

Attitudes of the Arab Community in Relation to Cultural Identity and Social Integration in Germany

L'ATTITUDE DE LA COMMUNAUTE ARABE EN RELATION AVEC L'IDENTITE CULTURELLE ET L'INTEGRATION SOCIALE EN ALLEMAGNE

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Abstract

This study firstly aims to investigate the relationship between cultural identity and social integration. Also, to examine any potential variables related to cultural identity and social integration such as age, gender, residency, period of residency, education, wife nationality, income, getting German nationality and getting back the original nationality. The study based on a sample size of (138) respondents from the Arab community living in Germany during the summer of 2011. The researchers developed a questionnaire to measure the attitudes of Arab community towards cultural identity and social integration. The results showed that there was a positive significant relationship between cultural identity and social integration. The results also found that there were no significant differences in all independent variables according to cultural identity. In relation to social integration, the differences were significant regarding income, getting German nationality and getting back the original nationality after obtaining German passport. The significant were favoring for high income, getting German nationality and favoring for those did not get back their original nationality.

Key words: Cultural identity; Social integration; Arab community in Germany

Résumé

Cette étude vise d'abord à étudier la relation entre l'identité culturelle et l'intégration sociale. En outre, d'examiner

toutes les variables potentielles liées à l'identité culturelle et l'intégration sociale, comme l'âge, le sexe, la résidence, la période de résidence, l'éducation, la nationalité femme, le revenu, obtenir la nationalité allemande et reprendre la nationalité d'origine. L'étude basée sur un échantillon de (138) des répondants de la communauté arabe vivant en Allemagne pendant l'été de 2011. Les chercheurs ont élaboré un questionnaire pour mesurer les attitudes de la communauté arabe vers l'identité culturelle et l'intégration sociale. Les résultats ont montré qu'il y avait une relation positive significative entre l'identité culturelle et l'intégration sociale. Les résultats ont également constaté qu'il n'y avait pas de différences significatives dans toutes les variables indépendantes en fonction de l'identité culturelle. En ce qui concerne l'intégration sociale, les différences étaient significatives en ce qui concerne le revenu, obtenir la nationalité allemande et reprendre l'original à l'échelle nationale après l'obtention de passeport allemand. Les significatives ont été favorisant pour un revenu élevé, se nationalité allemande et de favoriser pour ceux ne pas récupérer leur nationalité d'origine.

Mots clés: Identité culturelle; L'intégration sociale; La communauté Arabe en Allemagne

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INTRODUCTION

Till the end of 1981, the Federal Republic of Germany was still not a country of immigration. The pressure of public opinion to restrict the number of incoming foreigners and the latest hostility acts towards foreigners con-

stantly has increased (Mehrlander, 1987). The 15.6 million individuals of migrant descent living in Germany in 2008 represented almost one-fifth of the total population. This figure includes 8.3 million individuals holding German passports¹.

The migration of Arabs in Germany is one of the important challenges and results in the phenomenon of transmission of a segment of the Arabs to Germany in large groups to make a change in the unity of the cultural identity of the Arab community. The diversity, the multiplicity of cultures and patterns of behavior in turn raise questions about identity, citizenship, civil and political rights, instability absorbed and the extent of their agreement and acceptance of cultural in their new environment.

Integration leads to the melting and fission of the full is too dangerous because it collides with the obligations of Arabs' vision of intellectual and cultural position in the universe and of life and existence, or choose to live isolated caution, preferring introversion and reduce friction and to deal with the new society, claiming that the Arab who wants to preserve his cultural rights and obligations is possible to live a situation of conflict of cultural identity with this community, and he has to retain its identity and culture and values through the state of division and cultural challenge and self-conflict daily, and that consistently refused cases fission values, practices and culture of the host society, and refused to engage in their political institutions and its social, economic, and always stay on the outside part of the new society, and the preference being confined with the community immigrant with cultural uniformity to engage and interact confident based on self-confidence and ability to adapt to the host society while maintaining the privacy attracted to the cultural advantage of the freedoms and rights, the prevailing of society.

