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TÜRK AİLELERİNDE YABANCI UYRUKLU GELİNLER: BÜKREŞ ÖRNEĞİ[*]

Özet

Tüm toplumlar, aileyi geçmişten günümüze kadar toplumun temel direği olarak kabul etmişlerdir. Birey açısından ilk çevre ve doğal özellikler taşıyan bir ortam olması dolayısıyla oldukça önemli kabul edilmiştir. Küreselleşme ile birlikte, dünyanın çok farklı kültürleri arasında gerçekleşen evliliklerin sayısında da artışlar olmuştur. Ulaşım ve haberleşme imkânlarının çoğalmasıyla, ülkelerarası göçlerle farklı kültür ve dinlerden kadın ve erkeklerin evlenmeleri giderek artmaktadır. Nitel bir araştırma olarak tasarlanan bu çalışmada "durum çalışması" deseni dikkate alınmıştır. Bükreş'te yaşayan Romen kadınlarla evli 8 erkek katılımcının, aile hayatı ve evlilikle ilgili görüşlerinin incelenerek, ailelerinin sosyolojik portresini çizmek amaçlanmıştır. Maksatlı örnekleme yolu ile belirlenen çalışma grubuna veri toplama aracı olarak araştımacılar tarafından geliştirilen yapılandırılmış görüşme formu uygulanmıştır. Elde edilen veriler içerik analizi ile yorumlanmış ve NVivo 10 kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın amacı doğrultusunda katılımcıların, göç ettikleri ülke ile ilgili yorumları, uyum ve kültürel farklılıklara ilişkin algıları, aile ve evlilikleri ile ilgili düşünceleri ve farklı bir kültürde evlilik konusundaki algıları yorumlanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Evlilik, Kültürleşme, Göç. Yabancı Gelin

FOREIGN BRIDES IN TURKISH FAMILY: THE CASE OF BUCHAREST[*]

Abstract

From past to present all societies adopted the concept of family very important by means of the foundation of society and the natural habitat and the first environment of individuals. There has been an increase in the number of marriages between different cultures in the world due to globalization. In this qualitative study, "Case study design" was used with examining eight male participants' views on family life and marriage who living in Bucharest and married Romanian women. The purposive sampling technique was used. As data collection tool, structured interview form developed by researchers was applied. In content analysis of study, NVivo 10 used. For the purpose of the study, the participants' comments about the country they migrated, their perceptions about harmony and cultural differences, their thoughts about their family and marriages and their perception of marriage in a different culture were interpreted.

Keywords: Marriage, Acculturation, İmmigration, Foreign Bride.

INTRODUCTION

Spouse selection is one of the most important decision in the life of the individual. Marriage happiness depends on a good selection of spouses. The choice of spouse in marriage is a responsibility of the family that belongs to the individual in the traditional family structure, nowadays it has become the personal responsibility of individuals. The coherence and satisfaction of the marriage relationship is largely related to the choice of spouse. In the globalization process, the returns of free market economy are reflected in our social and cultural life. As a result of cross-country trade and migration, multicultural relations and structures have become more popular than ever. After foreign migrations, especially for trade and livelihoods, immigrants have acquired status and roles in various social institutions, especially in the family institution. At this point, marriages in multicultural society constitute a separate subject. As a demographic process, marriage resulting from external migration is the main theme of this study. Being a member of different races and religions may cause some problems. Cultural differences can cause distress over time. Food habits, child rearing styles can be divided on a variety of issues. However, as a result of adaptation to multicultural life, cultural conflicts can be minimized.

Although marriage has undergone structural transformations as a social institution, it continues to be the dominant factor in the family institution. As a result of globalization, an increase is observed in the marriages between individuals belonging to different countries. According to TUİK 2018 data, Syrian brides are in the first place, among foreign brides. While the number of foreign brides was 20 thousand 972 in 2017, it accounted for 3.7% of the total brides. When the foreign brides are examined according to their nationalities, the Syrian brides take the

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[*] This study was presented as an oral presentation at the VII. European Conference on Social and Behavioral Sciences in Bucharest 2015.

first place with 19.4%. Azerbaijani brides are followed with 13.3% and German brides with 12.4% (TUIK, 2018).

Mobility transition of people from one settlement area to another for social, economic, cultural and political reasons, called migration (Özer, 2004: 11). The phenomenon of globalization leads to an increasing importance of international migration for both underdeveloped and developed countries. The main reason for this is that most of the international migration is the flow of labor. Business relations and economic differences between countries increase the movement of the labor force (Aksoy, 2012: 294).

