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Negotiation of religious and national identity in young adult Turk-Muslims residing in Germany: A mixed-methods study

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ABSTRACT

This mixed method study delves into the nuanced negotiation of national and religious identity among young Turkish Muslim adults residing in Germany, shedding light on the complexities of bicultural belonging. The investigation encompasses diverse individual, social, and cultural factors, with a primary focus on strategies for reconciling identities, participants' daily experiences, the potential impact of perceived religious discrimination on social identities, and the interplay between social identities and depressive symptoms. The theoretical framework grounding this research draws from Social Identity Theory, developed by Tajfel and Turner in the early 1970s. A sample of 30 German Muslims of Turkish origin aged between 18 and 26 was recruited and interviewed online. We analyzed identity maps and utilized thematic analysis to extract themes from participants' answers to open-ended questions. Furthermore, correlational analysis and multiple linear regression were performed to unravel associations between related variables. Most participants manifested integrated identities, demonstrating that similar individual experiences may yield diverse identity affiliations and perspectives on reconciliation. Results also indicate that higher perceived religious discrimination was significantly associated with less German national identity, while more biculturalism is related to lower religious identification and higher German national identification. A strong Muslim religious identity and higher levels of biculturalism were also found associated with fewer depressive symptoms. Future research needs to include more representative samples of Muslims from different cultures to further explore the association between social identities and influential factors.

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INTRODUCTION

The mass immigration of Turks to Germany started in the 1960s through worker recruitment agreements between the two countries. Turkish workers who migrated to Germany to work 60 years ago were not aware that they were laying the foundation for the Turkish diaspora in Germany. Today, Turks constitute the largest diaspora in Germany, while they have been living for the third generation, created their own culture, and established a small Türkiye in Germany.

Despite this specific long history of migration and coexisting life with Germans, young Turk Muslims are still experiencing discrimination due to their Muslim religious background and cultural differences. These young people endeavor to navigate the interplay between their Muslim and German identities, bridging the gap between their households steeped in predominantly Turkish culture and Islamic principles, and the encompassing German society which embodies distinct values and attributes. However, little is known about how young Turk Muslims in Germany manage their dual identities, what daily struggles they face, and the extent to which their experiences, such as discrimination, influence their sense of belonging and psychological well-being.

This mixed-method study aimed to address this gap by investigating the role of selected individual and social factors in the negotiation of social identities in young Turk adults of Muslim faith who were born, raised, and/or currently residing in Germany. In particular, the current thesis examined the Muslim and German identity reconciliation of

young Muslim Turks in Germany and investigated their associations with perceived discrimination, and depressive symptoms.

The first chapter presents the history of Turk and Muslim immigration to Europe, specifically to Germany, and the current situation in terms of immigration and social inclusion through a summary of the statistical data on the Muslim and Turk populations in Germany. Additionally, the characteristics of the Turkish diaspora in Germany and the integration policies are explained to shed light on the integration of Turk Muslims into German culture.

The second chapter provides a comprehensive overview of its theoretical foundations by introducing the theory of emerging adulthood by Arnett (2000), and the formation of social identities. After the explanation of multiple identities and their relationship with mental health, a brief description of Islam, perceived religious discrimination and the Rejection-Identification model are explained.

The third chapter presents the research methodology of the current research, with research objectives, participant information, analytic procedure, and tools employed to measure the related constructs. Subsequently, the fourth chapter presents the results of the statistical analyses that were conducted to address our research questions.

The final chapter discusses the results in light of the existing literature, highlighting its limitations and providing potential future recommendations for policymakers.

CHAPTER 1

TURKISH MUSLIMS IN EUROPE AND GERMANY

1.1. Turkish Immigration to Europe

Considering the history of Turkish migration, the presence of many Turkish people in Europe can be attributed to the first Turkish guest workers who moved after recruitment agreements between Türkiye[1] and European countries during the 1960s. From the beginning of the early 1960s and well into the 1970s, there was a large migration movement of Turkish nationals to European countries, specifically to Western Germany (Icduygu & Kirisci, 2009).

Icduygu (2014a) claimed that this emigration movement at the beginning of the 1960s was the first time in modern Türkiye that the Turkish and Muslim populations went out of the country in an intense migration movement. Initially, the movements started as short-term temporary workers migration, then they evolved into a settlement in many European countries through family reunifications. The intense worker migration movements from Türkiye during the 1960s as reflected in the Five-Year Developmental Plans of Türkiye aimed to a) reduce the economic pressure which had increased with unemployment, b) benefit from the newly acquired skills of returning workers who had been abroad, c) ensure the balance of payments by increased cash inflow (Icduygu,

[1] The official name of the country, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti*, known in US English as the Republic of Turkey or Turkey, changed its international name (Turkey) by its Turkish name "Türkiye". The Turkish name "Türkiye" (pronounced as "tur-key-yay") was used throughout this thesis.
(https://www.euronews.com)

2014a). The labor search of growing European economies during the 1960s and asylum migration between the 1980s and 1990s caused changes in migration dynamics in the Euro-Turkish zone, and the most substantial change was the formation of permanent communities of Turkish people in different regions of Europe, a burst and variation of migration movements between Europe and Türkiye (Icduygu, 2011). After the first labor recruitment agreement with Germany, Türkiye started new relationships with different labor-demanding industrialized European countries (Icduygu, 2014b).

In the first years of emigration, Turkish workers were welcomed with warm feelings, but later they started to be pointed as the significant source of the many problems arising with increasing unemployment and the onset of the economic crisis (Lucassen 2005, as cited in Kaya, 2008). The issue of the economy absorbing so many workers caused some problems in different areas, for instance, in the first months of 1967, 20 thousand Turkish workers who worked in Germany lost their occupations and the number of unemployed people reached 621 thousand in the country (Sahin Kutuk, 2015). Thus, during the 1970s, the economic recession in Western European countries resulted in the abrogation of recruitment agreements, although these changes did not prevent Turkish emigration to Europe; indeed, migration rates accelerated gradually with family reunifications (Kaya, 2008).

It is also important to have an idea about how European countries approach immigrants in the sense of their adaptation to host countries. According to Sahin Kutuk (2008), European countries developed different strategies and policies for solving the problem that emerges with the settlement of the immigrant population. These policies

were initially based on "assimilation" inspired by the US melting pot practice, then on "adaptation" which is slightly more moderate, and lastly on "integration" policies that include the coexistence of two cultures; after the 1990s, they tried to develop policies based on "multiculturalism" (Sahin Kutuk, 2008). This situation was mainly associated with globalization and derogation of the world after the Cold War, significantly with the clarification of identities and increasing the intensity of the conflict on the concept of ethnic identities. The concept of multiculturalism formed a basis for constructing integration policies to ensure the continuity of multicultural life from assimilation policies to migration-receiving countries (Sahin Kutuk, 2008).

The Turks' migration to Europe has always been more than economic and political agreements. Turkish workers were sent to Europe without integrating into European culture, and these illiterate Turks who came from rural parts of Türkiye did not have any intention to stay in Europe at first, however, they ended up settling in European countries due to higher unemployment rates of Türkiye (Kaya, 2008). Abundant research has demonstrated that the two most important factors which influence migrants' integration process are having a low education level and not knowing the language of the host country, and most of the Turk guest workers came from rural parts of Anatolia, with lower literacy rates, which negatively influenced their adaptation process to European countries (Kaya, 2008).

1.2. Muslim and Turkish Immigration to Germany

Turks constitute the largest minority group in Germany, and many Turkish immigrants have already lived in Germany for numerous generations (Niechziol & Medeiros, 2023). Although years after the recruitment agreement with Germany, Türkiye has signed some other agreements which are similar (regarding scope and volume) with some other European countries, Germany has been the earmark of the modern Turkish immigration to Europe, and it has laid the foundations of the "Euro-Turk" fact (Toktas, 2012). Also, the Turkish community is not a homogenous group of emigrants; among them there are numerous sub-groups in terms of ethnicity and religiosity: the Kurds are the largest subgroup, and although most of the Turks are Muslim, they belong to different denominations of Islam (Sen, 2003).

The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees reported that in 2019, the number of Muslim populations with a migration history in Germany was between 5.3 and 5.6 million people, constituting between 6.4 and 6.7 percent of the total population of 83.1 million, and Turkish people were the largest origin group among the Muslim population in Germany (MLD, 2020). The same report also underlined the important difference between the Muslim population of Turkish origin and other ethnicities: although first-generation Muslims from the Middle East came to Germany 6.4 years ago on average, first-generation Muslims from Türkiye had been living in Germany for 32.1 years. Hence, Türkiye has been related to Germany for a long time through immigration. However, many Muslims from the Middle East have just come to Germany recently and they are in the middle of their integration process (Pfündel et al., 2021). These findings underline the

importance of studying the negotiation of Muslim and German identities among youth with Turkish backgrounds living in Germany, as Turks have been living in Germany for a few generations.

When we continue with the history of Turkish Muslim immigration to Germany, the emigration of Turks to Germany was shaped by different strategies and policies of the countries. From a historical approach, it is possible to evaluate the presence of Turkish immigrants who settled in Germany in four social categories (Aksoy, 2010): first, the Turkish workers who came to Germany between 1961 and 1973; the second category includes family reunifications after the termination of recruitment in 1973; the third category is those who returned to Türkiye after the "Right of Return" law, which entered into force in 1983; and the last category includes the formation of ethnic minorities and immigration phenomena, which gained a new perspective after the 1990s.

Although the first category includes Turkish workers who came to Germany between 1961 and 1973, contrary to what is widely known, some migration movements to Germany existed before the 1960s. During the Ottoman Empire, some Turks migrated to Germany with the aim of better education and working opportunities (Yildirim, 2021).

1.2.1. Recruitment Agreement between the Federal Republic of Germany and Türkiye: Turkish as a "Gastarbeiter"

After World War II, Germany has done important economic and industrial breakthroughs and started to establish the country again. This period of the history of Germany during the mid-1950s is named *Wirtschaftswunder* (Economic Miracle) to mark the accelerated

improvements in the economy of West Germany (Yildirim, 2021). Also, during this period, Federal Germany lost a large amount of the male population which could be employed due to the Second World War, and could not attract local workers to manufacture because of their high wage demands, resulting in Germany's search for importing foreign workers (Gursoy & Yagmur, 2020).

To meet the workforce need, West Germany invited *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers) from other countries and signed the first treaties with Italy in 1955, then with Spain and Greece in 1960 to recruit foreign workers (Yildirim, 2021). Following those, the Recruitment Agreement between Türkiye and Germany was signed on October 30, 1961, in Bonn, the old capital city of West Germany. Meanwhile, in Türkiye, unemployment rates increased due to increasing population rates and domestic migrations in the country (Gursoy & Yagmur, 2020).

When we look at the details behind the agreement, it is also important to mention that Türkiye was the first party to demand to sign an agreement with Germany. Initially, Germany rejected the demand of Türkiye with a racial argument which is "Turkey was not a European country" (Akgunduz, 2021, p.235). This attitude was not seen in a good manner by Turkish authorities, and they responded to the German Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs in December 1960, stating that "if Germany refuses to sign an agreement, Turkey will consider it to be neglecting a NATO member in favor of Greece" (Akgunduz, 2021, p. 235). Eventually, 10 months later agreement was signed between the two countries.

According to Göç Araştırmaları Derneği/the Association for Migration Research (2021), the framework of recruitment of guest workers designed for Turkish immigrants was clear: workers with certain qualifications would stay in Germany for two years based on their contracts and would return to Türkiye upon the expiry, and new workers would come on a rotational basis in case of need. In this way, Germany would be provided with its need for a workforce, and Türkiye would benefit from the foreign currency inflow and reach the needed skilled labor and labor knowledge.

It should be noted that the agreement with Türkiye was the second rate in terms of its form and social rights given to the migrants when it is compared to recruitment agreements between Germany and other European countries, such as Italy, Spain, Greece, and Portugal (Akgunduz, 2021). Indeed, the agreement between Germany and those countries included sympathetic concern about the right of workers. For instance, workers were allowed to bring their families to Germany, whereas the German-Turkish recruitment agreement did not have the same terms; the government of Germany did not want Turkish guest workers to bring their spouses and families. Also, the two-year stay aimed to prevent Turkish workers from turning into immigrants (Prevezanos, 2011). These differences suggest that the migration and integration of Turkish Muslim people into Germany was not an easy process, and that they have been exposed to discrimination since the beginning of their journey. Later, in 1964, the recruitment agreement was changed, allowing Turkish workers to stay more than two years because the enduring process of hiring and training new workers to replace old ones was too time-consuming and expensive (Prevezanos, 2011).

Since 1961, the selection of workers started through the German Liaison Office in Tophane, Istanbul: workers who wished to work in Germany came to this office and applied as a first step of the process (Uner, 2023). Turkish workers underwent a strict medical examination nakedly by German doctors and were examined up to their teeth; the strong, healthy, and young ones were prepared to be sent to Federal Germany (Haksever, 2014). The main concern of people who came to Istanbul from different villages of Türkiye was that they had to go back to their villages because of a negative result coming from the medical examination (GAR, 2021).

The first worker group from Türkiye comprised 450 people and arrived in Düsseldorf, Germany, where they were greeted by a brass band by German authorities (Uner, 2023). Their migration journeys occurred through trains which left from Sirkeci Station in Istanbul and ended in München; then, workers were split into groups and took the trains which were going to destination cities from München (Uner, 2023).

Turkish guest workers were initially placed in dormitories called “Heim”, where single people stayed, with crowded rooms, public toilets, bathrooms, and kitchens (Gursoy & Yagmur, 2020). As soon as they nestled into their dormitories of factories, they developed different strategies to deal with their homesickness; for the first time, they established surrogate families to provide an important support system and frequently commiserated with each other (Kahn, 2020). At first, Turkish workers were enthusiastic about the adventures and wealth waiting for them, but at the same time, they started to mourn the separation from the people they loved even before they left their country. They

were aware that keeping contact with their family would not be easy because electricity and telephone lines had not come to many villages, and if they would like to write and send a letter through the international post, it could take weeks or months to arrive (Kahn, 2020).

To understand how Turkish Muslims' life in Germany evolved until today, it is important to take a brief look at the lives of the first guest workers in Germany. Turkish citizens who came to Germany as "guest workers" were living in makeshift places such as attics, old workshops, basements, sheds, and apartment-shape dormitories prepared by their employers, and despite the European standards and relevant instructions, the quality of shelters was low and health conditions were unsuitable (Baskurt, 2009). In contrast with their contracts, Turkish workers were generally employed in heavy industries where German people did not want to work, such as mines and quarries, iron-steel and metal industries, construction industries, asbestos and rubber processing, textile and automotive industries, and tile and brick factories. The conditions of workplaces were very harsh, noisy, extremely hot, and smelly. However, they had to work hard to earn money in a short time. Also, they did not have the opportunity to check the terms since they did not know the language. This situation led to psychological problems among most of the workers, and some of them died in occupational accidents (Persembe, 2005, as cited in Baskurt, 2009).

During this period, Turkish workers suffered the most because they did not know the language of the society in which they lived – for this issue, neither the German nor

the Turkish sides have done anything. The language courses opened by some of the large business and social welfare institutions failed due to workload and workers' intentions to return after a few years of working in Germany (Baskurt, 2009). The fulfillment of religious requirements was another problem: Germans were encountering for the first time the reality of Islam, and prayer, fasting, sacrificing an animal for God, and other culturally based practices were causing distress. The Islamic community in Germany did not have any official right to open schools or plan social activities under the sponsorship of the German government (Sen, 2003). For this reason, to represent themselves and their interests, Muslims in Germany have established institutions in the form of umbrella associations or mosque unions. Hence, Turkish Muslim emigrants had difficult times in Germany in terms of sustaining their daily lives and adapting to the new mainstream culture in the first years of their emigration.

