

A field study on the profile of veterinary students in Türkiye: example of Ankara University Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

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ABSTRACT

This research was carried out to determine the general profile of the students enrolled in Turkish and English programs of Ankara University, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (AUFVM). Determination of the demographic characteristics, socioeconomic statuses, pre-university education levels, foreign language levels of students are aimed. Additionally, reasons for choosing the veterinary profession, career expectations, views on post-graduate education, leisure time preferences, and participation in sportive and artistic activities are evaluated. A survey consisting of questions prepared for the purpose of the study was conducted with 545 students studying in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades enrolled in Ankara University Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, 2019-2020 Spring Semester of Turkish and English programs. After the data analysis, it has been determined that the students are generally of urban origin and come from families with low income of the Central Anatolian Region. Accordingly, more than half of the students chose the veterinary faculty program as their first choice. They are satisfied with being a veterinary faculty student and a candidate for the profession. In addition, it has been highlighted that more than half of the students want to continue their post-graduate education, "sometimes" have the chance to participate in sportive and cultural activities, and have a low rate of reading books. As a result, it is thought that presenting a general overview of the student profile will be beneficial for both university and faculty administration and academicians in order to provide the opportunity to know the students better.

Introduction

The profile is the whole extent of distinguishing features for a person or an object, an attitude or tendency (36), and means examining the individual or object by considering all internal and external factors (25). Profile research describes the current situation of the target audience in terms of various variables (10, 39). Profile researches about individuals in all fields of education provide essential data about cultural contexts, socio-demographic factors and individual characteristics, etc. (10). Studies to define the student profile include the determination and statistical expression of the common characteristics of individuals in different fields of education that everyone can observe (28, 39). Studies conducted to determine student profiles are very essential in specifying the socio-economic roots of students, their views on academic and social life in the university/faculty, and their future

expectations (30). It has been determined that these studies have played an essential role in increasing the quality of education by strengthening the communication between the student-lecturers, and university administration, as they also serve as a feedback tool by ensuring better recognition of the student population (30, 41). It is very essential to know the profiles of the students in making decisions that are directive and open to improvement (6). Educational institutions, which are in constant development, frequently collect student data and make forward-looking plans and programs. Many organizations are working for this purpose in developed countries. For example, *Observatoire Nationale de la Vie Etudiante* (OVE) in France, *Deutsches Studentenwerk* (DSW) in Germany, and *Fondazione Della Residenza Universitaria Italiana* (RUI) in Italy are organizations working for this objective (8, 28). There are student statistics available in

Türkiye since 2016 published by the *Council of Higher Education* (YÖK) (42). However, these statistics cover only higher education input indicators. They do not provide detailed information about student profiles. After a literature review, it was seen that there are many studies about student profiles both in Türkiye and abroad (6, 21, 25). Some studies are for all departments or several faculties of the universities, and some are for all classes of a faculty or only one class (2, 10, 17). Although profile studies have been conducted in different fields and scopes, they serve the same purpose. In Türkiye, students are placed in veterinary medicine programs via the *Transition to Higher Education Examination* (YKS) conducted by *Student Selection and Placement Center* (ÖSYM). Students who choose the faculty of veterinary medicine programs come from various social-cultural and economic strata. A limited number of profile studies are conducted in Türkiye for veterinarians and veterinary candidates (21, 26, 27, 35). This study aimed was to determine the profiles, demographics, family structures, socio-economic levels, reasons for choosing the veterinary profession, pre-university education statutes, post-graduation career plans, satisfaction with the veterinary profession, and attitudes about participation in sportive and artistic activities of students of Ankara University, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (AUFVM). The study aims to contribute to the archives of Ankara University Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and the veterinary profession in general.

