

**T.C.  
BAHCESEHIR UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
THE DEPARTMENT OF FILM AND TELEVISION**

**THE EFFECTS OF TURKISH SERIES  
ON THE LEBANESE PEOPLE**

**MASTER'S THESIS**

**MINA EL JARDALI**

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**BAU 2023**

**ISTANBUL, 2023**

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**ISTANBUL, 2023**



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GRADUATE SCHOOL

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MASTER THESIS APPROVAL FORM

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| <b>Program Name:</b>               | Cinema and Television                                |
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This thesis has been approved by the Graduate School which has fulfilled the necessary conditions as Master thesis.

.....

**Director of Institute**

This thesis was read by us, quality and content as a Master's thesis has been seen and accepted as sufficient.

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## ABSTRACT

### THE EFFECTS OF TURKISH SERIES ON THE LEBANESE PEOPLE

Mina El Jardali

Film and Television

Thesis Supervisor:  
Assist. Prof. Eleni Varmazi

May 2023, 58 pages

The following study seeks to investigate the effect of Turkish series consumption on the Lebanese people since the first Turkish series aired on Lebanese channels in 2007. The study's aim to investigate this impact is done through conducting a survey and using quantitative data analysis, including the Pearson's correlation test, to determine the effect it has on Lebanese people's lifestyle, food preference, music choices, clothing style, and Lebanese series. The influence of the Turkish series will be emphasized throughout this investigation. The data gathered determined there is a high impact on the Lebanese people's lifestyle. Moreover, the Pearson's correlation test confirmed a relationship between the consumption of Turkish series and the Lebanese people's fashion style and media choices.

**Keywords:** Turkish Series, Lebanese people, lifestyle, food, music, fashion, Lebanese media.

## ÖZ

### THE EFFECTS OF TURKISH SERIES ON THE LEBANESE PEOPLE

Mina El Jardali

Film and Television

Tez Danışmanı:

Assist. Prof. Eleni Varmazi

Mayıs 2023, 58 sayfa

2007 yılında Lübnan kanallarında yayınlanan ilk Türk dizisinden bu yana Türk dizi tüketiminin Lübnanlılar üzerindeki etkisini araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Lübnan halkının yaşam tarzı, yemek tercihi, müzik seçimi, giyim tarzı ve Lübnan dizileri üzerindeki etkisini belirlemek için korelasyon analizi. Bu gösteri boyunca Türk dizilerinin etkisi üzerinde durulacaktır. Toplanan veriler, Lübnan halkının yaşam tarzı üzerinde yüksek bir etkisi olduğunu belirledi. Ayrıca Pearson korelasyon analizi, Türk dizilerinin tüketimi ile Lübnan halkının moda tarzı ve medya tercihleri arasında bir ilişki tespit etmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Türk dizileri, Lübnanlılar, yaşam tarzı, yemek, müzik, moda, Lübnan medyası.



To My Parents,  
My Siblings,  
My Friends

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Mina El Jardali

Istanbul, 2023

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

One of the key components of popular culture around the world for a very long time has been movies and TV shows. Millions of people around the world follow and watch American and European films and television programs with interest.

These films and television shows leave behind significant traces of the cultures and way of life of the nations where they are produced. A movie or television show consequently becomes a component of "exporting culture" (Asya, 2023). Through movies and television shows, American and European cultures have been promoted all across the world for many years now, this interaction is known by "globalization". Furthermore, globalization is an essential topic when it comes to television shows. Through television programs, new technology, film, and music, the mainstream media are now recognized as being vital in advancing globalization and fostering cultural interaction across nations (Matos, 2012). Matos (2012) has also stated that in the past few decades, the globalization of television shows has emerged as a significant cultural phenomenon. A wide variety of television programs from many nations and cultures are now available to viewers worldwide thanks to the growth of streaming services like Netflix and Hulu. This has increased exposure to various viewpoints and lifestyles and given people the chance to learn about other cultures in an entertaining manner. More cross-cultural projects have also been produced as a result of expanding international show popularity among production companies from many nations.

A new cross-cultural project is the addition of Turkish series to the global market. Turkish series have recently emerged as a rising star in the global TV series business. From the Middle East to Europe, from Africa to Latin America, Turkish TV programs have spread extensively to various geographical regions. Moreover, there is a growing interest in Turkish TV shows across the globe. Many people from all around the world have developed into passionate supporters and dedicated fans of Turkish television series (Asya, 2023). Turkish series have been estimated to bring in close to \$500 million annually from export, a sum that the Turkish government intends to increase to \$1 billion by 2023. They are available and favored in more than 150 countries. If the goal is met, Turkey, which is already one of the top exporters of drama

series, would be in a position to close the gap with the top producer, the United States (Navani, 2022).

Many foreign viewers of Turkish television series believe that the morals portrayed in the shows have inspired them. Turkish TV series are well-liked internationally due to the depicted culture and strong family relationships showcased. The popularity of Turkish TV programs in some nations is also greatly influenced by cultural and social affinities (Sevim, 2012).

With their popularity in the Middle East, Turkish series have also been broadcasted on Lebanese channels since 2007. These shows are becoming more and more popular as Turkish TV series are filled with drama, action, and suspense (Yanardağoğlu & Karam, 2013). How do they impact society, though? Walking around Lebanon, we can see Turkish restaurants selling Kumpir and Doner. We hear people saying “Tamam”, “evet”, or even “gunaydin” in casual conversations. Moreover, turning on the television we see popular Lebanese channels such as MTV, New TV, LBCi, to mention a few, playing Turkish series at prime time. Recent Turkish series being showed at the moment of writing this research are *Yalı Çapkını* (2023), *Kardeşlerim* (2023), *Sen Çal Kapımı* (2020), and *Yargı* (2021), to name some.

With the increasing demand for Turkish TV programs in Lebanon, Lebanese TV channels have been buying the rights for the most famous and recent Turkish series and adapting them into Lebanese series productions, such as the adaptation of “*Ufak Tefek Cinayetler*” (2017) which is “*Stiletto*” (2022) in Arabic and “*Binbir Gece*” (2006) adapted as “*Al Thaman*” (2023). The first broadcast of a Turkish series in Lebanon was in the winter of 2007; the series was “*Gümüş*” or “*Noor*” in Arabic which aired on mbc4 (Daily Sabah, 2018). In recent years, Lebanese channels have been airing different types of television shows in order to attract a broader range of viewers. By airing these programs, the channels are trying to differentiate themselves from their competitors in order to gain more viewers (Daily Sabah, 2018).

Mentioned above is a wide overview of the effect of television series on the people who watch it and its significant role in globalization. To further study the effect of Turkish series on the Lebanese audience, a survey was conducted to measure the

relation between Turkish series and the effect it had on the Lebanese people's lifestyle, culture, and media influence.

Turkish series are known to have an effect on its Lebanese audience, however, no previous studies have proven so. Research has been done on the effect of Turkish series on the audience in many parts of the world, more importantly, on the Arab regions and Arabs in general. However, no previous papers have shown a direct relation between Turkish series and the Lebanese people, an issue that is the main purpose behind this research paper. Furthermore, previous studies have failed to mention the effect of Turkish series on their media. The effect of Turkish series on the Middle East region's media such as their television series, movies, talk shows, and music were all left out of previous studies.



## **1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

This study seeks to investigate the effect of watching Turkish series on the Lebanese people since the first Turkish series aired on Lebanese channels in 2007 through conducting a survey in order to find out the effect it has on the Lebanese people's lifestyle, culture, and Lebanese series by means of quantitative data analysis. Throughout this research, the presence of the effect of Turkish series will be highlighted. Also, Chapter 2 will discuss the conceptual and theoretical framework. Moreover, Chapter 3 will include all data collected from the survey and how this data was considered in the first place, showing the correlations between variables chosen such as the language, music, food, clothes, and media choices. The 4<sup>th</sup> chapter consists of the discussion and analyses of the data collected from the questionnaire done to conceive the results of the study. Finally, the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter will be considering the conclusion of the research which will be presented with regards to the theoretical frameworks.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

The purpose of the second chapter is to provide an overview of Turkish television series, their impact on Arab audiences, and the theoretical frameworks that underpin the study.

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Early television broadcasts featured sports, news channels, and food programs. People scheduled time to watch with their families and friends, while enjoying their gatherings with food and drinks. Over the years, it has changed in every possible way. Huge production houses have taken advantage of the popularity of this mean of entertainment and changed it into a core industry in the world. Hollywood and European television series have been in the top charts of this market and the most viewed for a long period of time. However, recently Turkish series are scoring great numbers in the world, especially in the middle east (Yigit, 2013). Moreover, people have been arguing over the effect of watching television series on people's culture, lifestyle and media. Watching Turkish series is no different from this argument, as its effect has been proven over the audience in the Arab world (Karakartal, 2021; Navani, 2022; Asya, 2023).

After countless arguments and debates, studies show that commercial television has a significant and lasting influence on society and culture (Karakartal, 2021). The availability and accessibility of TV series and other shows are unrestricted today. We are in a stage of life where we are exposed to different cultures and information, and television is a major part of that.

All these phenomena have become possible to happen by watching Turkish series. As Yigit states (2013) in his paper, *Turkish drama in the Middle East: Secularism and cultural influence explained*, Turkish series had an impact on the Arab audience. Additionally, the impact the series had on the Arab audience include an increased interest in the Turkish language and culture as well as an increase in Arab tourists in Turkey. Furthermore, the focus of this paper tackles the effect of

consumption of Turkish series on the lifestyle, food, clothing style, music, and language of Arab people due to lack of Lebanese content.