In November 1973, worker recruitment from Türkiye was stopped because of the oil crisis and increasing unemployment. However, during this period, recruitment of workers continued through family reunifications as the demand for an intensive labor force still existed due to structural reasons in industrialized European countries (Dogan, 2001).

The decision to terminate the recruitment of foreign workers (*Anwerbestopp*) on 23 November 1973 had a two-side effect on the migration process. Firstly, the expectation that migration would improve social and class status became widespread, and crossing the border gained the meaning of an escape from the current economic situation in

Türkiye. Therefore, the termination of the agreement caused a group of people who thought they could not have this opportunity again to be quickly involved in this migration process, while those already in Europe extended their stay thinking that it would not be possible to come back (GAR, 2021).

Turkish guest workers never intended to stay in Germany for a long time (Kahn, 2020). Also, the German government did not consider the country a land of immigration, so the Turks and other guest workers were not officially classified as immigrants (Chapin, 1996). The workers had the same beliefs as the government: they were planning to return to their country with fancy cars after working a few years in factories and mines, and imagined building two-story homes, starting small businesses, and providing a favorable future for their families (Kahn, 2020). However, contrary to their first plans, they did not go back to Türkiye, and their population increased by taking along their families and children after the 1973 moratorium on labor recruitment, resulting in them becoming the largest ethnic minority in West Germany.

Lastly, if we look at the numbers, in the first year after the agreement, 6.800 Turks moved to Germany, and their population increased over the decades to 652,000 in 1971, 1,546,000 in 1981, and 1,780,000 in 1991 (Demirag & Kakısım, 2018). These Turks who moved to Germany in the first decade after the agreement are known as the first generation of Turkish immigrants. The next paragraph will examine the characteristics and differences between the generations of Turkish immigrants and their diaspora.

1.3. Characteristics of the Turkish diaspora in Germany

According to the German Federal Statistical Office, the Turkish population was recorded as 1,487,110 on 31 December 2022. Turkish population constitutes 11% of the foreign population in Germany, and %1.76 of the total German population (estimated 84.3 million). Within the Turkish population, 377,495 citizens were born in Germany, and 1,109,615 were born abroad. Additionally, according to the Federal Police Headquarters in Munich, the number of Turkish refugees who arrived in Germany between January and September 2021 was 254% higher than in the same period of last year; compared to the same period in the year 2020, the increase was 368% (Topcu, 2022).

Given that Turkish people did not originally plan to stay permanently in Germany, how did their plans for a temporary stay turn into a permanent settlement, becoming the largest diaspora in Germany?

According to Sen (2003), there are three main reasons. First, the arrival of families was a crucial factor in guest workers' decision, which was associated with other factors such as the education of children, the lack of savings and economic opportunities in their home country, some of the negative experiences of people who returned on the reintegration of their children into the community, inadequacy in building social contacts, and the differences in the social and cultural environment. Improvements in technology and transport were the second main contributing factor: the distance between the two countries has decreased and in the last decades, Turkish people in Germany have been able to communicate easily with their families in Türkiye. Third, the increase in the number of Turks in Germany resulted in a feeling that they could build “Türkiye” in the

middle of Germany, i.e., an infrastructure to meet their specific needs and demands in Germany. Turks in Germany created a place to live in the host country for themselves. Currently, Turk immigrants can find anything they are searching for and miss: friends, Turkish foods, mosques, Turkish television channels, shops, Turkish newspapers, Turkish organizations, and cultural services.

Examining some of today's Turkish associations in Germany is valuable for understanding the Turkish diaspora. Germany had allowed immigrants to establish their own associations even though the country has not channeled the Turkish society into the organizations of the German state (Oner, 2014). Some examples are the Turkish-Islamic Union of the Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Türk İslam Birliği / DITIB), the Islamic Community Milli Görüş (IGMG), which is one of the most important Turkish-Sunni associations, the Turkish Community in Germany**,** the German-Turkish Chamber of Industry and Commerce, and the Association of Turkish Entrepreneurs and Industrialists in Europe (Amelina & Faist, 2008).

Based on a survey of the political activities of these associations, the mentioned Turkish migrant associations and many like them in Germany have a role in the German integration discourse, even though their effect is limited on the discursive statement production. Further, organizations of the Turkish community have a significant role in both integrating the Turks into Germany and providing solutions to sociocultural and economic issues of Turks (Oner, 2014).

Mueller (2006) reported that the first established Turkish communities in Germany did not speak German generally, and spouses of Turkish workers spent most of their time

at home for a year until they could apply for a work permit. Hence, women spent their time watching Turkish television programs and were not exposed to German people and their language. Many young Turks in Germany were more likely to grow up in economically disadvantaged areas with limited educational opportunities and were less exposed to the German language compared to their German peers.

Since the earliest time of their journey in Germany, Turkish emigrants were always in touch with their families in Türkiye, they visited their homeland from time to time for holidays, weddings, funerals, or sickness of their relatives (Icduygu, 2012). Guest workers had the same rights for holidays as German citizens, and their most important tools of communication were traveling to Türkiye on their *Heimaturlaub* (home leave), and they vacationed in Türkiye between four to six weeks every year, usually summertime and sometimes in Christmas break (Kahn, 2020). The combination of massive emigration and the maintenance of contact with people left behind in their homelands seems to have an essential role in ongoing changes in the economic and social life of Türkiye (Icduygu, 2012).

The changes in German citizenship legislation are important in terms of the integration of Turks into German society and the opportunities given to them. According to the Turkish Republic Berlin Embassy, Consultancy of Labor and Social Security, a child with one of the parents being a German citizen is a born German citizen.[2] However, the legal basis for citizenship was altered in January 2000: children born in Germany with foreign-born parents acquire automatic German citizenship, provided that at least one

[2]http://www.calisma.de/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&layout=item&id=24&Itemid=63

parent has lived legally in Germany for at least 8 years and has had a permanent resident permit for at least three years (Mueller, 2006). Children also acquire their parents' citizenship and must decide which citizenship they prefer to hold until the age of 23, which means that Turks who prefer German citizenship must give up their Turkish passports.

In order to understand the nature of the Turkish diaspora in Germany, it is also crucial to understand the characteristics of Turkish generations. In the first years of migration, the mainstream culture greeted first-generation Turkish workers with wonder and surprise. The main reason for this is that Turkish guest workers had completely different socio-cultural structures in terms of all cultural institutions. These differences can be seen in faith, religion, traditions, education system, language, customs, and behavior patterns (Aksoy, 2010).

The first generation was composed of unskilled workers who did not know the language and preferred their own culture’s values rather than assimilating the values of German culture (Demirag & Kakısım, 2018). The second generation of Turkish immigrants in Germany is particularly relevant here, as the sample involved in this study draws from that particular generation. This generation includes people who emigrated after family reunifications at the beginning of the 1980s or were born in the host country and refers to the young people who are stuck between different cultural structures and identities, also defined as a "lost generation" (Aksoy, 2010). In contrast to the first generation, they can speak German, and some of them went to school in Germany (Demirag & Kakısım, 2018).

Demirag and Kakısım (2018) describe the third generation as youths who were born and educated in Germany, can speak the mainstream culture's language fluently, and have mostly German friends. Since they have adapted to German society and daily life, it might be claimed that the integration policies applied by the German government have enrooted in this generation. However, they are not very familiar with Turkish culture and language; they have some specific ongoing disagreements with their families and previous generations. In addition, the most important problem of the third generation is alienation from their Turkish identity (Demirag & Kakısım, 2018). They do not accept the pressures and impositions of the first generations; while young people in Türkiye are more connected to the family and society, young people in Germany approach events from a more individualistic perspective (Demirag & Kakısım, 2018).

To understand the formation of the Turkish diaspora and the identity negotiation of Turkish-German youths, it is essential to analyze the public discourse. Turkish workers have been addressed with terms that highlight the "otherness" and displacement, which are *Gastarbeiter* (guest-worker), *Ausländer* (foreigner), or *Mitbürger* (co-citizen), on the other side in Türkiye, they are officially called "gurbetçi" or "Almanyadaki vatandaşlarımız" (our citizens in Germany) (Kaya, 2001). However, in Türkiye they were called *Almancı* because of their different clothes, attitudes, and arrogant attitudes arising from being richer than those they knew (Baskurt, 2009). Hence, they were foreigners in both countries because there is a message of exclusion, humiliation, and marginalization in both the "Almancı" and "Ausländer" terms.

Kahn (2020) explained the Turkish term “Almancı” and translated it to English as “German-er”, or as the author uses, "Germanized Turk". This humiliating term has a physical and cultural estrangement: “the perception that the migrants living in Germany (*Almanya*) have undergone a process of Germanization, rendering them no longer fully Turkish” (p. 53). One famous refrain that is commonly heard from Turkish German young people is “Here we are called *yabancı* (foreigner) and there in Turkey they call us *Almancı*” (Kaya & Kentel, 2005, p.8). Also, during the interviews of our research, Turkish-German youths often mentioned how they felt about the terms people used to describe and name them, and that they were feeling like a foreigner in both countries.

1.4. Integration

Berry (1992) considers integration as one of the acculturation strategies in his model of acculturation: it happens when individuals maintain their culture of origin and, at the same time, seek to adopt the cultural values of mainstream culture. The attitudes and strategies of mainstream society toward immigrants influence the integration process of immigrants. For instance, societies may support cultural groups to keep and share their ethnic cultures and identities, and encourage maintaining cultural diversity in society by accepting cultural pluralism. Some other societies try to find ways to decrease immigration and diversity through many strategies and policies of assimilation, whereas others endeavor to marginalize ethnic minority groups in their societies (Berry, 2006). In short, the attitudes and policies of the mainstream culture might limit the opportunities for integration, and when other members of the society encourage them to maintain their

ethnic culture, then people can pursue integration (Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009). Hence, the integration policies and strategies of the host culture have a crucial role in an individual's adaptation to the new culture. According to Demirag and Kakısım (2018), the German government tried to find some ways to motivate Turkish immigrants to go back to their own country, but they could not achieve it.

After the formation of the second generation, German authorities noticed that the settlement of Turkish immigrants was not going to be for a short time, and they started to apply some specific policies for the integration of the next generations into the German community accordingly (Demirag & Kakısım, 2018). For many years, Germany did not want to admit that it was a country of immigration and has been always reluctant to implement immigration policies, keeping the issue in the background. This attitude in Germany has led to the constant exclusion and discrimination towards immigrants in matters such as education, citizenship, and the labor market (Cetin & Senoglu, 2021).

However, in 2000, the German government liberalized the citizenship laws towards dual citizenship and naturalization (Ozvatan, 2020). Also, in 2001, the German government of Chancellor Schröder enacted the Immigration Act (*Zuwanderungsgesetz*) for the regulation of immigration, then in January 2005 only a reduced version came into effect by the allowance from political compromise (Constant et al., 2012). The law accepted Germany as an immigration country and focused on the integration problems (Constant et al., 2012).

According to Sen (2003), although integration has been achieved by most emigrants, a feeling of foreignness among Germans is still present, as well as the Turks.

The reason behind this foreignness is the Turks' Muslim religious background, which is substantially different from the other emigrants from southern Europe in terms of cultural perspective.

On behalf of Münster University's Cluster of Excellence "Religion and Politics", the research agency TNS Emnid interviewed 1,200 immigrants from Türkiye via telephone between November 2015 and February 2016. Their research provides important information related to the integration of Turks into Germany: the majority of Turks (90%) reported that they were satisfied/very satisfied with their life in Germany. 87% of Turks reported that they felt related to Germany, and as many also felt related to Türkiye (85%). Besides, 70% of interviewees said that they wished to integrate into German society unconditionally and without reservation. Respondents were also asked what the indicators of integration were for them: 91% of interviewees reported learning the German language, 84% answered observing the German laws, and 76% mentioned maintaining good contact with Germans. Also, the researchers found that second and third-generations were structurally and socially better integrated into mainstream society compared to first-generation Turks.

Another study regarding the integration of Turks into German culture was conducted by Constant and colleagues (2012), who analyzed the cultural integration of different immigrant groups in Germany based on data from the German Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP), a longitudinal study providing information on approx. 20,000 people in 2007. Overall, Turks were more likely to be married, more often at young ages, and had more children than average German women. In comparison to other immigrant groups,

they reported less identification with the host society and more commitment to their home country, and their German language abilities were worse. Also, their religious beliefs differed from those of both natives and co-immigrants, and they reported the lowest level of interest in policy, and lower levels of life satisfaction compared to other groups. Based on their analysis, the researchers concluded that Turks were the least integrated immigrant group regarding integration signs used in their study, such as life satisfaction, marital age, religion, political interests, and so forth.

CHAPTER 2

THE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG TURKISH MUSLIMS IN GERMANY

2.1. Emerging Adulthood

The participants in this study are aged between 18 and 26 years, a period also known as emerging adulthood. This term refers to a distinct stage of life proposed by Arnett (2000), who defined it as a period of development from the late teens through the mid-twenties. It is a period when several life directions are still possible and few definite decisions about the future have been made for most people, and there is a great extent of life exploration than it would be at any other stage of life (Arnett, 2000). Arnett proposed this theory due to the changing nature of this specific developmental period of life in industrialized societies.

In developmental psychology, the initial and dominant theory concerning life-span psychosocial development was proposed by Erikson (1950). This scholar suggested that adolescence is a period between the beginning of puberty and the late teens, followed by young adulthood until around age 40 (Arnett, 2007). This conception gained meaning in industrialized societies of the middle of the 20th century, when most people married and started a permanent full-time job when they were around age 20. However, this model was no longer commensurate with the normative patterns of industrialized societies by the end of this century: median age of marriage had increased into the late 20s, and the

middle of the 20s were characterized by frequent occupational changes and pursuit of higher education for many people. In the twenty-first century, the way to adulthood is a long journey for young people: they generally leave home when they are 18 or 19, but most do not marry, become parents, or have a stable job until their late twenties (Arnett, 2004).

According to Arnett (2007), most youths spend their time from their late teens to the mid-20s trying out distinct experiences and establishing their life toward permanent decisions in occupation and love, rather than engaging in enduring adult roles. This period is greatly unsettled and unstructured; as a result, most young people who are in this period feel like neither teenagers nor (fully) adults, but somewhere in between. Emerging adulthood has five main features: *identity exploration* (trying different possibilities of life, specifically in love and work), *instability, self-focused*, *feeling in between*, and lastly *possibilities.* Although the process of identity formation starts in adolescence, it deepens in emerging adulthood, with young people defining their identities and learning more about themselves, such as who they are and what they want for their life (Arnett, 2004). In emerging adulthood, identity issues can be found in three major areas of identity exploration: love, work, and worldviews (Arnett, 2000).

From the end of adolescence to entry into adulthood, the responsibilities of being an adult are generally characterized by transitions from school to work, and from one's family of descent to the formation of new close relationships through marriage and parenthood (Rumbaut & Komaie, 2010). However, the criteria for transition to adulthood held by young people differ between age groups. Arnett (2001) examined the concept of

transition to adulthood among three different age groups in the US: adolescents (age 13–19), emerging adults (age 20–29), and young-to-midlife adults (age 30–55). He found that all age groups mostly considered individualistic criteria as a transition to adulthood, particularly deciding on one's beliefs and values, accepting responsibilities for one's actions, establishing equal relationships with parents, and being finally independent. However, he also found some differences between age groups - for instance, adolescents were more likely than young-to-midlife adults to consider the biological transition to be significant, and young-to-midlife adults were more likely to consider norm compliance as an essential criterion of the transition to adulthood.

