

Religiosity and gender equality: comparing natives and Muslim migrants in Germany

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Abstract

In European public debates, Islam is often described as an impediment to gender equality. By using data from surveys conducted in Germany, we analyse the role of high levels of individual religiosity in explaining Turks' and Germans' approval of gender equality and the way Turkish and German couples share household tasks. Results suggest that, for both groups, individuals with strong religious commitments are less likely than secular individuals to hold egalitarian gender role attitudes. At the behavioural level, this correlation between religiosity and gender egalitarianism only holds true for Turkish respondents. Furthermore, strong religious commitments contribute to generational stability in attitudinal and behavioural gender-traditionalism among Turks. However, when explaining Germans' more egalitarian gender-related attitudes and behaviours, religiosity turns out to be just one factor among others – and not a particularly important one. Further research is needed to disentangle the different cultural and religious aspects of Muslim migrants' attitudes and behaviours.

Keywords: Europe; religion; Islam; gender; immigration; integration.

Introduction

The religious dimension of migrants' integration receives growing public and academic attention in Western immigration countries. European debates notoriously focus on the integration of Muslims. Not unlike Spanish in the US (Zolberg and Long 1999), Islam is publicly conceived as a major symbolic boundary distinguishing both Christian and secular Europeans from their country's immigrants (Césari 2004; Alba 2005; Casanova 2006; Koenig 2007). Of crucial importance for this symbolic boundary is the perceived incompatibility

of Islam with the modern principle of gender equality. Alleged violations of this principle belong to the standard repertoire of those who ask for less tolerance *vis-à-vis* Muslim claims for recognition, as evinced by recurrent controversies over the Muslim headscarf which is often seen as a symbol of female oppression. Given its prominence in public discourse, this presumably negative relationship between Islam and gender equality merits close attention. In this article, we investigate how high levels of individual religiosity affect gender attitudes and gender role behaviour among first and second generation migrants from countries with a predominantly Muslim population. In order to grasp the specifics of Muslim religiosity, we compare these migrants with a native, predominantly Christian control group.

We focus on the situation in Germany where increasing public visibility of approximately 3 million Muslims is subject to growing controversy. Most of the Muslims are of Turkish origin, either having immigrated as low-skilled labour migrants during the period of 'guest-worker' recruitment in the 1960s and 1970s, or belonging to the second generation, i.e. those who immigrated as children or were born in Germany. Previous research has shown that both Turks in Turkey and Turkish immigrants in Germany do in fact hold substantially more conservative gender role attitudes than Germans (see Nauck 1990; Inglehart and Norris 2003; Gerhards 2007). However, it has not yet been systematically assessed to what extent these traditional orientations are related to the strength of Turkish immigrants' religiosity and to their religious background as Muslims.

This research lacuna is at least partly due to data limitations. However, the German 'Generation and Gender Surveys' [GGS], which were conducted as part of an internationally comparative panel study on family relationships and are based on large samples of Germans and Turks, offer new and unique opportunities for the systematic study of the relationship between Muslim religiosity and gender equality. They provide information on both groups' individual levels of religiosity as well as on gender attitudes and behaviours, i.e. individuals' approval of gender equality as well as more practical features of gender relations such as the way couples share household tasks.

Using these new data sets, we ask to what extent between- and within-group differences in gender-related attitudes and behaviours of Turks and Germans are attributable to differences in religiosity. The two groups vary with respect to many other characteristics known to affect gender equality such as education, female labour force participation, and broader socialization contexts. We thus need to assess the relative extent to which group differences are attributable to degree and content of religiosity as compared to other factors. Since it may be expected that exposure to more egalitarian gender values

during formative years attenuates the influence of Muslim religiosity, we also need to scrutinize how the nexus between religiosity and gender-related attitudes and behaviours changes in the generational succession among Turkish immigrants.

We start with an overview of theoretical arguments and previous empirical findings on the relationship between religion and gender relations in general and among Muslim migrants in particular. We then present our data and measurements and give a descriptive overview of the distribution of our relevant variables for Germans and first and second generation Turks. Based on this, we present our analysis of how religiosity impacts on gender-related attitudes and behaviours among the groups under consideration. A critical discussion of our findings concludes the article.

Religion and gender in the context of migration: theoretical arguments and empirical findings

The intersection between religion and gender relations has long attracted attention among social scientists. Within the specific context of migration, researchers have focused on the role of gender in religious identity construction among migrants (Alumkal 1999; Amir-Moazami and Jouili 2006), on female activism in religious diasporas (Werbner 2002), and on the influence of religious socialization goals on the transmission of gender role values in migrant families (Idema and Phalet 2007). However, as Cadge and Ecklund (2007, p. 365) argue in their review of US scholarship about religion and migration, 'there are few studies that examine the way religion and gender intersect more broadly outside of particular religious organizations'. In European scholarship there is a rich literature on public discourses about religion and gender (Gaspard and Koshrokhavar 1995; Bowen 2006), but few studies systematically scrutinize their relationship on the individual level.

