# ACCULTURATION PROCESS OF TURKISH IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

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**Abstract**

This study aims to investigate how Turkish immigrants manage their lives in the United States (US) and the relationship between acculturation pathways and demographic background of Turkish immigrants. Data was collected from 467 Turkish immigrants who were born outside of the US. This study adopts a bidimensional acculturation approach, stating that both heritage and dominant host cultures can live together. Results suggest that demographic backgrounds are significantly linked to both their heritage and dominant host cultures, therefore they have important effects on the acculturation process of Turkish immigrants. Ethnic identity is found to be the most significant factor predicting involvements in heritage culture, whereas American identity contributes the most predicting involvements in the dominant host culture. The most preferred acculturation pathway is integration among Turkish immigrants in the US. The results confirmed acculturation process is bi-dimensional, not a zero-sum game as we found a significant positive correlation between the heritage and the dominant host cultures, which assume the independence and orthogonal of involvements in the dominant host and heritage cultures.

**Keywords**: *Acculturation, Turkish immigrants, Ethnic Identity, Heritage Culture, Host Culture.*

# ABD'DEKİ TÜRK GÖÇMENLERDE KÜLTÜRLEŞME SÜRECİ

**Özet**

Bu çalışma Amerika Birleşik Devleti'ndeki (ABD) Türk göçmenlerin yaşamlarını nasıl idare ettiklerini ile kültürleşme yönelimleri ve Türk göçmenlerin demografik özellikleri arasındaki ilişkiyi araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır.  Çalışmanın verileri ABD dışında doğmuş olan 467 Türk göçmenden toplanmıştır. Bu çalışma hem öz/miras kültürün hem de ana akım ev sahibi kültürlerin birlikte yaşayabileceğini savunan iki boyutlu kültürleşme yaklaşımını benimsemiştir. Araştırmanın sonuçları demografik özelliklerin hem öz kültür hem de ana akım ev sahibi kültürüyle istatistiki olarak anlamlı bir fark oluşturduğunu, dolayısıyla Türk göçmenlerin kültürleşme süreçlerinde anlamlı etkileri olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Etnik kimlik öz kültüre bağlılığı açıklayan en önemli faktör iken ana akım ev sahibi kültür bağlılığına katkı sağlayan en anlamlı faktör ise Amerikan kimliğidir. ABD'de yaşan Türk göçmenler arasında en çok tercih edilen kültürleşme yönelimi entegrasyondur. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları kültürleşme sürecinin tek yönlü -sıfır toplamlı- bir ilişki olmadığı aksine iki boyutlu olduğunu ve her iki kültürün birlikte var olabileceği göstermiştir. Araştırma sonuçları öz kültür ile ana akım ev sahibi kültürü arasında pozitif bir korelasyon olduğunu dolayısıyla birbirinden bağımsız ve birbirini dışlamadıklarını ortaya koymaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Kültürleşme, Türk Göçmenler, Etnik Kimlik, Öz Kültür, Ev sahibi Kültürü.*

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**1.NTRODUCTION**

For  a variety of reasons, human beings have been on the move since the very beginning of human history. These movements cause interactions between different ethnic and cultural groups, which may result in cultural changes. Members of non-dominant cultural groups often have expectations that learning and adapting to the cultural elements of dominant host societies will be rewarding, such as accessing valuable resources that new society possesses. The primary concern of immigrants is the process of accommodating cultural differences between their heritage and the dominant host culture, which generally requires learning and accepting different values, behaviors, motives, attitudes, and so forth. Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits (1936) conceptualized this interaction as the acculturation process, which takes place when members from diverse cultures come into continuous first-hand contact and change subsequently occurs in at least one of the groups in the interaction.

Two applied theoretical frameworks dominate the discussion of this that examine this process: the linear model and the bi-dimensional model (Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, *&* Senecal, 1997). The linear model is based on the assimilationist perspective, known as a process of Westernization, Anglicization, Americanization, and denationalization (Alba & Nee, 2003). The model suggests that more interactions with members of the dominant host culture would automatically cause people to cut back on their interactions with their heritage culture (Horenczyk, Jasinskaja-Lahti, Sam, *&* Vedder, 2013). This model assumes that heritage cultures may differ from the host in the speed of the process, but the result inevitably is assimilation (Flannery, Reise, & Yu, 2001; Van de Vijver & Phalet, 2004).

