Not In My Kitchen? Ethnic Discrimination and Discrimination Intentions in Shared Housing among University Students in Germany

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This article looks into the scope and causes of both ethnic discrimination intentions and discriminatory behaviour in the sphere of close private interactions. In practice, German students' willingness to move into flats which would be shared with a Turkish student is analysed by conducting a direct survey, a factorial survey and a field experiment. Results show that, independent of the method used, ethnic discrimination against Turks does not, overall, play a substantial role among university students looking for a place to stay. However, data from the factorial survey and from the field experiment reveal that ethnic discrimination does occur in specific scenarios: while male applicants, in particular, prefer places inhabited by females, this is only the case if the females are German. In sum, our analyses demonstrate that the gender dimension needs to be taken into account when investigating discrimination intentions and ethnic discrimination in the field of close private interactions.

Keywords: Ethnic Discrimination; Student Housing; Gender; Turks; Germany

Introduction

One of the most prominent and stable findings from integration research in Germany is that the integration of the Turkish minority, referred to here as 'Turks',¹ lags behind that of other groups. Turks have fewer social ties with Germans and lower German language skills, educational credentials and income levels in comparison to other ethnic groups—mainly because most of the 1.7 million Turks living in

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Germany today immigrated as so-called ‘guestworkers’ in the 1960s and early 1970s. In an attempt to fill open and mostly low-skilled jobs in the industry and construction sectors, recruitment treaties were signed with several sending countries, among them Turkey. Although the guestworker scheme was intended to be a temporary solution, a large number of its migrants eventually settled in Germany permanently and were then gradually joined by their family members. Since 1980, the inflow of Turkish nationals to Germany has decreased. In 2010, Turks were only the fourth-largest group of new arrivals, far outnumbered by Poles, Romanians and Bulgarians (OECD 2011).

The Turkish population in Germany still reflects the legacy of the ‘guestworker’ era. Many first-generation Turkish migrants completed only a few years of formal schooling and have retained a low socio-economic status. Their children and grandchildren thus often enter the German school system disadvantaged by language problems and their parents’ limited ability to provide support. As a consequence they have, on average, less-favourable outcomes in the school system and in the German labour market in comparison to the children of natives or of other immigrant groups, even though their integration is greater than that of their parents’ (Diehl and Schnell 2006; Kalter 2011; Kristen and Granato 2007).

Public attention is thus often drawn to the failure of Turkish migrants and their offspring to integrate ‘successfully’ and to adjust to German middle-class values and codes of behaviour. In addition, their association with Islam leads them to be perceived, in the eyes of many Germans, as much more ‘alien’ than other immigrant groups. The link between the migration background, low socio-economic status and Islam has thus put the Turkish community in Germany into a difficult position. There is, however, mixed evidence and much debate with regard to the extent to which German natives’ social distances and discriminatory behaviour contribute to the situation. There is ample empirical evidence that Germans are more prejudiced against, and have higher levels of social distance from, Turks compared to other ethnic minorities (Blohm and Wasmer 2008). Turks more often report incidences of discrimination (Hans 2010: 286).

However, the number of reliable field experiments and audit studies on discriminatory behaviour against Turks in Germany is limited and has mainly focused on labour and housing markets (Auspurg *et al.* 2011; Goldberg *et al.* 1996; Kaas and Manger 2010). Similar to studies on migrants with a Muslim background in other European countries, these experiments suggest that ethnic discrimination does hamper migrants’ struggles towards parity with natives when it comes to accessing jobs (Ahmed and Hammerstedt 2008; Ahmed *et al.* 2010; Carlsson 2010; Carlsson and Rooth 2007) and housing (Bosch *et al.* 2010). Evidence of ethnic discrimination outside the labour and housing markets is more limited (for online auctions, see Przepiorka 2011; for the educational system, Sprietsma 2009; and for a general overview of discrimination in Germany, Klink and Wagner 1999). Majority members’ willingness to engage in close personal interactions with Turks remains particularly under-researched.

When it comes to explaining Turkish migrants' relative unpopularity, perceived cultural distance seems to play an important role: the German General Social Survey's (ALLBUS) item 'Foreigners should adapt their lifestyle a little more closely to that of Germans' received substantially more support in 2006 than in 1996, while other statements show declined or stable support over the same period (Blohm and Wasmer 2008; Diehl and Tucci 2010). It seems very likely that those natives who worry about migrants' cultural misfit think mainly about Turks. Moreover, perceptions of cultural distance between Germans and Turks increased substantially between 1996 and 2006, though they decreased or remained stable with respect to other migrant groups such as Italians or ethnic Germans. Data also show that social distance towards Turks—in Bogardus' (1925) sense of group members' willingness to have contact and interact with members of an outgroup—is and has remained high.