While there is very few previous literatures that have conducted a quantitative or a qualitative study to examine these effects the Turkish series had on Lebanese and Arabs in general, a hefty amount of scholar papers and news articles were found to speak about the popularity of Turkish series and the effect it had on the Middle East.

In 2001, Turkey began exporting its TV shows to other nations and throughout recent years, the export of TV shows has expanded, and Turkish TV programs are already beginning to draw big audiences throughout the region of the Middle East. International viewers' perceptions of Turkey have improved as a result of this (Bedrudin, 2011), and their attitudes toward Turkey have improved as well (Ktem, 2010). It has been noted that the popularity of Turkish television programs abroad, particularly in the Middle East, has increased commerce and tourism from the nations in these regions (Balli, Balli, and Cebeci, 2013).

It is widely recognized that overall television series consumption tends to rise and, as well as that it is a powerful marketing tool (Pervan and Martin, 2002; Miller, 1995).

One of the earliest research on the topic is the one carried out by Deniz (2010). Deniz (2010) investigated the sociological consequences of Turkish TV series in general and the *Gümüş* series in particular on social media platforms. Deniz argues that Turkey should take into account this process as a way to attain regional and global interests in the context of soft power while taking into account its political and economic impacts. According to Yigit (2013), Turkey has succeeded in showcasing modern Turkey to the world thanks to TV series, which are regarded as one of the pillars of soft power. Additionally, Turkish actors and actresses from series have been utilized to encourage export from other sectors to the Middle East. The most significant result of Turkish television series' popularity in the Arab world is the rise in interest in Turkish language and culture, as well as the rise in Arab travelers to Turkey.

Temina (2019) looked into how Turkish television series affected family, religion, and sociocultural issues as well as the impact of Turkish television series on the Algerian society and Algerians' perceptions of Turkey. Data for the study were

gathered using the questionnaire method. According to the survey, Algerians who watched Turkish TV series generally expressed admiration for the shows because they recognized elements of their own life in them (Temina, 2019). Elements stated by Temina (2019) include cultural similarities, the religion of Islam, and geographical likeness.

Matar (2017) looked at how Turkish series on television affected Arab viewers' intentions to travel to Turkey. Thirty Arab visitors to Turkey were subjected to in-depth interviews within this qualitative study. Findings demonstrated that TV series play a significant role in promoting a destination and contributing to a rise in tourists.

The aim of the research carried out by Yukar, Veyseller, Ykü, and Yigün (2018) was to assess the highly famous series *Muhteşem Yüzyıl* in terms of tourists' preferences. These series were primarily marketed to the Middle East and were well received there. The study's primary data came from in-depth semi-structured interviews with Middle Eastern visitors in Turkey. In this study, 10 visitors from five Middle Eastern nations—Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Oman, and Qatar—were asked to express their impressions solely on the *Muhteşem Yüzyıl* series. According to the study's findings, Arab visitors are drawn to countries with cultural traces and connections like a common language, meals, and rituals and traditions, just like Turkey's.

Geçer (2015) did a study to perform sociocultural analyses based on Turkish television series. The study examined the interactions between popular culture and the growing number of made-in-Turkey series, which are broadcasted on Turkish TV channels both domestically and abroad. Based on exchanges regarding the series and a literature review, the study asserted that cultural transition and cultural emphasis shaped these encounters.

These recent research findings elaborate on the impact Turkish series have on the Middle East and Arabs in general. However, no specific research concerning the effect of Turkish series on the Lebanese people's lifestyle, food, fashion, language, music or media choice has been examined.

## Chapter 3

### Methods

This study was conducted using an online questionnaire system. Filling it out took approximately 10 min of the participants' time. Data was gathered in April and May of 2023. Before anything else, participants were made aware of the study's objectives and contents. They received guarantees regarding their privacy and the secrecy of their responses. If they wanted to participate, they had to check a box. Demographic questions, such as gender, age, education level, and marital status, were asked in the first section of the questionnaire. Ten of the 155 responders who initially began to complete the questionnaires were disqualified for providing inaccurate information. Therefore, the research used the responses of 145 respondents (109 female and 36 male) for the data analysis.

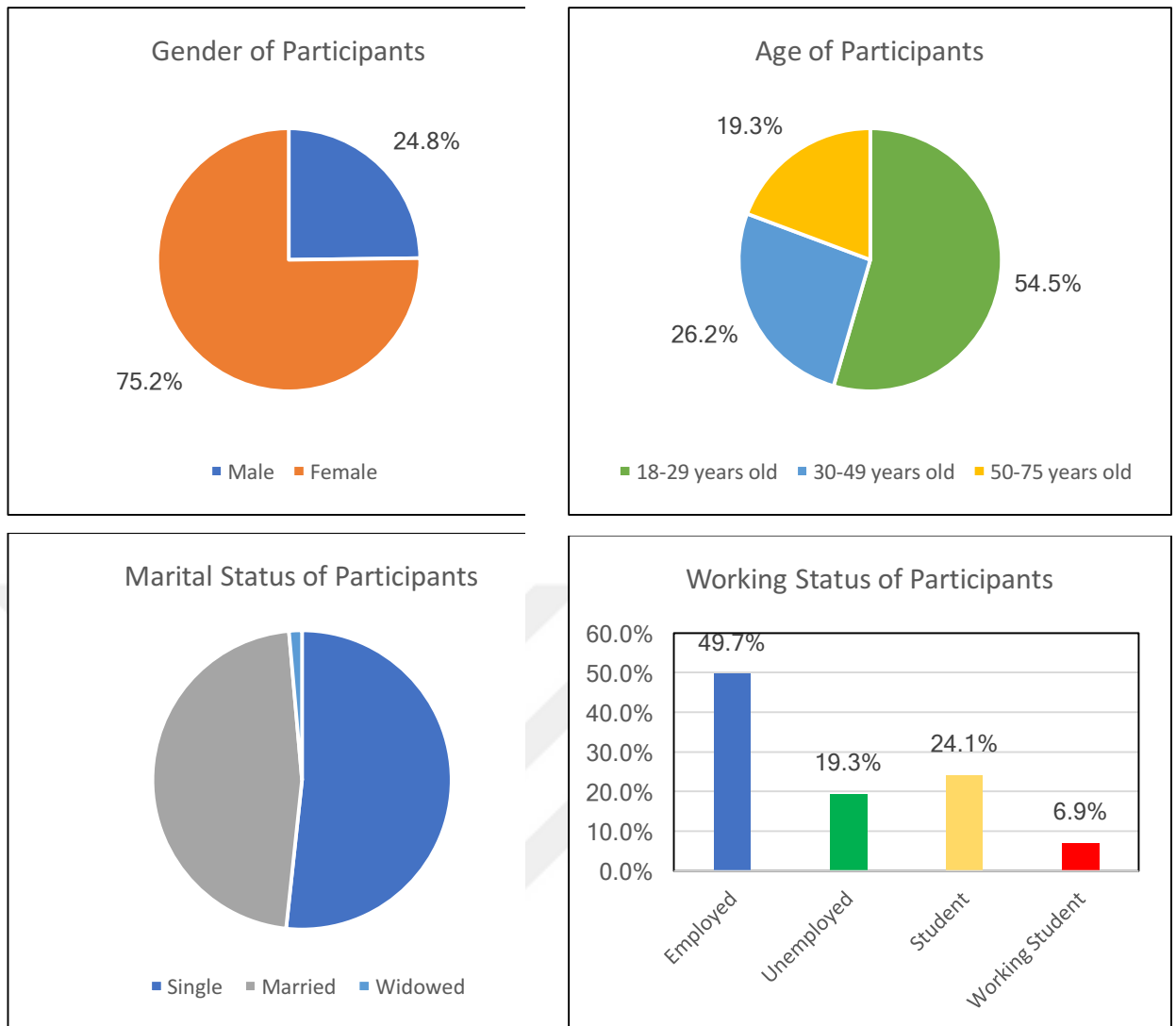
#### 3.1 Sample Descriptives

The sample of this study was composed of  $N = 145$  participants who watch Turkish series. Around three quarter of the sample (75.2%) were females while around one-quarter of the sample were males (24.8%). Concerning the age of participants, around half of participants (54.5%) belonged to the 18-29 years old age group, 26.2% belonged to the 30-49 years old age group, while 19.3% belonged to the 50-75 years old age group. Moreover, concerning the marital status of participants, around half of participants (51.7%) were single, 46.9% were married, whereas only 1.4% were widowed. Finally, regarding the working status of participants, around half of participants (49.7%) were employed, 19.3% were unemployed, 24.1% were students, while 6.9% were working students (Table 1; Figures 1, 2, 3, & 4).