It is possible to define the migration in accordance with different criteria such as reasons (compulsory and voluntary migration), objectives (work, asylum) and methods used to reach the target (legal, illegal) (Yılmaz, 2014: 1686), but the type of migration involved in the subject of the study is voluntary migration for economic purposes. The displacement of migrants who do not have the opportunity to work in their own countries and migrate to other countries for economic reasons is defined as labor migration. Although this kind of migration has occurred for economic reasons, the social and cultural structure of the immigration country requires an adaptation process for the migrant.

Acculturation; is the process of adopting the cultural elements belonging to one another and the emergence of a new cultural composition as a result of the continuous relationship and interaction of two or more types of culture (Güvenç, 1996: 126). Globalization has been causing complex cultural interactions. Reflections of globalization on cultural values are intend to explain with three major theses, namely, homogenization, polarization, and hybridization (Holton, 2000: 140). Intercultural marriage requires both sides to adapt to each other's culture in terms of the sustainability of marriage, and mutual understanding, harmony and respect. In this sense, it can be evaluated as a micro-form of acculturalization within the context of the hybridization thesis which explains the cultural reflections of globalization.

RESEARCH METHOD

The case study design was used in this qualitative research. The study group consists of eight Turkish men living in Bucharest, Romania, married to Romanian women. The structured interview form developed by the researchers was applied as a data collection tool to the study group determined by purposive sampling method. The data obtained by face-to-face interviews were subjected to content analysis. The computer aided qualitative data analysis program NVivo 10 was used in the categorization process.

FINDINGS

Interviewee's responses subjected to content analysis and opinions of Turkish men who are living in Bucharest and married to Romanian women were analysed two main categories.
Firstly, views on the *countries* were discussed. These views on Turkey and Romania are consist of interviewee's thoughts about reasons for coming to Romania, the difficulty of being in Romania, Romanians' perspective on Turks, the idea to go back to Turkey, Romanian wife's thought of living in Turkey, frequency of visiting Turkey and comparison of the two countries.

The views are obtained in the axis of family and cultural values / elements it has been obtained and reviewed the opinions about marriage, family and peer-related ideas, as well as traditions, customs, religion and cultural elements have been interpreted within the framework of social life.

According to family and cultural values / elements category, conjugal status information, the most important elements that make up the family, the difference between the Turkish-Romanian family structures, perspective of the man's family to Romanian bride, adaptation of the spouse to Turkish culture, change of religion.

1.   Interpretation of Findings Related Countries:

Causes of the interviewees' to come to Romania took place largely for commercial purposes. In *commercial reasons* "the influence of relatives, not being able to go to college and have a profession at the same time financial situation" has created sub-reasons. The answers to the question "What is your reason to migrate to Romania?" are shown grounds for commercial reasons are as follows:

A. Ç: "My relatives were settled here and had a good job in terms of earnings, I didn't go to college in country, and they transferred me here."

R. B: "I came for business purposes."

S. O: "Relatives were here. Financial situation was not good in village. I didn't go to college but this place was very good in terms of trade. "

S. S: "I thought it would be more profitable about commercial terms."

U. Ş: "Here the majority of which has come up with commercial reasons, and I came to trade."

Migration; increases the number of opportunities available to people, and gives them occupational and social mobility. Migration is the dynamic of economic development. Capital reaches the labour force it needs through migration (Balcıoğlu, 2007: 36-37).
In terms of interviewees who migrated to Romania for commercial reasons,   Romania's business opportunities have been identified as an attractive factor. A notable phenomenon is "college education" is adopted a benchmark in terms of having a profession in Turkey. Unlike many countries, higher education rate in Turkey is very high. Because the great alternative to a profession to be seen as applying to college. Turkey is a country with limited alternatives in order to receive vocational training. Despite this, unemployment is a major problem in Turkey.

Only one of interviewee said that he settled Romania by a *special cause*. The response of Y.Ç; "I met my wife in Istanbul. After living in Istanbul for a while, we decided to settle here because of my wife is Romanian" shows settlement to Romania occurred Romanian wife he met and married in Turkey.
According to interviewees' thoughts, the difficulty of living in Bucharest stated basically two categories. With adjustment problems arising from cultural differences and homesickness have become prominent factors in the difficulties of living in Romania. The compliance issues arising

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from cultural differences are emerging as *mentality*, *cultural structure*, *language*, *individualism* and *exclusion as a foreign*:

S. S: "Craving, longing are biggest challenges."

R. B: "Longing, homesickness and the more freely life here."

S. O: "There is no move together everyone must be his own. They look us as foreign and it challenges. And homesickness of course."

