

# **The Impact of Social Networking Sites on Socialization and Political Engagement:**

## **Role of Acculturation**

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# **The Impact of Social Networking Sites on Immigrants' Socialization and Political Engagement: The Role of Acculturation**

## **ABSTRACT**

This research examines the extent to which immigrant consumers' use of social networking sites affect their socialization and political engagement in the Netherlands. The study uses self-administered questionnaires to collect data from 514 Turkish-Dutch respondents of various ages, occupations, levels of education and locations in the Netherlands. The study finds that the propensity to share information, the intensity of use, and privacy concerns positively impact socialization on online social networking sites. In addition, a significant positive relationship between socialization and political involvement positively impacts voting intentions. The study also examines the interaction effects of enculturation and acculturation orientations on the relationship between socialization and political involvement. The study's findings point to a positive moderating role of acculturation in this relationship but a negative one for enculturation. The study is the first to investigate simultaneously the drivers of socialization on social networking sites in the context of immigrant consumers and the impact of their socialization on political involvement and voting intention. The research further contributes to the scholarly work by exploring the interaction effects of acculturation and enculturation orientation. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

**Keywords:** Political involvement, Social networking sites, Acculturation orientation, Voting intentions

## **1. Introduction**

Social networking sites (SNSs) assist peers, consumers and firms with communication and building relationships (Tang et al., 2015). Extensive academic research addresses social media in a wide range of contexts (e.g., Ellison and Boyd, 2013; Kapoor et al., 2017; Kruikemeier et al., 2016; Lindridge et al., 2015; Muhammad et al., 2017). Findings suggest that SNSs satisfy users' socializing needs (Park, Kang, Chung and Song, 2009), assist them in building social capital (Ellison et al., 2007; Park et al., 2015), make it more likely that they will participate in civic life (Boulianne, 2015), and encourage them to engage in political behaviour (i.e., participation, involvement, voting). Individuals use social media for a range of social purposes and spread messages through social influence and information-sharing online. The online environment relates positively to group membership, involvement and

political activity (Kwak et al., 2006; Taveesin and Brown, 2006), and research's examination of the impact on voting of a range of online activities, including the intensity of Internet use (Valenzuela, Park and Lee, 2009), concludes that the effect of online participation depends on the features of the political system (Anduiza et al., 2010) and that sharing news online contributes to voters' political knowledge (Beam et al., 2016).

However, little is known about the role of networking sites in immigrant consumers' political engagement. However, the significant growth in cultural diversity (Laroche and Jamal, 2015; Jamal, 2003; 2005) affects and shapes many institutions, including educational institutions, which must cope with a multicultural student body and staff, and public policy-makers, who must assess the impact of ethnic diversity on housing, education and health requirements. With migration levels across Europe rising and the increasing use of social media (Eurostat, 2015), research has not yet revealed the antecedents and outcomes of immigrant consumers' use of SNSs.

In addition, while SNSs have the potential to play a significant role in immigrant consumers' acculturation, to what extent these consumers' use of these sites triggers political engagement remains unknown. Acculturation refers to learning a new culture by interacting with another culture frequently over time (Laroche and Jamal, 2015). Research reports that immigrant consumers learn consumer skills and culturally appropriate behaviours while interacting with acculturation agents like family members, friends, institutions like schools and churches (Askegaard et al., 2005; Jamal, 2003; Peñaloza, 1994; Wamwara-Mbugua et al., 2005). Consumer acculturation occurs in the everyday experiences that involve family, work, online and offline media, and social interactions, so it relates to the relationships that immigrant consumers develop and the degree to which they engage with their heritage cultures and host cultures, including the degree to which they are willing to contribute to the host society's civic life. Although Kizgin et al. (2018) report that social media is a vital driver

of culture change, acculturation strategies and consumption choices among immigrant consumers, acculturation research does not investigate the role of acculturation orientations in explaining political engagement among immigrant consumers, specifically in the context of their use of SNSs.

The present research fills this gap in the literature by raising two key research questions: a) To what extent does immigrant consumers' use of SNSs meet their socialization needs inside and outside their own communities and enhance civic and political engagement? b) What are the roles of acculturation and enculturation in influencing immigrant consumers' political involvement and voting intentions? Inspired by theories of social media use (Ellison et al., 2007, 2013; Park et al., 2009), theories of consumers' political engagement (Gibson et al., 2005; Gil de Zuniga et al., 2012) and theories of consumer acculturation (Askegaard et al., 2005; Laroche and Jamal, 2015), the present research models the role of propensity to share information, intensity of use, and privacy concerns as predictors of socialization, which impacts political involvement and voting intentions. The research also investigates the moderating roles of acculturation and enculturation in the relationship between socialization and political involvement.

The remainder of the paper is organized into six sections. In the next section, the literature is reviewed, and a conceptual model is presented. Then, a number of hypotheses are developed. Next, the research method is described, along with the results of applying the conceptual model. The discussion and contributions are detailed thereafter, and finally, a conclusion and suggestions for future research are provided.

## **2. Literature review**

Our conceptual framework is based on a review of the literature on social media use, political engagement and consumer acculturation. We first discuss the literature on the use of SNSs

and acculturation and then present the conceptual model developed for this study, including a discussion of each of the hypotheses.

### *2.1 Social networking sites*

SNSs help to fulfill the human need to build and maintain relationships with others, communicate, seek information, and socialize. SNSs have emerged as an important tool in developing and maintaining social relationships through the exchange of ideas and opinions (Ellison and Boyd, 2013; Ellison et al., 2007; Erkan and Evans, 2016). The use of SNSs can also enhance one's social capital (Ellison et al., 2007).