Table 1

|                |                 | N   | %     |
|----------------|-----------------|-----|-------|
| Gender         | Male            | 36  | 24.8% |
|                | Female          | 109 | 75.2% |
| Age            | 18-29 years old | 79  | 54.5% |
|                | 30-49 years old | 38  | 26.2% |
|                | 50-75 years old | 28  | 19.3% |
| Marital Status | Single          | 75  | 51.7% |
|                | Married         | 68  | 46.9% |
|                | Widowed         | 2   | 1.4%  |
| Working Status | Employed        | 72  | 49.7% |
|                | Unemployed      | 28  | 19.3% |
|                | Student         | 35  | 24.1% |
|                | Working Student | 10  | 6.9%  |

*Table 1. Sample Descriptives*



Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4: Distribution of Gender, Age, Marital and Working Status of Participants

### 3.2 First Turkish Series Watched

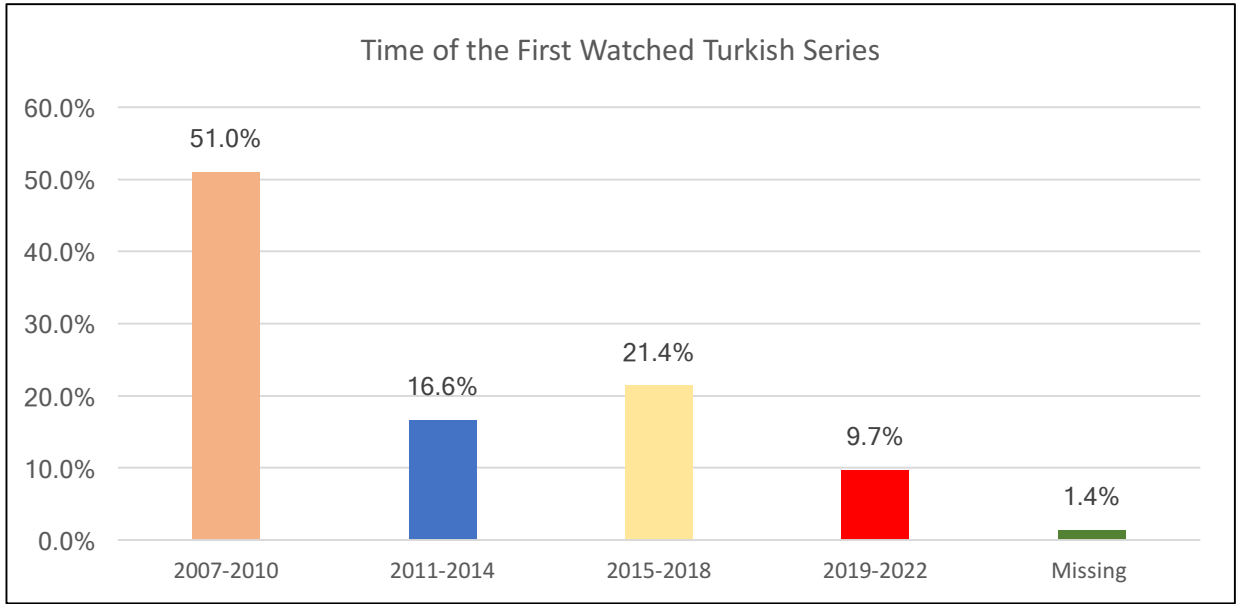
Table 2 below depicts information related to the first Turkish series watched by participants. Around one-half of participants reported that they watched their first Turkish series between 2007 and 2010, 16.6% reported that this happened between 2011 and 2014, 21.4% between 2015 and 2018, and 9.7% declared that they watched their first Turkish series between 2019 and 2022. It is noteworthy that two participants (1.4%) didn't answer this question. On the other hand, when participants were asked to report the name of the first Turkish series watched, 38.6% reported that it was *Gümüş*, 9.7% reported it was *Ertuğrul*, 9.7% reported it was *Kurtlar Vadisi Pusu*, and

5.5% reported it was *Güneşin Kizlari*. The rest of participants (36.5%) reported other names of series that are listed in Table 2 below (Figures 5 & 6).

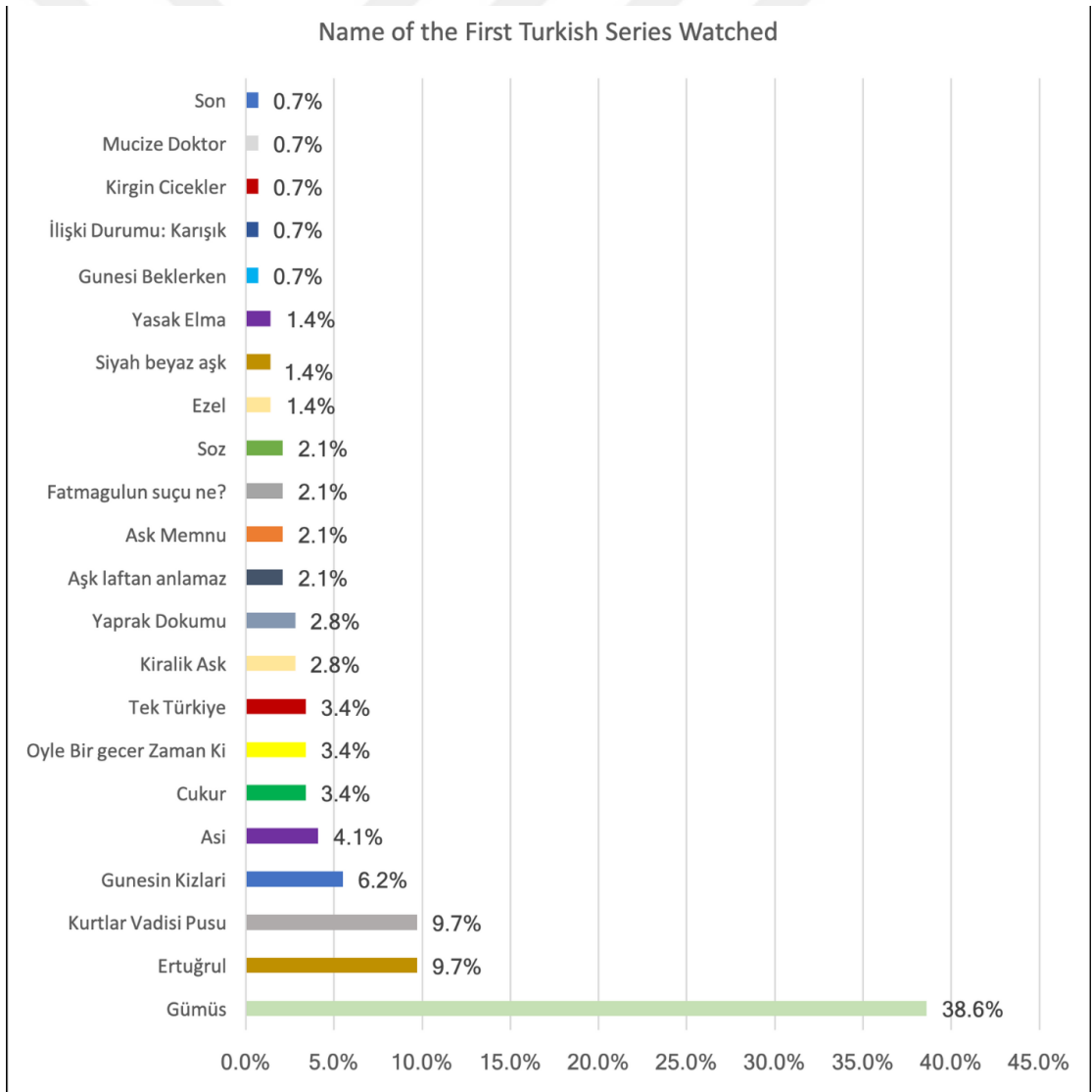
Table 2

|  |                        | N    | %     |
|--|------------------------|------|-------|
| Time of the First Turkish Series Watched | 2007-2010              | 74   | 51%   |
|  | 2011-2014              | 24   | 16.6% |
|  | 2015-2018              | 31   | 21.4% |
|  | 2019-2022              | 14   | 9.7%  |
|  | Missing                | 2    | 1.4%  |
| Name of the First Turkish Series Watched | Gümüs                  | 56   | 38.6% |
|  | Ertuğrul               | 14   | 9.7%  |
|  | Kurtlar Vadisi Pusu    | 14   | 9.7%  |
|  | Güneşin Kizlari        | 9    | 6.2%  |
|  | Asi                    | 6    | 4.1%  |
|  | Cukur                  | 5    | 3.4%  |
|  | Oyle Bir gecer Zaman   | 5    | 3.4%  |
|  | Ki                     | 5    | 3.4%  |
|  | Tek Türkiye            | 5    | 3.4%  |
|  | Kiralik Ask            | 4    | 2.8%  |
|  | Yaprak Dokumu          | 4    | 2.8%  |
|  | Aşk laftan anlamaz     | 3    | 2.1%  |
|  | Ask Memnu              | 3    | 2.1%  |
|  | Fatmagulun suçu ne?    | 3    | 2.1%  |
|  | Soz                    | 3    | 2.1%  |
|  | Ezel                   | 2    | 1.4%  |
|  | Siyah beyaz aşk        | 2    | 1.4%  |
|  | Yasak Elma             | 2    | 1.4%  |
|  | Gunesi Beklerken       | 1    | 0.7%  |
|  | İlişki Durumu: Karışık | 1    | 0.7%  |
| Kirgin Cicekler                          | 1                      | 0.7% |       |
| Mucize Doktor                            | 1                      | 0.7% |       |
| Son                                      | 1                      | 0.7% |       |

Table 2. Sample Descriptives



Figures 5: Time of the First Watched Turkish Series



Figures 6: Name of the First Watched Turkish Series

### **3.3 Influence of Watching Turkish Series on Lifestyle, Food, Fashion, Music, and Language**

Table 3 below depicts the influence of watching Turkish series on participants' lifestyle, fashion style, food habits, taste in music, and Turkish language acquisition. Concerning the impact of Turkish series on participants' lifestyle, 62.8% reported that they agree/strongly agree that the Turkish series had an effect on their lifestyle, while 66.2% of participants reported that they have seen/shared in/ done a Turkish custom during an event such as salt in coffee, Henna night, Turkish coffee, Turkish tea cups, etc...

Concerning the impact of Turkish series on food choices, around three-quarter of participants (75.2%) reported a Turkish restaurant had opened in their residential area, while 70.3% reported that they visited this Turkish restaurant, while 61.4% of participants reported that Turkish food is included in their diet such as Potato Kumpir, Turkish Shawrma, Sarma, Iskender Kebab, etc...