On the other hand, the bidimensional assumes the non-dominant groups may retain their socio-cultural heritage in various degrees when they attempt to interact with the dominant host society (Carlson & Güler, 2018; Nguyen, Messé, & Stollak, 1999). With respect to this model, the following two issues must be managed by members of the heritage culture: to what extent they maintain or abandon their own heritage culture and to what extent they participate in or reject the dominant culture (Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989). Berry (1997) forms acculturation pathways based upon the extensiveness of relationships with the heritage and the dominant host cultures: integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization. Specifically, in integration pathway, there is concern in maintaining and valuing heritage culture and in having maximum daily interactions with the dominant host culture. Alternatively, assimilation pathway becomes an option when members of the non-dominant groups do not wish to retain their own heritage culture and simultaneously express a preference for maximum daily interaction with the dominant host culture. Contrary to assimilation, separation occurs when members of the non-dominant culture value their heritage culture and meanwhile have minimum contact with others because they consider both heritage and dominant cultures as disparate and incompatible (Phinney & Devich-Navaro, 1997). Marginalization pathway occurs when there is little or no concern about maintaining the heritage culture and contacting with the dominant host culture.

Most of the studies conducted on the acculturation process of Turkish immigrants in European and North America countries have indicated that various factors such as age, gender, religiosity, socioeconomic status, ethnic identity, and length of stay in the host country may affect acculturation pathway processes. Studies being conducted in European countries where cultural diversity is supported indicate that integration is the most preferred acculturation pathway among Turkish and other immigrants (Gronewold, De Valk, & Van Ginneken, 2013; Koydemir, 2013). However, some studies have indicated the opposite, as Turkish immigrants preserve their cultural heritage due to discriminating attitudes coming from the host society (Güzey, Gültekin, Kirsaclioglu, Aksoy, & Ataç, 2014). Birman, Simon, Chan & Tran (2014) agree that current consensus in the acculturation literature suggests that the integration pathway may result in the best outcome because together both the heritage and host culture can cope with the negative effects of their interactions. Arends-Toth & Van De Vijver (2003) found that Turkish immigrants in the Netherlands made a distinction in their public and private lives, preferring integration in the public (outside) context but the separation pathway in their private (home) context. On the contrary, second-generation Turkish adolescents in Belgium showed no significant difference in maintaining heritage culture in private and public lives (Güngör & Bornstein, 2009). Likewise, Vedder & Virta,

(2005) found that for Turkish adolescents living in the Netherlands and Sweden, sex differences had no impact on acculturation in the Netherlands but females in Sweden had significantly higher scores in the acculturation process towards the host culture. However, Bektaş, Demir, & Bowden (2009) found that Turkish students at U.S. universities significantly prefer the separation pathway rather than integration. Similarly, Ataca & Berry (2002) indicated that Turkish immigrants whose socioeconomic status is low in Canada hold onto their heritage culture and ethnic identity significantly more than dominant host society and avoid interactions with.

People categorize themselves as members of social (ethnic) groups. They identify with these ethnic groups which, necessitating prioritization of some social roles over others that are deemed to be an essential part of their identity. Naumann, Benet-Martínez, & Espinoza (2017) found that weak ethnic identification is negatively associated with the dominant host culture while ethnic identification is positively associated with heritage culture.

Religion is a form of cultural identity that has a significant influence on the acculturation process, though some studies of acculturation have ignored religious factors. Religion can preserve one's identity and maintain one's ethnic heritage. Thus, religious values and traditions are seen an element of cultural distinctiveness and an obstacle to the integration of immigrants (Ward, 2013).

Research is being extensively conducted on Turkish immigrants in the European countries. Turkish immigrants in the US, in turn, are worthy of further study because the psycho-social problem that Turkish immigrants encounter, the cultural activities they are involved in, and the degree to which ethnic identity and its effects on intercultural relations have not been studied yet. To learn how these acculturation processes function and differ is very important for Turkish immigrants in the United States. Moreover, the relationship between acculturation and demographic characteristics suggests a need for a better understanding of the acculturation process of Turkish immigrants in the United States. For that reason, the purpose of this study is to extend previous studies, contribute to the literature in this area, and lead the way for future research by examining the acculturation process and demographic characteristics of Turkish immigrants in the United States. Specifically, there are three primary research questions raised in the present study:

1) What is the predominant acculturation pathway among Turkish immigrants in the United States?

2) How do age, age at arrival, gender, the length of stay in the US, socioeconomic status, religiosity, and identity of Turkish immigrants predict their involvements in the heritage culture once they live in a different country whose culture dominates?