In the following, we discuss potential hypotheses about the influence of religious traditions and of individual religiosity – broadly understood as the commitment to religious values and norms – as potential factors for subscribing to more traditional gender role orientations and gender-related behaviours such as the division of household labour. Doing this, we draw on standard paradigms of secularization and assimilation as well as on alternative theories of religious culture and reactive ethnicity, assess their *prima facie* plausibility against the background of existing empirical findings on Turkish migrants in Germany, and discuss arguments about religiosity's changing pertinence in the generational succession.

Religion's impact on gender attitudes and behaviour

There are many factors that affect gender attitudes and behaviour, including most notably the degree of societal modernization (Inglehart and Norris 2003, p. 47). Gender attitudes are strongly related to *individual social background*, with the better educated, female, and younger parts of the population holding more egalitarian attitudes. Gender behaviour – e.g. the division of household tasks between men and women, decision making in the household, or couples' money arrangements – is similarly related to *partners' resourcefulness*, such as income differences and life circumstances (Blood and Wolfe 1960; Becker 1981; Treas 1993; Bianchi *et al* 2000; Blossfeld and Drobnic 2001; Breen and Cooke 2005; Grunow, Schulz and Blossfeld 2007). Nevertheless, since many of these studies show that an increase in women's resources does not necessarily lead to more equality, people's gender behaviour seems also to be influenced by *cultural values* and *social norms*.

Within the broad range of values and norms, religious traditions have long been a prime suspect for explaining the unequal distribution of power between men and women. Many religions regulate the sphere of reproduction, and female sexuality in particular, by linking gender to symbolic distinctions between sacred and profane and to ritual norms of purity and impurity. In doing so, they tend to legitimize inequalities and hierarchical relationships between the sexes both within religious institutions and within broader society (Brinkerhoff and MacKie 1985). Individuals with strong religious commitments may therefore be assumed to share more traditional gender attitudes and behaviour. And, indeed, strong religiosity tends to be correlated with overall less egalitarian gender role attitudes even after controlling for other individual level factors such as education (Inglehart and Norris 2003, p. 670; for ethnic group variation in this association see Kane 2000, p. 434).

Now, standard theories of secularization predict that increasing societal modernization contributes to both a decline in religiosity and a decrease in the practical relevance of religion and, in both ways, facilitates more egalitarian gender relations. Within the context of presumably secularized European societies, it can therefore be hypothesized that migrants from less modernized countries with higher levels of general religiosity exhibit less egalitarian attitudes than those shared by the majority, other things being equal.

The stereotypical argument that Muslim immigrants are ill-equipped to adapt to Western norms of gender equality, however, does not just refer to their strong religiosity. Rather, it assumes that there are also differences in the *content* of religiosity. There is indeed a long-standing literature which highlights denominational variations in

attitudes toward women's roles and women's socioeconomic status and family-related behaviour (Lenski 1963; Porter and Albert 1977; Heaton and Cornwall 1989). Islamic discourses and practices such as Qur'anic scripture and the legal rules of shari'a are in particular perceived to entail inherently non-egalitarian gender relations (for a discussion see Mir-Hosseini 2000). And, in fact, Inglehart and Norris (2003, p. 47) have found that contemporary Jews, Protestants and Catholics – along with non-affiliated individuals – show higher mean scores on the gender equality scale than Buddhists and Muslims even after controlling for individual and societal background variables. Whereas religious cultures are here considered to affect the values and norms of most religious adherents, in general one would have to hypothesize *a fortiori* that Muslim migrants with particularly high degrees of religiosity hold more conservative gender role orientations than strongly religious Christians or Jews, other things being equal.

Available empirical evidence on Turkish Muslims in Germany is inconclusive with respect to these hypotheses. Previous findings confirm that immigrants from Turkey are substantially more religious than native Germans and other groups of former guest-workers (Fuchs-Heinritz 2000; Frick 2004; for more ambivalent results based on girls and young females, see Boos-Nünning and Karakaşoğlu 2005). Besides, existing data support the assumption that Turkish migrants, most of whom come from rather traditional rural contexts and who only rarely hold higher educational degrees, are overall less egalitarian than natives. There is also some preliminary evidence that religiously committed Muslim migrants (but not Christians) are substantially less approving of gender equality than secular migrants (for high school students see Brettfeld and Wetzels 2003, p. 331). At the behavioural level, previous research has shown that higher levels of religiosity are related to less female autonomy in Turkish immigrant households (Nauck 1985). In sum, however, the existing literature does not reveal to what degree traditional gender attitudes and behaviours among Muslim immigrants are best explained by their socioeconomic background, by their degree of religiosity, or by some particular characteristics of Islam.

Religion and gender among second generation immigrants

We now turn to the implications of straight-line theories of secularization and assimilation for the role of religion and gender among second generation migrants. Higher levels of education and labour force participation are usually connected to lower levels of religiosity (van Tubergen 2006). Many migrants born in the host society have left the educational and occupational ethnic niches occupied by the first generation and can therefore be expected to be *less religious* than those

who immigrated as adults. Changes in the cultural and economic context of female migrants in particular (Jones Correa 1998) and exposure to more egalitarian gender norms may also alter the practical relevance of religious norms in the generational succession. As life in a secular society raises the social and economic (opportunity-)costs of strict adherence to religious gender norms, migrants' religiosity may not only weaken over time, but also become more private and 'symbolic' (Gans 1994). One would therefore hypothesize that the relationship between migrants' religiosity and their gender attitudes and behaviours differs markedly between the first and the second generation.

