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What is This?
Communicating separation?
Ethnic media and ethnic journalists as institutions of integration in Germany

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ABSTRACT

Western European countries currently face much immigration from Eastern Europe and Asia. In Germany, Turkish migrants are the largest ethnic minority. Cohabitation is not yet a success story: some observers even fear the development of two separate cultures. Accordingly, public debate about the role of mass and ethnic media has risen. But what role do mass media and ethnic media play in the integration process? What is the role of 'ethnic journalists'?

In this article we discuss theoretical approaches to integration, cultural identity, and media consumption. We analyze the link between all three and present results pointing to the strong impact an ethnic online community has on the building of a hybrid cultural identity between majority and minority culture. We also discuss our findings on ethnic journalists’ acculturation, self-conception, and audience evaluation.

KEY WORDS  
cultural identity  
ethnic journalists  
ethnic media  
ethnic online community  
inclusion  
imigrants

Countries such as the United States have long learned the lessons of multi-ethnicity, but large migration movements are a new phenomenon for Europe. After decades of putting off any serious discussion on migration, Western European nations see themselves challenged by two developments. First, migration movements from Eastern Europe and from Asia have exploded in size, due to political and economical instabilities in the migrants’ home countries. Second, as birth rates drop in Western industrialized nations the socio-demographic situation endangers the stability of social security systems based on intergeneration contracts. To stabilize the situation, European countries become dependent
on the influx of younger migrants to secure the necessary workforce to keep social and economic systems alive.

In Germany 9 percent of the population do not hold German citizenship, in Austria just under 12 percent migrated from other countries, in France more than 6 percent of the population are non-French citizens, and in the Netherlands 17 percent of the population belong to minority ethnic groups. In public debates, be it on immigration laws in France and Germany or assaults on foreigners in all concerned countries, resulting problems are taken up more than resulting benefits. Furthermore, the EU expansion broadens the scale significantly. Whereas up till now nation states dealt with their own small ethnicities, a community of 25 member states represents a conglomerate of ethnic distinctiveness. The current discussion is dominated by the possible entry of Turkey into the EU. Such an entry would bring 70 million Muslims into the now almost exclusively Christian Union; the country would be the second largest EU member. A fear of a clash of religions is behind many agitated arguments about Turkey joining the EU.

The discussion is political, economical, cultural, and social – communication research has not yet had any say in the public debate. Politicians recently called for the media to contribute towards integrating ethnic minorities, possibly by establishing an ‘integration television channel’, and the potential threat of ethnic media has been highlighted. With aspects of representation being the main focus of European communication research on migrants there is not much empirical evidence for any link between the consumption of (mainstream) mass media, ethnic media, and integration processes. Therefore, this article focuses on two central questions that we examine from both a theoretical and an empirical perspective. Our first concern is the general relation between media consumption and integration. What role do mainstream and ethnic media play for the integration of ethnic minorities? Is there a relation between the use of ethnic media, specifically ethnic online communities, and the formation of cultural identity? Our second aim is to examine the role of ethnic communicators in promoting integration and establishing cultural identity. What role do ethnic journalists assume in the integration process, do they think of themselves as agents of integration – and what about their own position towards the majority culture?

We approach these questions in two ways. First, we combine theoretical approaches from sociology and communication with empirical insights into our explanation of media integration functions. Then, after specifying the theoretical premises, we explicate hypotheses that we examine using data from two different studies on migrants, mainstream media, ethnic media, and ethnic journalists.
Mass media and integration

We define social integration as a state of society with all parts connected tightly to form a unity that is well defined against outward groups (Münch, 1995). The basis of this unity is a notion of values and structures of meaning mutually shared by all members of a society (Kamps, 1999). Integration means the acceptance of differences, prolific cohabitation, and learning from each other. Social integration is the creation of relationships and mutual knowledge and understanding across different societal groups (Hasebrink, 1999). The term integration should be differentiated from assimilation and pluralism to clarify its meaning. Assimilation means the adaptation of one group to another while giving up one group’s identity. Pluralism stands for a society consisting of several subsystems that co-exist on the principle of equality. In the latter case, individuals permeate the systems and take on another identity in each of them.

Cultural identity is the key to understanding integration. Group identities assume different states in different forms of ethnic cohabitation. Whereas with separation or pluralism group identities of ethnic minorities and majorities remain independent and without interaction, in the case of assimilation the minority surrenders its ethnic identity and assumes characteristics of the majority. In an integrated state, though, minority and majority identities interact and attune, creating one shared identity that has nevertheless distinct ethnic features on all sides of the integration process. Caspi et al. (2002: 539) talk about a ‘dual identity’, referring to a hybrid position that enables one group to keep its own identity and at the same time be a member of a majority society. Confronted with two distinct cultures, a (sub)group of members of an ethnic minority develops an identity that absorbs elements of the different cultures. The result is a hybrid identity incomparable to either cultural origin.