3) How well do age, age at arrival, gender, the length of stay in the US, socioeconomic status, religiosity, and identity of Turkish immigrants predict their involvements in the dominant host culture?

**2.METHOD**

**2.1.Procedure**

After obtaining approvals from the Human Subject Committee at Florida State University, contacts were made with Turkish immigrants. All participants were informed that participation in the study was voluntary, responses would be anonymous, and no personal identifying information would be computer-coded. All participants, therefore, filled out an informed consent and read the instructions before joining the study. All measures were administered both in Turkish and English. Measures originally written in English were forward translated into Turkish, and independently back-translated.

**2.2.Participants**

Data was collected from 467 foreign-born Turkish American immigrants who had been in the US for at least one year. Out of the 467 participants sampled, 258 (55.2%) were male and 209 (44.8%) were female. The age of participants varied from 19 to 69 with a mean of 35.45 (SD = 10.53). The length of stay in the US varied from 1 year to 49 years, with a mean 10.96 (SD = 10.31). Most of the participants (89.1%) came to the United States after age 17. Moreover, only 1.9% of participants came to the United States after age 45. Regarding education attainment, 9.9% of participants had a high school diploma or less education, 6.2% had associate/vocational degree, 28.5 % had a bachelor degree, 40% had a master degree, and 15.4 % had a doctoral or professional degree. One hundred sixty-five (35.3%) of participants, in terms of legal status, had US citizenship and 78 (16.7%) were permanent residents (green card), 101 (21.6%) had only a work permit, and the remainder were students, diplomats, refugees and so on. Regarding marital status, 191 of participants were single/never married, 226 were married to someone, and 50 were divorced/separated/widowed. The sample was quite like the Turkish population in the US at large, regarding age, gender, and education attainment (US Census, 2012).

**2.3.Measures**

The measures used in the study began with screening questions to make sure the candidates met the eligibility conditions such as 'Is the United States your primary place of residence?'. Those who responded 'No' were not allowed to continue to fill out the questionnaire.

*Demographic characteristics:* After the screening questions, potentially influential demographic variables which were developed to collect information from participants about their age, gender, birthplace, marital status, employment status, personal income, education level, age at arrival in the United States, lengths of residence in the United States, religious affiliations, and legal status in the United States were asked.

*Acculturation scale*: to assess the respondents' attitudes towards maintaining Turkish culture and interacting and developing relationships with Americans, a 24-item acculturation scale which was developed by Ryder *et al.*, (2000) was used. A total of 12 items were selected to measure heritage culture and 12 items were used to measure relationship development with American culture. The items assessed different aspects of each culture such as involvement in cultural and social activities, friendships, entertainment, marriage, food preferences, and so on. In this scale, each question was presented twice, one time in the context of Turkish heritage culture and one time in the context of American culture. For instance, "I participate in Turkish cultural events" and "I participate in mainstream American cultural events."  Items were rated on a 9-point Likert scale ranging 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 9 (*strongly agree*). An overall mean was calculated for each scale, with higher scores indicating a higher orientation toward each culture. Internal consistency reliability was Cronbach's alpha of 0.89 for heritage culture and of 0.86 for American culture.

*Identification Scale*: to assess identification with ethnic and American identity, a 12-item identification scale which was developed by Phinney (1992) was used. A total of 6 items measured Turkish ethnic identity and 6 items measured American identity. The items assessed different aspects of ethnic identity, such as pride, the similarity with other members of the ethnic group, identification, and an ethnic way of life. In this scale, each question was presented twice, once in the context of Turkish identity and once in the context of American identity. For example, "I consider myself Turkish", "I consider myself American". Items were rated on a 9-point Likert scale ranging 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 9 (*strongly agree*). An overall mean was calculated for each scale, with higher scores indicating a higher orientation toward each culture. In the present study, two mean scores were computed for each participant: one indicating identification with ethnic/heritage identity based on the mean score of odd number items, and another indicating identification with American identity based on the mean score of even number items. Internal consistency reliability was obtained with Cronbach's alpha for Turkish identity and American identity as 0.80 and 0.76, respectively.