Materials and Methods

Study Design: AUFVM provides education in two separate programs as Turkish and English. The research universe consists of all students enrolled in the AUFVM, 2019-2020 Spring Semester, Turkish and English programs for 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grades. The sample size of the study was determined by the random sampling method. No sample selection was made in the study, and all students who agreed to participate in the study were included in the sample group. A web-based survey implementation that is proven effective over traditional survey methods was used in data collection (12, 24, 44). Some of the questions in the studies of Küçükaşlan and İlhami (21) regarding veterinary medicine were used while preparing the data collection tool. The questionnaire form prepared using the "Google Forms" application was delivered to volunteers by sharing the link. A total of 575 students were surveyed. The questionnaire form used in the study consists of three parts. The first part includes 23 questions about age, gender, family structure of parents, education and professional status of parents, the total income of the family, number of siblings, employment statuses, etc. In the second part, 11 questions about reasons for choosing university, post-graduation goals,

professional satisfaction levels, etc. were included. The last part consisted of six questions about students' socio-cultural and sportive characteristics etc.

Statistical analysis: The research is a survey (descriptive survey) model. The survey model is based on reflecting the current situation as it is. Descriptive statistics related to the obtained data were calculated and shown using frequency (n) and percentage (%) slices. In the statistical evaluation of the relationship between categorical variables, Pearson Chi-square and Fisher-Freeman-Holton analyzes were used. $P < 0.05$ criterion was used in all statistical evaluations. SPSS 21 package program was used for statistical analysis.

Results

Findings, including the demographic characteristics of the students of all classes of the 2019-2020 academic year in AUFVM are shown in Table 1. Data about the settlement where most of the pre-higher education life passed with the participants' families are given in Table 2. A significant difference was found between the programs in terms of the place of residence in the family. It has been determined that this difference arising from the people living in the village (8.6%) favours of the Turkish program.

Findings of the education levels and professions of the parents of the students are given in Table 3. It is seen from the findings that the education levels of the fathers are significantly higher than that of the mothers. Findings related to the socio-economic statutes of the students are given in Table 4. Students' high school information and language levels are given in Table 5. The rate of English speaking has been determined higher in favour of students enrolled in the English program. The answers regarding the veterinary faculty program preferences and how students have preliminary information about the veterinary profession are given in Table 6 and 7, respectively. Findings regarding whether the students would like to choose the veterinary medicine program again are shown in Table 8, and findings regarding the reason for preferring the veterinary medicine program are shown in Table 9.

The findings of the students' interests and enthusiasm for the veterinary profession are given in Table 10, and findings of which field they want to work in after graduation are given in Table 11. Findings, including the students' views on postgraduate education are given in Table 12. According to Table 12, a statistically significant difference was found between the programs. The findings of the students regarding socio-cultural activities and leisure time preferences in Table 13, and the findings of the preferences of reading professional and non-professional books are given in Table 14.

Table 1. Findings of the personal information of participants.

		Program of Veterinary Faculty			Chi-Square	P
		Turkish n (%)	English n (%)	Total n (%)		
Gender	Male	223 (42.6)	23 (45.1)	246 (42.8)	0.212	0.899
	Female	300 (57.3)	28 (54.9)	328 (57.0)		
	Other	1 (0.2)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.2)		
Grade	1	120 (22.9)	16 (31.4)	136 (23.7)	8.439	0.077
	2	93 (17.7)	12 (23.5)	105 (18.3)		
	3	78 (14.9)	11 (21.6)	89 (15.5)		
	4	165 (31.5)	9 (17.6)	174 (30.3)		
	5	68 (13.0)	3 (5.9)	71 (12.3)		
Place where you live with your family	City center	341 (65.3) ^a	35 (68.6) ^a	376 (65.6)	6.006	0.047*
	District**	136 (26.1) ^a	16 (31.4) ^a	152 (26.5)		
	Village	45 (8.6) ^a	0 (0.0) ^b	45 (7.9)		

*indicates statistically significant difference between groups ($P < 0.05$), ^{a,b}: Different subscript letters indicate statistically significant difference between Turkish and English programs at the 0.05 level.

**non-centrals.

Table 2. Findings of the region where most of the pre-higher education life was spent with the families.