Nevertheless, all of these concepts mentioned above, whether social or cultural do not directly contribute to the problem of integration and foreign presence in a different environment. For the events of 11 September 2001 in America and the terrorist bombings in Madrid and London, all caused a shake-up within the European Communities as it was the first time that they ever experienced such practices. This in turn, led to the increase of racist practices and to prejudiced attitude towards Arabs and Muslims in various European countries².

In addition to that, the events revealed by the individuals belonging to second- and third- generation migrants, which show tangle evidence on the flaws and flagrant errors and shortcomings of the integration policy pursued by European countries toward immigrants. Voices were raised in discussions on a broad level in Germany through the media, intellectuals, writers, political parties and civil society organizations, with the introduction of the need to

start thinking about new measures to avoid the aggravation of the crisis as a result of failure to pay attention to the former real integration problems.

Recent years have witnessed a clear interest in studies and research on the question of identity, and this field has attracted much attention from many governmental officials. It should be noted that the concepts of identity, integration and coexistence are the most controversial concepts, which require more debate, that is, in the pursuit of the complexity and overlap in the contexts of cognitive and conceptual issues.

A study carried out by Mehrlander U in 1980 showed that the German state put a new immigration policies to face the increasing numbers of immigrants and trying to strengthen the social integration between the immigrants and German society for the coming generation (Mehrlander U, 1987).

Diwan (2008) studied the differences in social network structures in relation to depressive symptoms among two groups of older Asian Indian immigrants, due to their limitation of English proficiency. The results showed that there were no differences in depressive symptoms for different social network which related to social integration among older immigrants (Sadhna Diwan, 2008).

An analytical study conducted by Casey Teresa and Dustmann Christian is based on an exceptional longitudinal dataset on immigrants and their children. They showed that identity with either country is only weakly associated to work market outcomes. However, there is a strong intergenerational transmitting of identity from one generation to the other (Casey Teresa, 2010).

A study was carried out by Constant Amelie, Gataullina Liliya, Zimmermann Klaus F. and Zimmermann, Laura and titled "Clash of Cultures: Muslims and Christians in the Ethnosing Process". They found that for the religious groups, school education in the own country leads to unhurried assimilation and causes more division than no education at own country. While school education has no effect on integration efforts for Muslim, it affects parallel attempts of Christians unhelpfully (Constant, et al.).

In a study done by Bisin Alberto, Patacchini Eleonora, Verdier Thierry and Zenou Yves, entitled "Bend It Like Beckham: Ethnic Identity and Integration". The researchers suggested a theoretical framework to investigate the finding of ethnic and religious identity along two separate motivational processes which have been reported in the social sciences: cultural conformity and cultural distinction. The results showed that evidence consistent with strong ethnic and religious identity mainly as a cultural differ Technique (Bisin, et al., 2010).

In a study conducted by Gerhards urgen and Hans Silke titled "From Hasan to Herbert: name-giving patterns of immigrant parents between acculturation and ethnic maintenance". Names mostly point out belonging to a definite ethnic group. When immigrants in host community decide a first name for their children that is familiar in their host society, they showed a high degree of assimilation (Gerhards & Hans, 2009).

It can be clearly seen from the above mentioned studies that our study will be the first of its kind to examine and address the problematic issues of this important topic and

¹ http://www.bundesregierung.de/nn_6516/Content/EN/Artikel/2010/07/2010-07-07-integrationsbericht_en.html

² http://www.almania.diplo.de/Vertretung/almania/ar/02/03_Integration/Auslaenderfrend_KeiPlaz_Juni-10_Seite.html

provide a scientific evidence based on empirical research, which will enrich the library of the German Academic, as well as to provide decision makers with solutions to through integration policies toward Arab community, German society and the government.

IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The importance of the study derives from the importance and the priority of scientific and practical of social integration is the process of cultural and social needs of Arabs in Germany, the case of integration of the Arab community and the host State deserves to be studied. This research also is a unique in this field. There are no previous studies about this topic in Germany, so the researchers believe that research will make a significant contribution for researchers and political decision maker.

PROBLEM OF THE RESEARCH

The researchers will attempt to find the attitudes of the Arab community in relation to cultural identity and social integration in Germany.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions are based on the above problem, the researchers attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What is the relationship between cultural identity and social integration of Arab community living in Germany?
2. What are the differences between cultural identity and independent variables?
3. What are the differences between social integration and independent variables?