A range of online communication channels, including those for interpersonal communication (e.g., Twitter, Facebook), content communities (e.g., Wikipedia) and multimedia platforms (e.g., YouTube, Instagram) make it possible for users to connect and to develop and maintain social and business relationships through the exchange of information, ideas and opinions (e.g., Ellison and Boyd, 2013; Ellison et al., 2007; Filieri et al., 2015). SNSs are used for sharing information, knowledge, opinions, and photographs and videos (Park et al., 2015).

Research finds that online exposure affects political engagement and influences political participation (Boulianne, 2015; Choi and Lee, 2016; Gibson and Cantijoch, 2013). Studies show the impact on political involvement of using SNSs (Park et al., 2009). However, only a few studies investigate immigrant consumers' use of SNSs. For example, Kizgin et al. (2018) find that SNSs allow immigrant consumers to interact with a range of cultures, including their heritage cultures and their host cultures, and Lie and Tsai (2015) find that acculturation is supported by use of SNSs. However, no study has investigated the extent to which the use of SNSs triggers political involvement and voting intentions.

The present study complements these studies by examining the antecedents of online socialization and its impact on political involvement and voting intentions. The study

explores the role of cultural orientation (i.e., acculturation) in immigrants consumers' political engagement and voting intentions.

## *2.2 Cultural Orientation – Enculturation and Acculturation*

Acculturation theories (Askegaard et al., 2005; Berry, 2005; Peñaloza, 1994) explain how, why and to what extent immigrant consumers retain their ancestral cultures, adopt their host country's culture or develop a new culture that differs from both. Immigrant consumers' cultural expression and disposition are both dichotomous and inconsistent. Stayman and Deshpande's (1989) empirical data suggest that consumers' sense of ethnic identity is not independent of their current situation, so acculturation can be facilitated or hindered by the degree of similarity between the host and immigrant cultures (Rudmin, 2003). Acculturation scholarship has moved from a unidimensional perspective to a bi-dimensional concept in which consumers can simultaneously retain their ancestral cultures (i.e., enculturate) and adopt the host country's culture (i.e., acculturate) (Dey et al., 2017; Schwartz and Zamboanga, 2008).

An emerging stream of research suggests that social media can be an important vehicle for an acculturation process that is influenced by multidimensional and multifaceted cultural orientations (Forbush and Foucault-Welles, 2016) and may reinforce in-group interactions (Phillipps, 2008). Research also suggests that group behaviour is more important than individual behaviour (Park et al., 2009) and that social interactions are important indicators of the state of acculturation (Kizgin et al., 2017; Laroche et al., 1998) to the extent that they open the possibility of connecting immigrants to the global community and the host culture. Research also shows that social media supports immigrants' cultural orientation and decisions concerning whether to acculturate (Li and Tsai, 2015).

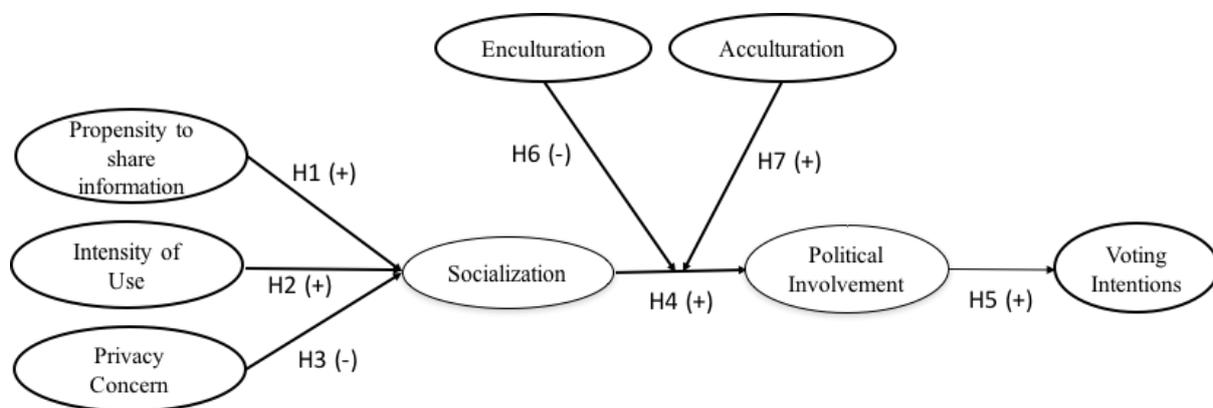
When immigrant consumers face discrimination in a host society, they may hold tight to their ethnic identities and favour an enculturation orientation (e.g., Berry and Hou, 2017), so

discrimination discourages a sense of belonging in the host culture and reduces immigrants' wellbeing, strengthening the desire to maintain the heritage culture. Alternatively, immigrant consumers may believe that the host society values and rewards hard work, promotes justice, safety and equality for all (Kizgin et al., 2017). Consequently, they may favour acculturation orientation contributing positively to the host society's civic life and political system.

### 3. Research Model Development and Hypotheses Formulation

#### 3.1 Conceptual Model

The present research examines the extent to which immigrant consumers' use of SNSs impacts their socialization and political engagement. Figure 1, which presents the conceptual model of immigrants' voting intentions, suggests that socialization and political involvement is positively related to voting intentions. Socialization is influenced by the propensity to share information, intensity of SNS use and privacy concerns. As the model shows, the relationship between socialization and political involvement is moderated by cultural orientation, that is, the degree of acculturation. In line with Kim and Lee (2011), Leong and Kim (2017), and Sheldon (2008) we conceptualize the propensity to share, intensity of SNS use and privacy concerns as antecedents of socialization. The proposed relationships and hypotheses are discussed in detail in the next section.