**3.RESULTS**

**3.1.Preliminary Analysis**

Before analyzing, variables were checked to detect errors and outliers, and for the frequencies of each of variables. We found that 20 respondents did not complete and dropped the questionnaire. Therefore, they were excluded from further analysis. Moreover, 64 respondents preferred to complete the Turkish version of the questionnaire while the rest of them preferred to complete the questionnaire in English. A total of 51 respondents filled it out during one-on-one interviews. The interviews were conducted in Turkish, but not all of the interviewees completed the Turkish version of the questionnaire. The distribution of the variables was checked to assess normality via descriptive statistics. In addition to this, as part of initial data screening process, outliers were checked for all the variables by using a normal probability plot of the regression standardized residual and scatter plot, and no outliers were found.

**Table 1. Frequency of the Preference of Acculturation Pathways**

|   | Separation | Integration | Assimilation | Marginalization | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| N | 89 | 251 | 77 | 50 | 467 |
| % | 19.1 % | 53.7 % | 16.5 % | 10.7 % | 100 % |

The sample mean split procedure was chosen as the cut-off point to code subjects into the four acculturation pathways. The coding produces that 53.7% (251) of the participants involved in both the heritage culture and the dominant American culture evaluated this process as integration, 19.1% (89) involved mostly in their heritage culture as defined separation, 16.5% (77) involved only in the dominant American culture as defined assimilation, and 10.7% (50) involved in neither the heritage and the dominant American culture as defined marginalization pathway (shown in Table 1). Also, we computed a paired t-test and the results suggested that mean of heritage culture (M = 7.18, SD = 1.32) was statistically significantly higher than mean of dominant American culture (M = 6.17, SD = 1.28) with t (466) = 12.92, p < 0.001. The analysis revealed that integration is the most preferred acculturation pathway among our sample of Turkish immigrants, in the United States.

**3.2.Loglinear Analysis**

The relationships between demographic characteristics (gender, age groups, age at arrival, birthplace, the length of stay in the US, SES, legal status in the US, and differences of education level in Turkey and the US, separately) and acculturation pathways were analyzed. These analyses indicated that there is a significant relationship between acculturation pathways and some of the demographic characteristics.

**Table 2. Acculturation Pathways by Gender, Age Groups, SES, Legal Status, Birthplace and DIF-Edu**

| Separation | | Acculturation Pathways | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Integration | Assimilation | Marginalization | Sig. | |
| **Age** | 19-29 Years | 28.1% | 47.9% | 13.8% | 10.2% | |
| | 30-39 Years | 15.3% | 52.9% | 18.2% | 13.5% | .00* |
| | 40-69 Years | 12.3% | 62.3% | 17.7% | 7.7% | |
| **Length of Stay** | 1-4 Years | 31.7% | 45.8% | 12% | 10.6% | |
| | 5-9 Years | 20.7% | 48.9% | 15.6% | 14.8% | .00* |
| | 10-49 Years | 8.4% | 63.2% | 20.5% | 7.9% | |
| **SES** | Low | 26% | 49% | 13.5% | 11.5% | |
| | Middle | 17.4% | 53.3% | 18.6% | 10.8% | .00* |
| | Upper | 6.5% | 65.2% | 19.6% | 8.7% | |
| **Legal Status** | U.S. Citizen | 7,9% | 63.6% | 18.8% | 9.7% | |
| | Green Card | 17.9% | 51.3% | 19.2% | 11.5% | .00* |
| | Work Permit | 19.8% | 53.5% | 13.9% | 13.8% | |
| | Other | 34.1% | 42.3% | 12.9% | 9.8 % | |
| **Birth Place** | Metropolis | 13.4% | 53.9% | 22% | 10.6% | |
| | Other Cities | 24% | 51.9% | 13.5% | 10.6% | .00* |
| | County/village | 27.5% | 55% | 6.4% | 11% | |
| **DIF-Edu** | Low+No | 32.1% | 37.7% | 5.7% | 24.5% | |
| | Low+Inc | 5.1% | 70.5% | 20.5% | 3.8% | |
| | Bachelor +No | 28.7% | 46.8% | 14.9% | 9.6% | .00* |
| | Bachelor +Inc | 17.2% | 54.5% | 20.1% | 8.2% | |
| | Higher | 16.7% | 54.6% | 15.7% | 13% | |

Note: DIF-Edu: Difference of Education Level in Turkey and the US (Low + No = Lower than Bachelor in Turkey and no change in US, Low + Inc = Lower than Bachelor in TR and increase in US, Bachelor + No = Bachelor degree in TR and no change in US, Bachelor + Inc = Bachelor degree in TR and increase in US, Higher = Higher degree than Bachelor).