THE RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The research is based on certain hypotheses trying to prove or negate them according to statistical analysis, as follows:

There is a significant relationship between cultural identity and social integration.

There is a significant difference for cultural identity according to the independent variables mentioned below in Table 1.

There is a significant difference for social integration according to the independent variables mentioned below in Table 1.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Instrument of the Study

The researchers prepared a questionnaire to identify the statistical significant in relation to social integration and culture identity with some variables such as: age, gender, education of the respondents, income, period of stay in Germany, place of current residence, getting back the original nationality after obtaining German passport, getting German nationality.

To ensure the content validity of the study instrument and the persistence of the researchers sent it for arbitration by specialists and are displayed on a group of arbitrators, a eight members, were as follows: three from major political science, and five members from the deferent academic disciplines; sociology, economics and statistics; in order to make observations and suggestions, and were adopted unanimously approved by 85%. On the other hand, the first author discussed the instrument with Prof. Torsten Oppelland, and with Oppelland MA and Ph.D students of political science in Friedrich-Schiller-University Jena, Germany. After, these procedures, the researchers deleted some unsuitable items, and reworded the misunderstanding some of the items until the last version developed. The instrument has two domains, Social integration with 12 items, and culture identity with 8 items.

Scale Reliability

To investigate the degree of the reliability of the scale Cronbach alpha coefficients was extracted. Cronbach alpha coefficients was 0.75 after deleted 3 items and thus the scale with acceptable degree of reliability.

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test the internal consistency between the sub-scores and grades for comprehensive identification, which has resulted in statistically significant at the 0.05 level, which means that there is internal consistency and thus significantly questioner valid to measure the variables of the study.

Population and the Sample

The study population consists of the Arab community living in Germany, which is equal to (272, 569) and the target group of the study was chosen from only Wedding area in Berlin and Jena city. The estimate number for Arab community is 2500 (Approximately 2250 in Wedding and exactly 256 in Jena)³. The first author has chosen Jena because was a scientific visitor in Friedrich Schiller University Jena, during the summer visit in the year 2011. Berlin has been chosen for two reasons. Firstly, because it is the biggest city in Germany which has the largest Arab community consisting of (20, 525)⁴. Secondly, to make a

¹³ According to information received from Federal Statistical Office Germany, as 31 12 2010, reference number: 249146 / 320982.08.08.2011

¹⁴ According to information received from Federal Statistical Office Germany, as 31 12 2010, reference number: 249146 / 320982.08.08.2011

comparison between big and small cities regarding to the Arab community. The researchers chosen Wedding area in Berlin due to the large number of Arab community living there.

The sample size consisted of (300) respondents, (200) questionnaire in Wedding area and the rest in Jena city due shortage of time. Only (155) questionnaires were received, and 17 questionnaires were incomplete which

were removed. The valid of questionnaires were (138) respondents which is equal to approximately percentage of .05. Moreover, .05 is considered as an acceptable percentage.

As shown in the Table 1, the number of the respondents is (138) including the missing answers in some variables. This suits the percentage of respondents who answered the questionnaire.

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Variable	Category	Number	Percentage (%)
Age	37 or less	78	57
	38 or more	60	43
	Missing	0	0
Total		138	100
Gender	Male	118	85.5
	Female	19	13.7
	Missing	1	.8
Total		138	100
Residency	Jena	53	38
	Berlin	69	50
	Missing	16	12
Total		138	100
Period stay in Germany	15year or less	90	65
	16 years or more	42	31
	Missing	6	4
Total		138	100
Income	1000 € or less	48	35
	1001 € or more	68	49
	Missing	22	16
Total		138	100
Education	Diploma or less	78	56
	Bachelor or more	56	41
	Missing	4	3
Total		138	100
Getting German nationality	Yes	41	30
	No	86	62
	Missing	11	8
Total		138	100
Wife nationality	German	48	35
	Arab	55	40
	Missing	35	25
Getting Back Nationality	Yes	29	21
	No	36	26
	Missing	73	53

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Time limitation of the research: as time was limited from 2-6-2011 to 28-8-2011.

The research is also limited to the Arab community living only in Jena and Wedding area in Berlin in Germany.