What about the universality of Arnett's model? Do all young people have the same criteria for transition to adulthood? Importantly, Arnett (2000) claimed that the period of emerging adulthood is culturally constructed and not universal, but distinct and subjective. Arnett mainly focused on US emerging adults of the 21st century, but numerous studies have been conducted to test the universality of emerging adulthood and the commonalities between cultures.

Badger and her colleagues (2006) conducted a study of Chinese and American individuals to compare their responses regarding whether they believed they had reached adulthood. They found that Chinese young people considered themselves to be adults more than American emerging adults did. Chinese students were also found to attribute more importance to criteria that represented obligations toward other people than American students did (such as Norm compliance, Family capacities, and Relational Maturity). The results indicate how emerging adulthood is seen in non-Western societies

and confirm the idea that emerging adulthood is culturally constructed and not universal (Badger et al., 2006). These differences might arise from the characteristics and values of the collectivistic culture of China, and the study supports the notion that culture plays a significant role in emerging adulthood.

Hendry and Kloep (2010) deliberately selected individuals who were not in higher education and completed interviews with Welsh young people aged between 17 and 20, who were unemployed or working. The authors found that the emerging adulthood concept proposed by Arnett was only valid for one subgroup of the participants, and many of the participants considered themselves as having already reached adult status and being accepted as an adult by others (not all sectors of their life). This research might be insightful in the sense that the period of emerging adulthood is subjective and numerous factors play a role in young people's perception of achieving adult status. It is also important to mention that most participants were already full-time employed.

In a qualitative study, Cok and Atak (2015) explored differences in the criterion for the transition to adulthood and perceived adulthood among Turkish young people ages between 20 and 31 in different areas of Türkiye: rural areas, urban settings (those who were continuing their education), and urban settings (those who were living in an urban area, but originated from a rural setting and had discontinued their education). They found that most of the rural and urban-with-rural background people considered themselves as adults, however, most urban young people did not consider themselves as having reached adulthood. Moreover, they found differences in the criteria for reaching adulthood: urban young people mostly considered biological/age-dependent issues, economic

independence, and accepting responsibility for one's own behaviors; on the contrary, people from rural groups generally emphasized the demographic markers (e.g., being married), military service, becoming parents and becoming able to raise a child as a criterion for reaching adulthood (Cok &Atak, 2015).

Overall, these findings support Arnett's (2000) idea that emerging adulthood is only present in societies that postpone the entrance into adult roles and responsibilities until well past the late teens, and are most likely to be observed in highly industrialized or post-industrialized societies. Additionally, there tends to be a specific cultural difference between urban and rural areas of developing countries, with emerging adulthood being mostly found in urban areas because individuals obtain more education, marry later, and have more occupational opportunities compared to their peers in rural areas (Arnett, 2000).

2.2. Identity

The definition and formation of identity have been discussed by numerous researchers from different perspectives. From a developmental perspective, researchers have focused on the two underlying processes of the formation of the personal identity: exploration and commitment (Mastrotheodoros et al., 2021). Exploration refers to the active rethinking, sorting through, and deliberation of different life choices and roles; on the other side, commitment includes individual investment the person shows in a course of belief or action (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). In the current study, the concept of identity will be discussed through Social Identity Theory (SIT).

SIT was developed by Tajfel and Turner in the early 1970s. The theory explains the relationship between different social groups and the sense of belonging of an individual to one or more groups (Harwood, 2020). Tajfel and Turner (1985) defined the group as a collection of people who recognize themselves as a member of the same social unit, have some sense of emotional belonging in their shared definition of themselves, and have some social consensus concerning thoughts of their group as well as their membership. Further, they claimed that social groups supply their members with identification with themselves.

Social identity refers to the aspect of an individual's self-concept that originates from their awareness of membership to one or more social groups, intertwined with the emotional importance assigned to that belonging (Tajfel, 1974). Social identity formation is actualized through two fundamental processes: social categorization and social comparison (Zakiryanova & Redkina, 2020). According to SIT, people categorize their social world instinctively to organize and simplify their environment; we categorize others into groups as well as ourselves, a mechanism that is referred to as self-identification (Harwood, 2020). When people categorize themselves into groups ("ingroup"), they try to achieve positive feelings from their membership by approaching their own group rather than other outgroups.

Tajfel and Turner (1985) claimed that a person's self-image derives from their membership to certain groups, and social identity might be positive or negative based on the individual's evaluations of social categories and one's memberships. If a social identity is not satisfactory, people will try to make their ingroup better, and/or they try to

leave their present group and join another distinct group that is perceived positively to a greater extent.

2.2.1 Multiple identities and acculturation

People form numerous social groups to organize their environment, and they can have different identities based on their distinct memberships in different social groups. Ethnic identity is one of them. Ethnic groups refer to subgroups that have a shared ancestry and hold different elements, such as culture, phenotype kinship, religion, language, or place of origin; ethnic identity is an individual's sense of self as a member of certain ethnic groups (Phinney, 2003). Ethnic identity is an important part of ourselves, especially if we are surrounded by different ethnic groups, or live in a distinct environment that is different from our ethnic background.

The process of ethnic identity formation is characterized as a progression, with a person moving from the unexamined attitudes of childhood through a moratorium (period of exploration) to a securely reached ethnic identity at the end of adolescence (Phinney et al., 2001). Ethnicity is considered a significant part of the individual's identity, but through the life course of a person and according to a given situation, the salience of ethnicity varies (Liebkind et al., 2016). Cultural identity is different from ethnic identity: it is defined as an individual's feelings about belonging to a certain cultural group and attributed to a range of beliefs and behaviors acquired from this cultural group, and shared with members of one's group (Jensen, 2003).

Ethnic and cultural identity are significant constructs in terms of acculturation and migration studies. Berry (2005) defined acculturation as a dual process of cultural and psychological changes which occurs because of contact between two or more cultural groups and their members. At the individual level, changes occur in the behavioral repertoire of the person, whereas at the group level changes occur in the social structures, cultural practices, and institutions (Berry, 2005). He also claimed that these cultural and psychological changes take place in a long-term process, sometimes in years, generations, and even centuries.

According to Berry's acculturation model, there are four acculturation strategies, and these stem from two issues that all acculturating people encounter. These two issues are based on an individual's orientation toward his/her own group and toward the other groups (Berry,2005), involving (1) a preference for maintaining one's own heritage culture and identity, and (2) a preference for getting in contact with and participating in the mainstream society. The strategies resulting from the combination of these issues are integration, separation, assimilation, and marginalization. Integrated individuals identify with both ethnic and mainstream cultures, assimilated (with mainstream culture) and separated (with ethnic culture) individuals identify with only one culture, and marginalized individuals do not identify with either culture (Benet- Martínez et al., 2002).

Schwartz and colleagues (2006) argued that the association of social and cultural identity with acculturation is based on the characteristics of the ingroup and outgroup. For instance, if an immigrant individual relates with a socially undervalued ingroup (e.g.,

nonwhite minority groups in Western countries), the acculturation experience might be harder than for someone who relates himself/herself with a socially valued ingroup.

Even though ethnic identity is important for one's sense of self, different identities play a significant role in the process of acculturation, such as cultural, national, and religious identities (Liebkind et al., 2016). Navigating multiple identities is necessary and important for immigrants and children of immigrants from ethnic minority groups; typically, this includes the development of ethnic and national identity (Spiegler et al., 2018).

2.2.2. National identity

According to Keane (1994), national identity can be defined as a consciousness of affiliation with the nation, which provides people with a sense of who they are in their relationships with other people or instill in them a perception of purpose that makes them feel at home (Hjerm, 1998). National and ethnic identities might differ independently, meaning that each identity might be on the contradictory poles of secure and strong or thwarted and weak; also, identifying with both cultures (ethnic and national) is possible (Sabatier, 2008).

Barrett (2000) explained some of the cognitive aspects of national identity from a developmental point of view: to have a sense of national identity, at the psychological level, one should have knowledge of the presence of the national group. Secondly, the awareness of the existence of a national group is not enough alone to have a national identity; an individual should also categorize him/herself as a member of this national

group. Further, as national identities are associated with certain geographical territories, and there are various symbols, institutions, customs, and traditions that exist to provide an important representation of identity, it is significant to examine how children acquire knowledge of the national geographical territories and knowledge of national emblems. Also, national identity includes beliefs about common descent and kinship, typical characteristics and traits of the national group, some certain beliefs about other people from different national groups, and an individual's beliefs about the self in the relationship with the national group (Barrett, 2000).

2.2.3. Religious identity

Religion is a fundamental part of human life and an indicator of humans' instinctual urge to search for meaning in this world (Yavuz, 2004). Further, religion can play an important role in an individual's identity, especially in ethnic communities. According to Griffith and Griggs (2001), religious identity is referred to the process of individuals' exploration and commitment to a certain domain of religion, and establishing religious commitments is significant for identity formation.

In addition to ethnic identity, religion is one of the most important indicators of group identity as ethnic and religious groups provide numerous functions to people, such as a positive identity, a sense of belongingness and inclusion, a cultural worldview, a feeling of certainty and meaningfulness (Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2007). Given that it is a social institution, religion is strongly involved in people's daily life, and it is also an indicator of whether an individual belongs to the community or not (Shady, 2022).

Also, religion plays an important role in the formation of ethnic identities; especially for first-generation immigrants, identification with Islam is mostly observed as a fragment of emerging ethnic societies in European countries among Turkish immigrants living in Germany, British Indians and Pakistanis, and to some extent, Moroccans living in France (Cesari, 2007). In addition, religion provides an important social support system for immigrants: religious institutions offer people who left their countries and families a community where they can come together with co-ethnics and build networks of support; they also provide psychological support to help them amend the traumas that derive from early settlement and frequent experiences of discrimination (Foner & Alba, 2008).

In the last decades, religious identity has been studied to reveal its effect and importance for the integration of immigrants into the host countries, especially in the US. In the North American literature on migration, specifically in the US, religion is approached as an instrument to encourage integration by fostering the adaptation process of migrants; however, in Western Europe, religion is often recognized as a conflict rather than the solution for immigrant minority groups, and the major remarks in the literature on immigrant religion are entirely on Islam (Foner & Alba, 2008). Additionally, Islam is considered an obstacle or challenge to the integration of immigrants and a reason for dispute with the organizations and practices of mainstream society.

The association between religious and national identity and individuals' attachment to the host cultures are also essential, as this study aims to analyze how religious identity influences young Muslim Turks' belongingness to German society. Shady (2022) researched the answer to the question "How does religion influence an individual's

national identity?". She concluded that individuals who were not part of the religion of mainstream culture had weaker national identity than people who were members of the religious majority group, which means that religious importance can lead to a weaker national identity, especially for Muslims. However, the overall conditioning influence of the significance of religion on national identity (strengthening national identity for majority religious group members, and weakening for minority religious group members) is decreasing in the European context.

A study with Belgian Muslim immigrants found that high religiosity predicted attachment to heritage identity and culture, whereas low religiosity predicted identification with the host country (Saroglu & Mathijsen, 2007). On the other hand, a recent study by Niechziol and Medeiros (2023) found that religiosity did not provide a clear explanation of the national attachment of German Turks, but their findings indicated that Turkish identity and Islam were more closely related. They also reported a significant positive correlation between age and German identity. Thus, second-generation Turkish immigrants were significantly more likely to identify themselves as Germans (Niechziol & Medeiros, 2023).

Another study with young Turkish and Moroccan adults aged between 18 and 35 years in five European countries (Fleischman & Phalet, 2015) found a conflicting identity pattern: the more participants self-identified as Muslims (and Turkish/Moroccan), the less they identified themselves as Dutch or Swedish. Saroglou and Mathijsen (2007) compared young Muslims who were born of immigration from Muslim countries and young non-Muslims who were born in other countries (including mostly Christian young

immigrants) in Belgium. Results indicated that in both groups, high religiousness was associated with attachment to the heritage identity and culture, whereas low religiousness and religious doubting were associated with identification with the mainstream culture and acculturation.

In sum, the literature suggests that the level of identification with one's own religious ethnic group has an influence on the identification with mainstream culture. In particular, among immigrant-origin youth, several studies indicate that identification with Muslim religion is negatively related to national identity, although findings are not always clear-cut.

2.3. Negotiation of multiple identities

The process of negotiating multiple identities is rather complex: a literature review of acculturation and ethnic research indicates that bicultural individuals explained their dual cultural identities in complex ways from both positive and negative perspectives (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005). For instance, Tahseen and Cheah (2018) suggested that the level of perceived membership in the two identities (national and religious) among Muslim American young adults could be classified as 'high', 'moderate', 'weak', and 'undifferentiated', with the largest category being composed of adolescents scoring high on both American and Muslim identity elements.

Benet–Martínez and Haritatos (2005) argue that Berry's notion of integration, which involves the identification with both cultures, fails to explain how people engage in integration and maintain their dual cultures, and does not provide enough information

about individual and sociocultural factors explaining biculturalism. As a result, the traditional research on acculturation has considered biculturalism as a uniform concept, ignoring the individual differences in how bicultural identities are formed and negotiated. For this reason, Benet-Martínez and her colleagues (2002) proposed a theoretical framework of Bicultural Identity Integration (BII): individuals high on BII see their identities as compatible and they tend to consider themselves as members of a "hyphenated culture" or part of a combined "third" emerging culture, but individuals low on BII view their social identities as disconnected from each other or conflictual (Repke & Benet-Martínez, 2017).

Stuart and Ward (2011) identified three different strategies adopted by Muslim young people in the process of achieving a balance between multiple identities and cultural orientations: *alternation orientations, blending orientations, and minimizing differences.* The strategy of alternation refers to the balance achieved by changing the behavioral repertoire accordingly to a given specific environment. Individuals who alternate their orientations decide their behaviors consciously depending on the cultural context and do not necessarily feel conflict between their cultural orientations. The second strategy is blending, which is a kind of hybridization of multiple identities and roles while individuals achieve balance by choosing the components of each orientation to adopt. The last strategy is minimizing differences, which involves putting the consistency of the self at the center as a unit. A sense of consistent individual identity is more important than a separate different identity element for people who adopt this strategy (Stuart & Ward, 2011). Also, cultural frame-switching might be engaged as an answer to signs such as

contexts (home or school) and symbols (language) that are psychologically connected with a specific culture (Hong et al., 2000). Here, cultural frame switching refers to the active movement between multiple cultural systems in answer to contextual cues (Benet-Martínez et al., 2002).

Research on the negotiation of identities among Turk-Muslim populations across Europe is limited. A study with young Turkish-Muslims in the UK indicated that these youths had different feelings, opinions, and perceptions about their lifestyle, background, and culture around them, and their bonds with British society (Babacan, 2021): while some of them strongly identified with their ethnic background in the multicultural context, others thought that there was a need to learn from both cultures (Babacan, 2021). In this qualitative study, the majority of participants maintained the ethnic origin of their parents and tended to build friendships with those who held the same religious beliefs and values as themselves. Also, personal choice and differences in behaviors and culture were determinants in participants' social interaction with English people, rather than social exclusion or discrimination.