		Program of Veterinary Faculty			Chi-Square	P
		Turkish n (%)	English n (%)	Total n (%)		
Region where you live with your family	Mediterranean	73 (13.9)	5 (9.8)	79 (13.6)	8.926	0.207
	Eastern Anatolia	21 (4.0)	0 (0.0)	21 (3.7)		
	Aegean	89 (17.0)	9 (17.6)	98 (17.0)		
	Southeastern Anatolia	14 (2.7)	0 (0.0)	14 (2.4)		
	Central Anatolia	219 (41.8)	24 (47.1)	243 (42.3)		
	Black Sea	62 (11.8)	4 (7.8)	66 (11.5)		
	Marmara	38 (7.3)	9 (17.6)	47 (8.2)		
	Abroad	8 (1.5)	0 (0.0)	8 (1.4)		

Table 3. Findings related to the education levels and professions of the parents.

		Program of Veterinary Faculty			Chi-Square	P
		Turkish n (%)	English n (%)	Total n (%)		
Education status of your mother	Illiterate	20 (3.8)	0 (0.0)	20 (3.5)	7.343	0.244
	Primary school	133 (25.4)	8 (15.7)	141 (24.5)		
	Secondary school	46 (8.8)	3 (5.9)	49 (8.5)		
	High school and equivalent	140 (26.7)	15 (29.4)	155 (27.0)		
	University	159 (30.3)	21 (41.2)	180 (31.3)		
	Master's degree	22 (4.2)	3 (5.9)	25 (4.3)		
	Ph.D.	4 (0.8)	1 (2.0)	5 (0.9)		
Education status of your father	Illiterate	1 (0.2)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.2)	11.358	0.070
	Primary school	79 (15.1)	3 (5.9)	82 (14.3)		
	Secondary school	59 (11.3)	3 (5.9)	62 (10.8)		
	High school and equivalent	122 (23.3)	11 (21.6)	133 (23.1)		
	University	222 (42.4)	27 (52.9)	249 (43.3)		
	Master's degree	31 (5.9)	3 (5.9)	34 (5.9)		
	Ph.D.	10 (1.9)	4 (7.8)	14 (2.4)		

Table 4. Findings regarding the socio-economic statuses of participants.

		Program of Veterinary Faculty			Chi-Square	P
		Turkish n (%)	English n (%)	Total n (%)		
House of your family	Owned	407 (77.7)	41 (80.4)	448 (77.9)	0.200	0.655
	Rent	117 (22.3)	10 (19.6)	127 (22.1)		
Number of siblings	1	259 (49.4)	29 (56.9)	288 (50.1)	3.807	0.577
	2	117 (22.3)	10 (19.6)	127 (22.1)		
	3	47 (9.0)	6 (11.8)	53 (9.2)		
	4	20 (3.8)	1 (2.0)	21 (3.7)		
	5 and above	23 (4.4)	0 (0.0)	23 (4.0)		
	None	58 (11.1)	5 (9.8)	63 (11.0)		
Who works in the family	Mother	36 (6.9)	7 (13.7)	43 (7.5)	7.327	0.120
	Father	229 (43.7)	19 (37.3)	248 (43.1)		
	Both	169 (32.3)	20 (39.2)	189 (32.9)		
	None	67 (12.8)	2 (3.9)	69 (12.0)		
	Siblings	23 (4.4)	3 (5.9)	26 (4.5)		
Family's total monthly income (TL)	Less than 2500	86 (16.5)	2 (3.9)	88 (15.4)	8.302	0.140
	2501-3500	81 (15.5)	5 (9.8)	86 (15.0)		
	3501-4500	62 (11.9)	8 (15.7)	70 (12.2)		
	4501-5500	77 (14.8)	10 (19.6)	87 (15.2)		
	5501-6500	76 (14.6)	8 (15.7)	84 (14.7)		
	6501 and above	140 (26.8)	18 (35.3)	158 (27.6)		
Your monthly income (TL)	Less than 550	194 (37.4)	17 (33.3)	211 (37.0)	0.970	0.914
	551-1000	192 (37.0)	18 (35.3)	210 (36.8)		
	1001-1500	79 (15.2)	10 (19.6)	89 (15.6)		
	1501-2000	24 (4.6)	3 (5.9)	27 (4.7)		
	2001 and above	30 (5.8)	3 (5.9)	33 (5.8)		
Place you live during your education period (In student life)	Homestay	161 (30.7)	22 (43.1)	183 (31.8)	4.470	0.603
	Relatives	8 (1.5)	1 (2.0)	9 (1.6)		
	Government dorm	114 (21.8)	10 (19.6)	124 (21.6)		
	Rent	152 (29.0)	12 (23.5)	164 (28.5)		
	Private dormitory	75 (14.3)	5 (9.8)	80 (13.9)		
	Hotel/hostel	1 (0.2)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.2)		
Do you have an insured or uninsured job to have additional income?	Yes	97 (18.5)	9 (17.6)	106 (18.4)	0.023	0.879
	No	427 (81.5)	42 (82.4)	469 (81.6)		
Do you get a scholarship?	Yes	145 (27.8)	13 (25.5)	158 (27.6)	0.122	0.727
	No	377(72.2)	38 (74.5)	415 (72.4)		