The fact that most Turks are Muslims seems to contribute substantially to how they are perceived. Islamophobia—i.e. the dislike of Muslims and all sorts of Islamic beliefs, symbols and religious practices—has been shown to be shared by about 30 per cent of all Germans (Kühnel and Leibold 2007). The gender dimension obviously plays an important role in this respect: reservations against the incorporation of Muslims into German society are frequently justified by the alleged incompatibility of Islam and gender equality. Debates on Turkish women wearing headscarves, girls not willing or allowed to participate in swimming lessons, and so-called 'honour killings' all touch upon issues of gender equality. Turkish men are often portrayed as 'macho' and women as more-or-less-passive victims of their male family members (Pratt-Ewing 2008; Schröttle 2009).

Linking the two phenomena of Turkish migrants' lagging integration and natives' social and cultural distance towards this particular group is difficult. One reason is that we do not know the extent to which negative attitudes against Muslims in general, and Turks in particular, translate into actual discriminatory behaviour—and how this, in turn, affects these groups' integration. In this article, we aim to make a contribution to the analysis of this puzzle by looking into the scope and causes of both discrimination intentions and discriminatory behaviour against Turkish immigrants and their offspring in the sphere of close social interactions. In practice, we look at students' willingness to apply for a vacant room in shared flats. These flats differ with respect to the ethnic composition of the potential co-tenants. In Germany, sharing a flat with other students is the most important form of student housing (BMBF 2010: 31). Typically two to five students live together in these *Wohngemeinschaften*, commonly known as a 'WG'. If a room is vacant, adverts are placed in newspapers or, more frequently, online. Students interested in the room contact the students already living there and make an appointment to view the available flat/house and to arrange for an 'interview' with the potential co-tenants.

In the next section, we introduce some theoretical considerations on the issue of discrimination in the form of contact avoidance, and propose some tentative hypotheses. We then depict the methodological challenges related to studying discrimination and discrimination intentions and describe our research design, which

includes differing, cross-validating methodological approaches. The empirical findings are presented in the penultimate section, before a discussion of the implications and caveats of our research.

Theoretical Background: Discrimination as ‘Contact Avoidance’ among University Students

Discrimination intentions are usually measured by asking respondents directly about their willingness to interact with minority members, whereas discrimination itself has been defined as ‘the difference between the treatment that a target group actually receives and the treatment they would receive if they were not members of the target group but were otherwise the same’ (Quillian 2006: 302). The specific form of discrimination under consideration here is ‘avoidance of contact’ on behalf of natives, i.e. ‘choosing the comfort of one’s own racial group [...] over interaction with another racial group [...]’ (National Research Council 2004: 57). From a theoretical standpoint, shared housing among students is a particularly suitable research topic when studying the scope and causes of discrimination intentions and discriminatory behaviour in the sphere of close private interactions.

First, students are highly educated and exposed to liberal norms regarding non-discrimination in both secondary and post-secondary contexts. While survey data suggest that these characteristics are linked to lower levels of prejudice (Coenders and Scheepers 2003), experimental research has revealed that students, nevertheless, show discriminatory behaviour against non-Europeans as well (Ahmed 2010a, 2010b). This discrepancy between reported attitudes and actual behaviour may be partly caused by the fact that respondents often conceal any existing discrimination intentions when asked directly in surveys but answer in a way that they perceive to be ‘socially desirable’. One factor known to trigger social desirability is the perception that a social norm with regard to the appropriate answer exists (Esser 1986). Results from German studies suggest that respondents who have a university degree and liberals are particularly convinced that ‘liking’ rather than ‘disliking’ foreigners is socially accepted (Janus 2010; Stocké 2004). Students can thus be expected to perceive racism and racist attitudes as negative—and to have the cognitive capacity to bias their answers accordingly (Stocké 2007). A combination of field-experiment methods along with survey research thus seems particularly appropriate when studying an educated group such as students.