Group identities in the context of ethnicity can be explained via various terms that all point to a different aspect of identity. Following Milikowski (2000), citizenship, culture, national origin, and religion all stand for certain identities that are not necessarily the same. Cultural identity, for instance, is based on cultural traditions that provide an intersubjective system of symbols and meanings for the interpretation of social reality (D’Haenens, 2003). Cultural identity refers to a sense of belonging to a system of meanings, beliefs, and traditions – therefore to mutual knowledge within a certain societal group.

Integration is a continuing process and in its course the participants interact and exchange information and knowledge that were originally reserved for one side only. Common values, structures of meaning, and identity can only be constructed when they are communicated. There is a widespread consensus among communication researchers that in modern and complex societies political, economical, social, and cultural reality is so far out of reach of a
single individual that mass media constitute the only means for communicating a set of symbols and patterns of meaning (DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach, 1989). The focus of our approach to the broad issue of mass media and integration is therefore the question to what extent individuals and sub-groups of society acquire common experiences and interests that allow references to the other, hitherto alien group. If these alien groups were groups of another ethnicity or another cultural background, the approach would then refer to the social integration between different groups. On the other hand, the alien group can very well be a sub-group within one cultural system, our proposition then referring to communication processes within one group with the possible outcome of finding or enhancing cultural identity.

Research on the representation of ethnic minorities in the media points to mass media’s ability to influence integration through the way it portrays social groups. Assuming that media ‘pictures’ become ‘pictures’ in the minds of the audience, media representations could create, alter, or dismantle prejudices and distances between ethnic groups (Esser, 2000). This research focus dominates European communication research on migrants and ethnic minorities (see, for instance, Merten, 1987; Brosius and Esser, 1995; Funk and Weiss, 1995; Geißler, 1999; Ruhrmann and Nieland, 2001).

A second, less prevalent perspective refers to the meaning of media consumption and integration processes. Here we differentiate between two groups of studies: those who examine media consumption without theoretical or empirical reference to integration (for instance Allen and Clarke, 1980; Eastman and Liss, 1980; Bundespresseamt, 2001); and those whose explicit focus is on integration (for instance Schneider, 1991; Hargreaves and Mahdjoub, 1997; Milikowski, 2000; Caspi et al., 2002). These studies imply two functions of integration: first, the development of language and communication proficiencies as a basis for creating interethnic relations and interethnic communication; and second, the diffusion of information and knowledge about values, meanings, and identities creating a symbolic community – between or within groups. Figure 1 illustrates the model of interrelation between media consumption and integration we assume for our research.

The general functions of (mainstream) mass media apply, with some specific additions, to ethnic media. The term ethnic media refers to three classes of media which we identified as being available on the German market. The first class refers to ethnic media that are produced in the country of origin, but are available with either the same or slightly altered content in the host country. One example is the Turkish daily Hürrîyet which is produced in Turkey and offers a ‘European edition’ produced in Germany, which has some additional articles besides the original Turkish content. Home country television channels
available via satellite are another example. The second class of media consists of ethnic media products produced in the host country by members of the host society, usually with the rather idealistic aim of furthering integration. These can be unilingual aiming at a specific ethnic group only, or bilingual aiming at an audience from both the majority and minority groups. In Germany there are very few such offers, usually surviving on the market for a short time only. Caspi et al. (2002: 552) ascribe such media an important role in societies that incorporate the principle of the ‘melting pot’, but point out that multi-cultural societies with ethnic groups that assume the ‘dual identity’ mentioned earlier require media made by members of an ethnic minority. These media we subsume in the third class of ‘hybrid media’, which are produced by members of the minority in the majority’s country. In Germany we find only one successful project of this kind: the radio station *Radyo Metropol* broadcasting in Berlin and Ludwigshafen is initiated and organized by Turks living in Germany and broadcasts in the mix of German and Turkish language young Turks often adopt.