Table 5. Students' high school information and language levels.

		Program of Veterinary Faculty			Chi-Square	P
		Turkish n (%)	English n (%)	Total n (%)		
Type of high school you graduated from	Science High School	74 (14.1)	10 (19.6)	84 (14.6)	7.766	0.514
	Anatolian High School	294 (56.1)	25 (49.0)	319 (55.5)		
	Social Sciences High School	2 (0.4)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.3)		
	Veterinary Health Vocational High School	1 (0.2)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.2)		
	Anatolian Imam Hatip High School	8 (1.5)	0 (0.0)	8 (1.4)		
	Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School	4 (0.8)	0 (0.0)	4 (0.7)		
	Private Science High School	14 (2.7)	4 (7.8)	18 (3.1)		
	Private Basic High School	55 (10.5)	6 (11.8)	61 (10.6)		
	Private High School Teaching in a Foreign Language/Private Anatolian High School	13 (2.5)	2 (3.9)	15 (2.6)		
	Other	59 (11.3)	4 (7.8)	63 (11.0)		
Level of foreign language	I don't know	15 ^a (2.9)	0 ^a (0.0)	15 (2.6)	69.133	0.001*
	Very little	160 ^a (30.5)	1 ^b (2.0)	161 (28.0)		
	At a level to sustain daily conversations	289 ^a (55.2)	19 ^b (37.)	308 (53.6)		
	Very good	60 ^a (11.5)	31 ^b (60.8)	91 (15.8)		

* indicates statistically significant difference between groups ($P < 0.05$), ^{a,b}. Different subscript letters indicate statistically significant difference between Turkish and English programs at the 0.05 level.

Table 6. Findings regarding the veterinary faculty program preferences of the participants.

		Program of Veterinary Faculty			Chi-Square	P
		Turkish n (%)	English n (%)	Total n (%)		
How many times did you take the entrance exam to be placed in the veterinary faculty program?	First	347 ^a (66.3)	45 ^b (90.0)	392 (68.4)	12.471	0.005*
	Second	159 ^a (30.4)	5 ^b (10.0)	164 (28.6)		
	Third	15 ^a (2.9)	0 ^a (0.0)	15 (2.6)		
	Fourth and above	2 ^a (0.4)	0 ^a (0.0)	2 (0.3)		
What is the rank of your preference of veterinary faculty program	1-5	415 (79.3)	37 (74.0)	452 (78.9)	4.348	0.361
	6-10	49 (9.4)	5 (10.0)	54 (9.4)		
	11-15	30 (5.7)	2 (4.0)	32 (5.6)		
	16-20	6 (1.1)	2 (4.0)	8 (1.4)		
	21 and above	23 (4.4)	4 (8.0)	27 (4.7)		

* indicates statistically significant difference between groups ($P < 0.05$), ^{a,b}. Different subscript letters indicate statistically significant difference between Turkish and English programs at the 0.05 level.

Table 7. Findings on how the participants have prior knowledge of the veterinary profession.

