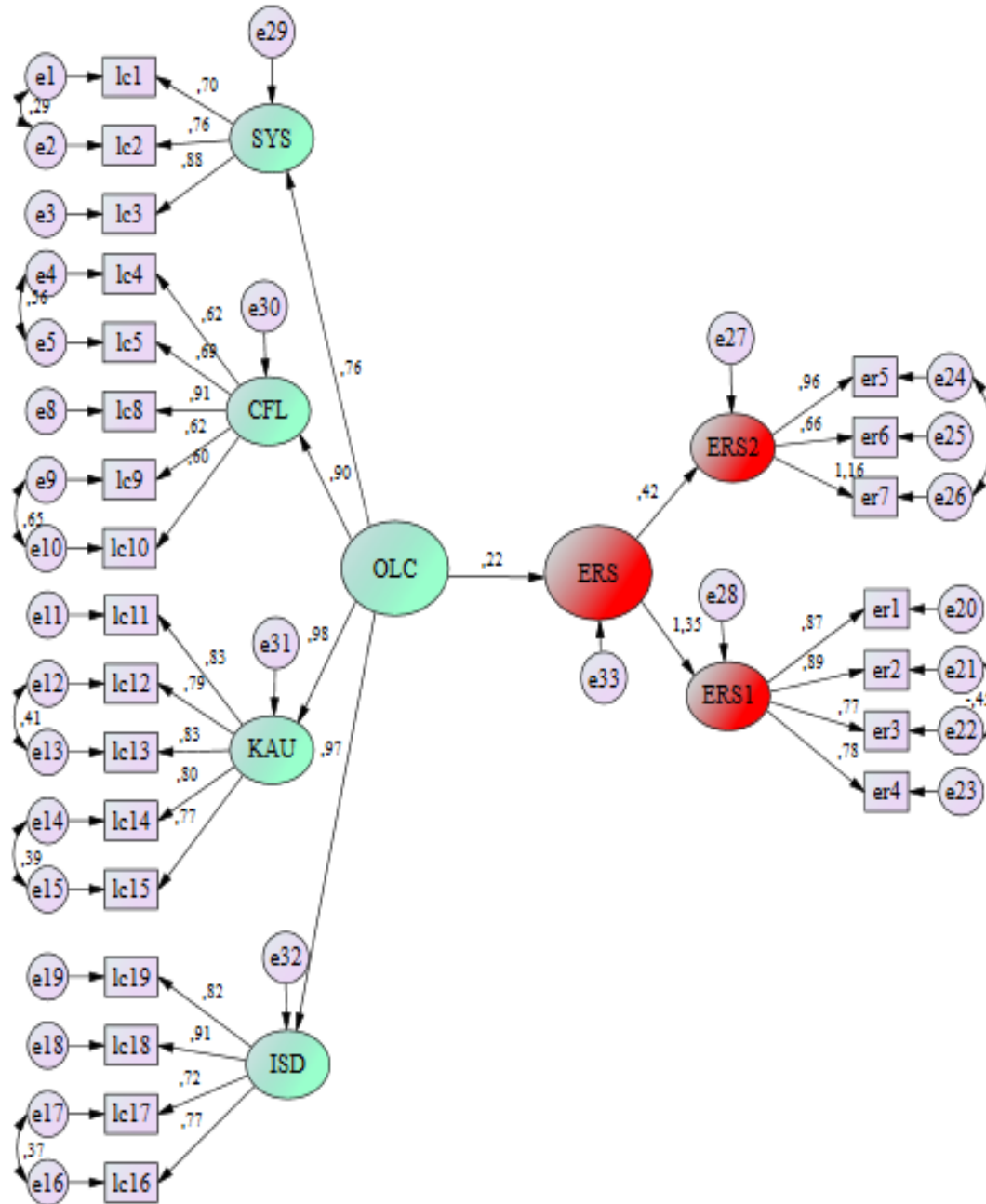


Figure 7. The effect of OLC on ERS

The model for the effect of organizational learning capacity (OLC) on Erasmus Programme (ERS) was found significant since the model test values were χ^2 (908.340), χ^2/df (3.833) and $p < 0.05$. The goodness of fit indices [**GFI** (.923), **CFI** (.965), **RMSEA** (.062) and **SRMR** (.049)] were within the acceptable limits, and therefore, the structural equation modeling the effect of organizational learning capacity (OLC) on Erasmus Programme (ERS1) is considered valid.