However, theories of secularization and assimilation have met considerable criticism. Thus, it is claimed that, depending on the circumstances in the host society, ethnic ties and identities may be maintained or even revitalized among the second generation (Portes and Rumbaut 2001, p. 148). These 'reactive' forms of identity formation may compensate for a lack of social approval and are most likely to emerge in hostile reception contexts marked by discrimination and a lack of upward mobility, which create the need for alternative sources of social status and identity. Since religion is an important foundation of ethnicity for many immigrant groups, this should also apply to religious acculturation processes (Greeley 1971). As generational persistence may affect both the strength of religious commitments and their grip on migrants' attitudes and behaviours in other, non-religious spheres, one would hypothesize that the relationship between religiosity and gender-related attitudes and behaviour remains strong or becomes even stronger for second generation migrants.

Again, empirical evidence is inconclusive for deciding between these two alternative arguments. At first sight, it seems that religiosity is declining in the generational succession, as evinced by data from the German Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) which show that second generation immigrants from Turkey and the former Yugoslavia are less religious than first generation migrants in terms of indicators such as religion's subjective importance or attendance at religious services (Frick 2004; Diehl and Schnell 2006). However, it is not clear to what extent these changes are merely due to differences in group composition (e.g. age and education). In fact, one might well expect that Turkish migrants in Germany would follow patterns of 'reactive ethnicity' or at least 'ethnic maintenance' rather than straight-line assimilation, since they face larger social and cultural distances than other groups of labour migrants such as Italians or Greeks. Although second generation Turks in Germany have higher levels of education and labour force participation and more contacts with natives than the first generation, their structural, cognitive, and social assimilation

progresses more slowly than that of other labour migrants (Kalter and Granato 2002; Diehl and Schnell 2006), and they remain subject to negative stereotypes (Wasmer and Koch 2003). This may slow down acculturation processes and further the maintenance or even reactivation of ethnic and religious identifications and norms.

Moreover, there is evidence that migrant parents feel a greater need to put more effort into the maintenance of cultural heritage than non-migrants. Intergenerational continuity in the transmission of religious norms within Turkish families is indeed high, particularly in the relationship between fathers and sons (Nauck 1995, 2000). Existing findings also reveal that children of immigrant parents with religious socialization goals hold more conservative gender role orientations than children who were raised in a more secular socialization climate. Again, this applies particularly to father–son dyads (Idema and Phalet 2007).

Empirical research on generational change at the behavioural level is so far limited to qualitative studies which suggest that religion has indeed changed its meaning for second generation Muslim migrants. Supposedly, Turkish women who grew up in Germany, not unlike young urban female Muslims in Turkey (Göle 1996), draw a sharp line between religious and traditional norms and rules and consider the former as a source of identity and emancipation rather than of oppression. ‘Neo-Muslimas’ tend to choose partners who follow the ‘true Islam’, and even though gender roles are still far from interchangeable the asymmetry in the privileges of the sexes is limited (Nökel 2002, p. 251). There is no evidence, however, about the quantitative relevance of this group.

This brief outline shows that existing empirical evidence cannot settle the contradictory theoretical assumptions about the role of religiosity in explaining gender role orientations and gender-related behaviour of natives and first and second generation immigrants. Therefore, we now turn to our own empirical analyses.

Data and measurements

The German ‘Generation and Gender Surveys’ were conducted in 2005 and 2006 at the German Federal Institute for Population Research. In two separate surveys, 10,000 Germans and 4,000 Turks aged between 18 and 79 were interviewed on topics such as relationships with partners, parents and children, gender role orientations and family life, religious attitudes, and socio-demographic characteristics. The survey instrument was the same for both groups, except for some additional questions on migrants’ immigration history and their individual integration (for data and methods see Ruckdeschel *et al.* 2006; Ette *et al.* 2007). In the German sample respondents were

identified by random route; the survey of Turks was based on a probability sample from the local registration offices. Accordingly, only Turkish citizens were interviewed. About 20 per cent of all persons of Turkish origin living in Germany, especially those whose assimilation is more progressed, have acquired German citizenship during the last decade (see Salentin and Wilkening 2003; Diehl and Blohm 2007). Thus, findings cannot be generalized to the whole Turkish origin population in Germany.¹

The survey contains several suitable indicators for migrants' gender role attitudes and behaviours and for their religious affiliations and orientations.² In order to measure gender role attitudes, we adapted Inglehart and Norris's Gender-Equality Scale [GES] (see Inglehart and Norris 2003) and constructed an index based on five items measuring approval of gender equality.³ On the behavioural level, gender equality is measured by the division of household tasks between the partners. Gender division of labour is labelled 'traditional' if the female partner is responsible for typical women's tasks (doing the dishes and cooking) and the male partner does typical men's tasks (maintenance repairs and paying the bills). All other forms of household division of labour (man does typical women's tasks and vice versa, third party does the work, man or woman does all the work) are categorized as 'non-traditional'.