The main distinction between ethnic and mainstream media is, as Milikowski (2000) points out, the difference in the direction of their potential influence on integration. Whereas mainstream media from the host society have a potential influence on the majority and on minorities, ethnic media refer to one ethnic group only. This one-way communication gives raise to fears of ethnic media promoting segregation of ethnic groups (Hargreaves and Mahdjoub, 1997). Becker (1996) speaks of ethnic parallel or resistant societies, Esser (2000) warns of ethnic minorities persisting in intra-ethnical relations while avoiding inter-ethnic communication. On the other hand, ethnic media provide the ethnic groups with a certain autonomy that allows them at least

![Interrelation between general media consumption and integration](image-url)
to maintain some of their cultural heritage, for instance language (Caspi et al., 2002). They provide orientation for migrants in their host country and set the news agenda for an ethnic audience (Constankakis-Valdes, 1992; Huntzicker, 1995). Ethnic media cater to cultural identity: they communicate cultural pride, provide a link to home, and provide a platform for collective communication and representation of interest. They provide the basis for a symbolic community throughout the members of an ethnic group on a national level; and they support integration into an ethnic group on a local level by providing information on local policies, events etc. (Schneider, 1991). This way, ethnic media are crucial for developing and sustaining cultural identity. The informational and emotional orientation provided help in identifying what Schneider (1991: 546) calls a ‘free-flowing ethnicity’.

The potential segregating effect of ethnic (mass) communication brings us to a third, hitherto neglected research perspective: the producers. With his study on ethnic producers in television, Cottle (1997) provided one of the rare analyses of ethnic involvement in media production. There has been no similar study in Germany until now. As ethnic producers and communicators assume much responsibility in (mediated) integration processes, this shortfall stands for a mostly white space on the map of ethnic media. In this article, we try to shed at least some light on this problem.

**Ethnic internet communication**

The general integration functions we identified for mass media communication apply for internet communication as well. Nevertheless there are certain specifics. The diffusion of information and knowledge is mainly realized over strong and weak relationships developing through the internet (Gráf, 1997; Döring, 1999). Strong relationships seem unlikely on the internet, given the anonymity of communication that can be easily abandoned without consequence or sanction. Nevertheless, researchers have found evidence for the formation of strong interpersonal ties on the web (Parks, 1996; Wellman and Gulia, 1999). These strong ties can be carriers of information and knowledge for forming a symbolic community with a shared identity, be it between cultural groups or within one group. Research has also indicated a potential of the world wide web to reinforce so-called weak ties, which are weak relationships crucial for distributing information and providing social resources such as support and reciprocity (Pickering and King, 1995; Wellman, 2000). This way the premises for dispersing information and knowledge to create within-group identity or across-groups integration have been improved efficiently and information channels have multiplied.
McKenna and Bargh (1998) analyzed minority communication on the internet. According to their findings, members of minorities – whether sexual, ideological or cultural – use the internet to find orientation, social acceptance and contact with other like-minded people. Direct social relations are often not easily accessible because minority members are seen as social outsiders or other members of their group are just too far away. The internet provides them with the means to meet others like them and to exchange. As we see in the results of our research this can lead to the creation of whole new groups with a unique identity not obvious outside the internet.

Melkote and Liu (2000: 501) find strong correlations between the use of an ethnic online community and the acculturation of their users. Analyzing Chinese intellectuals living in the USA they found that the internet provides ethnic users with orientation in the host country (behavioral acculturation), but also with an emotional bond with their country of origin; both resulting in what Melkote and Liu call ‘pluralistic integration’ (p. 502): ‘The netters depend on the net for not only learning American behaviors so as to better integrate themselves in their professional world, but also to involve themselves in their home cultural environment’ (p. 501).

Hypotheses

Following our general research questions we deduce four hypotheses from our literature review:

**H1:** Respondents who heavily consume mainstream media will show stronger integration into the majority culture because they receive more knowledge about the country both groups live in and about the majority group.

**H2:** Respondents who heavily consume ethnic media will show stronger separation from the majority group because they receive more knowledge about their own culture.

**H3:** Respondents who heavily consume mainstream media will show weaker cultural identity because they only receive little knowledge and values from the minority culture.

**H4:** Respondents who heavily consume ethnic media will show stronger cultural identity because they receive more knowledge and values from the minority culture. This effect is most prevalent for ethnic online communities.

Because of the lack of research on producers of ethnic media we cannot formulate any hypothesis regarding their role. Therefore, we continue with our research question and ask: what is the specific role of ethnic producers for integration?
Methods

With almost two million people, Turks are the largest group of people of foreign origin in Germany and their social and economical impact is significant. Nevertheless, there is endless public discussion about the success of cohabitation. Experts state a loss of (Turkish) cultural identity for the younger generations and a lack of integration for older immigrants.