6.9. The mediating effect of Erasmus Programme (ERS) on the impact of Organizational Learning Capacity (OLC) on Globalization (GLB)

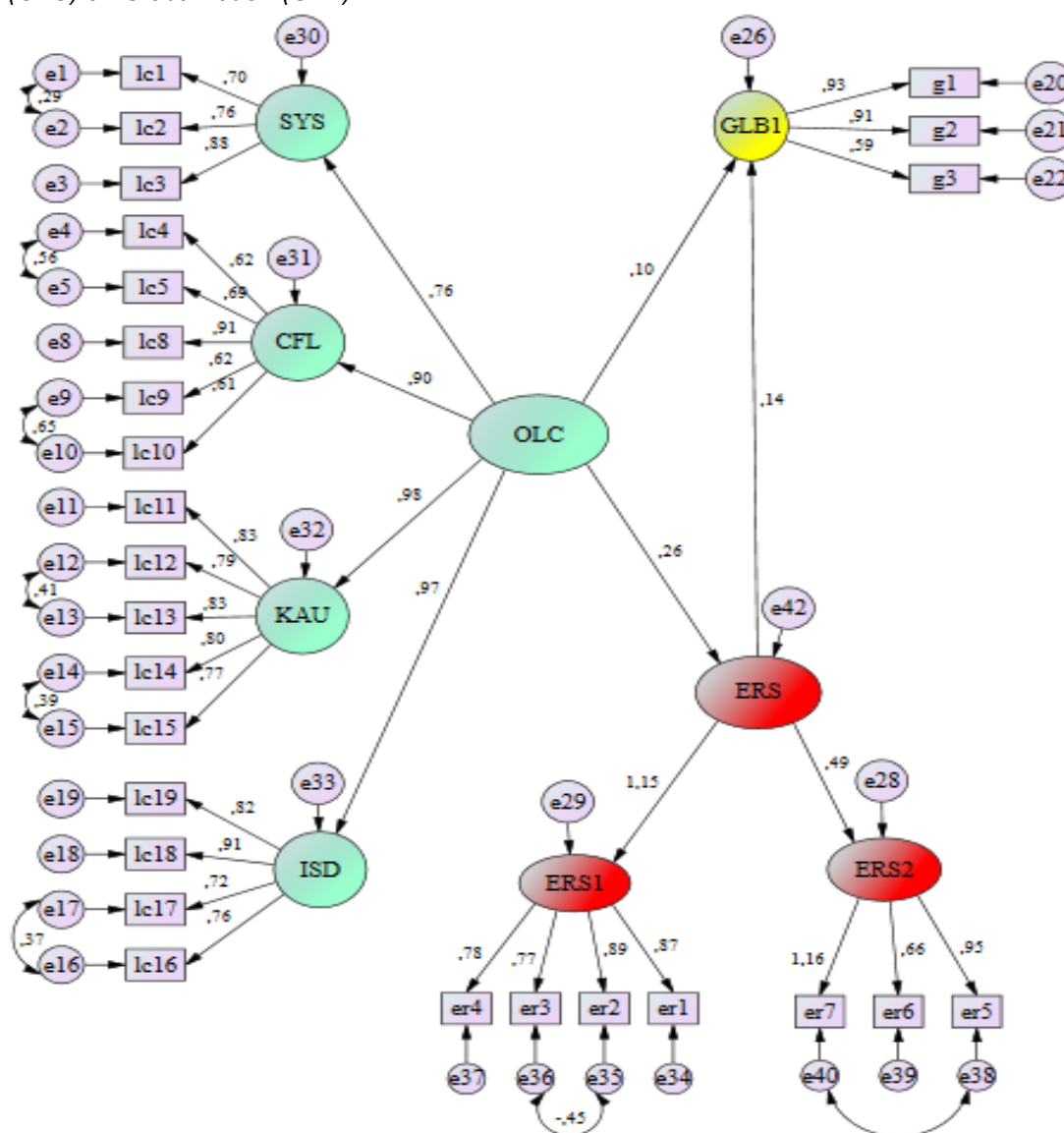


Figure 8. The effect of OLC on ERS

The model for the mediating effect of Erasmus Programme (ERS) on the impact of organizational learning capacity (OLC) on globalization (GLB1) was found significant since the model test values were χ^2 (1120.274), χ^2/df (3.649) and $p < 0.05$. The goodness of fit indices [**GFI** (.891), **CFI** (.942), **RMSEA** (.085) and **SRMR** (.073)] were close to the acceptable limits, but outside these limits.