**Figure 1 – Proposed Research Model**

### 3.2 Motivations for Online Socialization

Online socialization refers to when individuals participate in SNSs to satisfy socializing needs and become interested in meeting and talking with specific others and in getting peer support, both of which develop a sense of community (Park et al., 2009). Online socialization is recognized as a key driver in building social capital (Ellison et al., 2007; Park et al., 2015), which Bourdieu (1985, 0. 248) defined as “*the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition.*” Individuals use their social capital to establish strong ties and develop close relationships (Putnam, 2000) in both online and offline contexts.

Common outcomes of the use of SNSs include social connection and interaction (Brandtzaeg and Heim, 2009; Raacke and Bonds-Raacke, 2008). Users of SNSs feel highly motivated (Leung, 2013) to invest time and engage with people of similar interests and shared values (Elliot and Yusuf, 2014). Jarvenpaa and Stapels (2000, p. 135) define the propensity to share information as “a personal norm reflecting the costs and benefits of sharing.” The propensity to share has been reported as motivation for using SNSs like Facebook (Park et al., 2015; Sheldon, 2008). Kim and Lee (2011) find that the need to share information and receive social support are predictors of using SNSs. Consumer socialization through peer communication and SNSs has become a significant marketing issue with the increasing popularity of social media (Wang et al., 2012). Christofides et al. (2009) argue that disclosing information on SNSs is an important aspect of building relationships with others, while Wolny and Mueller (2013) reveal that those who have a high need for social interaction (i.e., propensity to interact and share information) engage more frequently in electronic word-of-mouth than do those who are not motivated by such factors. Based on this discussion, we present our first hypothesis as follows:

H1: An individual's propensity to share information is positively related to the use of SNSs.

An individual's use of SNSs may vary based on the extent to which he or she perceives such sites as personally relevant. The core of intensity of use refers to the degree to which SNS use is driven by the need to satisfy interpersonal relationships (Papacharissi and Rubin, 2000). Kim and Lee (2011) report that the desire for social support and information predicts the amount of an individual's SNS use. Shah et al. (2002) find that the effects between time spent online and social engagement is positive and is associated with civic engagement. In an organisational context, using SNSs may provide employees a sense of social interaction (Moqbel et al., 2013). Exploring Facebook users from different countries and backgrounds in university settings, Yu et al. (2010) argue that international students use Facebook more than others do because they want to be seen as those who understand university culture, norms, policies and educational goals. Based on this discussion, we propose our next hypothesis:

H2: An individual's intensity of use of SNSs is positively related to the need for online socialization.

Privacy concerns by users of SNSs may be raised when they are concerned that their personal information will be used without their permission or knowledge (Park et al., 2015). Recent media reports concerning the misuse of millions of Facebook users' private data for political purposes illustrate such concerns. Concerns are raised when users are not able to control the use of their information. Leong and Kim (2017) show that SNS users' privacy concerns are influenced by posts made by others on their Facebook timelines. Therefore, a user may exercise caution when posting materials and socialize less because they fear that their information may be used by others for purposes with which they do not agree. Accordingly, we state our next hypothesis as:

H3: Users' privacy concerns are negatively related to online socialization.

### *3.3 Socialization and Political Involvement*

Newman and Sheth (1985) address the importance of the process of making voting decisions, emphasizing why voters behave as they do. Scholarly interest in understanding political engagement increased with the arrival of the Internet. Studies show that online activities influence civic engagement, such as seeking civic information on SNSs (Gil de Zuniga et al., 2012), seeking information to improve political knowledge (Beam et al., 2016), and political participation (Holt et al., 2013). Involvement refers to the extent to which the consumer views the focal object (Evans et al., 2009) (e.g., elections and the political process) as a meaningful and engaging object in his or her life. Exposure to online networks (e.g., Facebook friends) is positively related to an individuals' political activities (Park et al., 2009), so it is expected that online socialization enhances the personal relevance of civic and political engagement. Hence, we state our next hypothesis as:

H4: Online socialization is positively related to political involvement.

### *3.4 Political Involvement and Voting Intention*

This study defines voting intention as a person's desire to vote for a particular candidate or party (Rachmat, 2010). In the consumer behavior literature, Fishbein (1967) argues that experiences result in beliefs, that is, that interactions with others lead to the formation of beliefs. The underlying assumption is that, the more favorable an individual's beliefs about a focal object (e.g., politics), the more likely it is that the individual will perform positive behavior related to that object, such as voting for a candidate in an election. Studies report a positive association between political involvement and voting (e.g., Choi and Lee, 2015; Park et al., 2009; O'Cass, 2003). In the context of immigrants, research shows that immigrants' involvement and voting intentions are influenced by their political engagement in their country of origin. For example, Wals (2011) finds that an interest in Mexican politics is positively related to Mexican immigrants' voting intentions in the US. Immigrants' voting intentions are also likely to be influenced by their personal networks' intentions to vote

(Rolfe, 2012) and by the culture of political engagement in their country of origin. Therefore, we state our next hypothesis as:

H5: Political involvement is positively related to voting intentions.

### *3.5 The Moderating Roles of Acculturation and Enculturation*

SNSs offer substantial opportunities for immigrant consumers to get involved in politics, even when they had little interest in politics in their home countries. This view is supported by a study of UK citizens' political engagement that shows that Internet experience increases political involvement more than offline engagement does (Gibson et al., 2005). The study also finds that groups that are difficult to reach are encouraged by those who were highly engaged and highly active on SNSs.

Ethnic minorities in a complicated, multi-ethnic marketplace may feel vulnerable and so seek to grow affinity and empathy with others who are similar to themselves (Sarpong and MacLean, 2015). Support, linkages and cooperation among community members are natural outcomes that can empower members.