*Significance at p < 0.01.

As presented in Table 2, the results of analysis indicated no significant relationship between acculturation pathways and gender $\chi^2$ (df = 3, n = 467) = 2.59, p = 0.46, and age at arrival $\chi^2$ (df = 3, n = 467) = 4.94, p = 0.18. Being male or female and being younger than 18 or adult at the time of immigration does not make any significant difference among acculturation pathways.

However, the analysis revealed that there is a significant relationship between acculturation pathways and age groups $\chi^2$ (df = 6, n = 467) = 18.05, p < 0.01 suggesting that integration is the main option for all three age groups (19-29 age, 30-39 age, and 40 and older), 47.9%, 52.9%, and 62.3%, respectively. Separation is the second option for the 19-29 age group with 28.1%, whereas assimilation is the second option for 30-39 age, and 40 and older age groups, 18.2% and 17.7%, respectively. In addition to age groups, length of stay in the US were found to have a significant relationship with acculturation pathways $\chi^2$ (df = 6, n = 467) = 36.01, p < 0.001, indicating a longer length of stay means more will follow an integration pathway, while it is the first option for all length of stay categories (1-4 years, 5-9 years, and 10 and more years), 45.8%, 48.9%, and 63.2%, respectively. Separation is the second option for those who reside 1-4 years with 31.7% and 5-9 years with 20.7%, while assimilation is the second choice for those who reside longer with 20.5%.

Moreover, the results suggested that there is a significant relationship between acculturation pathways and SES in the US $\chi^2$ (df = 6, n = 467) = 18.76, p < 0.005. In all three SES, integration is the most followed pathway. Turkish immigrants whose SES in the United States is higher are more likely to be associated with integration.

Assimilation is the second option for those who are in middle or upper SES, 18.6% and 19.6%, respectively. Similarly, the results suggested that legal status in the United States have a significant relationship with acculturation pathways $\chi^2$ (df = 9, n = 467) = 34.29, p < 0.005. Of those who have United States citizenship, 63.6% followed integration and 18.8% followed assimilation. Of the permanent resident, 51.3% followed integration whereas 19.2% followed assimilation. Moreover, of those who had only work permits, 53.5% followed integration and 19.8% followed separation. Additionally, 42.3% of others followed integration while 31.1% followed separation. Additionally, the analysis indicated a significant relationship between birthplace and acculturation pathways $\chi^2$ (df = 6, n = 467) = 21.89, p < 0.001. Integration pathway is significantly the first option for immigrants who were born in metropolitan, other city centers, or town/village, 53.9%, 51.9% and 55%, respectively. Separation is the second option for those who were born in non-metropolitans, whereas assimilation is second for Metropolitan.

Furthermore, a significant relationship between acculturation pathways and differences of education level in Turkey and in the United States as $\chi^2$ (df = 12, n = 467) = 45.42, p < 0.001 were found. The analysis indicated that 37.7% of Turkish immigrants whose education level was less than a bachelor's degree in Turkey and had not changed in the United States followed integration pathway, whereas 32.1% of them preferred separation and 24.5% followed marginalization. A total of 70.5% of Turkish immigrants whose education level was less than bachelor's degree in Turkey had an increase in the US followed integration while 20.5% followed assimilation. Moreover, 46.8% of those whose education level was a bachelor's degree in Turkey and had not changed in the US followed integration and 28.7% followed separation. A total of 54.5% of those whose education level was bachelor's degree in Turkey and had increased in the U.S. followed integration while 20.1% followed assimilation. Additionally, 54.6% of those whose education level was more than bachelor's degree in Turkey followed integration while 16.7% followed separation.

### 3.3. Hierarchical Regression Analysis

A hierarchical multiple regression was performed to investigate the level of identification with ethnic and American identity to predict orientation in heritage culture after controlled for presumably relevant demographic characteristic variables (gender, age, the length of stay in the US, and religiosity). Preliminary analyses were computed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. Additionally, the correlation amongst the predictor variables included in the study was examined and presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.  Pearson's Correlations between Variables**

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Heritage Culture | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. Host Culture | .144** | - |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3.Gender | -.019 | .056 | - |  |  |  |  |
| 4.Age in Years | -.050 | .279** | .052 | - |  |  |  |
| 5.Length of Stay | .019 | .358** | .055 | .774** | - |  |  |
| 6.Religiosity | .387** | -.170** | -.103* | -.141** | -.148** | - |  |
| 7.Ethnic ID | .654** | .079 | .067 | -.056 | .002 | .275** | - |
| 8.American ID | -.020 | .632** | .031 | .332** | .477** | -.212** | .034 |
| Note. Statistical Significance: *p < .05 (two-tailed). **p < .01 (two-tailed). | | | | | | | |