Table 3. Regression Coefficients from the Mediation Model

Model	Endogenous	Effect	Exogenous	Non-	Standardized	z	p
Model I	GLB1	<---	OLC	.062	.134	2.122	**
Model II	GLB1	<---	ERS	.207	.233	3.299	**
Model III	ERS	<---	OLC	.074	.215	1.877	**
Mediator	GLB1	<---	ERS	.159	.139	2.478	**
	ERS	<-ERS --	OLC	.105	.262	2.885	**
	GLB1	<---	OLC	.047	.102	1.578	.115

** $p < 0.05$

The data of the Model I, in which the effect of organizational learning capacity (OLC) only on globalization (GLB1) was examined, revealed that the effect is significant ($p < 0.05$). The data of the Model II, in which the effect of Erasmus Programme (ERS) only on globalization (GLB1) was examined, revealed that the effect is significant ($p < 0.05$). The data of the Model III, in which the effect of organizational learning capacity (OLC) on Erasmus Programme (ERS) was examined, revealed that the effect is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

Upon these statistically significant relationships found from the singular models, the model for the mediating effect of Erasmus Programme (ERS) on the impact of organizational learning capacity (OLC) on globalization (GLB1) was tested as a structural equation model. In the mediation model, the effect of Erasmus Programme (ERS) on globalization (GLB1) was significant ($p < 0.05$) with a regression coefficient of .139, and the effect of organizational learning capacity (OLC) on Erasmus Programme (ERS) was significant ($p < 0.05$) with a regression coefficient of .262, while the effect of organizational learning capacity (OLC) on globalization (GLB1) was statistically insignificant with $p > 0.05$. Organizational learning capacity (OLC) had a significant effect on globalization (GLB1) in the singular relationship, whereas the effect of organizational learning capacity (OLC) on globalization (GLB1) became insignificant when the mediation of Erasmus Programme (ERS) was added to the model. Therefore, it is possible to indicate that the effect of organizational learning capacity (OLC) on globalization (GLB1) becomes insignificant when Erasmus Programme (ERS) acts as a mediator.

7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present study is to examine the relationship between organizational learning capacity and globalization with the Erasmus Programme as a mediator. The study results indicated that organizational learning capacity has a significantly positive impact on globalization, which is mediated by the Erasmus Programme. Accordingly, the present study basically contributes to the available literature on management in higher education institutions since it demonstrates the influence of organizational learning and exchange programs, which are likely to relate with innovation and survival.

The first hypothesis of the present study assumed a positive impact of organizational learning capacity on globalization. The results affirmed this assumption. Organizational learning capacity is the ability both to produce and improve information (Hult et al., 2002). In the organizational context, learning is essential in modern day's business world due to rapid changes and competition. Organizational learning is believed to be vital for gaining a competitive edge (Mavondo et al., 2005). As knowledge has become the single source with the information age and globalization, organizations and particularly higher education institutions should have this ability to learn in order to survive, develop and compete throughout the world. Specifically higher education institutions usually pursue global standards to provide high-quality education and have an advantage in such competition. The results of the present study suggest that a learning capacity in higher education institutions positively affects their globalization process. Therefore, we recommend higher education institutions to create an organizational culture which encourages learning and allows collective decision-making processes. This would also help organizational development as reported by Teo and Wang (2005). In this regard, future studies may explore the impact of other variables such as organizational culture and leadership styles on globalization.

The second hypothesis of the present study assumed that the Erasmus Programme has a positive impact on globalization, which was affirmed by the study results. Erasmus is a program enabling student and teacher mobility in higher education institutions across Europe. It aims to develop cooperation among nations and enhance the quality of higher education in participant countries in order to educate individuals who would meet the expectations of the business world (Duman, 2001). As today's conditions are mostly governed by globalization, the Erasmus Programme is expected to have favorable outcomes related with globalization. With Erasmus, both students and academicians get the opportunity to live, learn and study in different countries. Another aspect of the Programme is to have the participant individuals adopt the European citizenship notion and the European awareness (Rençber, 2005). Therefore, Erasmus may be considered as a tool helpful in the globalization process across its participant countries. Accordingly, we recommend higher education institutions to encourage their students and academicians to participate in the Erasmus Programme. This may improve both the institutional and academic recognition and competitive advantage. In this sense, future studies may examine the impact of the Erasmus Programme on globalization on a subdimensional basis through a comparison of its social, individual or academic effects.

The third hypothesis of the present study assumed a mediator effect of the Erasmus Programme in the relationship between organizational learning capacity and globalization, which was affirmed by the study results. This finding suggests that the effect of organizational learning on globalization becomes insignificant in the presence of the Erasmus Programme. This can be interpreted that the Erasmus Programme acts as a learning tool, which removes the need to learning capacity. Based on this finding, we recommend higher education institutions to focus on the Erasmus Programme or develop an organizational learning capacity in order to keep up with the global world order. Accordingly, future studies may examine the extent to which Erasmus is related with innovation and academic success, and how the differences in individual and institutional benefits of the Erasmus Programme contribute to globalization.

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