Concerning the impact of Turkish series on the fashion style of participants, 60.7% reported that they agree/strongly agree that their fashion style had changed after watching the Turkish series, while 98.6% of participants reported that they usually shop for clothes made in/imported from Turkey.

Concerning the impact of Turkish series on the music taste of participants, 89% of participants reported that they enjoy the Turkish songs/soundtracks present in the Turkish series they have watched. Whereas, 55.9% of participants reported that have memorized any of these songs, while 64.8% of participants reported that the Turkish series they watch motivate them to listen to other Turkish songs.

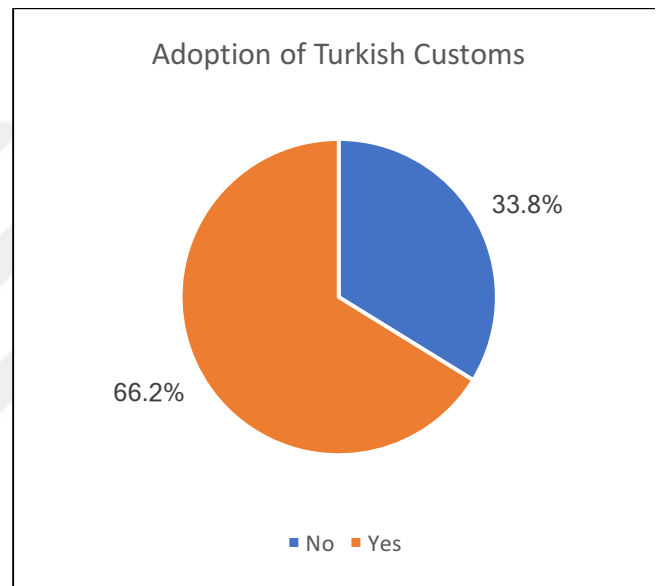
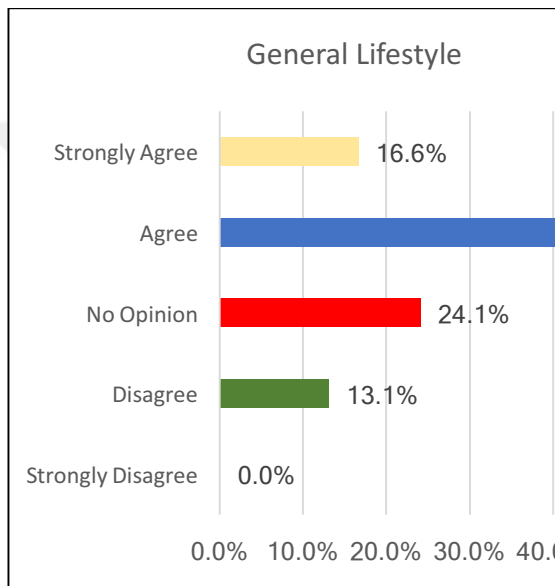
Finally, regarding learning Turkish language, 77.9% of participants reported that they tried to learn Turkish from the series they watch, 74.5% reported that they are interested in learning Turkish language, while 46.9% reported that they indeed learnt the Turkish language online, by attending courses, or through other means (Figures 7 through 19).

Table 3

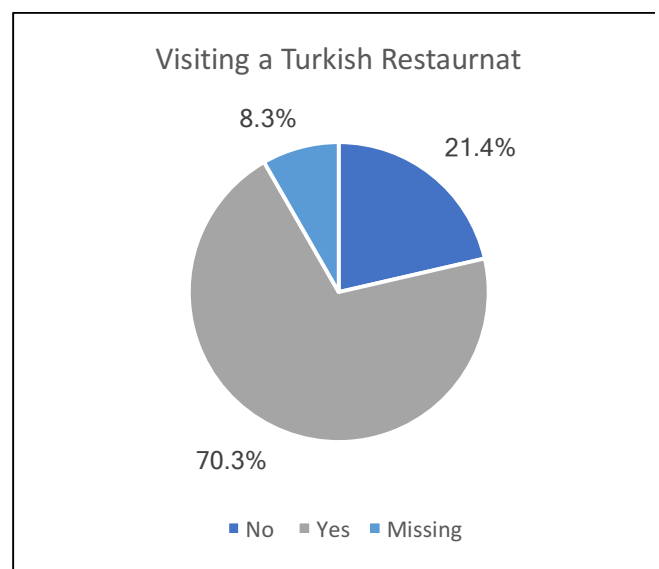
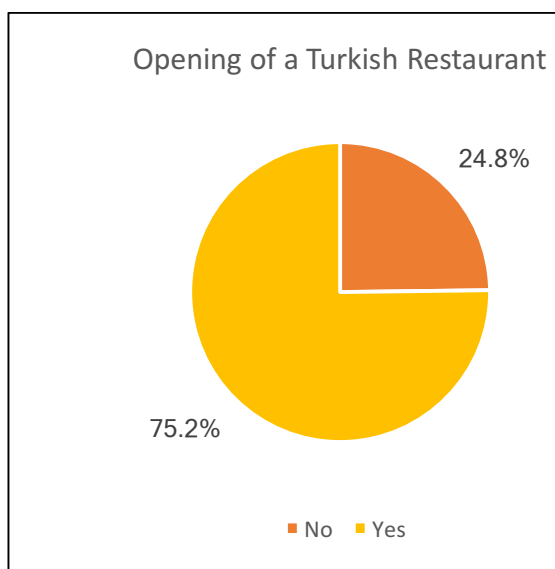
|   |                   | N   | %     |
|---|-------------------|-----|-------|
| Lifestyle                               | Strongly Disagree | 0   | 0%    |
|   | Disagree          | 19  | 13.1% |
|   | No Opinion        | 35  | 24.1% |
|   | Agree             | 67  | 46.2% |
|   | Strongly Agree    | 24  | 16.6% |
| Adoption of Turkish Customs             | No                | 49  | 33.8% |
|   | Yes               | 96  | 66.2% |
| Opening of Turkish Restaurant           | No                | 36  | 24.8% |
|   | Yes               | 109 | 75.2% |
| Visiting Turkish Restaurant             | No                | 31  | 21.4% |
|   | Yes               | 102 | 70.3% |
|   | Missing           | 12  | 8.3%  |
| Turkish Food Included in Diet           | No                | 56  | 38.6% |
|   | Yes               | 89  | 61.4% |
| Impact on Fashion Style                 | Strongly Disagree | 3   | 2.1%  |
|   | Disagree          | 32  | 22.1% |
|   | No Opinion        | 22  | 15.2% |
|   | Agree             | 56  | 38.6% |
|   | Strongly Agree    | 32  | 22.1% |
| Clothes Imported from Turkey            | No                | 2   | 1.4%  |
|   | Yes               | 143 | 98.6% |
| Enjoying Turkish Songs                  | No                | 16  | 11%   |
|   | Yes               | 129 | 89%   |
| Memorizing Turkish Songs                | No                | 62  | 42.8% |
|   | Yes               | 81  | 55.9% |
|   | Missing           | 2   | 1.4%  |
| Listen to Other Songs                   | No                | 51  | 35.2% |
|   | Yes               | 94  | 64.8% |
| Learn Turkish from the Series           | No                | 32  | 22.1% |
|   | Yes               | 113 | 77.9% |
| Interested in Learning Turkish Language | No                | 30  | 20.7% |

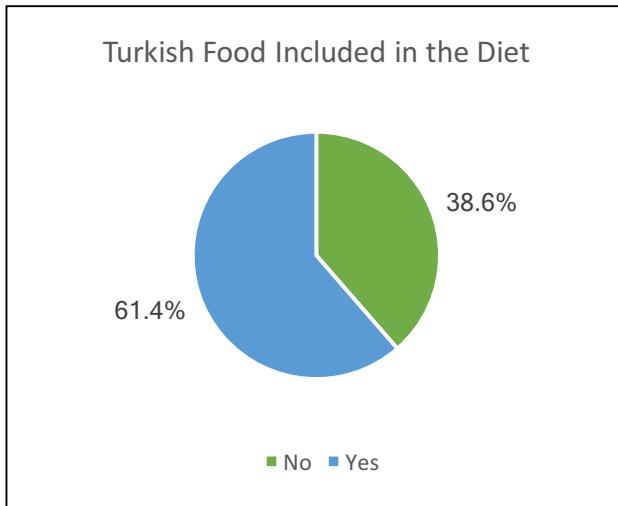
|                        |         |     |       |
|------------------------|---------|-----|-------|
|                        | Yes     | 108 | 74.5% |
|                        | Missing | 7   | 4.8%  |
| Learn Turkish Language | No      | 77  | 53.1% |
|                        | Yes     | 68  | 46.9% |

*Influence of Watching Turkish Series on Participants' Lifestyle, Food Customs, Fashion Style, Music Taste, and Learning Turkish Language*