With regard to religious affiliation, the survey distinguishes between self-identified Christians, Muslims, others, and those belonging to no religion. Individual religiosity is measured by three standard indicators: attendance at religious services; approval of the statement that religious ceremonies related to the life-cycle events such as weddings and funerals are important; and the mentioning of religion as one of the three most important socialization goals for children. In terms of Glock's (1962) seminal statement, these indicators measure the ritual and ethical dimensions of religiosity, respectively. Cognitive, belief, and experiential dimensions of religiosity were, unfortunately, not included in the survey. However, even a moderate multi-dimensional concept of religiosity is desirable, when comparing Christians and Muslims who vary substantially with regard to the doctrinal and practical importance of various dimensions. For instance, religious service attendance, the standard indicator for the public ritual dimension of religiosity, has very different meanings within Christian and Islamic traditions and, as our data show, it is also less important for Muslim women than for Muslim men. To measure strong religious commitment, we therefore used a composite index that takes group-specific manifestations of religiosity into account. Thus, we code all those respondents as 'religious' who display strong religious commitments according to at least two of the three indicators mentioned above (attendance at religious services at least once a week; agreement that religious

ceremonies are important; religion mentioned as one of the three most important socialization goals out of a list of eleven).

As outlined above, relevant social background variables need to be taken into account when assessing the relative impact of religion on gender-related attitudes and behaviour. Age, sex, and family status (married or cohabiting with partner versus living alone) are thus included in the analyses. As indicators for respondents' resourcefulness, individual level variables such as education (CASMIN classification, recoded into low for those who completed no school or basic education versus high for all others),⁴ employment status (full-/part-time employment or unemployment versus not employed or retired), and the presence of children are added. Additional indicators for partners' resourcefulness at the household level are the age difference between the partners (female more than three years younger than male versus female about the same age as male or older) and the employment status of the couple (only one partner is employed versus both partners are employed).

In order to measure respondents' exposure to the overall more egalitarian gender values of majority members, additional analyses for Turks include measurements of their social assimilation (Idema and Phaet 2007, p. 85). Since the latter is not measured directly we use the language spoken most of the time (German versus Turkish) and – at the household level – the origin of the partners as proxies (partner is first generation Turk or Turkish origin versus partner is second generation Turk or Turkish origin versus partner has German or other non-Turkish origin).

Empirical findings

We start out with a descriptive overview of the different variables for first and second generation Turks and Germans. We then take a closer look at the relationship between religiosity, nationality, and generation. Against this background, we scrutinize the role of religiosity in explaining between- and within-group difference in gender-related attitudes and behaviour of Germans and first and second generation Turks.

Gender, religion, and socio-structural background characteristics: a descriptive overview

The three groups differ substantially in terms of the characteristics under consideration. In accordance with much of the existing literature, we find that first generation Turks approve of gender equality less often and are less likely to practise an egalitarian division of household tasks than Germans. Second generation Turks are somewhere in between Germans and Turkish immigrants with respect

to the attitudinal aspects of gender equality, while on the behavioural level the dividing line is still between first and second generation Turks and Germans (see Table 1).

The three groups also differ in terms of our most important independent variable, religion. Analyses not displayed here reveal that 70 per cent of the Germans claim to be Christians, while more than 90 per cent of the Turks identify as Muslims. Of greater interest to our analysis, however, are the respective shares of religiously committed or 'orthodox' persons among the three groups. Against the background of existing research on religious affiliation, it should not come as a surprise that only 6 per cent of Germans are religiously committed in terms of at least two of our three indicators (regular attendance, importance of religious ceremonies, religious socialization goals), as compared to 21 per cent of second generation Turks and 27 per cent of those Turks who immigrated after childhood. It should be noted here that the religiously committed constitute a minority not only within the German population (see for example Norris and Inglehart 2004, p. 74), but also, in accordance with the 'polarization thesis' (Merkens 1997, p. 63), within the Turkish population.

Second generation Turks are younger than the other two groups and accordingly less likely to be married or cohabiting and to have children. The share of individuals with higher educational degrees and the share of those who are employed are larger among second generation than among first generation Turks. Germans, however, are the group with the largest share of employed individuals. Those Turks who were born in Germany or immigrated as children speak mostly German more often than first generation migrants, probably because they have German friends.

In terms of the indicators for the resource asymmetry within the household, the figures show that first and second generation Turks live substantially less often in a relationship in which both partners are employed than Germans. Females are about the same age or older than their partners in two-thirds of second generation Turkish and German couples, while this proportion is smaller among Turkish immigrants. In addition, less than 10 per cent of first generation Turks have a partner of non-Turkish origin, whereas the proportion is twice as high for second generation Turks. The proportion of those with a partner from another immigrant generation (i.e. first generation migrants with a partner who was born in Germany or immigrated at an early age or vice versa) is also larger among second generation migrants.