Procedural Definitions of the Study

The researchers defined the followings:

Cultural identity: The basic elements that guide the thought and the behaviour of the individual mind as cultural reference that determines his behaviour and attitudes. All cultural identity items with mean and

standard deviation can be found in Appendix 1.

Social integration: The immigrant can maintain some elements of their own culture identity and at the same time acquire new elements of the new culture of the host community. This can be done by uniting and blending the two cultures or by creating a new certain culture which is, in fact, a mix between the two cultures. All social integration items with mean and standard deviation can be found in Appendix 2.

Arab Community: Those people who left their own countries and decide to live in Germany for residency, study, work or marriage.

Age: there are two categories for age, 1 means 37 years old or less and 2 means 38 or more.

Gender: 1 means male, 2 means female

Residency: 1 means Jena, and 2 Berlin

Period in Germany: 1 means 15 years or less, 2 means 16 and more.

Income: 1 denote to 1000 € or less, 2 denote to more than 1000 €.

Education: 1 means Diploma or less, 2 means Bachelor or more

Getting German nationality: 1 denotes getting German nationality, whereas 2 denotes not getting German nationality.

Wife nationality: 1 means German, 2 means Arabian

Getting back nationality: 1 means getting back the original nationality after getting German passport, 2 means not getting back the original nationality.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

As an initial step, the relationship between the cultural identity and social integration was examined using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients. The relationship between two variables was .353, and the coefficient was statistical significant at $\alpha < .01$.

Table 2
Results for Independent Variables Differences in Social Integration and Cultural Identity

	Domain	Mean (1)	Mean (2)	SD (1)	SD (2)	T-value	Prob
Age	S. Int	3.44	3.57	.632	.564	1.236	.212
	C. Id	3.23	3.14	.863	.532	-.696	.488
Gender	S. Int	3.48	3.56	.594	.669	.573	.567
	C. Id	3.17	3.23	.728	.801	.325	.746
Residency	S. Int	3.53	3.52	.660	.593	-.035	.972
	C. Id	3.09	3.35	.666	.807	1.896	.060
Period in Germany	S. Int	3.46	3.63	.575	.622	1.541	.126
	C. Id	3.19	3.26	.769	.631	.546	.560
Income	S. Int	3.34	3.60	.576	.613	2.188	.031
	C. Id	3.29	3.16	.903	.553	-.983	.328
Education	S. Int	3.46	3.51	.604	.618	.443	.658
	C. Id	3.23	3.17	.629	.818	-.518	.606
Getting German nationality	S. Int	3.78	3.41	.536	.616	-2.80	.006
	C. Id	3.23	3.14	.604	.817	-.623	.534
Wife nationality	S. Int	3.65	3.55	.563	.598	-.848	.398
	C. Id	3.40	3.16	.940	.596	-1.533	.129
Getting back nationality	S. Int	3.48	3.77	.497	.508	2.324	.023
	C. Id	3.13	3.32	.544	.566	1.351	.182
Overall social integration		3.50		.604			
Overall cultural identity		3.19		.736			

Note: S. Int denote to Social Integration, and C. Id denote to Culture Identity

Then, the researchers divided all the independent variables to two categories, so several t-tests were conducted to determine any significant differences between social integration, culture identity with the study variables mentioned above. The age differences mean scores on social integration and culture identity were

compared in this study. There was no significant age difference for two of the domains. According to gender differences, the male and female interviewees mean scores on each of the two domains (social integration and culture identity) were also compared. There was also no significant gender difference in both social integration and

culture identity.

In relation to residency variable, there were no significant differences for integration and culture in this variable, the mean scores for integration were 3.53 and 3.52 for Jena and Berlin respectively, and for culture were 3.09 and 3.35 for Jena and Berlin respectively. Moreover, in regard to period in Germany (up to 15 years or more than 15 years), no difference was found in both integration and culture.