A study with German Muslims found that for those from Turkish families, preserving ethnic identities while living in Germany was central, since even participants with German nationality reported that they identified themselves as Turk rather than German (Holtz et al., 2013). Further, participants also stated that religion helped them to show others that they did not lose their cultural heritage and still had the feeling of belonging to their parents' culture, because those who were raised in Germany did not feel accepted by Turks in Türkiye during their visits. Here, religion played a role in

helping them maintain their bond with their "homeland" Türkiye and bridge the gap between Turks in Germany and Turks in Türkiye (Holtz et al., 2013).

2.3.1. Biculturalism and hyphenated identities

Identity development encompasses the development of ethnic identity and national identity for ethnic minority teens (Spiegler et al., 2019). Immigrant youth need to integrate their ethnic and national identities into their personal identities (Mastrotheodoros et al., 2021). In this process, the notion of biculturalism becomes relevant.

Biculturalism has been defined and explained in various ways. Broadly, it represents the comfort and proficiency that an individual has within both his/her heritage culture and the culture of the country where s/he has settled (Schwartz & Unger, 2010). Individuals who speak the language of both the minority and the majority group, have friends from both cultures, watch television programs, and read magazines from both cultural settings are considered bicultural. Some scholars further suggest that true biculturalism refers to the synthesis of heritage and receiving cultures into a unique and individualized blend (Schwartz & Unger, 2010). The notion of *hyphenated identity* can also be used to describe bicultural individuals. According to identity hyphenation, it is possible to have some degree of identification with both ethnic minority and national groups at the same time, such as African-American or Turkish-Dutch (Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2007).

Schwartz and Unger (2010) claimed that biculturalism arises from one or two factors: the sociocultural setting, characterized by ethnogenesis (i.e., the context where both the receiving and heritage cultural characteristics are valued and emphasized), and parents' active and conscious attempts to socialize their children toward the ethnic culture. In fact, in a monocultural context where mainstream society might not encourage the maintenance of one's heritage culture, the socialization efforts of parents might be particularly essential.

In their study of German Muslims, Holtz and his colleagues (2013) found different identification patterns among participants: identification with German culture was easy for participants who migrated to Germany at some earlier time in their life, whereas for younger participants who were born and raised in Germany, a more complex dynamic emerged. These youths felt a sense of belonging to both cultures, although this dual ethnicity was not seen as a source of enrichment. Rather, it was considered a burden: instead of identifying themselves as either German or Turkish, they tended to feel somewhat in-between, feeling neither completely Turkish, nor completely German.

2.3.2. Biculturalism, social identities, and mental health

The formation of multiple social and bicultural identities is essential in the acculturation process. However, there is limited research on the relationship between multiple social identities and mental health among immigrant youth.

A meta-analysis across 74 studies showed that strong social identification, whether ethnic, national, or other types, was related to decreased psychological symptoms (Brance

et al., 2023). Thus, social identification seems to offer protection against psychological difficulties, even though effect sizes were small as seen in the case of depression and anxiety. As regards biculturalism, a study found that greater bicultural competence buffered against depressive symptoms and minority distress (Wei et al., 2010); another study with minority students in Germany reported that students with a stronger bicultural identity showed significantly greater cognitive, emotional, and behavioral school engagement than students with a weaker bicultural identity (Preusche & Göbel, 2021).

A study of the Turkish immigrant population in Germany explored the relationship between acculturation strategies and depressive symptoms (Morawa & Erim, 2014). The authors found that a higher degree of acculturation to both ethnic and mainstream cultures was correlated with lower levels of depressive symptoms. Their findings were also consistent with previous findings indicating that the integration strategy and stronger bicultural identities are protective for psychological well-being.

Another study with Muslim American adolescents found that adolescents who exhibited a stronger identification with both national and religious identities had the highest levels of well-being, and those participants were successful in navigating their multiple identities in different social environments (Tahseen & Cheah, 2018). Additionally, there was a positive influence of religious identity on well-being, as participants who were high on Muslim identity reported higher levels of well-being than those who were low on both Muslim and American identities.

Taken together, these findings suggest that identification with both the heritage and national culture are linked to better psychological adjustment, and that among Muslim

adolescents, having strong religious and national identities is associated with increased mental health. However, the extent to which these findings can be extended to the European context is still unknown.

2.4. What does it mean to be a Muslim?

Islam is a monotheistic religion that was founded by the prophet Muhammad in Arabia in the 7th century CE. The Arabic word "Islam" means "surrender", particularly surrender to the will of the single God (Allah in Arabic). Allah is recognized as the universe's only God, creator, and sustainer.[3]

Muslim is the word that refers to people who belong to Islam, and it means "one who submits to God" in Arabic. Like the other two Abrahamic religions (Christianity and Judaism), Muslims also believe in a single God (Allah), but they acknowledge Muhammad as the last prophet, and they believe in their book Qur'an (Sirin & Fine, 2008). According to Islam, every Muslim adult must follow and meet the five principles of faith in Allah and his messenger: pray five times a day, donate a portion of his/her financial gain to people who are in need, fast during the holy month of Ramadan, and visit Mecca (birthplace of Islam) once in his/her life for pilgrimage (Sirin & Fine, 2008).

Yavuz (2004) suggests that there are seven distinct competing zones of political Islam, even though Islam has universal principles. In his explanation of the Turkish zone, he mentions how Islam is closely related to Turkish identity: in Türkiye, Islam plays a

[3] https://www.britannica.com/topic/Islam/Doctrines-of-the-Qur-an

role as a “melting pot” to integrate the various ethnic groups and was an identity of resistance toward the occupation forces during the Turkish War of Independence. The state has never been able to disengage Islam from the arguments in the politics of identity due to the role of Islam in the formation of Turkish identity. Islam became the basis of the construction of Turkish identity as a result of the emblematic relationship between Turkish nationalism and Islam (Yavuz, 2004). Hence, it can be argued that Muslim and Turkish identities are intertwined for most Muslims of Turkish origin. In support of this idea, Verkuyten and Yildiz (2007) found a strong positive association between Turkish and Muslim identifications among Turkish Muslims who lived in the Netherlands, demonstrating that being Muslim is a fundamental element of being a Turk in the Netherlands.

In studying the religious identity of Muslim immigrants of Turkish origin living in Germany - a mainly Christian country - it is essential to analyze how Muslims and Christians may differ from each other. Compared to Christians, Muslims believe in the all-great religions of the world, whereas Christians are brought up with the belief that other religions are false and only their religion is the true one, with Judaism as a preparation for Christianity (Aziz-Us-Samad, 2003). Additionally, these two religions consider the prophet Muhammad and Jesus from different perspectives. Muslims believe that Prophet Jesus is the slave and messenger of God, and reject that Jesus is God or is

part of the Trinity as Christians believe; on the other hand, although Christianity accepts the existence of Prophet Muhammad, they do not consider him a prophet (Stacey, 2017)[4].

Besides these differences, there are also common characteristics of these two religions: both highlight the importance of prayer and communication with God, call on people to be charitable and gentle, encourage their believers to behave and dress in a modest way, and admonish people to treat others the way they would wish to be treated (Stacey, 2017).

2.5. Islamophobia and Discrimination

The acculturation experiences and identity formation of individuals from ethnic minority groups cannot be analyzed without considering the sociopolitical context. Although there is a large Muslim population in European countries, islamophobia and discrimination are still issues. Discrimination refers to negative behaviors toward members of outgroups (Romero & Roberts, 1998). The term "islamophobia" stands for the hostility and fear towards Islam and Muslims which is motivated by racism, and it results in discriminatory, exclusionary, and violent behaviors toward Muslims and people sensed as Muslims[5].

The influence of perceived discrimination and islamophobia on immigrant youths' national and religious identity development has gained importance in the literature after the terrorist attacks of September 11. According to Poynting and Mason (2007), there has

[4] https://www.islamreligion.com/articles/11182/similarities-and-differences-between-islam-and-christianity-part-1/
[5] https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/display/document/obo-9780195390155/obo-9780195390155-0285.xml

been a shift in racist attitudes "from anti-Asian and anti-Arab racism to anti-Muslim racism" (p. 61), and this has increased after the events of 9/11 (Kunst et al., 2012).

Sirin and Fine (2007) conducted an exploratory, mixed-method study on how Muslim American youths (aged between 12 and 18) negotiated their identities in the presence of discrimination, especially in the years after 9/11. They found that most of the participants (84.3%) had faced discrimination due to their religion or ethnicity in different contexts, either at school, on the playground, on the street, or in other public spaces.

As regards the attitudes toward Islam in Germany, a representative survey of TNS Emnid on behalf of Münster University's Cluster of Excellence "Religion and Politics" (2016) asked the participants about their attitudes toward Islam: only a small number of participants of Turkish origin in Germany associated Islam with discrimination against women (20%), fanaticism (18%), or the propensity to violence (12%). On the other hand, the majority of Turkish respondents associated Islam with positive characteristics, peaceableness (65%), tolerance (56%), solidarity (53%), or respect for human rights (57%). These were the characteristics that only a few of German people ascribed to Islam, since most of the German population was found to associate Islam with discrimination against women (82%), fanaticism (72%), and the propensity to violence (64%). These findings also indicate that German people hold negative attitudes toward Islam, which might lead to discrimination towards Muslims living in Germany.

Further, a study with Turkish German youths found that, in contrast to German youth, an important percentage of Turkish participants perceived discrimination in different areas of their daily lives (Skrobanek, 2009).

A study with British Muslims aged between 16 and 27 years demonstrated that personal discrimination was correlated with greater depressive symptoms; none of the social identities were associated with more positive mental health outcomes; and Muslim identity was found weakly but significantly related to more depressive symptoms (Stuart et al., 2020). Another study with first and second-generation immigrant Muslims in Italy found similar results, as there was a direct link between discrimination and both depression and satisfaction with migration decisions among first and second generations; particularly the latter, who felt more discriminated, were more depressed (Giuliani et al., 2018).

Another study with different ethnic minority groups in the UK found that racism was correlated with higher levels of perceived distress, lower levels of social capital, higher minority identity, and lower majority identity (Heim et al., 2011). Also, a study with Turkish immigrant adolescents in six countries in North-Western Europe found that higher levels of perceived discrimination predicted worse adaptation; on the other hand, higher ethnic orientation and bicultural orientation boosted these youths' adaptation (Vedder et al., 2007). In these results, we can also see the importance of the development of strong bicultural identities.

2.5.1. Rejection identification model

The rejection identification model (RIM) is supported by several studies in the literature (Fleischmann et al., 2011; Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2007); it is important for the current study in terms of understanding the effect of perceived discrimination on participants'

negotiation of identities. The model suggests that rejection from an outgroup can result in identification with an ingroup for minority group members, protecting them from the negative outcomes of discrimination (Ramos et al., 2012).

The RIM was developed based on a study by Branscombe et al. (1999), who examined the effect of prejudice on well-being among African Americans. This study found that attributions of prejudice had a direct and negative influence on the well-being of African Americans, increasing the hostility towards Whites and minority group identification; at the same time, minority group identification improved psychological well-being (Branscombe et al., 1999). Hence, the main suggestion of the model is that discrimination based on individuals' group membership negatively influences psychological well-being, although identification with the group has a buffering role against the negative effect of discrimination on self-esteem (Ramos et al., 2012).

The results of different studies confirmed the RIM: a study with British Muslims demonstrated that perceived islamophobia was correlated with stronger Muslim identification, and personal discrimination was correlated with weaker British national identity (Stuart et al., 2020); similarly, in a study of German Turks, religious discrimination had a weak negative influence on national identity (Kunst et al., 2012). Fleischmann and colleagues (2019) carried out a longitudinal study with minority youths in Germany, and reported that adolescents who experienced frequent discrimination because of their ethnicity showed less national identification with Germany over time (lower German identification was correlated with increased minority identification). Another study with Muslim second-generation minorities in Italy also found similar

results: the greater the discrimination, the weaker the national identity and stronger religious identification (Giuliani et al., 2018).

Verkuyten and Yildiz (2007) analyzed national (dis)identification and ethnic and religious identity among Turkish-Dutch Muslims. They found that ethnic and Muslim identifications were negatively correlated with Dutch identification, and perceived group rejection was related to stronger ethnic and religious identification and decreased national Dutch identification. Verkuyten (2008) also studied the life satisfaction among Turkish-Dutch ethnic minorities and found that they had lower overall life satisfaction due to perceived structural discrimination by the mainstream society. In support of the RIM, he also found that perceived discrimination was correlated with greater identification with Turkish groups, and that group identification was positively related to life satisfaction.

Hence, the literature highlights an overall positive influence of ethnic group identification on immigrant individuals' lives, because people assign value to their ethnic group and gain satisfaction from their sense of belonging (Verkuyten, 2008). Indeed, there is a devaluation arising from minority group membership; therefore, positive self-esteem can be preserved by the feeling of belonging to the ingroup. According to RIM, discrimination might lead to a stronger identification with ingroup membership, and the negative effects of discrimination on well-being can be counteracted through identification with the ingroup.

CHAPTER 3

THE CURRENT STUDY

3.1. Objectives and research questions

This thesis is part of a larger study called "Project IMAGE: Identity between Religion and Culture", coordinated by Professor Ughetta Moscardino together with Dr. Chiara Ceccon from the University of Padua (Italy) in collaboration with Professor Charissa Cheah from the University of Maryland-Baltimore (USA). Using a mixed-method approach, the overall goal of this project is to examine how Muslim young adults who were born or have resided in Italy for a minimum of 10 years form their social identities (national, ethnic, and religious) and bicultural belonging. The investigation specifically aimed to understand the transitional stage of identity development during emerging adulthood.

The current thesis extended this aim to analyze the negotiation of different identities among Turk emerging adults with Muslim heritage in their daily lives in Germany, specifically national identity (gained from belonging to the mainstream culture) and religious identity (socialized within families), also considering the possible influence of perceived religious-based discrimination in this process. To achieve this goal, an exploratory study was conducted online by collecting both qualitative and quantitative data through interviews that included open-ended questions, an identity map, and several questionnaires to measure the variables of interest.

The following research questions were addressed:

R.Q. 1: *How do young Turkish Muslim adults residing in Germany reconcile the two identity affiliations (Muslim identity and German identity)?*

Young people with migration backgrounds from Muslim countries who live in the European context often encounter great challenges in the formation of multiple collective identities and regulation of their sense of belonging to different cultures (Saroglu & Mathijsen, 2007). Yet, most studies analysing the identity formation of Muslim-origin youth have been conducted in the United States. For instance, Sirin and Fine (2008) found that Muslim-Americans deeply felt the force of global conflict, however, they combined the pieces of identity in distinct ways: some of them felt alienated, some felt obliged to educate, some sought to clarify, some grew to anger, others felt connected (Sirin & Fine, 2008, p. 195).

The literature demonstrates that identity negotiations are different among immigrants, and multifaceted (Tahseen & Cheah, 2018; Stuart & Ward, 2011). While some studies have shown that strong religiosity/religious identity is associated with a stronger ethnic identity and a weaker national identity (Fleischmann & Phalet, 2015; Kunst et al., 2012; Saroglu & Mathijsen, 2007), other studies found that negotiation of religious identity and national identity is more complex process and involves the use of different strategies, and national and religious identities are not always in conflict (Sirin & Fine, 2007; Stuart and Ward, 2011). For instance, Sirin and Fine (2007) reported three identity solutions among Muslim-American youth: integrated, parallel, and conflictual identity.