Generational change in migrants' religiosity

Before turning to the impact of religiosity on gender role attitudes and gender equality, it is worth taking a closer look at generational change

Table 1. *Distribution of dependent and independent variables by nationality and generational status (means or per cent)*

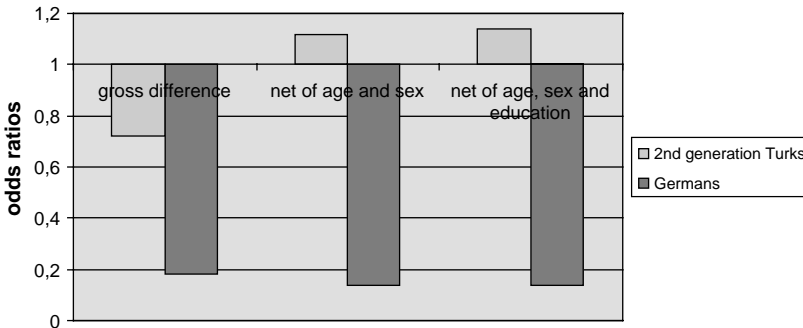
| | Turks 1st generation (n = 2,721) | Turks 2nd generation (n = 1,161) | Germans (n = 8,594) |
|--|--|--|------------------------|
| <i>Dependent variable (individual level)</i> | | | |
| Gender index (means)* | 2.5 | 2.9 | 3.4 |
| <i>Dependent variable (household level)**</i> | | | |
| Egalitarian division of labour | 42 | 45 | 59 |
| <i>Independent variables (individual level)</i> | | | |
| Highly Religious | 27 | 21 | 6 |
| Attendance at least once a week | 28 | 19 | 8 |
| Religious ceremonies very important | 38 | 35 | 21 |
| Religious socialization goals | 30 | 26 | 5 |
| Female | 48 | 45 | 54 |
| Age (means) | 42 | 28 | 49 |
| Married or cohabiting | 82 | 50 | 62 |
| Parent | 82 | 46 | 67 |
| Education: more than basic school | 28 | 49 | 63 |
| Employment status: employed | 41 | 47 | 51 |
| Assimilation: speaks mostly German | 20 | 49 | |
| <i>Independent variables (household level)**</i> | | | |
| Partners about the same age/women older | 56 | 67 | 65 |
| Both partners employed | 17 | 25 | 42 |
| Partner's origin | | | |
| German | 9 | 22 | |
| Other generation than respondent | 17 | 39 | |

* Gender index: 1 = rejection of gender equality, 5 = approval of gender equality

** Cohabiting couples only

in migrants' religious orientations. While bivariate results suggested that there is generational change in religiosity Figure 1 reveals that this is exclusively due to the different age composition of first and second

Figure 1. Gross and net differences in religiosity between first and second generation Turks and Germans (odds ratios)



Note: Differences statistically significant except for second generation net differences ($p < .10$), reference category: first generation Turks.

generation migrants. If this is taken into account, second generation migrants are about as religious as first generation migrants.

Separate analyses for males and females not presented here show that second generation Turkish men are even slightly more religious than first generation males whereas second generation women are slightly (though not significantly) less religious than female immigrants. Moreover, while the difference between first and second generation Turks disappears after controlling for the demographic composition of the groups, the difference between Turks and Germans becomes larger. If Germans were as young and predominantly male as first generation Turks, they would be even less religious than they already are. Additional controls for education do not change the picture substantially.

In sum, our findings show that, contrary to assumptions of straight-line theories of assimilation and secularization, religiosity does not decline in the generational succession, at least not when the share of those with strong religious commitments is considered. On the other hand, popular statements about a religious revival among second generation migrants are also without empirical evidence.

Religion and the approval of gender equality

As already discussed, second generation Turks are more approving of gender equality than first generation Turks but still less approving than Germans. But to what extent do these differences merely reflect group variation in relevant individual background variables? And how far are they attributable to migrants' strength or content of religiosity? In order to answer these questions, we start out by presenting regression models on the approval of gender equality, first excluding

and then including religion (models I and II). A model with interactions between group belonging and religiosity allows us to study the *differences* in the attitudinal repercussions of strong religious commitments for Muslims and Christians and for first and second generation migrants (model III). Separate models for the three groups complete the picture by providing more detailed insight into the relative importance of religious commitments, background variables on the individual and household level, and – for the Turkish group – degree of social assimilation (models IV to VIII, see Table 2).

The models confirm, first, that Turkish immigrants and, to a lesser degree, second generation Turks hold substantially more conservative gender role attitudes than Germans even after controlling for individual background variables known to affect these orientations. Furthermore, we can see in model II that high religiosity has a rather strong negative impact on the approval of gender equality. However, results also show that group differences in the approval of gender equality remain fairly stable when religiosity is included. Obviously, it is only to a very small extent that the nationality gap shown in model I can be attributed to migrants' religious commitment.

In order to assess if and to what extent the relationship between religiosity and traditional gender role orientations is stronger for Muslim as compared to Christian believers and for first as compared to second generation Turks we insert interactions between religiosity and generation/nationality (dummy variables for religious and non-religious first and second generation Turks and Germans) into model III. Results show very clearly that high religiosity has a negative impact on the approval of gender equality for *all three* groups – albeit the overall lower level of approval is lower among Turks in general: religious Germans are still more approving of gender equality than secular Turks. Furthermore, generational change towards more egalitarian gender role orientations is limited to secular Turks.