Second, shared accommodation among students is ultimately part of the housing market but this segment differs greatly from those which are usually in the focus of studies on discrimination (see Bertrand and Mullainathan 2004; Fix and Struyk 1993). Gatekeepers such as estate agents do not play a role in this case; those who make the decision are usually those with whom potential flatmates will share the accommodation later on and interact personally with on a day-to-day basis. Such private interactions with majority members are important because they provide opportunities for the creation of bridging social capital. That, in turn, provides access

to information and resources outside of an individual's own (ethnic) group and may help to gain access to jobs or housing (Kanas *et al.* 2011). Research in Germany has shown that a lack of social ties with natives plays an important role in explaining ethnic residuals with regard to natives' and Turks' job statuses (Kalter 2006). Among academics, social capital acquired during the course of studies may become an important resource later in life (Franzen and Hangartner 2006; Grayson 2004). Thus far, close interactions are rare between Turks and Germans (Haug 2003; Kalter and Schroedter 2010) but it is still unclear which role discrimination in the form of natives' 'avoidance of contact' plays in explaining these findings.

Third and finally, living in a shared flat involves close and private contact between students of opposite sexes. This enables us to look into the role of gendered prejudice as a possible cause for discrimination. As co-tenants, female and male students live closely together and engage in common activities. The decision about who to live with is thus likely to be affected quite strongly by social distances that are based on perceived cultural incompatibilities between Turks and Germans, especially in the field of gender relationships. Like other forms of discrimination, stereotypes—and especially prejudices—are considered to be an important source of discrimination (Fiske 1998: 372). However, unlike other forms of discrimination, contact avoidance does not presuppose blatant and openly 'racist' prejudices (National Research Council 2004). Natives, even educated ones, may hold subtle or even unconscious stereotypes and prejudices that nevertheless influence their willingness to interact with minority members.

Another well-known approach to explaining discrimination does not start out from prejudice but from a lack of information (Becker 1971: 16). According to the concept of statistical discrimination (Phelps 1972), a lack of information on unobservable traits—e.g. an applicant's productivity—is compensated by referring to observable traits—e.g. an applicant's nationality. In field-experiment research, the role of statistical discrimination is often tested by adding additional information to the applications of fictive candidates for jobs or apartments. If discrimination declines, statistical discrimination is assumed to be at work; if not, it is more plausible that the discriminating person is prejudiced (see Bertrand and Mullainathan 2004). While theories of statistical discrimination are used to explain discrimination in the market place, there is no general reason to assume that they are not suitable for explaining contact avoidance as well. As we show below, our research design takes a first look at the role of these competing explanations for contact avoidance.

Based on the theoretical considerations presented thus far, we can formulate three tentative hypotheses. First, we expect discrimination to be lower when students are asked directly in a survey about their intentions to discriminate than in studies using field-experiment methods, because these latter should be less affected by socially desirable answers than surveys. Based on the assumption that prejudice against Turks is gendered, we assume, secondly, that majority members are less willing to engage in close private interactions in opposite- rather than in same-sex combinations: German women are expected to be more hesitant about interacting privately with Turkish

men than with Turkish women, while the opposite should apply to native men. Finally, we expect to find at least some evidence that statistical discrimination is at work in our field of study. For prejudiced natives, discrimination (intentions) should decline if they get the information that the potential roommate is a party person, i.e. a signal that s/he differs from the group that is the focus of stereotypical assumptions about conservative Muslim migrants.

Research Design and Methodological Approach: Collecting Attitudinal and Behavioural Data among German University Students

Since studying real behaviour is often difficult, numerous surveys such as the ALLBUS have attempted to measure majority members' behavioural intentions towards minority members. However, this method is not only problematic because it is questionable to what extent discrimination intentions translate into discriminatory behaviour (LaPiere 1928; Merton 1949); we argue that it is also problematic in that educated natives, in particular, are prone to conceal discrimination intentions in surveys and to answer in accordance with social norms instead.

A method that is known to reduce social desirability bias and to yield results that predict actual behaviour better than do survey data are factorial surveys (see Wallander 2009 for a review). Rather than being directly asked about their attitudes, respondents are requested to evaluate descriptions of persons or situations which combine several attributes/dimensions in a quasi-experimental design—so-called 'vignettes' (Jasso 2006; Rossi and Anderson 1982). Respondents are randomly assigned to a set of scenarios, which allows researchers to assess the isolated causal influence of the vignette dimensions. Due to the complexity of combinations, respondents are not expected to be able to realise which dimension is the crucial one and to bias their answers according to perceived social norms. Additionally, the evaluation of multidimensional scenarios comes closer to real-life decision-making than evaluations of single attributes. However, factorial surveys still only capture discrimination intentions and not real behaviour. Their external validity is limited by the fact that respondents might never have given any thought to the many scenarios and have to make a decision about them somewhat spontaneously (Beck and Opp 2001). In the context of ethnic discrimination, the factorial survey approach has been used to study residential segregation (Emerson *et al.* 2001; St.John and Bates 1990); yet, an application to contact avoidance is thus far missing.