Y. Ç: "Language, laws, culture, structure, people's logic, freedom."

U. Ş: "Unfortunately in here there is no cornerstones of our tradition such as respect for elders, morality and conscience. It hurts sometimes. Ultimately we did not reared in such a culture."

It is understood that the review of interviewed who are experiencing some adjustment problems in Romania. In cultural sense, the differences in upbringing reveals several difficulties. The difference between the basic cultural elements of interviewees have grown in terms of its unique structure of Turkish culture, has been raised as a problem in lifestyle. Especially the fact that the freedom of individuals within broad limits, does not conform to the conservative Turkish culture. Also individuality is uncommon for the Turkish culture. Turkish people who used to act together with the community are uncomfortable with the individual perspectives in Bucharest.

The out migration from Turkey, an important point that needs to be addressed, the second and subsequent generations of Turks are the problems encountered abroad. Cultural hybridizations have emerged due to the simultaneous living of Turkish culture and the cultures of the society in which they live. The foreign hostilities that have arisen due to the competition between the members of foreign society and the demanding jobs have made their impact felt until today (Yalçın, 2004:176).

It has been asked the points of views in Bucharest to Turkish people. Considering the responses received together with the opinion stated that their positive approach, it was also stated some point of views described as *hostile*, *necessarily good*, *neutral but respectful*:

R. B: "Here is a high level of culture, we met well."

S. O: "They meet us with tolerance and sincerely."

Y. Ç: "They are enemies appear as friends. I think all of the elite part of official institutions are Turkish enemy. Of course there is a secret hostility because of they were on our colonial about 400 years."

A. Ç: "In economic terms we are capable of the top than them and they have to meet us welcome."

U. Ş: "Normally they meet neither good nor bad, but most of the time they have to be respectful because of we are their employees."

Interviewees' thoughts about viewpoints against them is partially positive. But they are some negative evaluations. It is due to political and economic reasons, and these comments can be evaluated in terms of each interviewees' life.

It has been asked to interviewees if they thought to be returnee. Half of the expatriates in the study group don't intend to return but some of them want to return and also some of them evaluating to return as a possibility.

S. O: "I want a lot, my wife does not want to. I'm likely to return to 50%."

Y. Ç: "We returned three times and we came back, we will return, I think."

It was wondering what Romanian wives think about to return. It has agreed to a general belief that wives aren't leaning toward returning to Turkey. Two of interviewees' wives don't want to return, two of them wants and remaining to wives are leaning toward to go Turkey for visiting and leisure. Furthermore, most of interviewees often go to Turkey and only one interviewee implies that never been to Turkey.

The interviewees were asked making comparisons between the two countries. In comparison it had been done by the interviewees, it determined a similar assessment with the difficulties they have experienced in Bucharest. In this review based on cultural differences, it has complained about the lack of elements that resemble the Turkish culture. For example, situations that vary with cultural elements have emerged as the *individualistic way of life despite family life*, *loneliness and alienation*, *the lack of culture of hospitality*, *sincerity difference*. By the way, it has touched on the differences between countries in *economic terms*:

R. B: "We've been here a long time and it is very difficult to bring habits here. This country is very different. People are very comfortable. That sincerity in Turkey is not in here. Everyone lives as individuals, no family life."

S. O: "No hospitality, no commuting together here, of course, because of workload. Everybody paddle their own canoe. Too much isolation, we are strangers to each other."

U. Ş: "When I came to Bucharest, there was a lot of brings in trade and this sounded appealing to us. Now we have suffered very large economic loss. At that time there were no profits in Turkey but in Bucharest. Now Turkish economy streets ahead of Bucharest."

In comparison of countries it seems to cultural differences are in the forefront. Turkish culture can be considered as a dominant culture. In peculiar dynamics of Turkish culture, altruism holds an important place. In this respect, according to Turks individualism and social isolation are meaningless preferences. A remarkable feature of the responses of interviewees, the criticism of difference from freedom perception. It should not accept the criticism of being free in a narrow sense. Acting with completely individual purpose without feeling a sense of responsibility and commitment on the rest of the community was implied.