Demographic variables were entered into the first step while American identity was entered into the second. In the final step (Model III), a total variance that comprising all covariates, American, and ethnic identity explained 48.1% of the orientation in heritage culture, F (7, 459) = 60.86, p < .001. In addition to ethnic identity, length of stay in the US (b = .018, SE = .009, p = .043) and religiosity (b = .132, SE = .021, p = .000) were significant predictors of orientation toward their heritage culture. The results of the hierarchical regression analysis are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4. Results of Hierarchical Regression Predicting Orientations in Heritage Culture**

| *Predictors* | $R^2$ | Adj. $R^2$ | $R^2$ Change | F | B | SE | β | t |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Model I** | | | | | | | | |
| Constant | | | | | 6.60 | .30**** | | 21.82 |
| Gender (Female =1) | | | | | .05 | .11 | .02 | .44 |
| Age | .16**** | .15 | .16 | 18.02 | -.02 | .01 | -.14 | -1.72 |
| Age at Arrival (<18=1) | | | | | -.01 | .24 | -.00 | -.05 |
| Length of Stay | | | | | .02 | .01* | .18 | 2.14 |
| Religiosity | | | | | .23 | .03**** | .40 | 9.16 |
| **Model II** | | | | | | | | |
| Constant | | | | | 6.48 | .36**** | | 17.81 |
| Gender (Female =1) | | | | | .05 | .11 | .02 | .44 |
| Age | | | | | -.02 | .01 | -.14 | -1.70 |
| Age at Arrival (<18=1) | .16 | .15 | .00 | 15.05 | -.02 | .24 | -.01 | -.09 |
| Length of Stay | | | | | .02 | .01 | .17 | 1.91 |
| Religiosity | | | | | .24 | .03**** | .40 | 9.12 |
| American Identity | | | | | .03 | .04 | .03 | .61 |
| **Model III** | | | | | | | | |
| Constant | | | | | 3.28 | .35**** | | 9.52 |
| Gender (Female =1) | | | | | -.10 | .09 | -.04 | -1.12 |
| Age | | | | | -.01 | .01 | -.09 | -1.37 |
| Age at Arrival (<18=1) | .48**** | .47 | .31 | 60.86 | -.13 | .19 | -.03 | -.72 |
| Length of Stay | | | | | .02 | .01* | .14 | 2.03 |
| Religiosity | | | | | .13 | .02**** | .22 | 6.18 |
| American Identity | | | | | -.19 | .03 | -.02 | -.59 |
| Ethnic Identity | | | | | .52 | .03**** | .59 | 16.76 |
| Note. Statistical Significance: ****p < .001, ***p < .005, **p < .01, *p < .05 | | | | | | | | |

A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was computed to determine whether the relationship between identification with ethnic and American identity and orientation toward the American host culture would be retained after controlling for potential demographic characteristic variables.

**Table 5: Results of Hierarchical Regression Predicting Orientations in Host Culture**

| *Predictors* | $R^2$ | Adj. $R^2$ | $R^2$ Change | F | B | SE | β | t |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Model I** | | | | | | | | |
| Constant | | | | | 5.98 | .30**** | | 19.96 |
| Gender (Female =1) | | | | | .07 | .11 | .03 | .58 |
| Age | .14**** | .13 | .14 | 15.40 | -.00 | .01 | -.01 | -.16 |
| Age at Arrival (<18=1) | | | | | -.03 | .23 | -.01 | -.18 |
| Length of Stay | | | | | .04 | .01**** | .04 | 4.07 |
| Religiosity | | | | | -.07 | .03** | -.12 | -2.67 |
| **Model II** | | | | | | | | |
| Constant | | | | | 5.30 | .39**** | | 13.57 |
| Gender (Female =1) | | | | | .04 | .11 | .01 | .31 |
| Age | | | | | .00 | .01 | -.00 | -.03 |
| Age at Arrival (<18=1) | .16** | .15 | .01 | 14.19 | -.07 | .23 | -.02 | -.29 |
| Length of Stay | | | | | .04 | .01**** | .34 | 3.97 |
| Religiosity | | | | | -.09 | .03*** | -.15 | -3.34 |
| Ethnic Identity | | | | | .10 | .04** | .12 | 2.67 |
| **Model III** | | | | | | | | |
| Constant | | | | | 3.19 | .36**** | | 8.89 |
| Gender (Female =1) | | | | | .06 | .09 | .02 | .63 |
| Age | | | | | .00 | .01 | .03 | .38 |
| Age at Arrival (<18=1) | .41**** | .41 | .26 | 46.25 | -.22 | .20 | -.05 | -1.12 |
| Length of Stay | | | | | .01 | .01 | .07 | .91 |
| Religiosity | | | | | -.03 | .02 | -.51 | -1.32 |
| Ethnic Identity | | | | | .07 | .03* | .08 | 2.04 |
| American Identity | | | | | .49 | .03**** | .59 | 14.19 |
| Note. Statistical Significance: ****p < .001, ***p < .005, **p < .01, *p < .05 | | | | | | | | |