Based on the available findings concerning Muslim-origin youth in the diaspora, and considering that there are reports indicating that Turkish citizens in Germany still struggle in terms of integration due to negative attitudes and prejudice towards Turk Muslims, we expect that our participants would engage in dynamic and divergent strategies of reconciling their religious and national identities, with some degree of conflict due to the large distance between German and Turkish-Muslim cultural and religious values.

R.Q. 2: *How do Turk-Muslims live their daily lives as Muslims in Germany?*

As religion and religious groups provide a sense of belonging, religion plays a significant role in individuals' daily lives and in the formation of ethnic identities (Shady, 2022; Cesari, 2007). Hence, when we look at the immigration of Turks to Germany, and the presence of a large Turkish community in Germany, the influence of Turk Islam culture in participants' lives cannot be ignored.

The literature suggests that Muslim-origin youth struggle in different areas of their daily life in Europe due to their religion and ethnic background, such as discrimination (Cetin & Senoglu, 2021; Skrobanek, 2009) and group rejection (Verkuyten and Yildiz, 2007). In addition, sociological accounts suggest that the German population has a mostly negative view of Muslims and Turks, as we can see in the public discourse (Lynn Kahn 2020; Kaya, 2001) and Turkish people created a new Turkish-German culture in Germany, which differentiates them from Germans and Turks in Türkiye thanks to the presence of the larger Turkish community and Turk-Islam organizations (Amelina &

Faist, 2008). Furthermore, studies conducted in the European context suggest that individuals with higher identification with religion tend to show low integration and high identification with the heritage culture (Saroglu & Mathijsen, 2007; Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2007). These negative experiences and the higher level of involvement with the Turkish community might lead to more identification with religious identity and isolation from mainstream society.

In this study, we anticipate that Muslim identity and religion have a broader influence on participants' daily lives, not only in religious practices and core beliefs but also in the behaviors and value systems. Given the extremely limited literature on Muslim Germans of Turkish origin, we cannot put forward any specific hypothesis; however, we expect that daily life experiences, integration strategies, identifying with groups, and negotiation of identities might change between participants as the process is multidimensional. Additionally, when we think about the differences between the cultures of Germany and Turk/Islam, the discrepancy between the environment at home/Turkish community and broader society might create conflict.

R.Q. 3: *Is there an association between perceived religious discrimination, social identities (Muslim and German identity), and biculturalism?*

When members of ethnic groups have strong national and ethnic identities, dual identity is formed (Spiegler et al., 2019). On the other side, members of minority groups might prioritize one identity over the other, for instance, they might emphasize their national or ethnic identity, with the assimilation or separation strategy.

Several studies on Muslim immigrants have shown that religious identity and national identity are negatively interrelated (Kunst et al., 2012, Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2007), and most of them have found support for the RIM, reporting that perceived discrimination correlated with stronger ethnic/religious identity and weaker national identity (Stuart et al., 2020; Fleischmann et al., 2019; Heim et al., 2011). However, some studies reported a weak negative association between discrimination and national identity (Kunst et al., 2012).

Based on the RIM, we expected that Muslim identity would be negatively associated with German national identity, and that perceived discrimination would be linked to a stronger Muslim identity and a weaker German identity. Moreover, we expected to find a positive relationship between biculturalism and the two social identities (religious and national), as biculturalism refers to the unique blend of both heritage and host culture (Schwartz & Unger, 2010).

R.Q. 4: *To what extent are religious discrimination, social identities, and biculturalism linked to depressive symptoms among Muslim German Turks?*

As the positive impact of identification with social groups and strong bicultural identities has been studied, the negative impact of religious discrimination on the psychological well-being of individuals from minority groups has been studied in different contexts, providing evidence for detrimental effects.

The literature highlights the importance of identification with social groups in terms of protection against psychological disorders (Brance et al., 2023) and the overall positive

effect of biculturalism on adjustment and mental health in terms of lower stress levels and depression (e.g., Cano et al., 2021; Morawa & Erim, 2014; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013); and better cognitive and emotional outcomes (Preusche & Göbel, 2021). On the other hand, religious discrimination is correlated with more depressive symptoms, more psychological distress, and weaker adaptation to mainstream society (Stuart et al., 2020).

Hence, we expected that increased religious discrimination would be related to more depressive symptoms and that more biculturalism would be linked to fewer depressive symptoms among our participants. Due to a lack of studies on the relationship between religious and national identities and depression among Turkish Muslims in Germany, we did not formulate any specific hypothesis; however, it was reasonable to expect that a stronger identification with both groups would be related to fewer depressive symptoms.

3.2. Participants

This study involved 30 Turk-Muslim young adults living in Germany, who were recruited using a snowball sampling technique. The inclusion criteria were as follows: 1) being aged between 18 and 26 years; 2) being Turkish with a Muslim family background; 3) being born in Germany or Türkiye with at least one Turkish-origin parent; 4) for Türkiye-born participants, having resided in Germany for at least 10 years and/or having finished at least one full cycle of education. Approximately 40 individuals were approached to participate in the study, of whom 30 consented to participate (participation rate: 75%). It

is noteworthy to mention that no participants opted to withdraw their participation during the interview. Participants' sociodemographic characteristics are reported in Table 1.

Table 1. *Sociodemographic characteristics of the study sample*

	M	*SD*	*Range*
Age (in years)	22		19-26
Gender			
Female (N, %)	25, 83%		
Male (N, %)	5, 17%		
First Generation (N, %)	2, 6.7%		
Years in Germany	11	1.4	10-12
Second Generation (N, %)	26, 86.7%		
Third Generation (N, %)	2, 6.7%		

Note. $N = 30$.

The vast majority of participants (28 of 30) were born in Germany, and the remaining 2 participants were born in Türkiye. Among the latter, one had been living in Germany for 10 years, the other for 12 years. Participants originated from different parts of Germany. All of them defined themselves as bilingual, the majority (28 of 30) chose the Turkish language as their first language and German as their second language. Almost all of them made this differentiation based on their first learned language, but for sure their proficiency in German was far better than their proficiency in Turkish.

The birth country of parents differed between participants, whether Türkiye or Germany: 57% of them (*n* = 17) had both parents born in Türkiye, 36% (*n* = 11) had one parent born in Germany and one in Türkiye. Lastly, 7% (*n* = 2) had both parents born in Germany. Concerning their current educational status, 87% (*n* = 26) reported that they were university students, and the remaining 13% (*n* = 4) were high schoolers. Of the 30 participants, 73% (*n* = 22) reported that they were also working (such as an internship, part-time or full-time job).

In response to the question: *"What denomination of Muslim are you (i.e. Sunni, Shia,…?",* 25 of them reported that they were Sunni, 4 of them Alevi, and one participant did not want to answer this question ("*For me, I don't find it right to divide Islam into sections, I say that I'm Muslim, same for my family also").*

3.3. Procedure

The current study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the School of Psychology of the University of Padua (protocol n. 4914).

I carried out the data collection between December 2022 and June 2023. Data were collected online through individually administered, semi-structured interviews that included both open-ended questions and several questionnaires, as well as an Identity Map (see Measures section). Interviews were conducted in Turkish (*n* = 25) or English (*n* = 5) according to participants' preferences. Participant recruitment took place through the

snowball technique, and participants were reached by social media ads and word of mouth.

After the first contact with the participants, the aim of the project was explained, and an informed consent form was sent by email or message through personal phone numbers. Also, the identity map was explained to each participant as it was also included in the informed consent. All the informed consent forms were signed digitally. After informed consent was signed, participants were asked to draw an identity map and send it before the interview day. Some of the identity maps were drawn by participants by hand (n = 21), some of them in a digital format (n = 9).

Each interview was completed in approximately one hour (between 45-60 minutes). All the Turkish interviews were translated into English by myself. All the participants were interviewed via the Zoom platform. During the online interview meetings, Google Forms were used for the surveys, and participants were orally asked to rate each questionnaire item; the answers to open-ended questions were noted simultaneously via computer. No audio or video recordings were taken during the interviews for privacy reasons.

Questionnaires and open-ended questions were used to delve deeper into related specific topics; in addition, sociodemographic questions and an ice-breaker question were asked *("Can you tell me about the history of your family's migration?"*). The interview finished on a good or neutral note by thanking the participant for his/her time and contribution to the study.

3.4. Measures

To address the research questions for this study, we used a mixed-method approach involving semi-structure interviews, questionnaires, and identity maps, as described below (see Table 2).

Table 2. *Interview protocol*

Construct	Questionnaire	Open-Ended Question(s)
Role of ethnicity in Religiosity/religious practices		*Do you think that your Turkish background shapes the way you live your religiosity?*
Religious Muslim Identity	RI-MEIM (Phinney, 1992)	*What does being a Muslim mean to you?* *Has your Muslim identity evolved/devolved through time? If so, how? You can also refer to specific episodes.*
Impact of being Muslim on daily life		*How does being Muslim impact/influence your everyday life?*
National identity	NI-MEIM (Phinney, 1992)	
Biculturalism	BIIS-2 (Huyn et al. 2018)	*How do you reconcile being Muslim with being German/living in Germany?*
Identity Map	Sirin & Fine (2007)	*Could you describe the identity map that you sent me with your own words?*
Religious Discrimination	Perceived Discrimination Scale (Way, 1992)	*If/when these episodes happen to you, how do you generally cope/what do you do to deal with these situations?*
Depressive Symptoms	CES-D, brief version (Radloff ,1977)	

- Identity Map

One of the tools that helped us delve into the negotiation of participants' identities is the "identity map" collected from each participant. Identity maps provide individual-level qualitative data which are created based on the writings of Wilkinson (1999) and Milgram (1976), and subsequently implemented by Sirin and Fine (2007). Identity maps are additional measurements to help us search how identities are formed in memory, what is going on below the surface, and feelings and fears that may not be revealed by surveys or focus groups (Sirin & Fine, 2008). Further, Stuart and Ward (2011) claimed that identity maps can provide information about how participants see their identities, which self is considered as significant, negative, or positive, which groups an individual feels s/he belongs to, and how that person negotiates his/her multiple social identities.

In the current study, before the interview took place, participants were asked to draw an identity map (pictorial representation of their Muslim and German identities). Also, during the interviews, participants were requested to explain their pictures in their own words: *"I would like you to describe and explain in your own words the identity map you sent me (i.e., visual representation of your different cultural/religious affiliations – Muslim and German background – and how you feel they coexist in you)"*.

For this thesis, 30 identity maps were collected; before coding all the identity maps, two master students independently coded five of them and reached an 80% interrater agreement (4 out of 5). After reaching an agreement on the remaining identity map through discussion, I coded the other 25 maps accordingly.

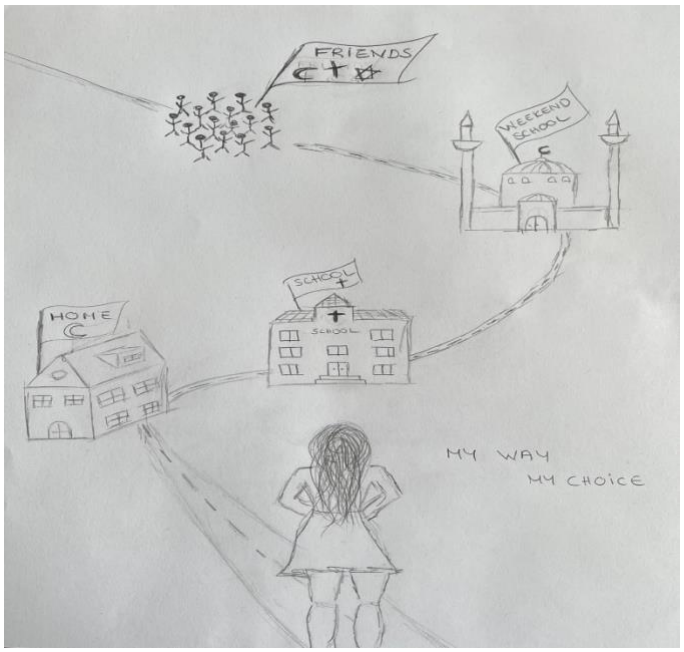
In order to code identity maps, we followed existing guidelines (Sirin & Fine, (2008). Specifically, a drawing was coded as "integrated identity" if the German and Muslim identities were completely blended in a nonconflicting way and if there was a fluid integration between Muslim and German identity. The identity map depicted in Figure 1 was drawn by a 24-year-old male participant, who explained himself with a German flag and the representative symbol of Islam (crescent moon) embedded. On the above flag, he wrote the unofficial national motto and the first words of the national anthem of Germany: *Einigkeit und Recht und Freiheit* (unity and justice and freedom). Here, it can be seen how Muslim and German identities are intertwined without any conflict or tension. Islam and German culture embrace each other, representing how he felt about being Muslim and German at the same time.

Figure 1. *Integrated Identity Map, male, age 24*

Identities were coded as "parallel" if the Muslim and German identities were represented as two distinct worlds for the participant and participants often splatted the paper into two sides, one for German identity, and one for Muslim identity. In parallel

identities, participants are seen as living two different lives. Identities are rooted in two worlds, where these people engage also in cultural and social activities of the culture of their home country, such as spending time with people from their ethnicity, eating food, listening to music, and watching movies from their heritage culture (Sirin & Fine, 2008). They usually engage in their religious identity at home but also engage in their national identity where they socialize with mainstream culture. However, they do not feel as much tension as in conflictual identities. Figure 2 shows an example of parallel identity, drawn by a 21-year-old female participant.

Figure 2. *Parallel Identity Map, female, age 21*

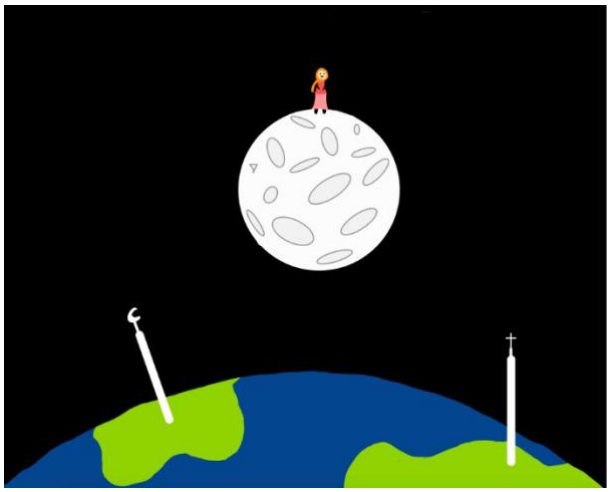


In this identity map, the participant drew different places where she could embrace a relevant identity. For instance, she put a crescent moon as a representative of Islam in her house, which means her Muslim identity was dominant; however, in school, her

German identity became more active as she put the cross as a symbol of Christian faith and German values in the picture. Also, which identity she was living when being with her friends depended on whether she was with a German or Muslim friend group.

Lastly "conflictual identity" was coded if the identities were depicted in a conflicting way with the elements of tension, hostility or irreconcilability between two identities. In conflicting identity maps, participants felt they did not belong to any side, or did not know who they were or where they belonged, as were those maps that only represented one of the two identities (German or Muslim) (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. *Conflicting Identity Map, female, age 23*



As can be seen in Figure 3, the participant put the cultures of Germany and Islam away from each other somewhere in the world and depicted herself on the moon, indicating that she did not belong anywhere: *"I don't feel like I belong anywhere"* (IG_111).