We tested hypotheses 1 to 4 above by applying a standardized questionnaire to Turkish migrants living in the town of Hannover in Germany, asking for their media use and several indicators we developed for integration and cultural identity. Originally, we recruited 237 respondents by directly approaching them in schools, mosques, and ethnic associations. For the purpose of this article we only include those participants in our analysis who never used the internet (110 persons). This way we are able to directly compare consumers of ethnic content on the internet with respondents that had never had access to such content. The latter group we recruited through a bilingual ethnic online community (www.turkdunya.de) that provides a number of different services in Turkish and German to Turks living in Germany. We placed a link to our questionnaire on the main page and asked for participation in our study. Eventually, 112 community members responded.

We used a different questionnaire for the online and the offline groups, although the majority of questions were the same for all respondents. At the core of the surveys were indicators for integration and cultural identity that we summarize in Table 1. Both integration and cultural identity are exceedingly complex constructs to measure in a quantitative empirical survey and there are numerous discussions on how to do it in the respective literature (for instance, Bundespresseamt, 2001). We derived the indicators presented in Table 1 from theory and partly from existing studies of integration. The indicators are not combined into indices on integration and cultural identity, but are analyzed on their own.

The study conducted by the Bundespresseamt (2001) to explore the general integration level of Turkish migrants relied heavily on questions regarding language proficiency as an indicator for integration. As this approach is somewhat limited we included additional questions on the respondents’ interest in current affairs both in Turkey and Germany to account for their involvement with both worlds; and questions on political and local integration. We also developed questions on ‘national proximity’ to ascertain the respondents’ closeness to either nation.

In our second study we tried to analyze the role of ethnic communicators: journalists living and working in Germany and publishing either for genuine German or ethnic media. To identify our target group we referred to the
Table 1  Measures for integration and cultural identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators for integration</th>
<th>Online survey*</th>
<th>Offline survey*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Main language of media use</td>
<td>Main language of media use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interests</td>
<td>Interest in news from Germany/ Turkey</td>
<td>Interest in news from Germany/ Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social interactions</td>
<td>Main language of social interactions</td>
<td>Main language of social interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political integration</td>
<td>Satisfaction with politics and government in Germany</td>
<td>Satisfaction with politics and government in Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local integration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfaction with residential area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acculturation</td>
<td>Assessment of Germans and Turks living together</td>
<td>Assessment of Germans and Turks living together</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indicators for cultural identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media use</th>
<th>Use of ethnic media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social interactions</td>
<td>Ethnicity of social interactions online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National identification</td>
<td>Motivation for using an ethno-portal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * For methodological reasons we chose to vary the integration criteria between both surveys. In three cases questions were asked only in one survey: (language of ethnic contacts online (online survey), ethnic origin of social contacts (offline survey), local integration (offline survey)).

member directory of the German professional association for journalists, contacted the newsrooms of those media outlets that were known to us through Germany’s general media register, and approached the Turkish Embassy in Berlin for their press release distribution list. We contacted each journalist thus identified and asked for participation in our study as well as the names of all Turkish colleagues in Germany he or she could think of. Eventually, we found 169 Turkish journalists and approached them all for participation in our study. However, the aim of recruiting enough ethnic journalists to gain serious empirical insights into their work proved hard to realize and in the end we only achieved 25 interviews. At the time we conducted our research (2002),
there was a public debate on the shortcomings of ethnic journalists, who were accused of hindering integration by writing negatively about Germany and German politicians. The German government even complained about this situation to the Turkish government. Our meager return might be explained by the hostile environment at that time. Though conceptualized quantitatively, we analyze the results in a more explorative manner to account for the small number of respondents. Core categories for the journalists’ survey were their self-perception in terms of being agents of integration for both Turkish minority and German majority, their assessment of the cohabitation between Germans and Turks (see Table 2), and their routines concerning the choice of issues to cover in their daily work. Questions pertaining to the journalists’ self-perception included their position on reporting neutrally, giving a voice to the Turkish population in Germany, acting as their advocates, providing them with information for their everyday lives, or simply entertaining their audience (these items have been tested successfully in research on German journalists by Schneider et al., 1993, see Table 2).

Results

Altogether, 247 participants of Turkish origin living in Germany participated in our study. We recruited 112 through the online community (online group), 110 through direct contact (offline group), and 25 journalists. The mean age of the offline group was 28 years; the members of the online community were 25 years on average. Recruiting the participants through the internet and, among other channels, through schools resulted in an age bias – both the online and offline respondents are very young. Nevertheless, this age bias provides grounds for reasonable comparison between both groups. Unlike the survey among ethnic journalists, the online and offline study were not meant to be representative and can at least provide us with valuable insights in matters of integration for younger immigrants.

The level of education among online and offline respondents was medium to high and somewhat higher in the offline group. In the latter group we recruited slightly more men (57%). Most of the participants were Turkish citizens and had been in Germany for an average of 19 years (offline group) and 16 years (online group). Most of them were of Muslim faith.