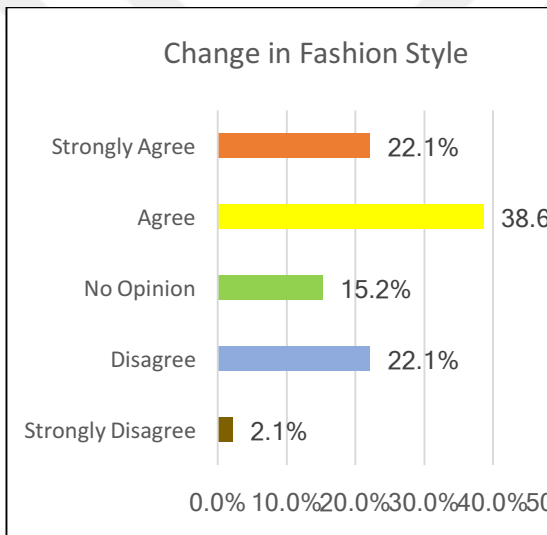


*Figures 7 and 8: Impacts of Turkish Series on Participants' Lifestyle*

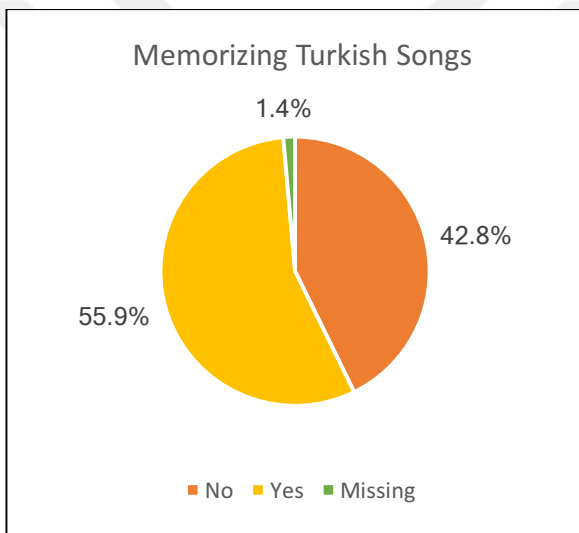
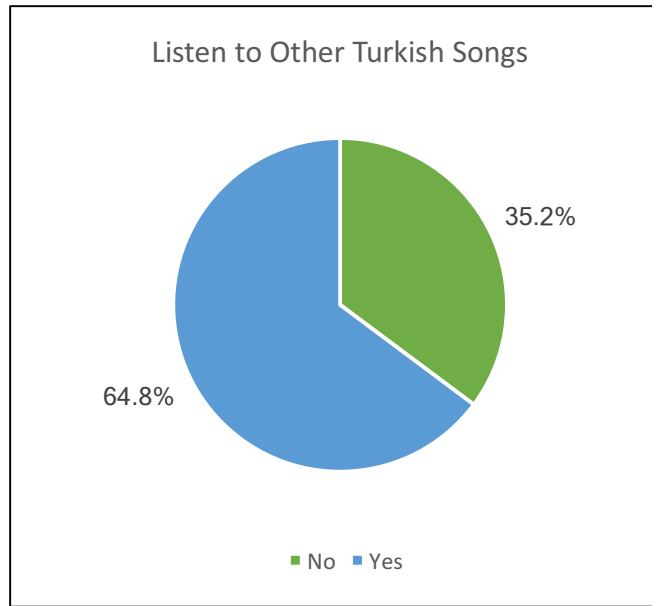
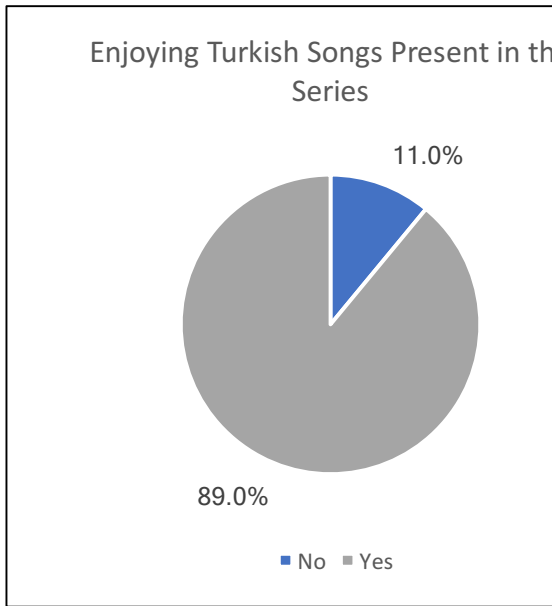




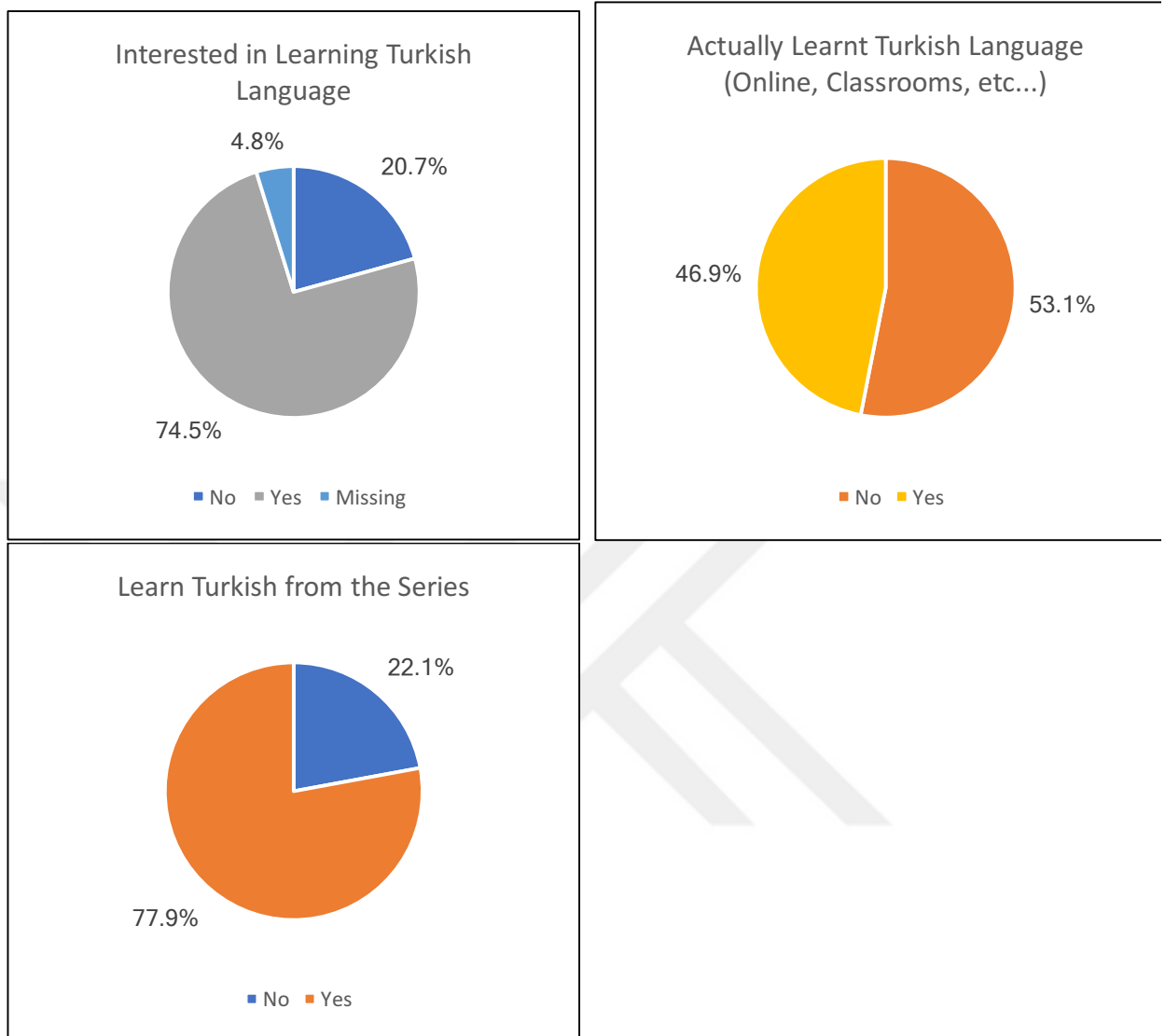
Figures 9, 10, and 11: Impacts of Turkish Series on Participants' Food Customs



Figures 12 and 13: Impacts of Turkish Series on Participants' Fashion Style



Figures 14, 15, and 16: Impacts of Turkish Series on Participants' Music Taste



*Figures 17, 18, and 19 Impacts of Turkish Series on Learning Turkish Language*

### **3.4 Influence of Turkish Series on Participants' Media Choices**

Table 4 below depicts the influence of Turkish Series on Participants' media choices. 89% of participants reported that agree/strongly agree that they prefer watching Turkish series more than Lebanese series. Moreover, 37.9% of participants reported that they watch Turkish series because these series have good scenarios, 34.5% reported that such series have better acting, 13.1% reported that these series have beautiful visuals, while 9.7% of participants reported that they watch Turkish series because they love Turkish actors. It is noteworthy that the rest of participants (4.9%) had other reasons for watching Turkish series that are listed in the table below.