- Religious identity

To assess religious identity, the *Religious Identity - Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure* (RI-MEIM) developed by Phinney (1992) was used. The original version of the survey was translated into Turkish by a master's student. After the first translation, another Turkish-English speaking student checked the translations to be used in interviews in Turkish. The questionnaire consists of 5 items assessing participants' sense of belonging to the Muslim group on a 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5): *"I have a strong sense of belonging to the Muslim group", "I'm happy that I am a member of the Muslim group I belong to".* For the measures of Muslim religious identity, young German-Muslim people of Turkish origin were instructed to think of their membership in the Muslim cultural group. The total score is obtained by calculating the mean of the items, and higher scores indicate a stronger Muslim identity.

The RI-MEIM has previously been used with young Muslims in the USA, demonstrating good reliability (Balkaya et al., 2019). In the current study, Cronbach's Alpha for the scale was .85.

- National identity

To assess national identity, the *National Identity - Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure* (NI-MEIM) developed by Phinney (1992) was used to tackle participants' sense of belonging to the German national group. Participants rated the items on a 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5): *"I have a strong sense of belonging*

to the German cultural group", "I'm happy that I am a member of the German cultural group I belong to". To apply the questionnaire NI-MEIM, participants were instructed to think of their membership in the German cultural group. The total score is obtained by calculating the mean of the items, and higher scores indicate a higher endorsement of German identity.

Previous studies have confirmed the psychometric properties of the tool, which has also been used with young Muslims in the USA (Balkaya et al., 2019)**.** In this study, Cronbach's Alpha was .82.

- Bicultural Identity

The Bicultural Identity Integration Scale-Version 2 (BIIS-2; Huynh et al., 2018) was administered to assess participants' perceived harmony and blendedness between their two cultures and identities. The BIIS-2 consists of 17 items grouped into two subscales: Blendedness, which includes 7 items assessing the degree of perceived overlap between cultural identities and the culture of participants (e.g., *"I feel Muslim and German at the same time"*), and Harmony, which involves 10 items assessing the degree of a person's perceived conflict and harmony (e.g., *"I find it easy to harmonize Muslim and German cultures"*). Participants rated each item on a 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). For the purposes of this study, we used the total score by computing the mean of all the item scores, with higher scores indicating a stronger bicultural identity.

The BIIS-2 was validated by Huynh et al. (2018) with different ethnic groups in the US and demonstrated good psychometric properties. In the current work, internal reliability was $\alpha = .77$.

- Religious discrimination

To assess participants' perception of religious discrimination, the *Perceived Discrimination Scale* (Way, 1997) was used. The scale consists of 20 items, and participants are asked to rate each statement on a scale from 1 to 5 to indicate how often they feel someone behaves with them in a certain way (1= never, 2= rarely, 3= sometimes 4= often and 5= all the time). Answers to items reflect Muslim young adults' perception of discrimination based on their membership in a Muslim religious group (e.g., *"Treats you like a troublemaker because of your religion"*), and some other items reflected how much participants were exposed to discrimination acts due to their religion (e.g., *"Pulled off your hijab or kufi on purpose"*). The total score is obtained by calculating the mean of the items, and higher scores indicate that perceived discrimination is higher.

Balkaya and her colleagues (2019) used the scale in their research, reporting excellent reliability and internal consistency. In this study, Cronbach's Alpha for the scale was .93.

- Depressive symptoms

The Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D), brief version (Radloff, 1977) was orally administered to participants to assess the frequency of

depressive symptoms. The CES-D consists of 10 items with 3 subscales (somatic symptoms, negative affect and positive affect). Participants rate each item (e.g., *"I was bothered by things that usually don't bother me"*) on a scale from 1 to 5 to indicate how often they have felt or behaved in a certain way over the last two weeks (1= Not at all or less than one day last week, 2= 1-2 days last week, 3= 3-4 days last week, 4= 5-7 days last week, 5= nearly every day for 2 weeks). For the purposes of this study, we used the total score by computing the mean of all the item scores. Higher scores indicated that participants had more depressive symptoms.

The adaptation of the CES-D to Turkish culture was performed by Tatar and Saltukoglu (2010), who reported good psychometric properties of the scale. We used the Turkish translation of the CES-D after asking for the authors' permission. In the current study, Cronbach's Alpha for the scale was .78.

3.5. Analytic Plan

To analyze the qualitative data resulting from the identity maps and interviews, a thematic analysis of the participants' answers to open-ended questions was carried out. Thematic analysis is a flexible qualitative analytic method that is used for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) in the data, and helps organize and describe the data in a detailed way (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In order to answer the first research question, which explored how participants reconciled their Muslim and German identities, the frequencies and percentages for the three previously identified categories (integrated, parallel, conflicting) from the identity maps were calculated.

To answer the second research question concerning how young adult Turk-Muslims lived their daily life as Muslims in Germany, as well as their bicultural belonging, thematic analysis of participants' answers to two interview questions was carried out: *"How does being Muslim influence your everyday life?"* and *"How do you reconcile being Muslim with being German/living in Germany?"*.

To address the third research question, aiming to identify possible associations among religious discrimination, religious identity, national identity, and biculturalism, a correlational analysis was performed on the questionnaire scores via the Pearson coefficient.

To analyze the last research question, which addressed the unique contributions of religious discrimination, social identities, and biculturalism to participants' depressive symptoms, a multiple linear regression analysis was carried out on the questionnaire scores.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1. Descriptive statistics

This chapter presents the results of analyses of both qualitative and quantitative data to answer our research questions. Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics of the study variables measured through the questionnaires.

Table 3. *Descriptive statistics of the variables assessed via questionnaires*

	M	***DS***	***Range***
Muslim religious identity	4.21	0.66	2 - 5
German national identity	3.20	0.65	1 - 5
Biculturalism	3.13	0.55	2 – 5
Religious discrimination	2.13	0.69	1 - 5
Depressive symptoms	2.39	0.67	1 - 4

Note. $N = 30$.

4.2. Reconciliation of Muslim and German Identity

The first objective of this study was to examine how participants managed their identities between different social memberships. To this end, we coded and analyzed each identity

map drawn by participants along with the explanations they made during the interviews. The frequencies of each category in our sample can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. *Types of identities based on categorically discrete maps*

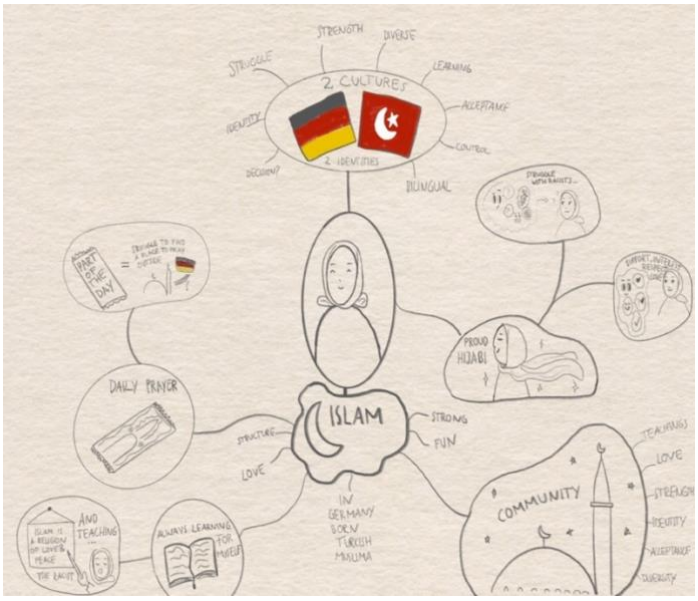
Category	Integrated	Parallel	Conflicting
N (%)	17 (56.7)	5 (16.7)	8 (26.7)
N (%) female	13 (52)	4 (16)	8 (32)
N (%) male	4 (80)	1 (20)	

Note. N=30

In the total sample, most identity maps fell into the "integrated" category; as regards gender, despite the uneven distribution of our participants (83% were female), we can notice that integrated identities were most prominent in both groups, but especially among males. The integrated identity category is composed of participants whose social identities were fully intertwined without any conflicting and negative feelings; however, maps coded under the integrated category also involved different emotions and reconciliation strategies.

Examples of integrated identity maps are shown in the pictures below. Identity map A (see Figure 4) was drawn by a young 22-year-old female participant, who drew herself in the center of paper, and around herself she drew representatives of German and Turk cultures on the one side, and Islam on the other side. This means that national and ethnic belonging were intertwined in herself and her daily life.

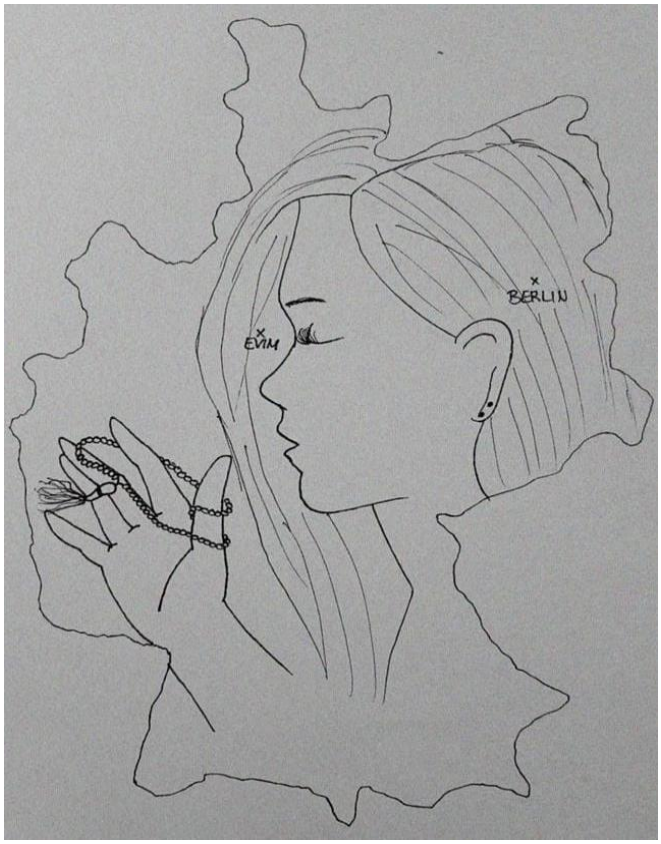
Figure 4. *Identity map A- integrated identity*



Even though she mentioned she lived her Muslim identity with her Turk identity, she considered her German identity was something that made her Muslim identity stronger: *"Because I live Islam mostly with my Turk culture because it mixes with culture, or it happens mostly with being Turk. But I think being a German is something that strengthens me to be a Muslim, that's what happened to me".* She also talked about the positive sides of being bicultural, emphasizing her integrated identity: *"I see culture and religion as separate. Growing up with two cultures brings positive things, such as you become bilingual, and you become open to other cultures also. You can learn new things; you take some things from two cultures. As German Turks, we created a new culture here."* (IG_126).

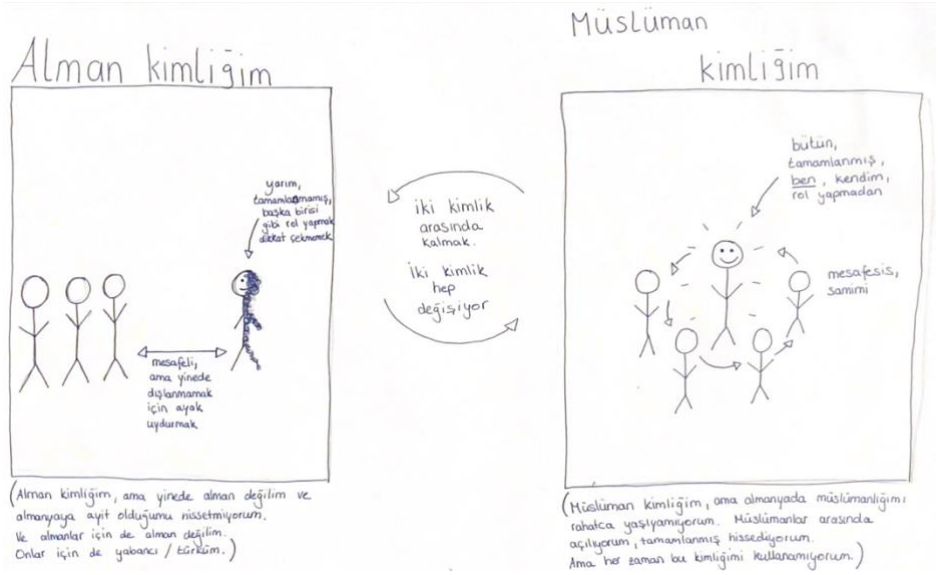
Identity Map B (see figure 5) was drawn by a young 23-year-old female participant, who depicted herself on the geographical map of Germany while signing Berlin and her house (*evim* (my house)) on the map. In the picture, she is holding a rosary representing Islam: *"I drew a girl in it, representing me. I am attached to the mosque, but I still live in Germany, and I do not regret living here. I love the system and order here, I love to go to schools here, I also love to go to mosque…that's why I wanted to make a painting by combining the two sides"* (IG_114).

Figure 5. *Identity map B - integrated identity*



In some identity maps, the differentiation between different identity categories was not always clear. For example, Figure 6 represents a parallel identity drawn by a young 22-year-old female participant.

Figure 6. *Identity map - parallel identity*

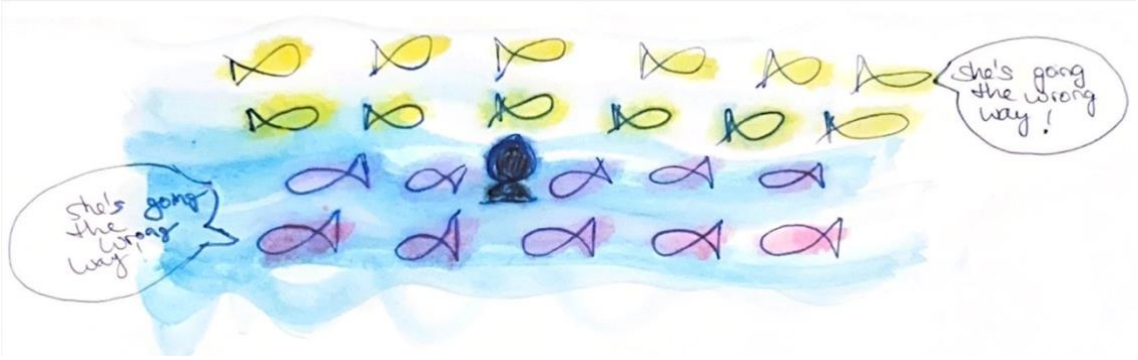


She divided the paper into two sides to represent her distinct social identities: in the left box, she drew her German identity by emphasizing that she had a German identity, where she felt distant from Germans and seemed to be in pain not because she could not reconcile two identities, but mostly because she felt excluded by Germans. On the other side, in the right box, she represented her Muslim identity where she could be completely herself among Muslims, but could not practice her religion comfortably in Germany. However, she also highlighted the importance of her German identity: "*I drew myself as half a person, but I cannot say that I'm not German because I was born here and the*

German culture has permeated me, I cannot say I do not have a German identity, I cannot deny it". She also wrote *"being stuck between two identities / two identities are always changing"* between boxes. Eventually, this identity map was coded as parallel identity, because even though she experienced some conflicts and tension, she emphasized that her identities were changing depending on the environment as she was living in two parallel worlds: *"I can say that my Muslim and German identity is constantly changing, I think about which identity I should take out depending on the environment"* (IG_106). Another female participant (23-year-old) who drew a parallel identity also reported that reconciliation was not easy for her by emphasizing the role of strong Turkish culture in her and her family's life: *"We could not break away from our Turkish identity as a family, we could not leave it behind and reconcile with the German culture. That's why I'm more Turkish as a culture"* (IG_102).