Separate models for first and second generation Turks and for Germans provide more detailed insight into the relative importance of the factors under consideration here. For the Turkish group, these models also allow us to look into the role of social contacts with majority members who on average hold more egalitarian gender role attitudes. Results show some substantial similarities between the groups (see Table 2). As we have already seen, the role of strong religious beliefs reduces the likelihood of approving of gender equality for each group. Furthermore, being female and better educated is accompanied by more egalitarian gender role orientations for all three groups. This is especially the case for second generation Turks and for Germans. However, only Turks hold more conservative gender role attitudes when they are married or cohabiting and have children. As

Table 2. *Approval of gender equality (unstandardized linear regression coefficients)*

| | | All | | | Turks 1st generation | | Turks 2nd generation | | German |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| | | M I | M II | M III | M IV | M V | M VI | MVII | MVIII |
| Group: | <i>Turks 1st generation</i> | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| | Turks 2nd generation | .185 (.023) | .181 (.023) | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| | Germans | .731 (.015) | .676 (.016) | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Religious | | – | –.258 (.018) | – | –.234 (.028) | –.230 (.028) | –.225 (.048) | –.209 (.048) | –.299 (.027) |
| Female | | .247 (.011) | .242 (.011) | .247 (.011) | .115 (.027) | .133 (.027) | .260 (.041) | .271 (.041) | .272 (.013) |
| Age | | –.006 (.000) | –.005 (.000) | –.005 (.000) | –.002 n.s. (.001) | –.001 n.s. (.001) | .006 n.s. (.003) | .007 (.003) | –.007 (.000) |
| Married or cohabiting | | –.077 (.013) | –.071 (.013) | –.078 (.013) | –.174 (.035) | –.157 (.034) | –.204 (.055) | –.197 (.055) | –.039 (.014) |
| Parent | | –.030 (.014) | –.028 (.014) | –.035 (.014) | –.097 (.035) | –.090 (.034) | –.105 n.s. (.057) | –.099 n.s. (.057) | .003 (.016) |
| Education: | > basic school | .261 (.012) | .258 (.012) | .270 (.012) | .182 (.028) | .157 (.028) | .286 (.040) | .268 (.040) | .259 (.014) |
| Employment status: | Employed | .136 (.012) | .130 (.012) | .133 (.012) | .090 (.027) | .071 (.027) | .076 n.s. (.042) | .067 n.s. (.041) | .125 (.014) |
| Assimilation: | speaks mostly German | – | – | – | – | .234 (.031) | – | .148 (.040) | – |
| Interactions: | <i>1st gen. relig. Turks</i> | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| | 1st gen. secular Turks | – | – | .089 (.026) | – | – | – | – | – |

Table 2 (Continued)

| | All | | | Turks 1st generation | | Turks 2nd generation | | German |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------|----------------------|----------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|--------|
| | M I | M II | M III | M IV | M V | M VI | MVII | MVIII |
| 2nd gen. relig. Turks | – | – | –.011 n.s. (.043) | – | – | – | – | – |
| 2nd gen. secu- lar Turks | – | – | .276 (.030) | – | – | – | – | – |
| religious Germans | – | – | .326 (.030) | – | – | – | – | – |
| secular Germans | – | – | .771 (.023) | – | – | – | – | – |
| Constant | 2.610 | 2.656 | 2.540 | 2.734 | 2.647 | 2.617 | 2.524 | 3.345 |
| R ² | .32 | .33 | .32 | .08 | .10 | .15 | .16 | .18 |
| N | 12,053 | 12,053 | 12,053 | 2,607 | 2,607 | 1,080 | 1,080 | 8,366 |

Note: $p < .05$ (coefficients significant unless noted otherwise), *reference categories in italics*, SE in parentheses.

expected, those Turks who speak German most of the time are more likely to approve of gender equality.⁵

In general, the attitudes of first generation Turks seem to be more 'diffuse', i.e. less explicable by the variables under consideration here (see low model fit). This suggests that unobserved heterogeneity with regard to factors related to the country of origin, e.g. urban versus rural background, might play an important role for this group.

Religion and gender-related behaviour

We now turn to the impact of religion on gender-related behaviour. Here, we limit our analyses to cohabiting and/or married couples and look into the factors that influence how they divide the tasks in the household. Apart from that, we run similar models to the ones presented in the last section.

The models displayed in Table 3 show that Germans are much more likely to share household tasks in an egalitarian manner than Turks, whereas there is no significant difference between first and second generation Turks when background variables on the individual and household level are taken into account. The sizeable difference between Germans and Turks is partly due to the fact that both first and second generation Turks included in the analyses on the household level are a somewhat selective subsample. As we saw in the previous section, Turks who are married or cohabiting hold considerably more conservative gender attitudes than single Turks, whereas the difference between married and single Germans is very small. Accordingly, if this selectivity in the subsample considered here was taken into account, the differences between Germans and Turks would most likely diminish whereas the differences between first and second generation would remain rather stable.

The model including religiosity shows once more that the differences between Turks and Germans are only marginally attributable to differences in the two groups' levels of religiosity (see rather stable group coefficients in model II as compared to model I). The group interactions that we added in model III reveal an important difference between gender-related attitudes and behaviour: religious commitments seem to be accompanied by a traditional division of household tasks only for Turks but less so for Germans (the dummy-coefficients for religious and secular Germans are rather similar in model III). Furthermore, we can see that the absence of generational change in gender-related behaviour is mostly due to the fact that second generation religious Turks are just as conservative with regard to their gender-related behaviour as first generation religious Turks, while there is at least some generational change for secular second generation Turks.