Social capital can affect the practice and strategies of ethnic acculturation (Anderson et al., 2004). Berry and Hou (2017) claim that ethnic groups' assimilation relates to their well-being as well as discrimination. However, social capital in the ethnic population also affects where these groups choose to resettle (Sue et al., 2018) and their resulting acculturation (Dey et al., 2017). Resilient social bonds and links within an ethnic group can also be a hindrance to cross-community communication and assimilation. 'Little Istanbul' or 'Little India' in large-metropolitan Western cities are culturally isolated neighbourhoods whose residents may have little or no aspiration to interact with or assimilate into the wider society. Hence, cross-community social capital needs to be established to address obstacles to acculturation and ethnic obscurity. In the context of voting, we argue that the link between socialization and political involvement is positive for acculturated individuals and negative for enculturated

individuals, as social capital is related to civic engagement (Campbell et al., 1999). Accordingly, we propose our final set of hypotheses:

H6: Enculturation negatively moderates the relationship between online socialization and political involvement.

H7: Acculturation positively moderates the relationship between online socialization and political involvement.

## **4 Research Method**

### *4.1 Sample and Data Collection*

This data considers the largest non-Western Turkish-Dutch ethnic group in the Netherlands, which represented more than 300,000 potential voters for the general elections held in 2017. Stratified sampling collected 514 completed self-administered questionnaires recruited from Markteffect, a leading research company.

Stratified sampling was used to improve the precision of the random sample (Lavrakas, 2008). The population of immigrants in the larger cities of the Netherlands is used to ensure accuracy in the representativeness of the sample. Stratification based on a characteristic reduces variability in the resulting population estimates and ensures a representative Turkish-Dutch sample, especially when the characteristic is related to the measurement of interest (Lavrakas, 2008).

Potential respondents were asked, “Do you have a Turkish background?” and of those who answered in the positive, 54.1 percent were male. Most (66%) were born in the Netherlands (n=337), while 32 percent were born in Turkey (n=166) and the remaining 2 percent were born in other European countries (n=11). The sample is well diversified in terms of age, occupation, education and location within the Netherlands. These elements in the sample are representative of the target population, Turkish-Dutch.

### *4.2 Survey Instrument/Measures*

The items in this study are drawn from the literature. Socialization items are adopted from Park et al. (2009), items that measured the propensity to share information and those that measure privacy concerns are from Park et al. (2009), and items for intensity of SNS use are from Ellison et al. (2007). Political involvement was measured using four items adapted from O’Cass (2004). Voting intentions items are from Rachmat (2010). All items were scored on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” through “neutral” to “strongly agree.”

Acculturation of the host culture and enculturation of the heritage culture were measured using twenty items. The questions were based on Arends-Tóth and van de Vijver’s (2007) “two-statement method”; the first one assesses the respondent’s behaviour regarding his or her own ethnic heritage (e.g., “I often spend most of my social time with Turkish people”), and the second one assesses the respondent’s behaviour in relation to the host culture (e.g., “I often spend most of my social time with Dutch people”).

Table 1 shows the constructs examined in this study, their definitions, and the source of the the items used to measure it.

**Table 1: Construct summary**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scale Source</b>
Propensity to Share	SNSs are used for sharing information, information, opinions, and photos and videos. Propensity to Share is defined as “a personal norm reflecting the costs and benefits of sharing” (Jarvenpaa and Staples, 2000, p. 135). The theory originates from Emerson’s (1962) view that one’s interest in evaluating the potential costs and benefits of any exchange with others is to obtain value from that exchange.	Park, Jun and Lee (2015)
Intensity of Use	Intensity of Use of SNSs refers to the degree to which the use is integrated into one’s everyday life. The core of Intensity of Use is the importance of Internet-based links with social capital (social ties). Social capital refers to “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 248).	Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe (2007)
Privacy Concerns	The Privacy Concerns of SSN users may be raised when users are concerned about their personal information’s being used without their permission or knowledge. Privacy Concerns refer to “a concern for controlling the acquisition and subsequent use of [private] information” (Westin, 1967).	Park, Jun and Lee (2015)
Socialization	Socialization is defined as the degree to which individuals participate in SNSs to satisfy socializing needs and are interested in meeting and talking with others, getting peer support, and having a sense of community.	Park, Kang, Chung and Song (2009)
Enculturation/Acculturation	Enculturation refers to the process of learning about one’s heritage and culture (Schwartz, and Zamboanga, 2008). Acculturation refers to “cultural change that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural systems .... It may be the consequences of direct cultural transmission; it may be derived from non-culture causes, such as ecological or demographic modifications induced by an impinging culture; it may be delayed, as with internal adjustments following the acceptance of alien traits or patterns, or it may be a reactive adaptation of traditional modes of life. Its dynamics can be seen as the selective adaptation of value systems, the processes of integration and differentiation, the generation of developmental sequences, and the operation of role determinants and personality factors” (Social Science Research Council, 1954, as cited in Peñaloza, 1989, p.111).	Arends-Tóth and van de Vijver (2007)
Political Involvement	Involvement refers to the extent to which the consumer views the focal object (i.e., elections) as a central part of his or her life, a meaningful and engaging object in his or her life, and important to him or her. Research finds that involvement affects voters’ knowledge, confidence and preferences (Burton and Netemeyer, 1992).	O’Cass (2004)
Voting Intentions	Voting intention is defined as a person’s desire to vote for a particular candidate or party.	Rachmat (2010)

## **5. Data Analysis and Results**

The theoretical concept of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is represented in the measurement model's reliability and validity. The Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) model is presented to evaluate the conceptual model developed in this study, and the results of the hypothesised relationships are used to evaluate the model.