In the current study, 26.7% (n = 8) of participants exhibited conflicting identities, indicating that they experienced conflict and some tension between their social identities. An example of conflicting identity can be seen in Figure 7.

Figure 7. *Identity map - conflicting identity*



This identity map was drawn by 23-year-old female participant. She described how she found herself trapped between Muslims and Germans by drawing an ocean composed of Muslim and German fish and drew herself in the middle of them as going to a different direction than the Muslim and German cultural groups. She also emphasized that she felt judged by two sides: *"I feel a bit in between. I feel neither like a complete German nor a complete Muslim. I feel stuck. Sometimes I feel like a little fish swimming in a huge ocean. I feel like those German fish are swimming in one direction and Muslim fish are swimming in one direction and I am stuck in the middle"* (IG_115).

4.3. Daily life of Muslim German - Turks and identity solutions

To examine the daily life of participants as Muslims in Germany and to delve into their identity solutions, a thematic analysis of answers to two open-ended questions was carried out: "*How does being Muslim influence your everyday life?"* and "*How do you reconcile*

being Muslim with being German/living in Germany?". From the thematic analysis of the answers to the first question, five themes emerged (see Table 5).

Table 5. *Daily experiences of Turk-German Muslims*

Themes	***N (%)***
Influence on lifestyle (e.g., eating, drinking habits)	12 (40%)
None or little influence	11 (36.6%)
Experiencing prejudice/discrimination because of being Muslim	10 (33%)
Influence in terms of values, way of thinking, and behaviors	9 (30%)
Influence in terms of meeting religious requirements (e.g., prayer)	7 (23.3%)

Note. $N = 30$.

Forty-percent of the participants believed that being a Muslim influenced their daily lives by shaping their preferences in their social life. Islam had an important impact, specifically on their eating and drinking habits, which also indirectly influenced their social relationships. One participant explained the impact of Islam on her food preferences and how it could create tension with Germans: *"When I go out, people do not see that I'm Muslim because I do not wear a headscarf, but it becomes clear when we talk about food. I go out with them, and we meet in a restaurant I do not order meat because I know it is not halal and they said oh, so you are vegan, vegetarian… And I explain myself like I do not eat meat outside. Some say it is okay, others can be judgmental"* (IG_110).

This theme was observed especially in participants who tried to not violate the rules of Islam, but it also seemed like a learned behavior from their parents. One participant also said that: *"I think I've been drinking alcohol for three or four years when I attend a celebration or something, but I still do not eat pork and do not plan to eat it either. I do not pay much attention to the issues, but it seems like I should not eat pork in any way in my mind, maybe because it has been ingrained in me since my childhood"* (IG_108).

Another participant emphasized how his social life was also influenced: "*How does being Muslim affects me in that sense… there are differences between my friends, for instance, you cannot do or maintain everything together in terms of drinking alcohol or doing a barbecue. Because there are separations, even though I am not hundred percent Muslim, there are more radical people around me. I can adapt more because I'm a moderate person, but there are some environments where I am separated from Germans or non-Muslims"* (IG_122). Of the 12 participants who were classified within this thematic category, 8 drew a map falling into the *"integrated"* category, 3 drew a *"conflictual"* identity map, and one drew a *"parallel"* map.

The second most frequent theme was "None or little influence on everyday life". In our research, 37% of the participants reported that being Muslim had no or little influence on their daily lives. One participant reported: *"How it affects my daily life, actually it does not affect it much. I guess if I wear a headscarf or pray five times a day, maybe it will affect me if I want to pray at work"* (IG_114). Some other participants also mentioned that being Muslim did not influence their lives much because they did not regularly follow

religious practices, it only had little influence in terms of food preferences. For instance, a 24-year-old male participant commented: "*Well, it does not affect my daily life too much, actually... In other words, since I do not pray five times a day... I do not eat pork when I go to a restaurant, not only because of religion but also for health reasons. It has negative sides in every way, there is no need, I'm thinking. Actually, I do not feel anything, there are the same life standards also in Türkiye"* (IG_103).

A 22 year-old-female participant also reported that there was not much influence because others did not think that she was a Muslim at first sight: *"Well I do not wear headscarves. So, people even do not think that I'm a Muslim or Turkish person in my experience also in university. But I know that most people say if you have a headscarf, you are a Muslim and Turk. Many people who wear headscarves experience this often. But people who know that I'm Muslim most have positive reactions or welcoming to me… so it is not a big problem for me, just when I go to the mosque on weekends, I use a headscarf and I got weird looks*" (IG_127). When we look at the answers of participants who fell into this thematic category, it seems like the presence of religious practices and the attitudes of Germans might have shaped whether Islam had an influence on their daily lives or not. Also, life in Germany is harder for women who wear a hijab. Of the 11 participants who gave such responses, 7 drew *"integrated"* identity maps, 3 drew *"parallel"* identity maps and one participant drew a "*conflictual"* identity. It is not surprising that most participants who reported "none or little influence" showed integrated identity.

Another theme in our sample was "Experiencing prejudice/discrimination because of being Muslim". Thirty-three percent of the participants explained the impact of being Muslim in their daily lives through negative experiences. A 22-year-old female participant explained how the stereotypes and prejudice she was exposed to in Germany made her feel: *"...These things bother me; I understand people are wondering but they make me feel like they are treating us we are very different people. That's why I do not like it, as if we live in another world. I did not come across much racism, but I saw it for the first time last year. I was in the hospital, there was a man. In Germany, people coming from foreign countries are called Ausländer, Turks are also called a lot. He said that word, and when I heard it, I looked directly. He said something like, they are increasing in Germany, we are disappearing because the age range is higher... they are increasing, everyone is coming to this country..."* (IG_112).

Another participant also talked about how they did not allow her and her friends to perform *namaz* in university by endorsing an Islamophobic attitude, and this event made her angry towards Germans as well as Muslims: *"...we had to perform namaz behind the cabinets in the library. We were not bothering anyone, we were going by ourselves, we were doing it, and no one saw it, but as soon as the security noticed us, he started to follow us. When he saw a person with a hijab, when he saw us praying, he warned us. And he said that you cannot perform namaz here because this place is independent of religion. I think I really see a difficulty here because namaz is a part of my religion and I have to do it. And when I do it, I do not bother anyone I do it on my own corner. I thought about this a lot, why does this bother people? I was very angry because of that, to them,*

the thoughts lived in society. I got also angry with some Muslims, as because of them society thinks like that" (IG_119).

Some participants also emphasized that the prejudice they were exposed to made them motivate to show themselves/Muslims better to society: *"…when you leave the house every day to go out, you do not feel comfortable as much as Germans. Because there are lots of things. There is prejudice towards Muslims... and for me, it is my duty to break down these prejudices every day when I leave the house. The fact that the man spat on me motivated me more afterward. How I show myself to people…For example, even if the car does not come when the traffic lights are red, I would never pass. Or I smile at the people whom I do not know. If someone needs help, I would run for help. I would do this even If I was not covered, but when you are covered you become more cautious. I am very careful outside, I am trying not to do anything bad so that prejudice can be broken"* (IG_120,). Here we can also see how perceived discrimination shapes the way of negotiation of multiple identities, and their belonging to the mainstream culture.

Of the 10 participants who gave such responses, 6 drew *"integrated"* identity maps, 3 drew *"conflictual"* identity maps and one participant drew a "*parallel"* identity. It shows that experiencing prejudice can result in different identity solutions among participants, not necessarily leading to conflictual identity.

The fourth theme was "Influence in terms of values, way of thinking, and behaviors". This theme emerged from the answers because participants said that being Muslim influenced their behaviors and the values they assigned to things in their daily

life. They might experience conflict due to their different values – compared to Germans- concerning food and lifestyle habits. One participant reported that: *"I have one example, I have a Christian friend, and sometimes she invites me over for Christmas. My parents do not want me to go there, they say we are Muslim and we are not going to Christian celebrations. I'm kind of between. I have to behave as a Muslim for their expectation and I do not go, but at the same time I want to keep my friendship well, so kind of conflict"* (IG_110).

Another participant also said that the values she assigned to things and her way of thinking differentiated her from non-Muslims: *"Aaa it is my favorite question, I always say this to people… So, I always say this to others, what is the difference between me and non-Muslim people in my daily life, what distinguishes me from them. Let's say this: in almost every moment of my daily life, I connect my job or the process with a prayer. Worldly things are constantly connected to something spiritual. When I encounter something bad, I can overcome it with religious resources"* (IG_118). Of the 9 participants who gave such responses, 6 drew *"integrated"* identity maps, 2 drew *"conflictual"* identity maps and one participant drew a "*parallel"* identity.

The last and least frequent theme was "Influence in terms of meeting religious requirements (e.g., prayer)". Here participants talked about whether they prayed/performed *namaz* five times or not, it could create a problem during the day when they were outside. For instance, a 22-year-old female participant reported that: *"It affects a lot. Because as Muslims we have the effort to perform namaz five times, and here when we go to university, we do not have any place to perform namaz. It was a big problem at*

my university" (IG_126). Four other participants also mentioned that performing *namaz* in university or the workplace was difficult for them. Based on participants' answers, this difficulty seemed to be caused by the German people's attitudes towards them: *"For example, if I would go out, if I would pray outside, they would ask why he prays. When I am at home, of course, I can live my Islam by myself, but when I go out when you enter a Christian community, if you say I will pray, I will fast, they will glare at you"* (IG_109).

The second open-ended question asked to participants was: "*How do you reconcile being Muslim with being German/living in Germany?* From the thematic analysis of the answers to this question, five themes emerged (see Table 6).

Almost 40% of participants reported difficulties with reconciliation due to the incompatibility/cultural distance between German and Muslim values and lifestyles.

Table 6. *Reconciliation of being Muslim with being German/living in Germany*

Themes	***N (%)***
Difficult reconciliation due to incompatibility/cultural distance between German and Muslim values and lifestyle	11 (36.6%)
Reconciliation made easier by social acceptance and/or compatibility between the German culture and Islam	11 (36.6%)
Lack of reconciliation due to discrimination	8 (26.6%)
Difficult reconciliation due to lack of German friends and/or predominant involvement with the Turkish/Muslim community	6 (20%)
Reconciliation made easier by keeping German culture and Islam separate	3 (10%)

Note. $N = 30$.

These participants lacked reconciliation because they found incompatibility between two cultures. For instance, a participant stated that *"Mainly I associate Muslimism with being Turk, not with being German. Germans are Christian, so it does not harmonize with Islam... When you are in a German community, I think that person cannot behave as if they are from a Muslim group, I think people adapt to German people."* (IG_104). Another participant also supported the theme by stating: *"German culture is really different from Muslim culture. Because German culture is really based on Christianity, very hard to bring both sides together. I think we as German/Muslims have to find the middle of both sides, not divided anymore to live peacefully* (IG_110).

Despite these difficulties, of the 11 participants who were categorized within this theme, 7 drew an "integrated" identity map, 3 drew a *"conflictual"* map, and only one participant drew a *"parallel"* identity map.

The second theme (Reconciliation made easier by social acceptance and/or compatibility between the German culture and Islam) was reported by 36.6% of the participants. Reconciliation between German and Muslim identity was relatively easy for those young people because they generally felt accepted by the broader society, and they found commonalities between the cultures of Islam and Germany. As stated by one of the participants, *"... That's what I perceived as well, since Germany is more positive towards other religions, it does not put me in a mold and does not try to assimilate me. You can freely live as a Muslim if you are a Muslim, or as a Jew if you are a Jew. It did not have a negative effect on me, nor did it try to reinforce it, but I mean, moderately, I have the freedom to practice my own religion*" (IG_102). Supporting this theme, another

participant reported, *"…if a person looks at Islam and looks at the lifestyle of Germans, it is very compatible, not with modern Germans, not the ones who are very free, I mean, more old-fashioned ones"* (IG_124). As reconciliation was easy for these 11 participants, not surprisingly, 7 of them drew *"integrated"* identity maps, 4 drew *"parallel"* identity maps, whereas *"conflictual"* identity maps were not observed.

For the third theme, 8 participants reported that they lacked reconciliation due to discrimination towards Muslims in society. It is worth mentioning that some participants were categorized both in the reconciliation and in the lack of reconciliation themes; for instance, one participant reported that *"Here there are two perspectives. One is good and also fun because there are Germans who respect Muslims and want to be friends with them and be interested in our religion… So, I love to go with my friends to the mosques or pray, but on the other side, there are these things where they attack Muslims in mosques and there are demonstrations and protests where people are holding a sheet written no Muslims. It is a between acceptance and discrimination"* (IG_105).

Another participant also said that she wanted others to see her as a German, however, she could not feel as if she was accepted because of her religion: *"I feel Turkish here, but in fact, I would like them to see me as German. I speak their mother tongue very well, I was born here, I was raised here, I will be a teacher here, that's why I want them to see me as German. But they make me feel like I do not belong here because of my headscarf, so I cannot say that I'm a German"* (IG_111). Of the 8 participants, 5 drew *"integrated"* identity maps, and 3 drew *"conflictual"* identity maps.

The fourth theme (Difficult reconciliation due to lack of German friends and/or predominant involvement with the Turkish/Muslim community) emerged in 6 out of 30 participants, equating to 20% of the total sample. This theme was created because these participants generally talked about difficult reconciliation by emphasizing that they did not have many German friends and/or they were predominantly involved with the Turkish/Muslim social group. For example, a 23-year-old female participant stated, *"I was not very involved in the German culture, as I am not a part of it, as I said, I do not reconcile it much…"* (IG_102). One participant stated that, since the attitudes of Germans are positive, life as a Muslim in Germany was easy for her, so she was coded under the reconciliation theme. However, she also coded under the fourth theme, because sometimes she also felt that reconciliation was harder for her due to her lack of involvement with German culture. Some participants also reported that they did not get along with Germans much: *"…I do not have any German friends because we live mostly as Turks, so they do not understand us much, maybe our parents do not let us go out as much as they do…They live more independently, maybe that's why I could not get along with the Germans in terms of friendship"* (IG_107). Among 6 participants who were categorized within this category, 3 drew an "integrated" identity map, 2 drew a *"conflictual"* map, and only one participant drew a *"parallel"* identity map.

The fifth theme (Reconciliation made easier by keeping German culture and Islam separate) was found among 3 out of 30 participants (10% of the sample). Participants who classified within this theme mostly reported that, since they kept culture and religion separate from each other, reconciliation was not much of a problem for them: *"It is not*

much of a problem, I can say that. That's why I actually stated it in the drawing, I showed that I do not keep the two together, the religion I live, and the German culture are separate for me" (IG_123). Another participant stated, *"I think they are not related at all. All are different. Being Muslim, Islam is a religion, and being German is culture. You can be a German and Muslim at the same time"* (IG_109). Of those 3 participants, 1 drew an "integrated" identity map, 1 drew a *"conflictual"* map, and 1 participant drew a *"parallel"* identity map.

4.4. Associations among religious discrimination, social identities, and biculturalism

To answer the third research question, four questionnaires were administered to measure perceived religious discrimination, religious identity, national identity, and biculturalism. To examine the associations between these variables, a correlational analysis was conducted on the total scores of the questionnaires (see Table 7).