Demographic variables were entered into the first step while ethnic identity was entered into the second. In the final step (Model III), a total variance that comprising all covariates, ethnic, and American identity explained 41.4% of the orientation in American host culture, F (7, 459) = 46.25, p < .001. In addition to American identity, ethnic identity (β = .066, SE = .032, p = .042) was a significant predictor of orientation toward American host culture. The results of the hierarchical regression analysis are presented in Table 5.

## 4. DISCUSSION

As the analyses indicated, the most preferred acculturation pathway among our sample is integration. However, this does not support the previous findings of some studies regarding Turkish immigrants in European countries (e.g. Verkuyten & Kwa, 1994), the United States (Bektaş *et al.*, 2009), and Canada (e.g. Ataca & Berry, 2002). There are at least three potential reasons why Turkish immigrants preferred the integration pathway in this sample. The first possibility is the increase of numbers in Turkish immigrants in the United States because this gives them sufficient social support to develop and maintain their heritage culture by providing a feeling of identity and belonging when interacting with the host culture. There are more Turkish populations in European countries than in the United States, but their socioeconomic backgrounds are very different, with generally less educated and lower socioeconomic status than those in the U.S. Secondly, in countries where cultural diversity is supported or tolerated publicly, Turkish immigrants choose to maintain their heritage culture and get contact with the dominant culture simultaneously. Since there is a relatively small number of Turkish immigrants who followed the marginalization pathway, we can conclude that there is no or very little prejudice against them

arising from the dominant culture, even though prejudice was not measured directly. Thirdly, the literature on Turkish migration mostly focuses on labor migration (guest workers) of Turkish immigrants to Western Europe that were unskilled labor and not expected to establish strong relations with the host cultures (Abadan-Unat, 1986), but most of this study's participants reported that their fundamental reason to come to the United States was to achieve their educational objectives. Yağmur & Van de vijver (2012) found that less educated Turkish immigrants in Germany, France, Austria, and the Netherlands are less inclined to value host culture, whereas better educated Turkish immigrants show strong signs of integration in varying patterns. So, either they have a high education level or enhance it in some way. The will to interact with dominant society could be explained by their higher education level and language skills.

Analyses indicated no significant difference between males and females on acculturation pathways. This study was expecting that females would have significantly more separation acculturation than males did because the literature on acculturation of immigrants emphasizes gender roles in traditional Turkish culture and the subjugation of females in Islamic culture's impact on acculturation process. Abadan-Unat (1977) states that immigration of Turks to Western countries made immediate and crucial changes in gender relationships, especially in favor of the status of women. For example, the proportion of female Turkish workers employed in Germany was two times more than employed in Turkey (Abadan-Unat, 2006). Despite this, Amer & Hovey have found that Arab females reported significantly less involvement and orientations towards the dominant American culture than males and suggested that females have a role in "preserving and transmitting their cultural and religious traditions" (2007:343). Moreover, results showed that the birthplaces of Turkish immigrants have a significant relationship with acculturation pathways. Those who were born in metropolitan areas significantly followed the integration pathway more often when compared with those who were born in other places. This is because those who were born in metropolitan cities have more opportunities to get to know people with diverse cultural backgrounds due to internal or external migration.