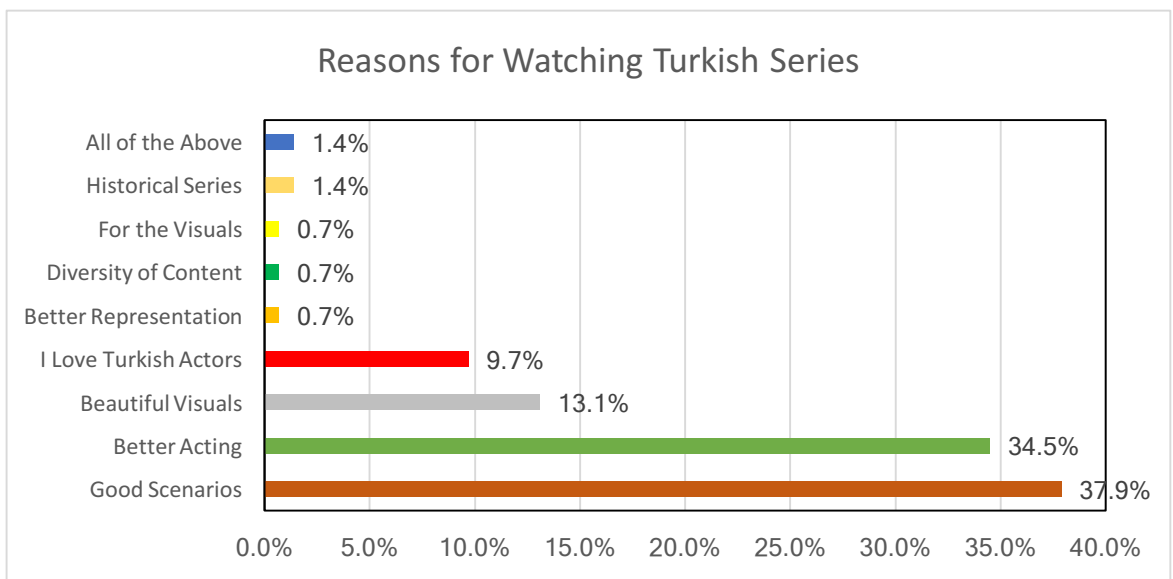
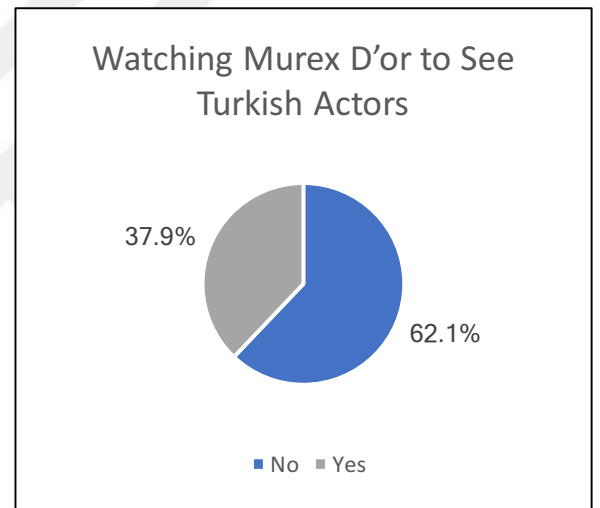
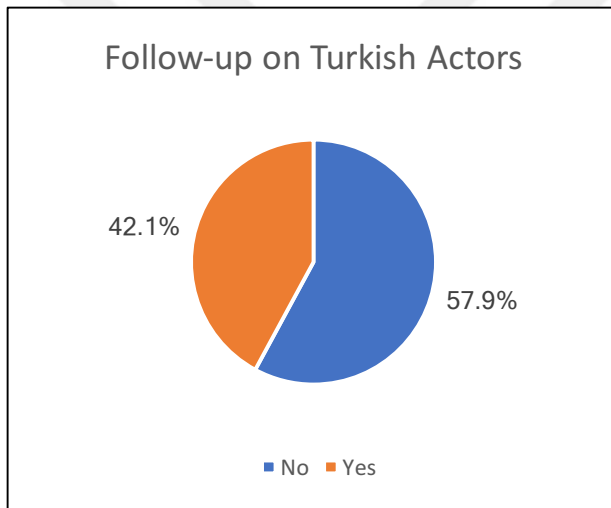
On the other hand, 42.1% of participants reported that they follow-up the Turkish actors' interviews featured on Lebanese national TV such as MTV, New TV, OSN, etc... In addition, 37.9% of participants reported that they watch the Lebanese award show (Murex D'or) to see which Turkish actress/actor is invited this year. Furthermore, 66.2% of participants reported that they watched the latest Lebanese adaptations of famous Turkish series, such as *Arous Beirut (Istanbulu Gelin 2017)*, *Stiletto (Ufak Tefek Cinayetler, 2017)*, *Ala Helwi w Ala Morra ( İyi Günde Kötü Günde, 2020)*, etc... Finally, 74.5% of participants reported that they would love it and certainly watch a Lebanese Movie if a Turkish actress/actor has a special appearance in it (Figures 20 through 25).

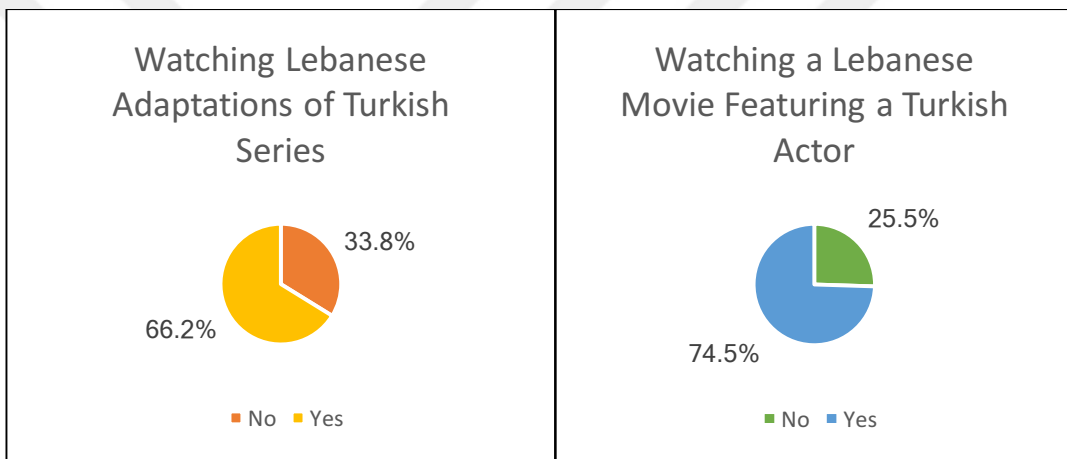
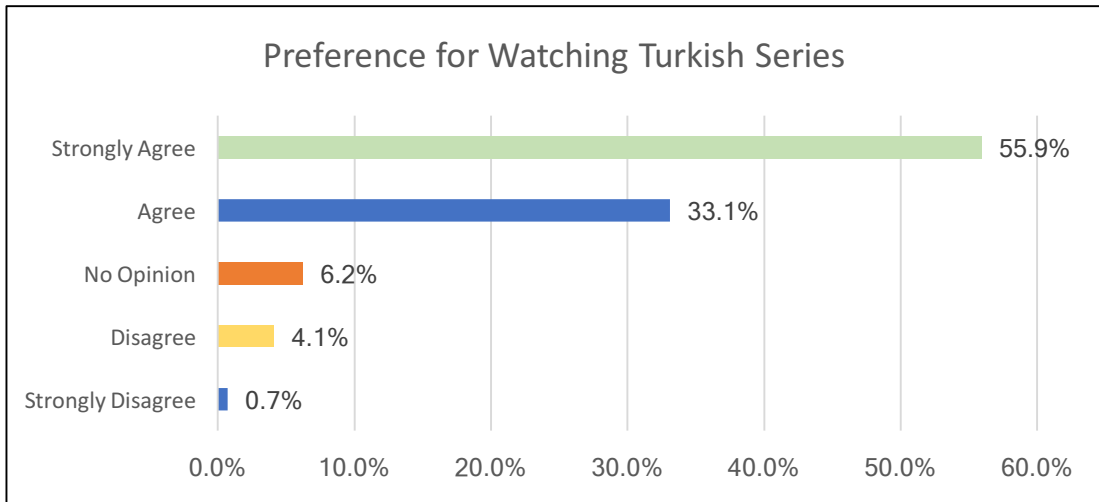
Table 4

|   |                       | N  | %     |
|---|-----------------------|----|-------|
| Preference for Watching Turkish Series    | Strongly Disagree     | 1  | 0.7%  |
|   | Disagree              | 6  | 4.1%  |
|   | No Opinion            | 9  | 6.2%  |
|   | Agree                 | 48 | 33.1% |
|   | Strongly Agree        | 81 | 55.9% |
| Reasons for Watching Turkish Series       | Good Scenarios        | 55 | 37.9% |
|   | Better Acting         | 50 | 34.5% |
|   | Beautiful Visuals     | 19 | 13.1% |
|   | I Love Turkish Actors | 14 | 9.7%  |
|   | Better Representation | 1  | 0.7%  |
|   | Diversity of Content  | 1  | 0.7%  |
|   | For the Visuals       | 1  | 0.7%  |
|   | Historical Series     | 2  | 1.4%  |
|   | All of the Above      | 2  | 1.4%  |
| Follow-up on Turkish Actors Interviews    | No                    | 84 | 57.9% |
|   | Yes                   | 61 | 42.1% |
| Watching Murex D'or to See Turkish Actors | No                    | 90 | 62.1% |
|   | Yes                   | 55 | 37.9% |

|   |     |     |       |
|---|-----|-----|-------|
| Watching Lebanese Adaptations of Turkish Series     | No  | 49  | 33.8% |
|   | Yes | 96  | 66.2% |
| Watching a Lebanese Movie Featuring a Turkish Actor | No  | 37  | 25.5% |
|   | Yes | 108 | 74.5% |

*Influence of Watching Turkish Series on Participants' Media Choices*





*Figures 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, and 25: Impacts of Watching Turkish Series on Media Choices*

### **3.5 Impacts of Years of Watching Turkish Series on Participants' Lifestyle, Food Customs, Fashion Style, Music Taste, Learning Turkish Songs, and Media Choices**

For this analysis, the independent variable is the number of years of watching Turkish series that is measured on four levels:

- 1 to 4 years (2019-2022 first series watched; 9.7%)
- 5 to 8 years (2015-2018 first series watched; 21.4%)
- 9 to 12 years (2011-2014 first series watched; 16.6%)
- 13 to 16 years (2007-2010 first series watched; 51%)

### **3.6 The Outcome variables are:**

1. Lifestyle (ranged between 0 and 2) is measured by summing the scores of the following two questions:
  - a. Turkish Series had an effect on your lifestyle. Participants who answered agree/strongly agree to this question receive 1 point while those who answered strongly disagree, disagree, or no opinion receive 0 points.
  - b. You have seen/ shared in/ done a Turkish custom during an event? (Ex. Salt in coffee, Henna night, Turkish Coffee, Turkish Tea cups, etc...). Participants who answered yes receive 1 point while participants who answered no on this question receive 0 points.
  