On the other hand it is seen in the comparison made about the economy, the balance is reversed on economy that formerly an attractive reason for migration. In the past worse Turkish economy caused emigration of labour, now it's claimed the economy of Turkey is better than Romania's.
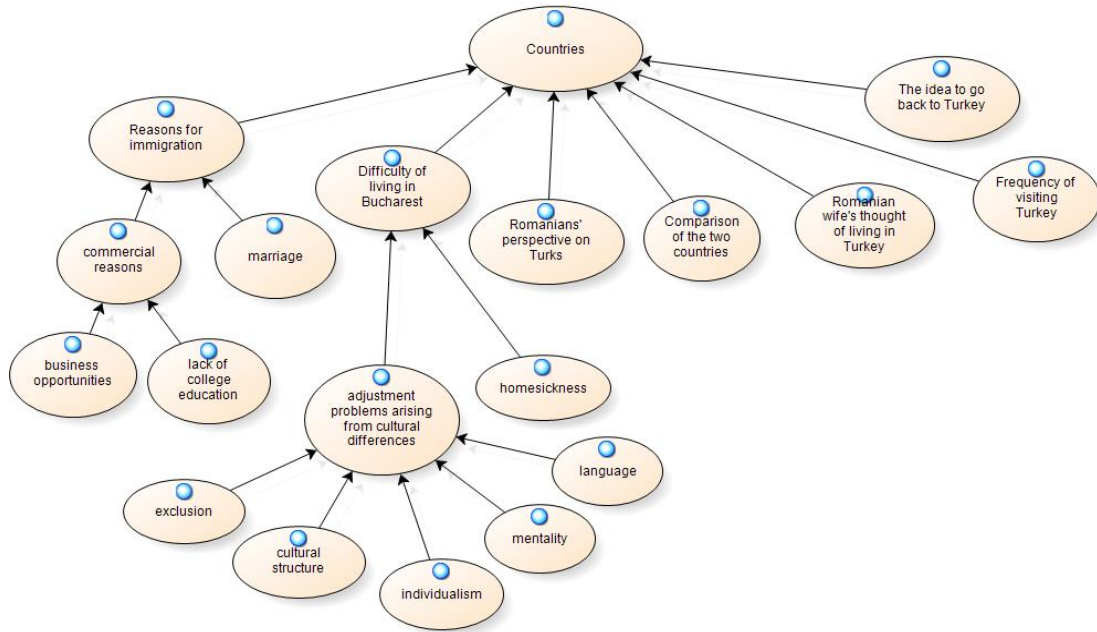
Figure 1: Model of *Countries*.

2- Interpretation of findings related family and cultural values / elements:

When examining the interviewees' marital status, six of them have stated that the current marriage is the *first*. Other two interviewees expressed that they maintaining *second* marriages. One of first wife is Turkish, another is Romanian again. The answer of interviewee whose first wife is Turk, as follows:

U. Ş: "My first wife was Turk and we were out of love after I came here. She was just my children's mother. Then I met my Romanian wife and married to her. I was both married for a while. In an era, being married in Turkey was unknown in Romania for that reason most of Turkish man married in here when they came first. Then I got divorced from my Turkish wife when she learned my marriage status."

In this response remarkable case is the men who immigrated to Romania made marriage in there although they have already married with Turkish women. The reason for this situation in terms of the interviewee, the broken bond of love between him and his ex-wife. But to getting married to Romanian wife without to divorce ex-wife does not constitute an excuse for this situation. In this case it can be considered as an example of immigration lead to polygamy and broken families.

In a consensus that considers the polygamy phenomenon as a means of output for social problems; polygamy was analysed the mode of production in the society, in relation to female and male birth rates and social values and norms. It does not seem possible to explain polygamy by linking it to a single factor (Kaya, 2008:62).

The interviewees were asked what the holding element the family stands. They responded this question with a number of values and concepts such as *love*, *respect*, *faith* and *responsibility*:

> A. Ç: "Faith, love, respect ..."

> U. Ş: "Responsibilities and obligations."

> R. B: "Child and love."

> Y. Ş: "The Women."

Interviewees' reviews have been wondering about if they had experienced a change in life-style after marriage. Some of those interviewee stated that there were *no differences* on this issue in the form of life:

A. Ç: "I did not have any changes because I grew up in a family with rules and depending on culture. I affect rather than impressed."

> S. O: "No change for me."

> S. S: "Any changes did not occur."