### *5.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis*

CFA and SEM are used to test the theories and hypotheses. Based on the results provided by the three assessment criteria (standardized factor loading, average variance extracted (AVE) and reliability score) (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) and the critical ratios (CRs) provide satisfactory evidence to confirm the validity of the measurement model (Table 2). The factor loadings of  $>0.4$  are significant, and no cross-loading provides evidence of convergent validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) for the sample size in this study. The modification indices do not reveal any misspecifications associated with the pairing of error terms (Hair et al., 2010). The AVEs for all constructs are above the cut-off point of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2010), with the AVE between 0.545 and 0.822 (Table 2). This assessment establishes convergent validity for all constructs used in the research model. The composite reliability values for each construct exceed the threshold value of 0.70 (Field, 2000). Comparing the square root of the AVE for each construct with the inter-construct squared correlations for the other corresponding constructs indicates that the square root of the AVE for all constructs is always greater than the inter-correlation estimates for the other corresponding constructs, which supports the discriminant validity of all constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Based on the results of the standardized factor loading, AVEs and reliability scores, there is evidence of the measurement model's validity.

Following Marsh, Wen and Hau's (2004) recommendation, the unconstrained approach is conducted to detect interaction effects. The product variables (Enculturation  $\times$  Socialization, Acculturation  $\times$  Socialization) serve as indicators of the interaction variable. The model does

not impose any constraints derived from the multivariate normality assumption (Marsh et al., 2004). However, since the approach does not take into account the effects of multicollinearity on model fit, multi-collinearity issues and common method bias are assessed. The variance inflation factor for each value is below the threshold of 3 (O'Brien, 2007), indicating no serious multicollinearity problems. To avoid problems related to common method bias, Harman's single factor test was applied, which determines whether all variables can be accounted for by one latent factor. Variance of 35.04 percent was recorded by a single factor, so no factor's variance is more than 50 percent, a threshold recommended by Podsakoff et al. (2003), who also point out that Harman's test may be inadequate. Therefore, a common method factor evaluates whether the measurement model is strong enough with regard to common method variance. The results show that an average explained variance of the indicators of 0.69, whereas the average method-based variance is 0.03, indicating a small method variance. The outcomes of the common method bias tests, supported by correlations, indicate that it does not pose any concerns about the measurement model or the results of this research.

The measurement model indicates a good overall fit (Parsimony fit  $\chi^2/df= 2.710$ ; Adjusted Goodness of Fit (AGFI) = 0.888; CFI = 0.960; Incremental Fit Index (IFI) = 0.960 and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.05).

**Table 2: Item Loadings**

	Standardized Loadings	CR (Critical Ratio)	Mean Values
<b>Propensity to Share</b>			
<b>(<math>\alpha=0.867</math>, Composite reliability=0.868, AVE=0.688)</b>			
I share my knowledge and experiences with others voluntarily on social networking sites.	0.792	fixed	4.362
I exchange information and data with others regularly on social networking sites.	0.874	20.782	4.381
I frequently share new information and my knowledge with others on social networking sites.	0.820	19.606	4.574
<b>Intensity of Use</b>			
<b>(<math>\alpha=0.793</math>, Composite reliability=0.790, AVE=0.557)</b>			
I feel I am part of the online social networking community.	0.780	fixed	3.889
I feel out of touch when I haven't logged onto a social networking site for a while.	0.703	15.515	4.002
I feel proud when I tell people I am on a social networking site.	0.754	16.706	4.444
<b>Privacy Concern</b>			
<b>(<math>\alpha=0.895</math>, Composite reliability=0.896, AVE=0.741)</b>			
I am concerned that unknown parties have access to my private information on social networking sites.	0.889	fixed	4.553
I am concerned that my private information on social networking sites may be misused.	0.867	24.327	4.691
I am concerned about the negative consequences of unknown parties' accessing my private information on social networking sites.	0.825	22.963	4.825
<b>Socialization</b>			
<b>(<math>\alpha=0.826</math>, Composite reliability=0.827, AVE=0.545)</b>			
I talk about things with others while using social networking sites.	0.704	fixed	4.399
I feel like I belong to a community while using social networking sites.	0.791	16.154	4.411
I meet interesting people while using social networking sites.	0.731	15.055	4.321
I get peer support from others while using social networking sites.	0.725	14.949	4.523
<b>Political Involvement</b>			
<b>(<math>\alpha=0.932</math>, Composite reliability=0.910, AVE=0.671)</b>			
Dutch politics is a relevant part of my life.	0.847	fixed	4.081
Dutch politics is significant to me.	0.903	26.828	4.191
I am involved in Dutch politics.	0.821	23.224	3.934
I am interested in Dutch politics.	0.865	25.368	4.191
Dutch politics means a lot to me.	0.851	24.084	4.081
<b>Voting Intentions</b>			
<b>(<math>\alpha=0.948</math>, Composite reliability=0.949, AVE=0.822)</b>			
I am planning to vote in upcoming general elections in the Netherlands.	0.870	fixed	4.840
I am likely to vote in upcoming general elections in the Netherlands.	0.928	31.419	4.905
I intend to vote in upcoming general elections in the Netherlands.	0.945	32.657	4.947
I will probably vote in upcoming general elections in the Netherlands.	0.881	28.100	4.982