		Program of Veterinary Faculty			Chi Square	P
		Turkish n (%)	English n (%)	Total n (%)		
Did you have enough prior knowledge when choosing the veterinary profession?	Yes	304 (58.0)	28 (54.9)	332 (57.7)	2.193	0.334
	No	155 (29.6)	13 (25.5)	168 (29.2)		
	Indecisive	65 (12.4)	10 (19.6)	75 (13.0)		
If your answer to the previous question is yes, how did you get enough prior knowledge when choosing the veterinary profession?	Family	30 (9.9)	5 (17.9)	35 (10.5)	3.619	0.460
	Teachers	13 (4.3)	1 (3.6)	14 (4.2)		
	Entourage	95 (31.3)	6 (21.4)	101 (30.4)		
	Social media	75 (24.7)	5 (17.9)	80 (24.1)		
	Other	91 (29.9)	11 (39.3)	102 (30.7)		

Table 8. Findings regarding whether the participants would like to re-prefer the veterinary medicine program.

		Program of Veterinary Faculty			Chi Square	P
		Turkish n (%)	English n (%)	Total n (%)		
Would you consider changing the program by taking the university entrance exam again?	Yes	51 (9.7)	5 (9.8)	56 (9.7)	0163	0.922
	No	372 (71.0)	35 (68.6)	407 (70.8)		
	Indecisive	101 (19.3)	11 (21.6)	112 (19.5)		

Table 9. Findings on the reason for the participants to choose the veterinary medicine program.

		Program of Veterinary Faculty			Chi-Square	P
		Turkish n (%)	English n (%)	Total n (%)		
Why did you choose the veterinary faculty program? (Please tick the only option that is a priority for you)	My love for animals	133 (25.4)	19 (37.3)	152 (26.4)	9.760	0.378
	Job opportunities	85 (16.2)	4 (7.8)	89 (15.5)		
	Being a profession suitable for my abilities	107 (20.4)	12 (23.5)	119 (20.7)		
	Being a profession that offers good economic conditions	50 (9.5)	4 (7.8)	54 (9.4)		
	At the request of my family	9 (1.7)	2 (3.9)	11 (1.9)		
	Having a family (mother, father, relative, etc.) profession	5 (1.0)	1 (2.0)	6 (1.0)		
	The influence of the environment - friend, teacher etc.	25 (4.8)	1 (2.0)	26 (4.5)		
	It is a profession that provides social dignity	3 (0.6)	0 (0.0)	3 (0.5)		
	I didn't have a better choice	73 (13.9)	4 (7.8)	77 (13.4)		
	Wrong preference order	4 (0.8)	0 (0.0)	4 (0.7)		
Other	30 (5.7)	4 (7.8)	34 (5.9)			

Table 10. Findings regarding the interest and enthusiasm of the participants for the veterinary profession.

		Program of Veterinary Faculty			Chi-Square	P
		Turkish n (%)	English n (%)	Total n (%)		
What is your level of satisfaction with being a veterinary faculty student and candidate of profession? (Please tick the only option that is a priority for you)	I'm getting more and more interested and excited	264 (50.4)	22 (43.1)	286 (49.7)	3.628	0.429
	Nothing changed	94 (17.9)	12 (23.5)	106 (18.4)		
	It has decreased since I started faculty	128 (24.4)	16 (31.4)	144 (25.0)		
	I am not sure about continuing the program	18 (3.4)	0 (0.0)	18 (3.1)		
	Other	20 (3.8)	1 (2.0)	21 (3.7)		

Table 11. Findings regarding in which field the participants would like to work after graduation.

		Program of Veterinary Faculty			Chi-Square	P
		Turkish n (%)	English n (%)	Total n (%)		
What field do you want to work in after graduation?	I want to be an academician	85 ^a (16.2)	8 ^a (15.7)	93 (16.2)	21.634	0.006*
	I want to be a clinician	155 ^a (29.6)	7 ^b (13.7)	162 (28.2)		
	I want to work at Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	50 ^a (9.5)	1 ^a (2.0)	51 (8.9)		
	I want to work in food industry	22 ^a (4.2)	2 ^a (3.9)	24 (4.2)		
	I want to work in pharmaceutical industry	12 ^a (2.3)	0 ^a (0.0)	12 (2.1)		
	I will consider the opportunities to work abroad	74 ^a (14.1)	15 ^b (29.4)	89 (15.5)		
	I will not work as a veterinarian	8 ^a (1.5)	0 ^a (0.0)	8 (1.4)		
	I haven't decided yet	89 ^a (17.0)	16 ^b (31.4)	105 (18.3)		
	Other	29 ^a (5.5)	2 ^a (3.9)	31 (5.4)		

*indicates statistically significant difference between groups ($P < 0.05$), ^{a,b}: Different subscript letters indicate statistically significant difference between Turkish and English programs at the 0.05 level.