Table 3. *Non-traditional division of household tasks (logistic regression coefficients)*

| | | All | | | Turks 1st generation | | Turks 2nd generation | | Germans |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | | M I | M II | M III | M IV | M V | M VI | M VII | M VIII |
| Group: | <i>Turks 1st generation</i> | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| | Turks 2nd generation | .053 n.s. (.099) | .052 n.s. (.099) | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| | Germans | .331 (.068) | .285 (.070) | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Religious | | – | –.251 (.071) | – | –.369 (.104) | –.329 (.108) | –.378 n.s. (.212) | –.219 n.s. (.224) | –.105 n.s. (.116) |
| Female | | .186 (.048) | .183 (.048) | .180 (.048) | –.225 (.093) | –.103 n.s. (.098) | .520 (.180) | .548 (.192) | .328 (.060) |
| Age | | .005 (.002) | .005 (.002) | .005 (.002) | .007 (.004) | .014 (.004) | .040 (.014) | .040 (.015) | .002 n.s. (.002) |
| Parent | | –.314 (.063) | –.309 (.063) | –.310 (.063) | –.400 (.140) | –.315 (.149) | –.231 n.s. (.243) | –.164 n.s. (.253) | –.292 (.075) |
| Education: | > basic school | –.047 n.s. (.052) | –.044 n.s. (.052) | –.037 n.s. (.052) | –.056 n.s. (.103) | –.088 n.s. (.109) | .160 n.s. (.185) | .084 n.s. (.195) | –.074 n.s. (.065) |
| Approval of gender equality | | .305 (.039) | .290 (.039) | .303 (.039) | .335 (.075) | .302 (.078) | .399 (.141) | .419 (.146) | .236 (.049) |
| Assimilation: speaks mostly German | | – | – | – | – | .229 n.s. (.127) | – | .210 n.s. (.194) | – |
| Female same age or older | | .102 (.048) | .106 (.048) | .107 (.048) | .187 (.092) | .167 n.s. (.095) | .241 n.s. (.188) | .279 n.s. (.198) | .048 n.s. (.060) |
| Both employed | | .139 (.054) | .133 (.054) | .140 (.054) | .458 (.123) | .434 (.129) | .290 n.s. (.211) | .329 n.s. (.226) | .008 n.s. (.063) |

Table 3 (Continued)

| | | All | | | Turks 1st generation | | Turks 2nd generation | | Germans |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|-------|-------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------|
| | | M I | M II | M III | M IV | M V | M VI | M VII | M VIII |
| Partner's origin: | <i>same generation</i> | | | | | | | | |
| | German | – | – | – | – | .959 (.203) | – | .364 n.s. (.319) | – |
| | <i>different generation</i> | – | – | – | – | .032 n.s. (.137) | – | .384 n.s. (.209) | – |
| Interactions: | <i>1st gen. relig. Turks</i> | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| | 1st gen. secular Turks | – | – | .257 (.099) | – | – | – | – | – |
| | 2nd gen. relig. Turks | – | – | –.160 n.s. (.188) | – | – | – | – | – |
| | 2nd gen. secular Turks | – | – | .319 (.128) | – | – | – | – | – |
| | religious Germans | – | – | .350 (.125) | – | – | – | – | – |
| | secular Germans | – | – | .493 (.096) | – | – | – | – | – |
| Constant | | –.162 | –.093 | –.406 | –.086 | –.517 | –.850 | –.316 | –.443 |
| Nagelkerkes R ² | | .05 | .06 | .06 | .05 | .08 | .09 | .10 | .02 |
| N | | 7,719 | 7,719 | 7,719 | 2,092 | 1,980 | 557 | 516 | 5,070 |

Note: $p < .05$ (coefficients significant unless noted otherwise), *reference categories in italics*, SE in parentheses.

Again, we present separate models (IV to VIII) in order to assess the relative importance of the factors under consideration here for all three groups and look into the impact of migrants' exposure to natives' overall more egalitarian gender norms. These models confirm that religion is negatively related to an egalitarian division of household tasks only for Turks, not for Germans. Religious Turks of both generations are less likely to pursue an egalitarian division of labour in their household than secular Turks. And again, the influence of religiosity seems to be just as strong for second as for first generation Turks.⁶ The impact of religion for second generation migrants is moderated if respondents' social context is taken into account: having a partner from a different generation is marginally positively related to more liberal gender division of labour for second generation migrants. This effect seems somewhat surprising but is easy to explain: analyses run separately for both sexes show that it is exclusively caused by second generation females whose partner migrated from Turkey (first generation). These couples are very likely to share household tasks in a non-traditional way which probably reflects the better bargaining position of those females who have been living in Germany for longer and who often sponsored their husband's immigration (for a similar finding, see Nauck 1985).