Analyses revealed that the better socioeconomic status Turkish immigrants had, the more they followed integration pathway rather than separation or assimilation pathways. This could be explained by the fact that the higher socioeconomic group had more resources and appropriate skills, such as greater language proficiency and better education to help them better manage their life in host countries. Moreover, results indicated that Turkish immigrants across different legal statuses in the United States reported a significant relationship with the acculturation process. Turkish immigrants who have U.S. citizenship and permanently reside there followed the integration pathway more than those who had an only work permit and others such as visitors and diplomats. As Zlobina, Basabe, Paez, & Furnham (2006) suggested, having citizenship or permanent residency contributes not only to access to services but also to the specific cultural knowledge shared by dominant society. Therefore, social exclusion and greater vulnerability are prevalent among those who do not have citizenship or permanent residency because they avoid contact with members of the dominant culture that results in withdrawal from the society.

The present study examined whether acculturation with heritage and dominant host cultures varied according to education level in Turkey and in the United States. Results suggested that there was a positive relationship between attending school in the host country and interacting with the dominant host culture. More specifically, there were significant differences in terms of attending school in the host country and valuing the dominant host culture as well as maintaining their heritage culture. The explanation could be that immigrants who acquire and advance their knowledge became more open minded about the host American culture and/or became more capable of reconciling differences and discordances between heritage and host American cultures.

In the literature, religiosity is studied as a part of heritage culture of Muslims in their acculturation process. Highly religious Muslims were more likely to interact with the heritage culture than less religious ones (see Bornstein & Phalet, 2012). Religiosity consistently has a significant relationship with heritage and the host American culture. Even though most of the Turkish immigrants followed integration acculturation, religiosity had a positive correlation with heritage and a negative correlation with the host American culture. It can be

explained that Turkish immigrants practice their ways of life without facing difficulties such as finding their cultural foods and other needs in almost every supermarket with a clear description and labeling, and they likewise appreciate the rights and freedoms they enjoy in American society. Conversely, it can be explained by the defense mechanisms in a foreign country and multicultural policies of a host country that encourage religious revivals (Abadan-Unat, 1997). Another explanation would be that religiosity significantly predicted acculturation towards heritage culture because it provides Turkish immigrants a feeling of security without leaving their heritage culture/identity behind. Similarly, Parekh (2006) discussed that most Muslims feel a strong sense of loyalty to host countries because they are educated in their schools, have learned their languages, and are shaped by their dominant culture. Therefore, Islam is important, but so is the culture of the host country. The results also indicated when religiosity gets more intense, Turkish immigrants who followed the separation increased. The explanation could be that religiosity increases the cultural distance between Turkish immigrants and the host American culture, which results in less interaction, presumably owing to differences between cultures and beliefs.

The results suggest that ethnic and American identity are very important factors in both heritage and host cultures. They also indicate that ethnic identity has a significantly positive correlation with heritage culture and is a leading predicting factor of heritage culture. Moreover, American identity has a significantly positive correlation with host culture, and it is the best predictor of host culture among predictors.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The present study has revealed some findings consistent with the existing literature. Data suggest that demographic backgrounds are significantly linked to both the heritage and receiving host cultures; therefore, it has significant effects on the acculturation process. The results also confirmed the acculturation process is bi-dimensional and not a zero-sum game since a significant positive correlation between the heritage and the dominant host culture exist. The bidimensional acculturation model provides a more advanced picture of interaction and creates a comprehensive and more useful framework to understand the acculturation process. Accordingly, maintaining the heritage culture does not conceptually and empirically oppose interacting with the dominant host culture. Even though the linear model has the preference of parsimony, it presents a deceptive and an incomplete acculturation process and does not explain the complexity of how immigrants manage their lives in the host societies. In sum, the bidimensional model is clearly superior to and more appropriate than the linear model when maintaining one's heritage culture and social interaction with the host society.

## 6. LIMITATIONS

There are several limitations in the present study that should be considered such as certain methodological limitations related to causality and sampling method. More specifically, the directionality of effects between acculturation process and some other variables were not clear and for multiple reasons might influence correlation. For example, Turkish immigrants with higher socioeconomic status may tend to have more participation in the dominant American society, which leads to more acculturation with the host culture. Alternatively, Turkish immigrants who are more acculturated to the host American culture may have better economic opportunities, leading to higher financial gains. Another limitation of the study is due to geographical conditions. The findings are limited to only Turkish immigrants who participated in this study. Therefore, the findings could not be generalized to all Turkish immigrants who live in the United States.

Furthermore, the sample of the current study consisted of Turkish immigrants who were predominantly highly educated. The results should be understood cautiously because the participants may be sample specific.

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