**Table 2: Item Loadings**

	Standardized Loadings	CR (Critical Ratio)	Mean Values
<b>Ethnic cultural engagement - Enculturation</b>			
<b>(<math>\alpha=0.948</math>, Composite reliability=<math>0.937</math>, AVE=<math>0.598</math>)</b>			
I spend most of my social time with Turkish people.	0.576	fixed	3.655
I often ask for help/advice from Turkish students/colleagues.	0.635	9.500	3.630
I frequently eat with Turkish friends/colleagues.	0.631	9.463	3.707
I often participate in Turkish public celebrations.	0.627	9.416	3.829
My preference is to speak Turkish most of the time.	0.692	10.070	3.213
I often speak Turkish with my Turkish friends.	0.697	10.113	3.456
I often speak Turkish with my parents and other family members.	0.559	8.667	3.503
I often attend Turkish cultural performances (e.g., theatres and concerts).	0.712	10.254	3.227
I often watch Turkish movies.	0.604	9.174	3.414
I often listen to Turkish music.	0.561	8.696	3.503
<b>Dutch cultural engagement - Acculturation</b>			
<b>(<math>\alpha=0.938</math>, Composite reliability=<math>0.917</math>, AVE=<math>0.528</math>)</b>			
I spend most of my social time with Dutch people.	0.475	fixed	4.025
I often ask for help/advice from Dutch students/colleagues.	0.453	7.645	4.052
I frequently eat with Dutch friends/colleagues.	0.451	7.852	4.008
I often participate in Dutch public celebrations.	0.433	6.157	4.166
My preference is to speak Dutch most of the time.	0.592	7.422	3.445
I often speak Dutch with Turkish friends.	0.603	7.493	3.903
I often speak Dutch with my parents and other family members.	0.501	6.834	3.547
I often attend Dutch cultural performances (theatres and concerts).	0.521	6.916	3.945
I often watch Dutch-language movies.	0.584	7.370	3.356
I often listen to Dutch music.	0.621	7.604	3.506

## 5.2 Structural Equation Modelling

Structural equation analysis using AMOS 22 is used to assess the relationships among the latent variables (Figure 1 and Table 3). The analysis confirms that the factor structure is an appropriate representation of the underlying data. A review of the output that is related to the initial model reveals an error variance with fairly large Modification Indices (MIs) ( $=172.779$ ) associated with *propensity to share* and *intensity of use*. MIs relate to the covariances and provide clear evidence of potential misspecification associated with the pairing of error terms (Byrne, 2009). The parameter-change statistic of *propensity to share* to *intensity of use* is 0.671.

The additional parameters in the model depends on their meaning and the adequate fit of the model. Park et al. (2015) find a positive relationship between *Propensity to Share* and *Intensity of Use*. Considering the parameter-change statistics, the argument for including this

path provides theoretical justification for the modification. The goodness of fit statistics show a good fit, given the large sample size of 514 (Hair et al., 2010): parsimony fit  $\chi^2/df = 2.530$ , AGFI = 0.89, CFI = 0.96 IFI= 0.96 and RMSEA = 0.05. The structural model accounts for 39 percent of the variance in respondents' voting intentions.

**Table 3: Structural Model Estimates**

	Estimates	Std. Error	C.R.	p	St. Estimates
H1 Propensity to Share → Socialization	0.152	0.051	2.971	0.003	0.190
H2 Intensity of Use → Socialization	0.609	0.065	9.322	0.000	0.728
H3 Privacy Concerns → Socialization	0.078	0.025	3.049	0.002	0.105
H8 Propensity to Share → Intensity of Use	0.694	0.048	14.420	0.000	0.724
H4 Socialization → Voting Involvement	0.484	0.067	7.219	0.000	0.354
H6 Interaction Enculturation	-0.118	0.055	-2.148	0.032	-0.091
H7 Interaction Acculturation	0.178	0.053	3.377	0.000	0.144
H5 Voting Involvement → Voting Intentions	0.691	0.049	14.126	0.000	0.621
Propensity to Share → Intensity of Use	0.694	0.048	14.420	0.000	0.724

Goodness-of-fit statistics of the model:

*Chi square*=1133.549

*degrees of freedom (df)*=448, *p*=0.000

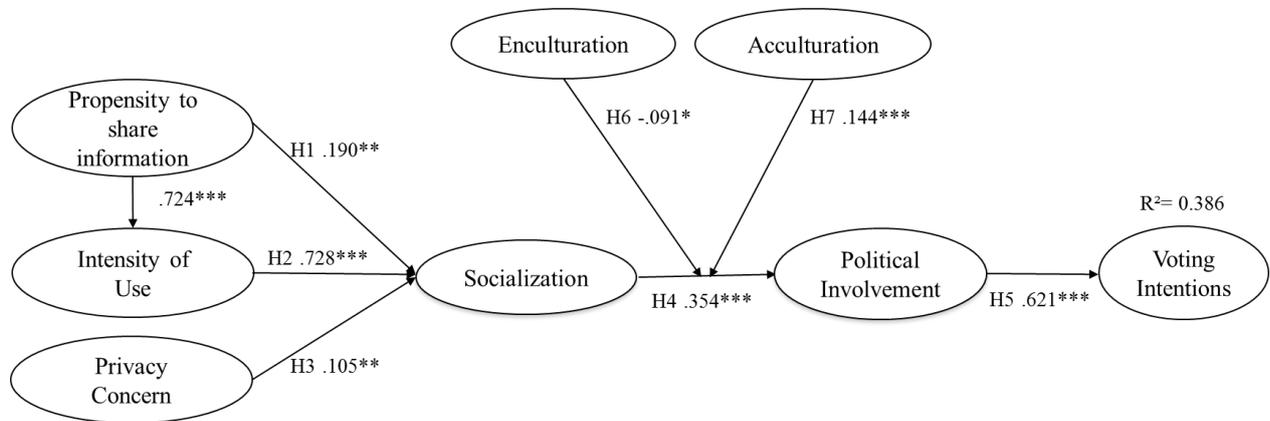
$\chi^2/df$ =2.530

*Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)*=0.892

*Comparative-Fit-Index (CFI)*=0.955

*Incremental Fit Index (IFI)*=0.956

*Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)*=0.055



**Figure 2: Structural Equation Model**

Reviewing the structural parameter estimates (Table 3) shows that all paths are significant. The analysis reveals a significant positive influence of *Propensity to Share* ( $\beta=0.19$   $p=0.003$ ) and *Intensity of Use* ( $\beta=0.73$   $p=0.000$ ) on *Socialization*, so H1 and H2 are accepted. The additional structural path between *Propensity to Share* and *Intensity of Use* was investigated theoretically post hoc. The additional path (i.e., the post hoc model modification) shows a