Y. Ç: "We did not have much change because my wife have also lived in the Turkey. She already knew our culture."

The similarity of the couples in terms of ideological and religious views is one of the qualities that will increase the harmony in marriage. Both ideological and religious views determine the lifestyle, habits, attitudes and behaviours of the individuals (food preferences, wedding ceremonies, what the child's name will be, etc.). Therefore, the differences in these characteristics will reduce the likelihood that individuals will adapt to each other (Kalkan et al., 2015: 17).

The other part of interviewees stated that they have experienced *changes in terms of cultural differences* mainly and one of them had problem due to *former marriage*:

R. B: "There are differences between the cultures and experiencing difficulties. Food, cuisine, traditions, religion…"

U. Ş: "I have 2 sons from my ex-wife and I experienced dissociation in family structure. I've been away from them for many years but now they stay with me. There are of course potential harm of years I stayed away. We are strangers to each other, but we are now at the stage to fix it."

Despite the cultural differences, the majority of interviewees were found to be unaffected. In general the sense is appeared that the husbands embraced their culture to their wives. In addition for one interviewee, it is possible to say fragmented family structure from ex-marriage, was forced him.

In this regard information provided to what extent their spouses adapt to Turkish culture is also an important point. Although it expressed a part of spouses cannot adapt culturally, it is

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possible to say that generally *the wives adapted to the culture*. The important thing is whether they want to adapt to the culture:

A. Ç: "Of course, I'm from Urfa she investigate and cook our meals, she knows about feasts and shows much interest."

S. O: "She knows and adapted. We do not have a problem with it."

Y. Ç: "She knows everything better than me."

U. Ş: "In the beginning she was trying learn and learned. Now she is not interested so much."

R. B: "Not exactly."

S. S: "She does not want to learn and I do not have problems like this stuff."

The difference between the spouses' religious beliefs can affect the happiness of the family. Because the differences of religious beliefs affect the attitudes of the spouses, the ways of eating, drinking and having fun affect the rules of life, especially the religious education of children. Religious differences may not affect the happiness of established marriages (Özgüven, 2017:59).

It has been wondering if any differences between the religions of spouses. Interviewees were asked whether there is any religious conversion, four of interviewees' wives have been Muslim, in two interviewees' family there is no religious conversion experienced. Religion factor has an important place in terms of interviewees' extended families perspective to the bride. When interviewees were asked what their family perspectives to foreign brides, it is possible to say at first family had a prejudiced attitude towards the bride but with the religious conversion, there is more accepting and soft attitude adopted against the bride:

Y. Ç: "They did not want first, they liked her so much when she accepted to converse religion."

A. Ç: "They said there would be no problem if she agree to converse our religion."

In continuation of the foreign bride's family perspective in general, together with the opinion stated that the bias before, there are some interviewees who say their family indicated any opinion on this issue:

R. B: "Of course they've afraid before. But our happiness is comforting to them."

S. S: "At first they approached with prejudice, then they like her."

S. O: "They did not say anything."

U. Ş: "After a certain age, the family does not interfere in such things. When I married my Romanian wife my family has no word to say.
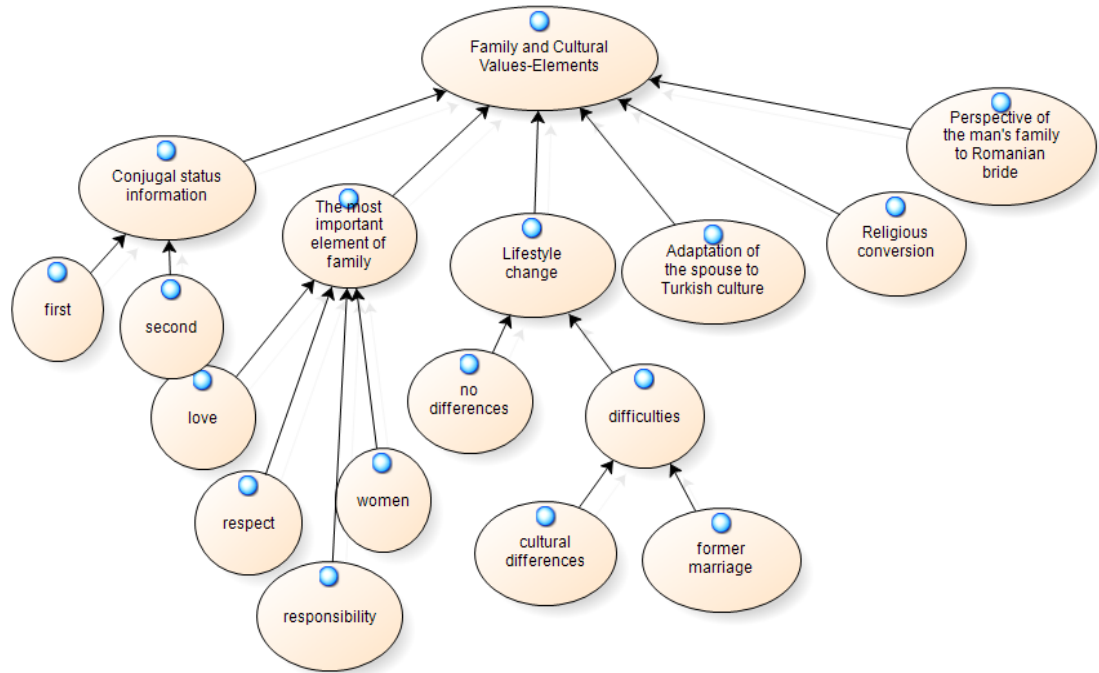
Figure 2: Model of *Family and Cultural Values / Elements.*