Table 12. Findings regarding the students' views on postgraduate education.

		Program of Veterinary Faculty			Chi-Square	P
		Turkish n (%)	English n (%)	Total n (%)		
Do you want to have postgraduate education (Master's/Ph.D.)?	Yes	322 ^a (61.5)	29 ^a (56.9)	351 (61.0)	7.768	0.021*
	No	74 ^a (14.2)	2 ^b (3.9)	76 (13.2)		
	Indecisive	128 ^a (24.4)	20 ^b (39.2)	148 (25.7)		

*indicates statistically significant difference between groups ($P < 0.05$), ^{a,b}: Different subscript letters indicate statistically significant difference between Turkish and English programs at the 0.05 level.

Table 13. Findings regarding students' socio-cultural activities and leisure time preferences.

		Program of Veterinary Faculty			Chi-Square	P
		Turkish n (%)	English n (%)	Total n (%)		
How often do you participate in socio-cultural activities	Never	36 (6.9)	2 (3.9)	38 (6.6)	1.487	0.685
	Rarely	188 (35.9)	19 (37.3)	207 (36.1)		
	Sometimes	240 (45.9)	22 (43.1)	262 (45.6)		
	Very	59 (11.3)	8 (15.7)	67 (11.7)		
What type of cultural events you attend the most?	Concert	93 ^a (18.1)	10 ^a (20.0)	103 (18.3)	10.471	0.333*
	Cinema	204 ^a (39.8)	22 ^a (44.0)	226 (40.1)		
	Theater	82 ^a (16.0)	4 ^a (8.0)	86 (15.3)		
	Exhibition	5 ^a (1.0)	3 ^b (6.0)	8 (1.4)		
	Other	129 ^a (25.1)	11 ^a (22.0)	140 (24.9)		
Please tick the most appropriate option regarding your participation in sports activities.	I don't do any sports	93 (17.8)	6 (11.8)	99 (17.2)	6.036	0.110
	I only watch sports	49 (9.4)	3 (5.9)	52 (9.1)		
	I do sports whenever I have the opportunity	302 (57.7)	28 (54.9)	330 (57.5)		
	I do sports regularly	79 (15.1)	14 (27.5)	93 (16.2)		
Please tick the most appropriate option for your leisure time preferences.	Reading books	57 (10.9)	7 (13.7)	64 (11.1)	4.933	0.424
	Listening to music	48 (9.2)	4 (7.8)	52 (9.1)		
	Spending time with my friends	227 (43.4)	22 (43.1)	249 (43.4)		
	Going to the mall	6 (1.1)	1 (2.0)	7 (1.2)		
	I don't have free time due to the intensity of the courses	141 (27.0)	9 (17.6)	150 (26.1)		
	Other	44 (8.4)	8 (15.7)	52 (9.1)		

* indicates statistically significant difference between groups ($P < 0.05$), ^{a,b}: Different subscript letters indicate statistically significant difference between Turkish and English programs at the 0.05 level.

Table 14. Findings about the preferences of reading professional and non-professional books.