significant and positive relationship ( $\beta=0.72$   $p=0.000$ ). The relationship between *Privacy Concern* and *Socialization* is positive and significant ( $\beta=0.11$   $p=0.002$ ), so H3 is accepted, although with a reverse effect.

*Socialization* has a significant and positive influence on *Political Involvement* ( $\beta=0.35$   $p=0.000$ ), so H4 finds support. *Political Involvement* has a positive and significant influence on *Voting Intentions* ( $\beta=0.62$   $p=0.000$ ), so H5 is accepted. As for moderation, the relationship between *Socialization* and *Political Involvement* is positive and significant for *Acculturation* ( $\beta=0.14$   $p=0.000$ ) and negative for *Enculturation* ( $\beta=-0.09$   $p=0.032$ ), so the study finds support for H6 and H7.

## **6. Discussion**

A literature review was used to develop a conceptual model of immigrants' voting intentions, which includes a multidimensional concept of socialization. This research points to the potential and the consequences of using SNSs to engage immigrant voters politically. The empirical model's contribution is to support the implementation of political-engagement strategies that are specific to the immigrant voters who are a growing subgroup in the Netherlands and across Europe. The results highlight the vital role of cultural orientation (i.e., enculturation and acculturation) and suggest activities and initiatives to encourage the involvement and political participation of this growing voter base.

The study examines the relationships of the propensity to share information, intensity of use, and privacy concerns with socialization, political involvement and voting intentions. The study covers the moderating role of cultural orientation, including enculturation and acculturation, in the relationship between socialization and political involvement. The unique contribution of this research is information about how immigrants' use of SNSs relates to their online socialization, political involvement, voting intentions and the extent to which these relationships are impacted by the acculturation process. Therefore, a key contribution of

this research is clarification of the links between online context (online socialization, including its key motivations) and offline context (involvement in Dutch politics, voting intentions, and acculturation and enculturation).

### *6.1 Theoretical Contribution*

The study finds that the propensity to share plays a significant role in predicting online socialization, such as a sense of belonging to a community and getting peer support on-line (e.g., Sheldon, 2008). The result implies that propensity to share generates a desire to seek social support via the use of SNS (Kim et al., 2011; Wolny and Mueller, 2013).

As this study's findings suggest, immigrants maintain relationships with others as part of SNSs. The findings confirm that intensity of use strengthens the expected direction of socialization (Ellison et al., 2007; Park et al., 2015). The additional strength and significance of the path that comprises the propensity to share and intensity of use suggests that immigrant users connect and bond by sharing news, increasing their socialization (Elliot and Yusuf, 2014). Specifically, the intensity of use and intention to share may be the foundation for creating online social relationships.

The data analysis shows that privacy concerns, referring to an individual's awareness of risks, is a positive antecedent of socialization, so this concern does not appear to be at the expense of socialization (Tan et al., 2011). We concur with the research that argues that privacy concerns do not necessarily reduce the use of SNSs (Gross and Acquisti, 2005) if there is a perception of privacy protection (Shin, 2010). While unexpected, the finding is in line with Leong and Kim (2017), who report that privacy concerns are related to others, rather than to the self. Therefore, although users may have privacy concerns, they do not necessarily affect their online socialization (i.e., building and maintaining relationships) (Dwyer et al., 2007). This finding has implications for the media debate about the role of users' data in political advertising.

The study shows that socialization is a significant force in determining immigrants' political involvement, motivated by joining social networks and enhancing relationships (Ellison et al., 2007). According to O'Cass (2004), involvement refers to the extent of the voters' view that voting is meaningful and important in their lives, which is in line with Park et al.'s (2009) finding that the use of SNSs is an indication political interest and involvement. Hence, this study extends past research in suggesting that socialization is an important force behind political involvement (Park et al., 2009).

Another contribution of this study is its finding that enculturation negatively moderates the link between socialization and political involvement. Therefore, enculturation (i.e., when immigrants tend to socialize with people of their own cultural background, prefer to speak their own ethnic language, and engage with their own media) weakens the positive effect of socialization on political involvement, and networking on SNSs do not impact political involvement to the extent it would without a preference for enculturation. On the other hand, acculturation positively moderates the link between socialization and political involvement, so acculturation (i.e., when immigrants tend to socialize with people with the host country's cultural background, prefer to speak the host country's language and engage with the host culture's media) strengthens the positive effect of socialization on political involvement. In other words, online socialization via SNSs more strongly impacts political involvement than it would have done without the preference for acculturation. Based on these findings, we contend that immigrant consumers who have an acculturation orientation are more likely to be politically involved and active after using SNSs than are those who have an enculturation orientation.

In the context of ethnic consumers' acculturation, these findings contribute to existing scholarly work (Kizgin et al., 2018; Li and Tsai (2015) that provides insights into the role of culture in explaining immigrant consumer behaviour.

The current study's findings indicate that political involvement positively affects voting intentions, although enculturated voters do not tend to be as interested in political engagement as acculturated voters are. O'Cass (2002) finds that the degree of an individual's political involvement affects his or her choice of both candidate and party. The strong relationship between political involvement and voting intentions indicates that acculturated voters' involvement in political activities in the Netherlands have a strong influence on their intention to vote in the country's elections.