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CONCLUSION

In the related literature, there are studies about marriages of individuals belonging to different cultures, religions and social groups. These studies focused on the causes, processes and results of intercultural marriages and conducted analyzes in terms of economic, social, cultural, religious and geographic variables.

Undoubtedly, it is difficult to distinguish social, cultural and economic factors from each other, but studies on intercultural marriages in connection with migration (Timmerman, 2006: 125-143; Gopalkrishnan&Babacan, 2007: 507-526; Ter Wal et al., 2008: 409-422; Timmerman et al., 2009: 232-244; Aniciete&Soloski, 2011: 103-126; Özgür&Aydın, 2012: 418-442; Ferrari&Macmillan, 2019) and studies on the factor of religion in the context of intercultural or mixed marriage (Daneshpour, 2003: 57-71; Bangstad, 2004: 349-364; Marks, 2005: 85-111; Al-Yousuf, 2006: 317-329; Yahya&Boag: 2014: 480-504) provide a broad perspective.

From 1960 migration from Turkey to Europe for economic and commercial reasons has been realized intensely. Migration often requires a process of harmonization with the target country. In this process, which can also be expressed as acculturation, migrants carry out intercultural marriages in terms of adaptation with social structure and texture. Similarly, in this study Turkish men's opinions who married to Romanian women after emigrating from Turkey to Romania / Bucharest were obtained, the following conclusions were reached:

The data obtained from the interviewees were analyzed under two main themes. The first of the themes is related to the countries, and there is often a comparison between the two countries.

Reasons for coming to Romania were mostly for commercial purposes. At this point, we can talk about labor migration, where the economic reason is at the forefront.

The interviewees mentioned that there are some difficulties in living in a different cultural structure in another country. Adaptation problems due to cultural differences (mentality, cultural structure, language individualism and exclusion) and longing sub-themes show that the interviewees had some adjustment problems in Romania. The interviewed emigrants find the outlook for them in Romania partly positive. The idea of returning to Turkey in terms of those interviewed is regarded by half. However it has been thought Romanian wives are not take kindly to idea of return to Turkey. When countries are compared, there is a huge difference between cultural structures. This makes the process of acculturation difficult.

Another point of note is the fact that the economic rationale for migration in Romania has lost its appeal. Interviewees stated that Romania's economic situation is better than in Turkey.

The second theme, family and cultural values / elements have been identified. The interviewees mostly continue their first marriage. But it has been noticed that second marriage in Romania is made before the termination of the marriage made in Turkey. In many cases, immigrant men are known to prefer this alternative to settle and work legally. When the interviewees were asked whether their life styles changed after marriage, it was concluded that there were mostly no changes in their lifestyles. The interviewees have previously stated that they have been suffering from cultural differences. They stated that instead of adapting foreign culture in the context of acculturation, they maintained their own culture and were not exposed to influence.

The adaptation of the spouses to the Turkish culture is also analyzed as a subcategory. In general, it is possible to say that the spouses adapt to the culture of the interviewees. Considering the acculturation, while migrants are expected to adapt to the culture of the country where they settled, migrants seem to integrate their wives into their cultural structures in their marriages. These findings can be linked with the patriarchal family structure in Turkey and normative Islam religion. Most of the spouses of the interviewees were changed their religion. Foreign brides often adopted their husbands' religion (Islam). This situation also affected the man's family's point of view to the foreign bride. It was easier for them to accept a bride who embraced their own beliefs.

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