Given the problems related to using data from direct or factorial surveys, field experiments are often conducted in order to assess the scope of discrimination. They are an important direct method for studying the extent to which minority members are discriminated against; they have a high external validity, since participants are unaware of their participation. These studies try to capture discriminatory behaviour directly in the moment when it occurs and are often conducted as audit studies or 'paired testing' (for an overview, see Pager 2007; Pager and Shepherd 2008; Riach and Rich 2002), that involve real testers (in-person audits). Since such a design is

demanding in terms of time and money and can raise questions with respect to internal validity (Heckman 1998), ‘testing studies’ are an alternative that looks into the impact of race or ethnicity in social or market interactions based on the success of written or phone applications (correspondence tests)—e.g. for housing or jobs (see Bertrand and Mullainathan 2004). The internet has opened up new opportunities for this type of research, for example, by sending online applications or using online platforms. For the housing market, studies have been carried out recently by, for example, Ahmed and Hammerstedt (2008), Ahmed *et al.* (2010), Auspurg *et al.* (2011), Bosch *et al.* (2010), Carpusor and Loges (2006) and Hanson and Hawley (2011); however, it should again be stressed that studies on close personal interactions in the private housing market are absent thus far.

In field experiments, the displayed behaviour is taken as evidence for underlying attitudes or feelings about minority members. None of the studies we know of have validated this assumption by measuring the discrimination intentions *and* actual behaviour of the same people, probably because such a theoretically and empirically desirable design raises both ethical and practical issues. We therefore study discrimination intentions and discriminatory behaviour by investigating the same topic using different methods—a direct survey combined with a factorial survey and a field experiment—and involving different participants to those in the survey.

The dependent variable in our research is either the self-reported willingness to move into a flat that is inhabited by a Turk (‘discrimination intentions’) or actual reactions to fictitious online adverts for vacant rooms in a shared flat with a Turkish roommate (‘discriminatory behaviour’). In both approaches, our test scenario involves two other students who already live in the flat and are looking for a third co-tenant. These two students are either both German, or one German and the other Turkish.² In order to examine the interaction between applicants’ gender and the gender and ethnicity of those students already living in the flat, we analyse natives’ willingness to move into a certain place separately for male and female applicants and for female and male German and Turkish roommates.

Direct Survey

To capture students’ self-reported discrimination intentions we conducted a paper-and-pencil survey among 900 undergraduate students at a German university at the beginning or end of lectures in the summer term of 2010. Even though we chose lectures from different fields (mainly business, social sciences, natural sciences and humanities) we did not achieve a random sample of students. Of our respondents, 55 per cent were male, with a mean age of 22 years; 95 per cent were German nationals. We informed the participants that the study was about the local student housing market and we included items measuring their preferences in terms of location, rent, room size and quietness of the room using a six-point answer scale. Students were also asked to provide information about their current living arrangements and whether or not they are generally willing to share accommodation with others. All

Table 1. Measurement of respondents' discrimination (intentions) in the direct survey, the factorial survey and the field experiment

Direct survey	<p>Imagine you were searching for a room in a shared flat. Independent of how you generally think about sharing flats with others, would you get in touch with a place where you would be living with: (6-point scale from 1 = definitely not, to 6 = definitely)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>someone who is working</i> • <i>someone who is homosexual</i> • <i>people who do not like to attend parties</i> • <i>a Turkish person</i> • <i>a couple</i> • <i>a child</i> • <i>party people</i> • <i>only women</i> • <i>only men?</i>
Factorial survey	<p>Two students, (f,f)/(m,m) (<i>Laura and Ayse/Lukas and Hakan/Anne and Julia/Nils and Martin</i>) look for a new roommate. The vacant room costs (150/200/250/300) Euros and is (12/16/20/24) m². (<i>Laura and Ayse/Lukas and Hakan/Anne and Julia/Nils and Martin</i>) (<i>like to party/are not big party people</i>).+ Please mark: <i>I would contact this place</i> (6-point scale from 1 = definitely not, to 6 = definitely).</p>
Field experiment	<p>Bright room in a shared flat for three!</p> <p>We, (<i>Laura and Ayse/Lukas and Hakan/Anne and Julia/Nils and Martin</i>) (undergraduate students) look for a nice third person to share our pleasant flat. The room is spacious (<i>size</i>) and bright and has a <i>hardwood floor/carpet</i>. The room is located downtown. A washing machine and a <i>lumber room/an attic</i> are available for use. Rent is (<i>price</i>) including heating costs and electricity.# We look forward to getting to know you!</p>

Notes: + Vignette dimensions in brackets and respective levels are printed in italics; # Characteristics of roommates/rooms that varied systematically/randomly between ads are printed in italics.

students were asked to rate how likely they were to apply for a room in shared accommodation under a variety of circumstances (see Table 1). Finally, we asked for standard socio-demographic variables (age, gender, nationality/parents' origin, field of study, income).