		Program of Veterinary Faculty			Chi-Square	P
		Turkish n (%)	English n (%)	Total n (%)		
How many professional books have you read in the last year? (except lecture notes)	None	166 (31.7)	13 (25.5)	179 (31.2)	3.126	0.373
	1-3	256 (48.9)	28 (54.9)	284 (49.5)		
	4-5	55 (10.5)	3 (5.9)	58 (10.1)		
	6 and above	46 (8.8)	7 (13.7)	53 (9.2)		
How many non-professional books have you read in the last year?	None	43 (8.2)	5 (9.8)	48 (8.4)	4.499	0.212
	1-3	128 (24.5)	18 (35.3)	146 (25.5)		
	4-5	99 (19.0)	5 (9.8)	104 (18.2)		
	6 and above	252 (48.3)	23 (45.1)	275 (48.0)		

Discussion and Conclusion

Looking at the gender distribution of students studying at AUFVM, it was found that the rate of females in both Turkish and English programs is higher than males (Table 1). It is thought that the number of female students being higher shows that the old perception of the veterinary profession being male-dominated is broken in Türkiye, relatedly in Europe, and the United States of America (19). In Canada and the United States, women make up about 80% of the student population today, and the momentum that started in the 1950s reached a high level in the 1970s and has continued to increase until this time (18, 29). As an example of Türkiye, AUFVM's findings support the idea that veterinary medicine is no longer a male-dominated profession. When the findings were examined in terms of where the students lived with their families, it was found that the highest rate (42.3%) lived in the Central Anatolia Region (Table 2). As Ankara is close to the Aegean (17.0%), Mediterranean (13.6%), and Black Sea regions (11.5%) due to its geographical location, it is determined that the students mostly come to the veterinary faculty from these regions. After a literature search on the factors affecting the university selection of students, it was found that many criteria affect university preferences, and students mostly prefer universities that were close to where their families live. Relevant literature is found to be supportive of our study's findings (7, 11, 14, 32). When the educational status of the parents was examined, it was found that mothers (31.3%) and fathers (43.3%) were university graduates in high ratios (Table 3). The ratio of university graduates rose from 5.5% to 13.9% since 2008 according to the TSI (*Turkish Statistical Institute*) National Education Statistics (37). This result was consistent with the findings that the parents of AUFVM students are university graduates (Table 3). The findings on mother's literacy levels being lower than father's is found to be consistent with the general literacy levels of Türkiye. In general, literacy levels are lower among women, in rural areas, and in the eastern Türkiye (3, 13).

Besides, all the variables have much more effects on women than men (3, 13). Examining Table 4, which includes information on the socio-economic status of the students, it was found that 50.1% of the students were single siblings. In Türkiye, the average number of children for a family is 2.6. Families who have higher education levels prefer a smaller number of children, with an average of 1.2 in university graduate families (9). The family structures of AUFVM students are found to be compatible with Turkish families in general. The highest rate to the question of who is working in the family was 43.1%, with the father's answer. This is consistent with the tradition in Türkiye that fathers mostly are responsible for providing the living expenses, and sustenance of the family is associated with men (22). When Table 4, which shows the monthly income levels of the families was analyzed, it was determined that 15.4% of the families were below 2500 TL and 27.6% of them were over 6500 TL. According to the results of the TÜRK-İŞ Research (*Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions*) for May 2020, the poverty line for a family of four is 7942.17 TL, and the hunger limit is 2438.24 TL (38). It has been concluded that families of all students of AUFVM are at the poverty line and 30.4% are at the hunger limit. These results are compatible with the literature (9, 30) and Küçükaslan and Bulut's (14) study on socio-demographic levels of university students. The data that 37.0% of the students have less than 550 TL monthly income, 81.6% do not work and only 27.6% have scholarship mean that students do not have sufficient financial resources. Although their monthly income was quite low in Türkiye's conditions, 72.4% of the students answering negatively to the scholarship question shows that university students in Türkiye have a limited number of scholarship opportunities (9). The finding that 55.5% of the students are graduates of the Anatolian High Schools (Table 5) is found to be compatible with the common presence of these schools in general (35% of all high schools in Türkiye, according to the Ministry of National Education 2018 and 2020 university preference guides)

(22, 23). When Table 5, the results of the students' knowledge of English were examined, it was found that more than half of the students enrolled in the English program have very good levels of English. Thus, it is concluded that they made the right choices and can understand the courses without being limited by the language barrier. Students enrolled in the Turkish program can be suggested to improve their English levels. The finding that more than half of the students (68.4%) of the veterinary faculty have entered the faculty at the first try and their order of preference was 1-5 for 78.9% of the students (Table 6) shows that they were aware and informed of their preferences and the profession. The finding that 57.7 % of the students had prior knowledge and 30.4% received the preliminary information from their entourage shows a conscious choice (Table 7).