2. Food Customs (ranged between 0 and 2) is measured by summing the scores of the following two questions:
  - a. Did you ever visit a Turkish Restaurant? Participants who answered yes receive 1 point while participants who answered no on this question receive 0 points.
  - b. Is Turkish Food included in your diet (Potato Kumpir, Turkish shawarma, Sarma, Iskender Kebab...)? Participants who answered yes receive 1 point while participants who answered no on this question receive 0 points.
  
3. Fashion Style (ranged between 0 and 2) is measured by summing the scores of the following two questions:
  - a. Did your fashion style change after watching Turkish series? Participants who answered agree/strongly agree to this question receive 1 point while those who answered strongly disagree, disagree, or no opinion receive 0 points.

- b. Do you usually shop for clothes made in/imported from Turkey? Participants who answered yes receive 1 point while participants who answered no on this question receive 0 points.
4. Participants' Music Taste (ranged between 0 and 3) is measured by summing the scores of the following three questions:
- a. Do you enjoy the Turkish songs/soundtracks present in the Turkish series you have watched? Participants who answered yes receive 1 point while participants who answered no on this question receive 0 points.
  - b. Have you memorized any of them? Participants who answered yes receive 1 point while participants who answered no on this question receive 0 points.
  - c. Did the Turkish series you watch motivate you to listen to other Turkish songs? Participants who answered yes receive 1 point while participants who answered no on this question receive 0 points.
5. Learning Turkish Language (ranged between 0 and 3) is measured by summing the scores of the following three questions:
- a. Have you ever tried to learn Turkish from the series you watch? Participants who answered yes receive 1 point while participants who answered no on this question receive 0 points.
  - b. Are you interested in learning Turkish Language? Participants who answered yes receive 1 point while participants who answered no on this question receive 0 points.
  - c. Did you learn the Turkish language (Online, Classroom, etc.)? Participants who answered yes receive 1 point while participants who answered no on this question receive 0 points.
6. Media Choices (ranged between 0 and 5) and is measured with the following five questions:
- a. I prefer watching Turkish series more than Lebanese series. Participants who answered agree/strongly agree to this question receive 1 point while those who answered strongly disagree, disagree, or no opinion receive 0 points.

- b. Do you follow up the actors' interviews done on Lebanese national TV (MTV, New TV, OSN...). Participants who answered yes receive 1 point while participants who answered no on this question receive 0 points.
- c. Do you watch the Lebanese award show the Murex D'or to see which Turkish actress/actor is invited this year? Participants who answered yes receive 1 point while participants who answered no on this question receive 0 points.
- d. Did you watch the latest Lebanese adaptations of famous Turkish series? (ex. *Arous Beirut*, *Stiletto*, *Ala Helwi w Ala Morra*, etc.) Participants who answered yes receive 1 point while participants who answered no on this question receive 0 points.
- e. I would love it and certainly watch a Lebanese movie if a Turkish actor/actress has a special appearance in it. Participants who answered yes receive 1 point while participants who answered no on this question receive 0 points.

Table 5 below depicts the correlations between the number of years watching Turkish Series and the six outcome variables. Pearson's correlation test revealed that there was a significant, positive, and small to medium correlation between the number of years watching Turkish series and the participants' fashion style;  $r = .14, p = .043$  (*one-tailed*). This indicated that participants who had been watching Turkish series for longer time were more likely to report that the Turkish series had higher impact on their fashion style. The Pearson's correlation test also revealed that there was a significant, positive, and small to medium correlation between number of years watching Turkish series and participants' media choices;  $r = .17, p = .021$  (*one-tailed*). This indicated that participants who had been watching Turkish series for longer time were more likely to report that Turkish series had higher impact on their media choices favoring Turkish media. On the other hand, the Pearson's correlation test revealed that there were no significant correlations between the number of years watching Turkish series and the four outcome variables lifestyle, food customs, music taste, and learning Turkish language;  $r = .10, p = .122$  (*one-tailed*),  $r = .10, p = .120$  (*one-tailed*),  $r = .08, p = .166$  (*one-tailed*), and  $r = .06, p = .241$  (*one-tailed*), respectively.

Table 5

|  | Lifestyle | Food<br>Customs | Fashion<br>Style | Music<br>Taste | Learning<br>Language | Media<br>Choices |
|--|-----------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Number of Years<br>Watching Turkish Series | .10       | .10             | .14*             | .08            | .06                  | .17*             |

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (one-tailed).

*Pearson's Zero Order Correlation Matrix*



## Chapter 4

### Discussion

The present study examines the effect of Turkish series on the Lebanese people through an online questionnaire. The goal of this research is to examine the effects that Lebanese people's viewing of Turkish television programs has on their daily routines, artistic viewpoints, and media preferences. Moreover, the paper's aim is to investigate that Turkish series had directly affected their own way of living in regards to acquiring new customs, listening to Turkish music, learning the Turkish language. Also, Turkish series had directly influenced the Lebanese series in different artistic elements. These elements include series scripts and dialogues, method of acting, visuals, and content. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that the significance of this research and the quantitative study conducted on the Lebanese people is hardly found in other research papers. While many quantitative and qualitative studies exist on the topic of the relation between Turkish series and their audiences in the Arab world, no study is based solely on the Lebanese people, nor the topic of this research. Therefore, this research paper is one of the first to conduct a study and measure the impact of Turkish series on the people of Lebanon. Additionally, another significance is the newly found findings regarding the adaptations made by Lebanese TV production houses in the very recent years.

Furthermore, the procedure of data analysis was done through two parts. The first part is analyzing the numbers directly and dividing them into charts, tables and themes. The first theme is the "First Turkish Series Watched" which, according to the data, is *Nour and Mohannad* (2007) or *Gümüs* (2005). The Turkish series *Gümüs* (2005) was watched by the majority of the sample.

The second theme is the "Influence of Watching Turkish Series on Lifestyle, Food, Fashion, Music, and Language". This part of the findings discusses the all aspects of the lives of Turkish actors and characters we see in the series and their effect on the Lebanese people. In addition to the previous themes, "Influence of Turkish Series on Participants' Media Choices" was also considered. The charts analyze the Turkish series influence on the Lebanese people's media choices regarding which

series they prefer either Lebanese series or Turkish series. Also, the famous *Murex D'or* Award show is discussed because of its inclusion and invitation of the most popular Turkish actors. As well as the previously mentioned, the new addition to the media part are the Lebanese adaptations of Turkish series and their popularity. The recent series airing on Lebanese and Pan-Arab channels such as *Al Thaman* (2023) which is an adaptation of *Binbir Gece* (2006), or *Wajaa Al Qalb* (2023) adapted from *Zalim İstanbul* (2019).

The second part of the data analysis was titled by “Impacts of Years of Watching Turkish Series on Participants’ Lifestyle, Food Costumes, Fashion Style, Music Taste, Learning Turkish Songs, and Media Choices”. This part was analyzed through the Pearson’s test of correlations, where the independent variables is the number of years of watching Turkish series. Answers were coded and measured accordingly and resulted in finding between years of series watched and the Lebanese people’s fashion style change and their media choices respectively.

The mentioned above test is based on the Pearson correlation coefficient, commonly referred to as Pearson's  $r$ , the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, or just the correlation coefficient, is a statistical indicator of the linear relationship between two sets of data. According to Kenton (2022), it is essentially a normalized measurement of the covariance, with the result always falling between -1 and 1. It is the ratio between the covariance of two variables and the product of their standard deviations. The measure is capable of capturing a linear correlation between variables, just as covariance itself, and ignores many other kinds of linkages or correlations. In a simple example, the age and height of a sample of high school students should have a Pearson correlation coefficient that is significantly more than 0, but less than 1 (because 1 would signify an erroneously perfect correlation) (Kenton, 2022).

#### 4.1 Interpretation of the Findings

Earlier research had found a series of results relating to Turkish Series and the importance they have as a soft power. Deniz (2010) examined the social media platforms' sociological effects on Turkish TV shows generally and the *Gümüş* series in particular. The most significant result of Yigit (2013) in respect to this research's topic, is that the Turkish television series' popularity in the Arab world had a rise in interest in Turkish language and culture, as well as a rise in Arab travelers to Turkey. Additionally, according to a survey done by Temina (2019), Algerians who watched Turkish TV series generally expressed admiration for the shows because they recognized elements of their own life in them. Also, the findings of Matar (2017) and ÖZDEMİR (2021) demonstrated that TV series play a significant role in promoting a destination and contributing to a rise in tourists. While these results do not relate to the topic of this research, however, these findings and previous literature are related to the effect of Turkish series on its audience.