Almost all of the 25 journalists participating in our study were men ($n=21$). Their average age was 39 years, with the youngest being 25 and the oldest 67 years old. Most were born in Turkey and maintain Turkish citizenship. Our small sample is mainly employed by newspapers ($n=15$) and radio stations ($n=5$); the others work for television and news agencies.
Media consumption and integration

All in all the integration status of our respondents shows a consistent discrepancy: political integration is rather low, they feel insecure and estranged towards the political system and Germany as a whole. They express mistrust in and discontentment towards current German politics. On the other hand, they are satisfied with their actual life in Germany and feel quite at home in their social and regional surroundings – the quality of life in general is positively evaluated.

The interrelation between media consumption and integration is best examined by comparing three groups: German media users (51% of our respondents), media users without a clear preference for either German or ethnic media (37%), and the respondents that use solely ethnic media (12%).

Respondents using mainly German mainstream media feel significantly closer to Germany as a nation and a culture than all other respondents, and contact with their Turkish origins is rather marginal. Although they are skeptical of Germans’ attitudes towards Turkish migrants, they nevertheless maintain a great number of social relationships with members of the German majority; the dominant language in everyday life is German. Respondents preferring German media agree with the concept of integration as we understand it: two groups with distinct cultural identities sharing a common basis of values and meanings with either segregation or assimilation being unfavorable ways of cohabitation.

Consumers of a media mix – mainstream and ethnic – have the closest emotional relationship with Turkey as their country of origin; they keep alive contacts to friends and relatives that still live in Turkey. With a bilingual and bicultural social environment they show tendencies of assimilation and think that ethnic minorities should adapt to the majority.

The use of ethnic media is closely linked to a life dominated by Turkish culture: Those respondents’ main contacts are with other Turks and they speak mainly Turkish. Deficient language proficiency seems to be the main reason why this group mainly uses ethnic media. Their attitude towards integration is a separatist one: they think Turks should keep to themselves in Germany. Whereas the two groups described above do not differ much in age, the ethnic media users consist largely of older migrants from the first generation that came to Germany between 1955 and 1973, when the German government hired ‘guest workers’ from East Europe and Asia to compensate for the shortage of workers in Germany.

An analysis of the motives of media consumption of mainstream or ethnic media points to their more specific functions. Younger, well-integrated respondents turn to mainstream media for information on current affairs, orientation
in everyday life and issues to talk about with friends. Turkish television acts as an emotional bridge to home culture; it unites a Turkish family in front of the TV screen to remember Turkey and Turkish traditions. Respondents less or even weakly integrated only look for current information in German media, every other function – orientation, fun, nostalgia, finding issues to discuss with others – is better served by Turkish media, especially Turkish television.

Our results on the functions of ethnic internet communication confirm the emotional meaning of ethnic media described above. Further, we compared integration indicators for the respondents of our online survey – all of them members of the ethnic online community – with a group of Turks not using the internet at all.

Whereas self-reported language proficiency does not differ between online and offline participants, the language of media use does. Internet users watch more Turkish than German television; for the non-users it is the other way round. The same applies for books. In both groups newspapers are dominantly read in Turkish, nevertheless the gap between Turkish and German newspaper use is considerably smaller in the offline group. If understood as indicator of the respondent’s integration level, the language of media consumption hints at the offline group being slightly closer to the German media market. This is confirmed when looking at the language spoken in the immediate social environment: here again offline respondents speak German more often and with a wider variety of people (for instance family members, friends, colleagues, neighbors), whereas the online community members prefer Turkish in most situations. When we asked for the specific information the participants look for in the media, we found that when turning to mainstream or ethnic media for information, non-users show strong concern for local, regional and national German issues as well as for news from Turkey. Users of the ethnic online community generally share these interests – but they do not care that much. The degree of their interest in such information is significantly lower.

Interesting findings occur when analyzing the group’s position on both cultural factions taking over aspects from the respective other (acculturation). Neither online nor offline respondents are convinced that Germans perceive Turkish culture as an enrichment to German society. Participants not using the internet are strongly in favor of the idea that Turks in Germany should keep to themselves if they want to preserve their culture. They are considerably more convinced that a multi-ethnic society is able to solve problems better than a single-ethnic one. The notion of adapting to German culture when coming to Germany gets average agreement by all respondents, but those not using the internet are clearly more in favor of at least adapting to German language and raising their children speaking mainly the host country’s language. In Table 2
the average agreement for both groups is summarized. Numbers marked with letters stand for statistically significant distinctions as determined using \(t\)-tests for both groups.