In addition, there were no differences between interviewee education and wife nationality in both integration and culture, see table 1. Also, there were no significant differences in mean scores for income, getting German nationality, and getting back nationality in culture subset. In contrast, there were differences in these variables in integration scale. For income, high income had higher mean scores than low income; the mean scores were 3.34 and 3.60 respectively and $\alpha = .031$. Also, getting German nationality had higher mean score than other interviewees who not getting the nationality, the mean scores were 3.78 and 3.41 respectively and $\alpha = .006$. Finally, the respondents who not getting back nationality had higher mean score than others, the mean scores were 3.77 and 3.48 respectively and $\alpha = .023$.

All information about mean scores, standard deviation (SD) and probability by independent variables is shown in Table 2.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The result of the study showed that the relationship between the culture identity and social integration was positive correlation with coefficient of .353, $\alpha < 0.01$. The potential reasons for the result: 1) the social integration of immigrants that they can keep some elements of their cultural identity. 2) Obtaining new elements of the new culture of the host community. 3) Linking their culture with the host culture which is in fact a mix between the two cultures due to the freedom of beliefs and multiculturalism in Germany.

The age differences mean scores on integration and culture were compared in this study. There was no significant age difference for two of the domains. In regarding to age differences with integration, this result was consistent with Diwan (2008) study. His study found that there was no integration for the older immigrants (older than 50 years). In contrast, in this study the overall mean scores for social integration was (3.50) out of (5) because the age of two groups was converge and in between 26-47 years. In addition, the same reason for that no age differences for the culture identity.

According to gender variable, the result was not significant in both cultural identity and social integration. Because males and females in Germany received the same level of general culture.

In relation to place of residency, the study found that no significant differences in regard to social integration and culture identity due to city size such as large Berlin or small city Jena. The possible reasons for this result are: German Openness and tolerance toward other communities, host society accept multiculturalism for each race and religion, religious tolerance form side host country and finally, the media brought the distances and scrapped the concept of the village and the city and become the concept related to the communication and social media via modern channels such as face book and the Internet.

With regard to period of stay in Germany, the results also showed there were no differences between long or short stay in Germany for dependent variables. Gathering the Arab community members at least once a week through the Mosque, Arabic restaurants, coffee shops and stores, build strong social relationships and ties .

According to education variable, the result found that no difference in social integration, or even in cultural identity, because the majority of the members having Diploma certificate or bachelor degree . This results was consistent with (Ager & Strang, 2008; Rooij, 2011) in their literature that considered education will active the members of the community. It leads to social integration (the social integration was 3.48 out of 5) which is considered high integration. Moreover, these categories are closer to the general culture in time of accelerated technical globalization and communications and the opening of the channels.

In addition, wife nationality of the respondents was also apparently not significant in cultural identity and social integration. Researchers observed that there is an imbalance in the relationship between study variables during their period of stay in Germany, due to the unwillingness of the head of the household respondent for the recognition of this result of social integration, and may be some of German wives become Muslims. Also, the percentage of German wife nationality in this study was 35%. In addition to that, Arab children who were born in German from Arabian mothers do not speak the parents Arabic language from our observations, and this result itself indicate to the internal rejection of respondents recognize and the new reality and new cultural identity.

According to the income variable, the results showed that higher income had higher mean scores than low income in social integration. This is due to the following reasons: If the income is high, then maybe the thought of the expatriates to uphold with their rights gained and more social integrated with the host community. Also, the members of the Arab community may not find the same opportunities to work in their original countries. Finally,

the respectful for the humankind, psychological and job stability in Germany was better than Arab countries.

In contrast, there were no differences between income and cultural identity for the following reasons: the most of the sample respondents were from the first generation who born and educated in their countries. Besides, the cultural identity based on the factor of religion, and this factor is stable in the psychological and the Arab entity due to religious freedom in Germany. Keeping the members of the community with their Arab language, traditions, and customs to some extent with the acquisition of a new culture and integrate them into his own culture. In addition, keeping social relations with home country and Arabs living around him in Germany.

Regarding to getting the German nationality, the results showed positive correlation with social integration which has emerged from the Table (2) for those who have obtained German nationality, and this result is due to the following reasons: getting the German nationality for the respondent enhanced self-confidence and belonging to the German society and state. Ensuring the stability of psychological, social life to those who had acquired citizenship, also ensuring equality of rights and civil duties and increasing affiliation and loyalty to Germany and its leaders. Arab immigrants with German nationality seem to have confidence in German official and social institutions at the same time .