Furthermore, the findings of this study are more specific in comparison with the conceptual frameworks of the previous authors'. Results found that the Turkish series had indeed an effect on the Lebanese people's lifestyle, fashion style, food habits, taste in music, and Turkish language acquisition. It was noted that three quarters of the people who shared in the questionnaire state that Turkish series had affected them on the way they live. Matar (2017) had argued that this effect is due to the close customs and religion between the Arab countries and the Republic of Turkey. Also, it is conceivable that this effect is due to the high consumption of the Lebanese people of Turkish series. Karakartal (2021) had endorsed that people are deeply affected by what they watch on television and will gradually obtain some of the lifestyle and way of living of the characters and the scenarios they watch. About three quarters of the participants had agreed that Turkish series had affected their lifestyle. Also, the majority of the participants had stated that they have shared in famous Turkish customs they have seen in series. Lebanese people can be seen posting on social media putting salt in the coffee for their grooms, even some put hot pepper and sharing in henna nights where the bride wears red, both of which are very famous Turkish customs the Lebanese see in scenes from their favorite Turkish series.

Moreover, concerning the impact of Turkish series on food choices, around three-quarter of participants reported a Turkish restaurant had opened in their residential area, while most of the participants reported that they visited this Turkish restaurant. Also, three quarters of the participants reported that Turkish food, such as Kumpir, Doner, Sarma, Iskender Kebab, is included in their food style. One might argue that the popularity of Turkish series made this effect occur because the series present their food continuously throughout the episodes, this makes the viewer willing to try these food items and as their popularity grew, Turkish restaurants did open in many areas across Lebanon.

All of the above suggest the major role of Turkish series on the tourism of Turkey and the great economic advantages this Turkish lifestyle has to offer for the Turkish people, government and country through the Turkish exports.

Another finding of this study is the impact of Turkish series on the fashion style of participants. Most of the participants have reported that they agree/strongly agree that their fashion style had changed after watching the Turkish series, while almost all of participants confirmed that they usually shop for clothes made in/imported from Turkey. Thus, it is conceived that Turkish series had a major role in enhancing the Turkish economy through boosting its clothes exports. Additionally, many Turkish shops have created new strategies to market its products in the MENA region after they have seen the numbers of Lebanese, and generally Arabs and foreigners interested in their merchandise.

Furthermore, nearly all of the participants answered that the Turkish songs and soundtracks featured in the Turkish programs they had watched had a positive impact on their musical tastes. While three-quarters of participants said that the Turkish television series they watch encourages them to listen to other Turkish songs, half of the participants said that they have memorized one or more of these songs. It can be argued that Turkish artists became very popular in Lebanon and their songs can be heard and marketed in Lebanon even though the language is not spoken on the Lebanese grounds, unless between minorities.

Finally, when it comes to learning the Turkish language, the majority of participants said they tried to pick up the language from the shows they watch; more than a third said they were interested in doing so; and roughly half said they had

actually learned the language through online courses, classroom instruction, or other methods.

The previous paragraphs regarding music and language are much alike. It is conceived that participants intended to search for Turkish music and memorizing them in order to enhance their Turkish language learning process. Also, it is considered “trendy” if someone knows the Turkish words to the songs. Furthermore, as mentioned above, “günaydin” or good morning, can be heard casually in the Lebanese conversations, just like “evet” as yes when responding to each other.

In addition, one might argue that the influence of Turkish Series on Participants’ media choices was behind the Lebanese adaptations of Turkish series into Lebanese productions. Almost all of participants reported they agree/strongly agree that they prefer watching Turkish series more than Lebanese series. Moreover, most of the participants reported that they watch Turkish series because these series have good scenarios, have better acting, have beautiful visuals, or because they love Turkish actors.

Interestingly, half of the participants said they watched the interviews with Turkish actors that were broadcast on Lebanese national TV, including MTV, New TV, OSN, etc. In addition, two-thirds of participants said they follow the Murex D'or awards ceremony in Lebanon to find out which Turkish actress or actor would be invited this year, as per custom. *Arous Beirut*, *Stiletto*, *Ala Helwi w Ala Morra*, and other recent Lebanese adaptations of well-known Turkish series were also mentioned by more than half of the participants. Finally, three-quarters of the participants' surveys indicated that they would enthusiastically watch a Lebanese film if a Turkish actress or actor made a cameo appearance. So, depending on the previously mentioned findings, it is understood that Turkish series had overruled Lebanon’s own series, and only recent adaptations of Turkish series are the ones most popular amongst Lebanese people based on the scenarios, and the high value production it has. Also, this finding had secured the Turkish television and production sector a huge amount of revenue. Additionally, the results of the Pearson's correlation test showed that there was a significant link between the participants' fashion preferences and the number of years they had watched Turkish television shows. This showed that participants were more likely to report that Turkish shows had a greater influence on their sense of style if

they had been viewing them for a longer period of time. It is conceived that the higher the consumption of watching Turkish series, the higher the imitation of clothing style to match the character. It has been proved that people tend to imitate and get influenced by what they watch (Karakartal, ,2021), which can also be applied on the case Turkish series.

In addition, the number of years that participants spent viewing Turkish series and their media preferences was significantly, positively, and small to medium correlated, according to Pearson's correlation test. This showed that individuals who had been watching Turkish television shows for a longer period of time were more likely to claim that these shows had a greater influence on their decision to watch Turkish media. In comparison with Lebanese series, excluding Turkish cameos and interviews, it is understood that the Turkish content is far more profitable than the original Lebanese content. To expand it more, the Turkish content on Lebanese television is very popular which gains more views than Lebanese series. This in the eyes of the producers secures funds, advertisements and prime time on the television grid.

However, the four outcome variables—lifestyle, eating habits, music taste, and language learning—did not significantly correlate with the number of years spent viewing Turkish series, according to the Pearson's correlation test. This can be understood due to the lack of a bigger sample, which failed to secure more accurate data to base their correlations on. Also, one might argue that the lack of significance of these four variables may be because it affects the Lebanese audience directly and there is no need for a high yearly consumption of Turkish series for it to be effective, as proven by the tables in chapter 3.

## **4.2 Implications**

It is notable to mention that this study has many implications on different sects in the society. Clinicians might use this research to further investigate the effect of Turkish series on how people react and interact with what they are watching. Moreover, campaigns of many backgrounds and objectives from the Lebanese or the Turkish side might benefit from this research. Additionally, journalists can utilize the

research data to further investigate and prove the popularity of the Turkish series and the recent Lebanese adaptations of Turkish series in their written articles and different mediums. Finally, the Turkish government can also be benefited from such a study in order to boost their tourism strategies and economy procedures.

### **4.3 Limitations**

Throughout this study, some limitations were detected due to a shortage of time and the extent of the analysis. The first limitation was related to the number of the sample. N=145 is not of a huge number, especially if one takes into consideration that the Lebanese population of more than six million, belong to more than 10 sects, various religious backgrounds, and are geographically divided into groups. A bigger sample must be obtained to ensure the various views of all the Lebanese population ensuring a bigger scale to include the South, North, Beirut, Mount of Lebanon, and Bekaa valley. Also, the majority of the sample are females which form approximately three-quarters of the sample and only one-fourth of the sample were males. This means that the sample does not necessarily provides us with the male's point of view on the topic of the research.

In addition, regarding participants' ages, over half of the participants were between the ages of 18 and 29; more than a quarter were between the ages of 30-49; and just a quarter were between the ages of 50 and 75. Thus, this implies that not all age group were presented equally.

Additionally, the research lacks a comparative study. A comparative study must have been added to compare between the effect of Turkish series on people who did watch with the people who did not watch Turkish series. The significance of the comparative study is to ensure the credibility of the findings.

At last, it must be noted that the study was done through an online survey, where the participants shared their answers to the questionnaire on an online platform. This means that accessing specific participant groups, such as individuals without internet access, can be challenging. Also, the statistical confidence and margin of error are questioned due to poor random sampling quality.

Future research on this topic can benefit from this study and work on the limitation regarding this research paper in order to enhance their data and get better results. To assure an improved data base and analysis, future research might conduct a comparative study to the research between Turkish series' viewers and none viewers. On top of that, a bigger sample from the Lebanese population should be obtained to guarantee a more accurate result and data analysis. Furthermore, adding to the effects of Turkish series on the Lebanese population can be done. For example, the effect of Turkish series on the Turkish economy because of the Lebanese consumption of Turkish merchandise, the negative effect the Turkish series has on the children's lifestyle, habits, and culture, and the effect of the series on political level. All these effects can be an additional enhancement to future research papers regarding this paper.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

Movies and television series have long been important parts of popular culture all throughout the world. Millions of people worldwide follow and enjoy watching American and European movies and television shows. American and European cultures have long been spread throughout the world through films and television programs. Globalization is a crucial subject for television programs, as well. The mainstream media are increasingly acknowledged as being essential in promoting globalization and encouraging cross-cultural engagement through television shows, new technology, movies, and music (Matos, 2012).

The Turkish series have become a dominant provider in the industry, among others. Turkish TV programs have a wide global reach, reaching from the Middle East to Europe, from Africa to Latin America. Additionally, there is a global increase in interest in Turkish TV programs. A large number of people from all over the world have grown to be ardent supporters and devoted admirers of Turkish television series (Asya, 2023).

Because of the way Turkish culture is portrayed and how strong the Turkish family ties are shown, Turkish TV series are popular around the world. Cultural and social affinities have a significant impact on the success of Turkish TV shows in

different countries (Sevim, 2012). Since the beginning of the 2000s, Turkish series have also been shown on Lebanese channels due to their popularity in the Middle East and affordability. Furthermore, the effects of Turkish series on the Lebanese population are visible on their lifestyle, fashion style, music preference, media choices and food preferences. Through the data collected from the survey and the Pearson's correlation test done, this effect has been proven and a significant relationship between the consumption of Turkish series and the Lebanese people's fashion style and media choices was detected.



## Chapter 5

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