Taking into account the results presented so far we might deduce that online users are integrated into German society to a somewhat lesser degree than non-users. Offline respondents’ media use and social contacts are more strongly dominated by the German language; they clearly have a more optimistic view on Turks and Germans living together in Germany. This supports our first and second hypotheses assuming a stronger integration of mainstream media consumers. Naturally, our data does not allow for any causal interpretation of the relationship between integration and media use. Nevertheless, there is an obvious trend that mainstream media consumers are closer to the Germans and German culture than those respondents who turn to ethnic media more often. We do not interpret this closeness as mere assimilation, though. The attitudes of the mainstream media users towards cohabitation between Turks and Germans do not favor either assimilation or separation, but rather cooperation on equal terms.

### Ethnic media and cultural identity

Starting with the respondents not using the internet, we analyzed their use of German mainstream media and ethnic media as indicators of cultural identity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Online survey (mean average*) ( (n = 112) )</th>
<th>Offline survey (mean average*) ( (n = 110) )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If Turks want to keep their culture, they should keep to themselves.</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culturally diverse societies can solve problems easier.</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.4(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turks coming to Germany should adapt to German culture.</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turks living in Germany should raise their children speaking mainly German.</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.5(^b)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: \( N = 222 \)

\(^*\) agreement on a scale from 1 = ‘do not agree at all’ to 5 = ‘totally agree’

\(^a\): \(t(152) = -3.5, p < .001\)

\(^b\): \(t(170) = -4.4, p < .001\)
We asked for their preference of Turkish and German newspapers, as well as for Turkish and German television channels. Among regular newspapers the Turkish newspaper *Hürriyet*, also published in Germany, is the most popular single paper; only free advertising newspapers are read even more often than *Hürriyet*. German tabloid *Bild-Zeitung* and regional papers enjoy some popularity, too. For television the picture is even clearer: Turkish channels available in Germany score highest, with German entertainment broadcasts following.

Turkish music is highly popular among most respondents, even more popular than music in the English language. German music is not scoring any points with Turkish listeners: on a scale from 1 (do not like at all) to 5 (like very much), German songs reach a meager 2, whereas Turkish singers get a 4.4.

If an intense use of Turkish media points to a strong Turkish identity, our offline respondents show a distinct cultural profile. Hypothesis 3, therefore, is not supported by our data. As most members of our offline group turn to ethnic as well as mainstream media and show a distinct cultural profile, there is no clear relation between ethnic media consumption and cultural identity. Rather, the consumption of mainstream media does not hinder cultural identity. Taking into account the high level of integration we discussed earlier we feel safe to say that this group of participants follows what we regard as successful integration: becoming a part of the host’s society while preserving their own cultural identity.

Turning to the members of the ethnic online portal, we ask if ethnic communication possibly enhances cultural identity when it is strongly focused on ethnicity, as is the case for ethnic internet communities. We analyzed our online participants’ motives for joining an ethnic online community and for their social contacts made through the web platform. Basically, the online community is used for meeting and making new friends, but the same ethnic background is preferred: more than half (55%) meet Turkish chatters only. Meeting people of the same background is not most important when meeting other people. It is more important to meet people living under the same circumstances: 37 percent meet people of the same origin, 39 percent meet people living under the same circumstances. Nevertheless, the strongest bond by far is mutual interest in leisure activities. Here we find a community that is defined by a) mutual interests, b) mutual situation of living and c) mutual ethnic and cultural roots.

A factor analysis of motives for using an ethnic online community identifies four factors (see Table 3). The first factor refers solely to having fun on the web, and fun is combined with meeting other people who are just like oneself – and who preferably are Turks. Most respondents agree strongly to this group of motives. The second factor we called the ‘bond to Turkey’. Here the contact to fellow Turks, Turkish culture and language are the main issues. Being the
second strongest factor, these motives point to a desire to find a community that is distinctively Turkish, but also distinctively concentrated on having fun. The importance of mutual interests and a mutual background again becomes apparent. The third factor combines issues pertaining to community building, e.g. being taken seriously, meeting people who understand the user’s problems or finding something to talk about with friends. The fourth and least important factor is made up of issues pertaining to orientation in Germany, specifically to improving German language proficiency through the bilingual nature of the examined ethnic online community.