The key contribution of this study—made through its empirical findings and the presentation and testing of a conceptual model that combines antecedents, SNSs, political involvement, acculturation, enculturation and immigrants' voting intentions—is to research on political engagement (Table 4). The data supports the notion that immigrant consumers are influenced through the friendships and associations (i.e., social capital) they develop on SNSs. As such, social capital, which refers to a sense of identity and friendship with community members, represents an agent of culture change (Peñaloza, 1994) and influences ethnic consumers with patterns of culture-specific consumption (or, in this case, political involvement).

**Table 4: Summary**

Concepts	Literature	Contribution of the current study
<p>Predictors of Socialization  <i>Propensity to share (H1)</i>  <i>Intensity of use (H2)</i>  <i>Privacy concerns (H3)</i></p>	<p>The predictors of socialization are hypothesized in H1, H2 and H3.                      Previous studies show a positive effect of propensity to share and intensity of use on socialization, whilst privacy concerns have a negative effect on socialization (e.g., Ellison et al., 2007; Kim et al., 2011; Leong and Kim, 2017; Park et al., 2015; Sheldon, 2008; Wolny and Mueller, 2013).</p>	<p>The findings contribute to a multidimensional concept of motivations for socialization and provide a foundation for online social relationships.                      The findings and analysis show that privacy concerns do not negatively affect socialization.</p>
<p>Socialization's influence on Political involvement (H4)                      Acculturation orientation (H6 and H7)</p>	<p>The use of SNSs is a force of political engagement (O'Cass, 2004; Park et al., 2009)</p>	<p>The findings confirm those of extant research. The study's contribution is the finding that ethnic voters' political engagement is shaped and characterised by cultural orientation such that civic engagement is subject to cultural influences (i.e., enculturation and acculturation).</p>
<p>Voting intentions (H5)</p>	<p>Political involvement effects voting (O'Cass, 2004) such that the higher one's political involvement, higher one' voting intentions.</p>	<p>This study examines online socialization's (i.e., enculturation and acculturation) effect on political engagement.</p>

## *6.2 Implications for Practice and Policy*

Understanding immigrants' political engagement is much debated in political science (e.g., Strijbis, 2014; Wass et al., 2015). The present study adds to that debate by applying its principles to the effect of social media and cultural orientation on immigrants' voting intentions. While some of the literature focuses on how and why individuals use online resources, some focuses on civic and political engagement. The present study's findings benefit politicians and guide governments by helping to explain the motivations of immigrant voters and the challenges of reaching them.

Immigrants are a significant segment of the political arena in Western countries, and the findings of this study demonstrate that their socialization and political involvement positively impact their voting intentions. The community of Turkish-Dutch voters appears to be influenced by both heritage and their host culture (Askegaard and Arnould, 2005). Turkish immigrants are the largest non-Western ethnic group in the Netherlands (CBS, 2015), whose multicultural policies from as early as the early 1970s acknowledge cultural and religious differences (Vasta, 2007). However, developments in the Netherlands since the 1990s, such as "Islamization" (Meijer, 2013), oppose the established integration-policy, causing political change in the country. The elections in March 2017 included the first political party ("Denk") of non-white people, which was founded by two Turkish-Dutch politicians. The party's goal is to mobilize immigrant communities (Otjes and Krouwel, 2018). In the elections for Parliament, Denk won 3 of 150 seats, and 7 Turkish-Dutch politicians were among the 11 ethnic politicians elected to the House of Representatives. Political marketers interested in targeting Turkish-Dutch voters may find this research useful. We expand the research on immigrants' voting intentions to an online setting and provide valuable information about the role of media, depending upon the context of the consumption.

## *6.3 Limitations and Future Research*

Like all research, the present study has several limitations. It focuses on social media and political engagement, as political participation online influences voting behaviour (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2012). However, it does not examine how attitudes of host society toward immigration and discrimination inform immigrant voters' political engagement and preferences. Future research could use online political participation to examine the interplay between cultural orientation and social media users. Future research could also include other constructs for conceptualizing immigrants' social media use and reassess its impact on the various dimensions of social capital. In addition, this study used structural equation modelling to test the main effects of its constructs on voting intentions. Future research could employ fsQCA (fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis) to understand the interdependencies and interconnected causal structures (Pappas, 2018; Pappas, Papavlasopoulou, Kourouthanassis, Mikalef, and Giannakos, 2017). fsQCA explains how causal conditions form configurations that affect intentions and behaviour. Another limitation has to do with the data for this research's having been gathered from the Turkish-Dutch ethnic minority in the Netherlands, as the findings' applicability to other ethnic communities in the Netherlands and elsewhere is limited. Future research should collect data from other minority ethnic groups to determine whether this study's findings hold. Finally, this research gathers data from the Turkish-Dutch respondents at a specific point in time, so future research could analyse the respondents' voting intentions by collecting longitudinal data to cover this shortcoming.

## **7. Conclusion**

This study finds that immigrants' political involvement is positively affected by acculturation and negatively affected by enculturation. Both those who prefer enculturation and those who prefer acculturation take part in online communities, but the former are not as politically engaged as the latter. The notion of acculturation, including integration, assimilation and

separation from the home country requires further investigation in political research. Immigrants are expected to integrate into the host country, but their separation from their home countries often accentuates the importance of their heritage culture.

An important contribution of this study is its stratified sample and access to a large, representative data set of ethnic voters. Immigrants participate in social networks and associations with both their heritage groups and their host country's groups, and the resulting social capital involves a sense of identity and social interaction that can influence their decision to engage in local political activities.

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