The positive effects of age for first and second generation Turks show once again that conservative young Turks are more likely to live in a relationship than more egalitarian ones who may have adapted to the 'Western' pattern of late marriages. In all three groups, those who approve of gender equality are more likely to show a non-traditional division of labour. The positive impact of egalitarian gender attitudes is particularly strong for second generation Turks. Obviously, 'cultural' factors such as religious commitments or gender role orientations matter more for Turks than for natives whose gender division of labour seems to hinge primarily on factors not considered here (see low model fit for this group).⁷

Conclusion

In this article, we have asked to what extent between- and within-group differences of Germans and first and second generation Turks in gender attitudes and behaviour can be attributed to religious commitment. In sum, our analyses establish four key findings. First of all, whereas previous research has described the assimilation process of Turkish migrants in Germany as comparatively slow but steady, their religiosity seems to be rather stable across the generations. This applies at least to immigrants with strong religious commitments – who are a minority even within the Turkish population – and particularly to young Turkish males.

Secondly, our findings suggest that religious individuals hold more conservative gender role attitudes than more secular individuals among both Turks *and* Germans – even if relevant social background characteristics are taken into account. However, strong religious commitments do not affect the division of household tasks among German couples, while this continues to be the case among Turkish couples. Furthermore, the repercussions of religious commitments in everyday life are just as strong for those who grew up in Germany as for those who immigrated later in life. Turkish migrants' religiosity thus seems to be less 'symbolic' than in the case of Germans in so far as its grip on everyday life is tighter.

Thirdly, we could demonstrate very clearly that in explaining why Turkish immigrants hold more conservative gender role orientations and exhibit more traditional ways of organizing the household, strong religious commitment is just one among several factors – and not even a particularly important one. Even secular Turks are more conservative than Germans with similar background characteristics. One might argue that this is just another piece of evidence for the strong indirect impact of the Islamic heritage on cultural norms of gender relations even of secular Turks. However, existing research suggests caution in drawing such far-reaching conclusions: populations of many other non-Islamic countries in southern and eastern Europe have similar traditional gender orientations to Turkey (Gerhards 2007), and parents' gender-specific expectations of their children's involvement in household tasks are rather conservative for all labour migrants (Greeks, in particular, see Nauck 2000, p. 369). Clearly, further research is needed to assess the relative impact of the Islamic culture and to disentangle it from other aspects of migrants' cultural background.

Fourthly, despite religiosity's moderate role in explaining gender-related differences between Turks and Germans our analyses show that strong religious commitments contribute to generational stability in attitudinal and behavioural gender-traditionalism. Only secular second generation migrants hold more egalitarian gender role attitudes than first generation migrants, and generational change in gender-related behaviour – albeit small – is also limited to secular Turks. Strong religiosity seems to be an effective barrier to generational change towards gender equality in attitudes and in everyday life among Turkish migrants, or so our analyses suggest.

It has to be emphasized that our findings cannot be generalized to the whole Turkish origin population living in Germany. Since naturalized Turks who are often less religious are not included in our analyses, the overall level of religiosity for the Turkish origin population might be overestimated (note, however, that naturalization is equally prevalent among first and second generation Turks; see Diehl and Blohm 2008). Besides, nationality differences on the

behavioural level might be somewhat overstated because Turks who live in relationships tend to be more conservative than single Turks.

Notwithstanding these reservations, the baseline of our argument is rather clear-cut: religious commitment has considerable influence on gender attitudes of *all* groups considered here, whereas it has repercussions on everyday behaviour only for the Turkish population. These findings are in accordance with decades of research showing that the religious factor matters in the sphere of gender relationships. With regard to the role of Islam in explaining the more conservative gender attitudes and behaviours of Turks as compared to natives, however, our findings call for a revision of popular and easy-at-hand attributions: the large attitudinal and behavioural differences even between secular Turks and Germans suggest that the factual explanatory power of migrants' religiosity lags far behind its prominence in public debates.

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Notes

1. Although naturalized Turks were included in the German sample, they were strongly underrepresented. We therefore had to exclude them from the analyses.
2. The questionnaires are available under: www.bib-demographie.de/publikat/frame_material.html
3. The four GES items are: (1) On the whole, men make better political leaders than women (agree coded low); (2) When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women (agree coded low); (3) Do you think that a woman has to have children in order to be fulfilled or is this not necessary? (agree coded low); (4) If a woman wants a child as a single parent but she doesn't want to have a stable relationship with a man, do you approve or disapprove? (disapprove coded low). The fifth item was not in the original GES: (5) Taking care of household and children is just as satisfying as to work for money (agree coded low).
4. This was necessary due to the large differences between the groups. Most first generation Turks have no educational degree or have only completed elementary education while only a small share of Germans fall into this category.
5. Note, however, that it is impossible to assess the causal relationship between migrants' social assimilation and their adoption of liberal gender attitudes with cross-sectional data.
6. The statistically non-significant coefficients ($p = .9$) for the second generation are primarily due to the small number of cases for this group.
7. In analyses not presented here we inserted into the models several indicators that have proven to be an important determinant in explaining changes in the gender division of labour over time (duration of partnership, marriage-migration, large educational gap between the partners) (see Grunow, Schulz and Blossfeld 2007), but this did not increase their explanatory power. Including income differences between the spouses was impossible due to missing cases.

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