This short introduction to the groups of motives for using an online ethnic online community points to our main conclusion with regard to the meaning of internet communication for cultural identity and integration processes. We identified a group of members of an ethnic online group that shows signs of a lower degree of integration (as discussed before). This group is exposed to the identity building effects ethnic media can have – and they seek a very specific community of fellow people with Turkish backgrounds and with shared

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motive for being member of an ethnic online community</th>
<th>Factor 1: Fun</th>
<th>Factor 2: Bond to Turkey</th>
<th>Factor 3: Community building</th>
<th>Factor 4: Orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Turks</td>
<td>.810</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun</td>
<td>.786</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting people like oneself</td>
<td>.713</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving Turkish language</td>
<td>.842</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserve ethnic origin</td>
<td>.813</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving Turkish-German relations</td>
<td>.629</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting to Turkey</td>
<td>.556</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact to Turkey</td>
<td>.538</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be taken seriously</td>
<td>.838</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community with like-minded</td>
<td>.765</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaining new topics of conversation</td>
<td>.720</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn about trends</td>
<td>.658</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be where the party is</td>
<td>.630</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting people who understand my problems</td>
<td>.544</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving German language proficiency</td>
<td>.856</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation in German everyday life</td>
<td>.546</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variance accounted for (R^2)</strong></td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: N = 112; R^2 = 61%*
experiences and problems as well as mutual interests in leisure activities. This confirms hypothesis 4 in which we assumed ethnic online communication to be a catalyst of identity formation. The identity of our online users differs from what the offline participants showed. They are more separated, less assimilated, more conscious of their own roots. Here we have a group of young Turks living in Germany who seem to be unsatisfied with the circumstances they live in, who seek contact with Turkey and to fellow Turks on the internet. In this way they do not form a ‘Turkish’ cultural identity but their very own, which is not Turkish and is not German, but a distinct identity of people combining ‘old’ and ‘new’ Europe.

**Communicating separation? The (self assumed) role of ethnic communicators**

Though we did not include the producers of online ethnic communities, our final analysis of ethnic communicators might contribute to understanding some of our earlier results while providing some answers for our research question regarding ethnic journalists.

Compared to the positions on acculturation of the respondents of our online and offline surveys, ethnic communicators strongly opt for integration on equal terms (Table 4): Turks should neither separate nor adapt; they should neither forget their roots nor reject the host culture. All in all they are confident that multi-cultural societies will be able to cope with current problems better than single-ethnic ones. This positive view, though, is not shared by all. Journalists working for a Turkish newspaper published in Germany answer strongly in favor of separation of both cultures. The most open-minded Turkish journalists are working for a German newspaper.

When understanding the diffusion of knowledge as central to promoting integration, it is of crucial relevance to analyze if and how ethnic journalists communicate knowledge on both ethnic groups. The decision to report news on topics that are specifically Turkish, or specifically German, or concerning both is relevant here as journalists at this point influence what kind of knowledge will reach the audience. Respondents reporting for German media or hybrid media cover topics concerning both ethnic groups. Those working for Turkish media in Germany focus exclusively on Turkish issues; for instance on current affairs in Turkey or Turkish entertainment news. For all groups German issues have low relevance and appear – if at all – only on the desks of reporters in culturally mixed newsrooms. News decisions depend on the journalist’s own position on acculturation: the stronger they reject a cultural union between Germans and Turks, the more they focus on Turkish and less on German issues.
Ethnic journalists participating in our study ascribe themselves, and their work, some influence on integration of Turks in Germany. Asked whether they can influence cohabitation of both groups on a scale from 1 (no influence) to 5 (large influence), they credited themselves a 3.5. The specific interests of the Turkish minority ranks high on their journalistic agenda. Although their first duty is neutral reporting in any case, they feel strongly obliged to report on the life of Turks living with the German majority, to expressing Turkish opinions and attitudes, and to addressing problems facing the minority. Journalists working for a Turkish medium published in Germany, though, feel somewhat less obligated to objectivity and slightly more to take the Turkish populations’ side. With a somewhat defensive overall attitude, the journalists get involved critically with grievances concerning the cohabitation of the minority and majority as well as the minority’s rights. The central point of their journalistic work is giving voice to their fellow Turks – this attitude is stronger among journalists with Turkish media. Maintaining closeness to Turkish culture and nation is not central, but somewhat more important to those working for a Turkish medium. Table 5 gives an overview of our respondents’ self-conception as ethnic communicators.

Surprisingly, none of our respondents thought highly of the audience. Compared to German journalists, who value their audience’s intelligence and political enlightenment (Schneider et al., 1993), Turkish journalists believe their readers, viewers, and listeners to be traditional and insecure. All items we

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Ethnic journalists (mean average**)</th>
<th>Turkish respondents (mean average**)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n = 25)</td>
<td>(n = 222)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If Turks want to keep their culture, they should keep to themselves.</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culturally diverse societies can solve problems easier.</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turks coming to Germany should adapt to German culture.</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turks living in Germany should raise their children speaking mainly German.</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = 247
* accounting for the small number of journalists we did not apply t-tests to test for statistically significant differences between the groups
** agreement on a scale from 1 = ‘do not agree at all’ to 5 = ‘totally agree’
provided to describe the audience were ranked at the lower side of the scale (does not apply at all/does not apply), be they negative or positive.