While there was no difference between getting German nationality with cultural identity because of the following reasons: That identity is related to the person, traditional and historical roots of the responder. Also, the person can change his civil life style, but it is too difficult to change his religious beliefs. The cultural identity built through his age stages and the overall correlated to cultural terms of frame reference inherent in him.

On the bases of recovering the original nationality after obtaining German citizenship, there was significant difference favoring for who did not return the original nationality in social integration due to the followings: those who regained their original citizenship have the intention to return to their countries of origin after retirement. Also, they did not integrate into German society and they aim from getting German nationality only as a passport to get work opportunities and retirement from services rendered to the host country and return back to their own countries.

As for those who have not recovered their original nationality after obtaining German citizenship, the social integration into German society was the strongest for the following things: Germany has represented permanent residence for some of the Arab community as European country and as a country that respects the human rights. Also, coexistence with the German society may lead to the understanding of necessity of social integration and life in peace. The existence of absolute religious freedom

to the Arab community in worship as a Muslim practice and religious tolerance by government and German people towards others. Belief of the German people with multicultural facilitated live opportunities and housing security for the Arab community. Lack of conviction to the availability of decent living in their home countries, in terms of freedom, democracy and state institutions and the law. On the other hand, there is no political stability and social and political persecution in their countries of origin. Moreover, there is no equal opportunities, justice, corruption and equality among citizens as well in their home land.

In contrast, there was no relationship between getting back the original nationality and cultural identity due to the reasons mentioned above and its dependence on the basic components of the identity of Arab culture with Islamic religious dimension.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Through the above study, the following recommendations have been found:

1. Since there are significant differences for people who obtained German citizenship in terms of social integration, the researchers recommend facilitating the acquisition of German nationality.
2. Since the results of the study showed statistically significant differences with regard to social integration favor of higher income, the researchers recommend the need to raise the income level of members of the Arab community living in Germany.
3. Since the result found difference for those who did not return back their original nationality after obtaining the German passport, it is recommended to ensure that non-return of nationality after obtaining German nationality.
4. To help the Arab community members for more social integration in the host society, while allow them to maintain their own cultural identity.
5. Re-measuring these attitudes of cultural identity and social integration at least once ever three years to examine these attitudes, to promote the positive and try to avoid such negative attitudes.
6. Conduct further studies in relation to Anthropology - to understand the cultural identity (political phenomenon) and social integration in Germany and try to decide more appropriate solutions.
7. Conduct further studies of cultural identity (political phenomenon) and social integration in political and social development of the Arab community in Germany for all the other cities.
8. Expansion to study the Arab community with large sample throughout Germany in terms of knowledge of models of social integration to generalize the results.

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APPENDIX 1

Cultural Identity

Cultural Identity	Mean	Standard Deviation
I prefer to speech in German language with my friends even the Arabs	1.98	1.21
Speaking two languages did not contribute to my assimilating in German culture	2.56	1.30
Being able to understand German language solved a lot of my problems	3.93	1.36
I do not want to matrimony (from German partner) because of the different customs of religious, traditions and social	3.81	1.73
I'm feeling a cultural differences between me and host community	2.77	1.43
Non-social recognition of the Islamic religion make it hard to assimilate the other's culture	4.17	3.57
I am feeling that my children future is in Germany	3.06	1.54
I do my prayers five times a day	4.37	1.23

APPENDIX 2

Social Integration

Integration	Mean	Standard Deviation
Looking for 'Halal' food such as meat and chicken	4.69	0.83
Committing to the principles of Islamic in my behaviors with the German	4.59	0.83
Building a good relations with my neighbors	4.40	0.89
I Exercise my religious practice freely	4.18	1.26
Social recognition of the Islamic religion facilitates the process of accepting the other	3.76	1.45
They deal with my in terms of legal equality in the German society as original citizen	3.69	1.23
My relationship with my German Colleagues is good in working place	3.63	1.32
I have German friends now	2.87	1.40
I considered Germany as the country of my permanent stay	2.56	1.50
Participating in the membership of local committees (neighborhood) where I live	2.15	1.29
I feel that my belonging to the German society	2.02	1.17
I make sure to participate in German national celebrations	1.89	1.14