Table 7. *Correlations among religious discrimination, social identities, and biculturalism*

	Muslim religious identity	German national identity	Biculturalism
Religious discrimination	.11	-.40*	-.15
Muslim religious identity	-	-.30	-.37*
German national identity		-	.37*

Note. $N = 30$. * $p < .05$.

The results indicated that higher perceived religious discrimination was significantly associated with less German national identity, whereas no significant association with religious identity or biculturalism emerged. Religious identity was negatively related to national identity, although this association did not reach statistical significance. Moreover, those who engaged in more biculturalism scored lower on religious identification and higher on German national identification (and vice versa).

4.5. Contribution of religious discrimination, social identities, and biculturalism to depressive symptoms

To answer the last research question, we performed a multiple linear regression model in which we included religious discrimination, Muslim and German national identity, and biculturalism as independent variables, and levels of depressive symptoms as the dependent variable. The results are shown in Table 8.

Table 8. *Regression analysis on depressive symptoms*

	B	*β*	*SE*	*t*	*p*
Religious discrimination	.15	.15	.18	.84	.411
Muslim religious identity	-.42	-.41	.18	-2.26	.033
German national identity	-.01	-.01	.20	-.07	.947
Biculturalism	-.65	-.53	.23	-.288	.008

Note. $N = 30$.

Overall, the model explained 22% of the variance in depressive symptoms (adjusted $R^2 = .22$, $p = .037$). Participants who reported a strong Muslim religious identity and higher levels of biculturalism had fewer depressive symptoms. No other significant main effects emerged.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1. General comments

The current mixed-method study aimed to understand how young Turk-Muslim adults who were aged between 18 and 26 years of the second generation living in Germany perceived their cultural identities (Muslim and German identity), how they negotiated their identities in daily life, and the role of religious discrimination in identity affiliations and psychological well-being. Fleischman and Phalet (2015) argue that identity compatibility or conflict might differ according to the characteristics of the socio-political context. Although there is tension between Muslim religious and European national identities, "there is growing evidence that the degree to which these identities are compatible varies greatly within Europe" (Fleischmann & Phalet, 2018, p.,45). In this perspective, we believe that exploring identity reconciliations of Turk-Muslim young people in Germany may provide us with important insights into identity-related processes.

To address our research questions, a semi-structured interview consisting of open-ended questions and questionnaires, as well as a tool called “identity map” used in previous research (Sirin & Fine, 2007) were administered to the participants. Subsequently, we did a thematic analysis on the answers to open-ended questions, coded

the identity maps into relevant categories, and ran statistical analyses to identify possible associations among the study variables.

The first research question aimed to explore participants' identity reconciliations. To answer this question, we coded all 30 identity maps into categories which were suggested by Sirin and Fine (2007):" integrated", "parallel" and "conflictual", together with the verbal explanations of participants in relation to their maps. The results showed that most identity maps drawn by these young people fell into the "integrated" category, which represents the blending of Muslim and German identities without any conflict, fostering bicultural belonging. Integrated identities were predominant in our research, consistent with the study of Sirin and Fine (2008); and the result is also in line with the study by Stuart & Ward (2011), where elements of all three identity categories were present, but the predominant representations were "integrated". Also, like in their study, our participants expressed their integrated identities in a different way from each other: they included elements that blended ethnic culture (being Turk in our case), Islam, and German culture, but they also contained the immensity of their personal life where they combined family, friends, school, and social groups.

Through the discussion of identity maps and the explanation in their own words of what made up their identity, we managed to grasp in greater depth the multidimensionality of the process of reconciling identities. Most of the participants who drew integrated identities explained that they were taking things, values, and habits from both Muslim and German cultures, they had friends from both cultural groups, and they

were mostly aware of the discrimination and Islamophobia towards Muslim Turks in Germany - either having it heard from people around them, or having been exposed to it personally. However, regardless of the differences and tension they were aware of, they were able to combine these two identities in a peaceful way. In some integrated identity maps, perceived discrimination appeared as a motivation for our participants to show Muslims and Turks as being good people and to underscore the similarities with people of German origin.

On the other hand, participants who drew parallel identities ($n = 5$) mostly balanced their identities based on the social environment, engaging in Muslim identity in their home and Turkish community, and in German identity when they were around German people. They seemed to "wear" their relevant identity depending on the environment, and they engaged in this shift between identities in a smooth way, feeling comfortable with both identities. This can be explained as cultural frame shifting (Hogg et al., 2000). Although shifting between two worlds might sound effortless, a number of participants with parallel identities explained that their identity negation was not easy, as Sirin and Fine (2008) also highlighted in their study. Indeed, they reported feelings of ambivalence and sometimes had trouble in the reconciliation of identities. These findings are in line with what Sirin and Fine (2008, p.144) reported: "…they had not yet learned how to live in both worlds with ease".

Lastly, as observed in previous research with Muslim American young people (Sirin & Fine, 2008), in the current study only 8 participants represented their identities

in a conflictual way. These participants mostly felt discriminated against due to their religion or did not feel they belonged to either culture, Turk, or German. In these cases, Turkish identity appeared to have a role in the participants' lives because they mostly experienced their religion together with Turkish culture. They felt stuck between two cultures and experienced conflict in their sense of belonging. In their expressions, they felt neither completely German nor completely Turkish, as found in a study by Holtz et al., (2013). Some of them talked about their belonging to the Turkish and German communities, rather than mentioning the Muslim community. They mainly described how they felt separated as Muslims from Germans in terms of values, and how they struggled in their lives in Germany; others mentioned having a strong Turk-Muslim identity, but they could not identify themselves as German. These findings can be explained by acculturation theory (Berry, 2005), according to which individuals develop different identity and acculturation strategies depending on their perspective on both cultural groups and perceived differences between groups.

In the second research question, we aimed to address the impact of being a Muslim on participants' daily lives in Germany. The themes emerging from their responses to the two open-ended questions revealed that being Muslim influenced their daily life in different areas, including their reconciliation strategies. Even though 11 participants were coded under the theme "none or little influence on everyday life", just five of them were only coded under the "none or little influence on everyday life". The others mostly talked about some degree of influence, specifically in terms of eating and drinking habits (e.g., *"Actually, it does not affect it, you just need to be more careful in terms of food"*

(IG_102), *"Being Muslim actually does not affect me much all day long, when we do not talk to someone about Islam, it is not very noticeable except for a few issues. The issue of halal eating can always have difficulties*" (IG_124)).

Due to the experience of discrimination, the perceived differences between the two cultures seemed to make identification with German culture harder for some of the participants. These findings resemble those reported by Martinovic and Verkuyten (2012), who evidenced a positive relationship between discrimination and religious group identification, and a negative relationship between religious and national identification among Turks living in Germany and the Netherlands as they perceived incompatibility between Islamic and Western lifestyles. However, we found that these experiences did not necessarily lead to the same identity negotiations, because only 3 out of 8 participants coded under this theme (lack of reconciliation due to discrimination) expressed their identities in a conflictual way. Hence, our findings support the idea that bicultural people experience their dual identities in divergent ways (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005).

Another theme indicated that the lack of German friends or predominant involvement with the Turkish Muslim community could hinder social integration. The absence of cross-cultural friendships may isolate the young Turk Muslim adults from broader German society, which may influence the reconciliation of identities. This isolation from the broader society might lead to over-involvement in the Turkish community. Also, this theme resonates with the findings reported by Fleischmann and Phalet (2018), who found that among Muslim youth, national identification was higher

for those who had more friends from the majority group, and lower for those who experienced more discrimination at school. Hence, the social context can accelerate cultural identification with the social group by weakening identification with the other culture (Repke & Benet-Martínez, 2017). Further, individuals might choose to not spend time with the members of the majority society and isolate themselves from the host culture, as happens with the separation strategy (Berry 2005); these individuals may turn to their ethnic groups to maintain their self-esteem, as suggested by SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1985), with an overall positive effect of ethnic group identification on immigrants' lives (Verkuyten, 2008).

Relatedly, another theme concerned the positive impact of social acceptance on integration. Those who talked about the positive attitudes of Germans toward Muslims reported that reconciliation was easier for them. These answers to two open-ended questions demonstrated that the daily life experiences and reconciliation strategies of Muslim Turks in Germany were a complex and multifaceted path influenced by several factors, such as discrimination, cultural distance, and attitudes of mainstream society as emerged in our themes.

In the third research question, we examined possible associations among religious discrimination, social identities, and biculturalism measured via questionnaires. We found that those who perceived more religious discrimination reported significantly lower German national identity, but the association with religious identity was not significant. These findings partially support the previous findings of both longitudinal and cross-

sectional studies (see Fleischmann et al., 2019; Giuliani et al., 2018) as well as the RIM (Branscombe et al.,1999), which suggests that "perceptions of discrimination and related stress strengthen one's identification with one's own group and weaken one's identification with the outgroup" (Sirin & Fine, 2008, p.131). Furthermore, higher biculturalism was related to less religious identification and more national identification. This result might be an indicator of good integration with German culture among Muslim Turks, as biculturalism might strengthen the identification with national groups. On the other hand, less religious identification might be the result of prioritizing one identity over another, because minority group members can prioritize one of their identities (Spiegler et al., 2019); moreover, the cognitive flexibility originating from biculturalism can provide individuals with a broader perspective, leading to a questioning of their identity affiliations.

In the last research question, we aimed to explore the unique contribution of religious discrimination, social identities, and biculturalism to participants' levels of depressive symptoms at a multivariate level. Our findings revealed that young Turk-German Muslims who reported a stronger identification with their religious affiliation and higher levels of biculturalism also scored lower on the depressive symptoms questionnaire. These findings are consistent with previous research (Tahseen & Cheah, 2018; Wei et al., 2010) and can be interpreted in light of SIT, which proposes that identification with a social group provides a feeling of belonging, and people gain positive feelings from that membership. Hence, lower levels of depression might be explained by the sense of belonging and social support arising from identification with the Muslim

group (Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2007). Further, higher identification with both religious and national groups provides greater well-being (Tahseen & Cheah, 2018), hereby explaining the negative association found between biculturalism and depressive symptoms.

Unexpectedly, religious discrimination and German identity were not significantly associated with participants' depressive symptoms. It is possible that at the multivariate level, these associations disappear if more relevant, identity-related variables are included in the model. Further research with larger samples is needed to replicate this finding. Another possible reason is that membership in a Muslim religious group might provide a better support system than identification with a German national group when we consider the sociopolitical context of Germany and the experiences of Turks. Indeed, some participants reported that they felt valued, supported, and understood by the Muslim community, but they could not easily relate with Germans and sometimes felt excluded.

5.2. Limitations

While the present study provides valuable insights into identity processes among Turk-German Muslim young adults, several limitations need to be considered when interpreting the results.

First, since our study had a cross-sectional design, we cannot establish any causal relationships and cannot evaluate the trajectory of identity development from adolescence to emerging adulthood. Future longitudinal research is warranted to follow up young

Turk-German Muslims at different points in time to explore the influence of these minority youths' experiences on their identity trajectories and psychological adjustment.

Second, while the use of semi-structured interviews offers important insights into participants' subjective experiences, the analysis of open-ended questions involves some degree of subjectivity which may lead to biased results. Also, the interviewer's cultural awareness has a role in the analysis of qualitative data. To increase reliability, multiple independent judges were involved in the process of creating themes and coding, and providing good levels of inter-rater reliability. Yet, the possibility of social desirability effects cannot be ruled out.

Third, the recruitment method used in this study (i.e., snowball sampling through online advertisements and word of mouth) may have resulted in a biased sample. Indeed, our participants were mainly female university students and mostly involved second-generation people, thus limiting the generalizability of study results. Future studies might use other sampling techniques to involve a more representative population of (Turk) Muslim-German emerging adults (e.g., male individuals, third generation, and other educational backgrounds).

Fourth, most of the participants mostly experienced Islam with their Turkish culture, and some of them identified themselves as being Turk (not German or German Turk). This can be attributed to involvement with the Turkish community in Germany, family characteristics, and social life experiences of the participants. Even though participants emphasized how their Muslim identity overlapped with their Turkish

identity, most of our participants explained that they felt different from Turks in Türkiye. In other words, while in Germany they felt Turk and others saw them as Turk, in Türkiye they felt German and Turks did not accept them as Turk. Some participants also shared the idea that they created a new Turk-German culture in Germany which differentiated them from Turks and Germans, suggesting the development of new identities. Thus, future research may include measures of attitudes toward Turk-Germans in Türkiye as well as of identity centrality/salience in the two cultural contexts (i.e., Germany and Türkiye) to obtain a more fine-grained picture of the experiences concerning multiple belongings and biculturalism.

Lastly, our study only included Muslim emerging adults of Turkish origin. However, there is evidence that Islam is experienced and practiced differently among various ethnic groups, as Muslim groups worldwide differ in tenets of faith and views of religious practices (Pew Research Center, 2012) which may have implications for identity reconciliation. Further research is warranted to include measures of ethnic identity and to compare Turk-Muslim Germans with other immigrant groups of Muslim religious faith in order to better represent other Muslim populations with different cultural backgrounds, migration histories, and environmental conditions.

5.3. Implications for policy and practice

Our interviews have shown that even though most participants expressed their identities by drawing integrated identity maps, the conflict between identities due to religious

discrimination and lack of social acceptance from the broader society poses numerous challenges that are still prominent for second-generation Muslim Turks living in Germany. Despite the attitudes of German young people toward Muslims have improved compared to the former generation, participants who wore hijab and/or wanted to pray five times a day experienced difficulties in university, workplace, or in public spheres. In other words, wearing a hijab and regularly following religious practices still carries limitations in young adult Muslims' access to educational/job opportunities, and this often leads them not to feel completely free in their expression in the broader society. In some situations (e.g., renting a house), the mere fact of being Muslim created some conflict and limited participants' opportunities.

These findings highlight the importance of providing support to young Muslim immigrants in their acculturation process to facilitate a better reconciliation of social identities and bicultural belonging, which eventually protects their psychological well-being. To achieve this, we believe that both governments of Türkiye and Germany should undertake numerous initiatives at the policy and practice level. Indeed, despite the presence of a large Turkish community and Turk-Muslim religious and cultural organizations in Germany helping young Turk-Muslims cultivate their ethnic-religious identity and prevent cultural loss, second and third generations are still having a hard time participating in the broader society. For instance, some of our participants mentioned the difficulty – and sometimes impossibility – to perform daily *namaz* in university or workplace settings due to the lack of prayer rooms and the negative attitudes of staff members. In that sense, there is a need for more intervention efforts aimed at raising

awareness of religion-based differences (e.g., the way of dressing, eating, and drinking, practices of Islam, Muslim/Turk holidays).

Further, policies and educational programs should be developed to encourage minority groups to actively participate in the daily life of the host country to prevent isolation and alienation. Due to the many Turkish families, particularly those adhering to traditional values, predominantly instilling Turkish and Muslim culture within their children, these young Muslim Turks encounter challenges in socializing with the broader society. This often results in their isolation from the broader mainstream society as they gravitate towards seeking connection within the Turkish community. Thus, in the family and individual context, interventions aiming to inform families about the advantages of multicultural belonging may be developed to help them prepare their children for engagement with the broader society.

In conclusion, although this study warrants further replication, our findings suggest that more needs to be done in terms of proactive interventions and policies after 60 years of immigration of Muslim Turks to Germany to support their integration. By fostering an environment that values diversity, religious and cultural differences, and acknowledges the challenges faced by these individuals, the larger society can benefit from the multicultural milieu and fully realize immigrant youths' potential.

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