To answer our research question concerning the role of ethnic journalists for integration we summarize: Turkish journalists operate in two worlds. Politically and emotionally they occupy a position between host country Germany and home country Turkey. Those who have a more positive attitude towards acculturation are more concerned to promote harmonization between majority and minority. Those who feel closer to Turkey want to help their audience to maintain their ties to Turkey and the Turkish–Islamic culture. Neverthe-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It is the mission of a (Turkish) journalist to:</th>
<th>Agree completely/agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>report neutrally</td>
<td>8 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always report objectively on the life of Turks in Germany</td>
<td>6 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>criticize grievances</td>
<td>8 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mirror opinions and attitudes of the Turks living in Germany</td>
<td>9 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>promote cohabitation of different cultures in one country</td>
<td>7 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be a voice for the population</td>
<td>7 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elucidate Turks about their rights in Germany</td>
<td>7 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>report on problems evolving from Turks and Germans living together</td>
<td>7 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provide Turks in Germany with advice for their lives</td>
<td>5 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be an advocate for the disadvantaged</td>
<td>7 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teach democratic values to the audience</td>
<td>5 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>promote the ties of Turks living in Germany to their home country</td>
<td>6 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entertain the audience</td>
<td>4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entertain the audience with specifically Turkish topics</td>
<td>4 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be a politician by other means</td>
<td>2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: \(N = 25\)
less we find a fundamental intention for all of them to promote integration. This intention differs in implementation, especially with regard to news decisions, and in degree – members of an exclusively Turkish newsroom feel less obliged.

**Conclusion and discussion**

The methodological problems of our research are obvious. The task of analyzing integration and cultural identity using standardized questionnaires might not be satisfying on all accounts; and the number of ethnic journalists that participated in our study cannot lead to conclusive answers on their role in a multicultural society. Nevertheless, we were able to shed some light on the specific functions of ethnic media, especially ethnic online communication.

Ethnic media do not communicate separation nor is this the intention of ethnic journalists. We did, however, find specific functions of ethnic media that point to a specific role for integration and matters of cultural identity. Whereas German mainstream media provide information on current affairs, ethnic media are turned to for several reasons. On one hand, the audience is looking for orientation in everyday life; on the other, emotional aspects play a crucial role. Turkish media provide a bond between the Turks living in Germany and their culture of origin; they preserve ethnic traditions and foster a family’s sense of togetherness as Turks.

Ethnic online communities basically fulfill the same needs as ethnic television or newspapers, but they seem to do so with stronger impact. Comparing members of an ethnic online community with Turks not using the internet at all we found two groups. The first consisted of well-integrated Turks living in Germany who adapt to current circumstances, nevertheless showing a clear Turkish identity expressed through their use of ethnic media. The other was made up of online-users with a strong attachment to Turkish language and cultural heritage that showed some detachment towards German society. So the internet is a medium for those who seek attachment to their cultural home and to strengthen their cultural identity. The internet allows users to find members of their own ethnic background and culture and to gather information and knowledge about where they come from. This way their own cultural identity as Turks is enhanced. A new sub-group is formed: a group of young German-Turks with a very distinct identity unlike their fellow Turks or fellow Germans. Going beyond our data we assume that this identity is a mixture of German everyday reality and Turkish tradition and values, which currently seems to have no equivalent outside of the world wide web. It is not impossible and even quite likely that this kind of new identity will become a characteristic
feature of the third and later fourth generation of Turkish migrants in Germany, which might well form a new kind of society between both cultures.

The specific role of online communities could not be verified through insights into the work and attitudes of producers of such online content, but we were able to ask a small group of ethnic journalists for a range of aspects relating to integration. Although they do not explicitly communicate separation, the members of exclusively Turkish newsrooms were less inclined to promote serious interaction between both ethnic groups.

A question that still needs to be asked and examined is whether the consequence of the enhancement of cultural identity through the internet and the specific attitudes, self-conceptions, and working strategies of ethnic journalists result in an estrangement from German society, the society our respondents live in. The fact that heavy internet users and journalists working for a Turkish medium remain skeptical towards a successful living together with Germans might point in that direction. However, there is no definite answer to be given with our data. A decision whether the emergence of a sub-group identity somewhere between two cultures is advancing or restraining multi-ethnic societies can not be reached in this article, but remains to be seen as Germany continues to become a culturally diverse immigration country.

References


Biographical notes

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