Considering the participants' opinions on whether they would like to change their program (Table 8), it is seen that most of the students (70 %) are satisfied with being AUFVM students. Looking at why they preferred the veterinary profession, they stated that their love for animals (26.4%) was decisive, and it was a profession suitable for their abilities (20.7%) (Table 9). These results show that students made conscious choices that will make them happy throughout their professional life. The fact that students prioritise their abilities (20.7%) instead of job opportunities (9.4%) leads us to think that they consider the financial gains as secondary. Career choice is significant in terms of directing the future of individuals. This appears to be a positive attitude in professional life, as prioritizing financial concerns in career choices may overshadow the feeling of job satisfaction (4). The individual will be successful, productive, and happy in the field chosen as a profession in line with their talents, interests, and desires. For this reason, when choosing a profession, one should pay attention to the compatibility between his/her characteristics and the qualifications of the profession (31, 40). Results that 13.4% of the students did not have a better chance, and 0.7% of them preferred the faculty due to the wrong choice indicate that there may be unwanted outcomes and a decrease in job satisfaction in the long term if the program selection is not made carefully (Table 9). The fact that students answered "I am getting more and more interested and excited" (49.7 %) to the question "what is your satisfaction level with being a veterinary faculty student and a candidate of the profession?" highlights that they are not disappointed with their choices and have a positive impression for the faculty (Table 10). The results that 28.2% of the students want to work in clinical veterinary medicine (Table 11) leads us to think that they want to practice their profession freely in their workplaces. This finding seems to be compatible with the research of Küçükaslan and Bulut (21). More than

half of the students want to have postgraduate education (Table 12) leading us to think that students give importance to post graduation education. Continuous increase in the ratio of postgraduate students, in general, seems to be coherent with these findings (16). Utilization of leisure time has been defined as participation in certain free time activities (33). Examples of these active and organized activities include sports, cultural activities, and hobbies (20, 34). Answers that AUFVM students "sometimes" attend to socio-cultural activities, as going to see a movie being the most, (40.1%) (Table 13) found to be consistent with other university students' leisure time activities (1, 5).

In Türkiye, many university students spend their free time reading newspapers, books, magazines, going to the cinema and theatre, watching TV and sports events, wandering, or chatting with friends. Studies have shown that university students who engage in educational, cultural, or artistic activities are in the minority (1, 15, 34, 43). Considering how veterinary students spend their free time (Table 13), it has been determined that the most preferred activity is "spending time with friends" of % 43.4 of all students. These answers were found to be compatible with literature findings. Considering that 26.1% of the students responded as not having much free time leads us to think that they cannot find free time due to the intensity of their curriculum. It is striking that students read one to three professional and six or above non-professional books in a year (Table 14). This situation shows that we are a society that does not value reading books enough. This has also reflected in our universities. Although students understand the importance of reading books, they admit that they have not read enough books. Findings are consistent with the paper of Arslan et al. (2).

Consequently, a field study was conducted to determine the general profile of AUFVM students. In line with this purpose, it was tried to determine the demographics of the students studying at the AUFVM, their socio-economic statuses, general information about their pre-university education life and their families, reasons for choosing the veterinary profession, career goals, socio-cultural activities, leisure time activities, etc. It is found that the socio-economic and cultural statuses of the students of AUFVM represent Türkiye's average. Additionally, it is concluded that students of AUFVM are mostly placed to their first preference of university, and are content with being veterinary faculty students.

It can be concluded that this research, which is conducted to provide student profiles, will contribute to both the administrators of the institutions and the academic staff in terms of having the opportunity to know their students.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared that there is no conflict of interest.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting this study's findings are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Ethical Statement

Official permissions were obtained from the AUVFM Dean's Office and Ankara University Ethics Committee (Approval number: 2020-10-146) for the questionnaire to be applied to the students.

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