Factorial Survey

In the factorial survey we asked respondents who participated in the direct survey to rate different scenarios in which two students search for a third person to fill a vacant room in their flat. We presented the vignettes before the direct questions to avoid priming effects. In the introduction to the vignettes, we asked respondents to imagine that they were searching for shared accommodation and that the rooms were all equally suitable in terms of location and equipment (see Table 1 for wording, dimensions and levels of vignettes). In addition to the gender and the ethnicity (the latter indicated by the name) of the two students already living in the place and the monthly price of rent and the size of the room, a fifth dimension of the vignettes

specified whether roommates were party people or not. We included this characteristic in the vignettes and the direct survey to obtain a first impression of the motives for discrimination, i.e. a lack of information about or a general dislike of Turks. This serves as a signal that the stereotypical assumptions about religious Turks who are not ready 'to have fun' or to engage in opposite-sex interactions and friendships do not apply to the Turkish co-tenant in question. If discrimination decreases once this information is added, statistical discrimination could be at work.

In total, the Cartesian product of vignette dimensions and their respective levels yields a full factorial of 128 vignettes ($2 \times 2 \times 4 \times 4 \times 2$); none of the vignettes was excluded due to implausibility. We used Beck and Opp's (2001) Word macro to randomly assign the 128 vignettes to 16 sets, each containing eight vignettes. Each set was duplicated 65 times and respondents were randomly assigned to one of the sets. Of the 7,184 possible ratings (898 respondents $\times$ 8 vignettes), 19 vignettes were not rated and nine respondents were excluded from further analysis. We are thus left with a sample of 889 respondents (7,112 ratings).

Field Experiment

Our field experiment was conducted in June 2010. We studied actual discrimination against Turkish co-tenants by posting 40 fictitious online adverts for vacant rooms in shared flats already inhabited by two students. The ads were posted on a large German internet platform—specialising in student accommodation—which is used by about 3.2 million people, mostly students, each month. In order to reach case numbers high enough to conduct more complex analyses we did not limit this field experiment to the city where we administered the questionnaire but included ads for 20 German cities.³ We posted two ads per city on the same date and at about the same time of day.

Substantively, these ads differed only with regard to the ethnicity of the fictitious roommates who were either two German women, two German men, one Turkish woman and one German woman or one Turkish man and one German man. We did not vary gender *and* ethnicity within one city since that would have meant posting four ads, making the detection of our experiment more likely. Instead, we only posted ads for flats shared by females in one city per state and only for accommodation shared by males in the other city in the same state (e.g. Tübingen and Heidelberg in the state of Baden-Württemberg). The ads were introduced with a short general description and contained information on the gender and ethnicity of the other tenants, as indicated by the name. The remaining text differed slightly and randomly between the ads, and contained information on the price and the size of the room (randomly varied, based on the mean rent and mean size of rooms in the city). It also included some randomly assigned distracting information, such as details about the floor covering or the availability of an attic or a lumber room.

In total, 633 individuals reacted via email to our ads and asked if they could have more information or take a look at the flat. Of these, 68 per cent were men, 89 per

cent were of German origin (according to the name given in the email) and 81 per cent were students. Mean age was the same as in the survey—22 years.

Results: Not In My Kitchen?

In the direct survey, discrimination intentions against Turks were quite weak. As we can see from Table 2, with a mean rating of 4.42 (SD 1.43), a flat with a Turkish co-tenant is significantly less popular than an all-female flat (mean: 4.92, SD 1.35, paired $t(878) = -8.506$, $p < .00$) or a place inhabited by quiet persons (mean: 4.72, SD 1.21, paired $t(881) = -5.617$, $p < .00$), but significantly more popular than an all-male flat (mean: 4.22, SD 1.58, paired $t(880) = 3.241$, $p < .00$) or a place inhabited by a child (mean: 2.17, SD 1.37, paired $t(881) = 37.50$, $p < .00$) or a homosexual (mean: 3.86, SD 1.71, paired $t(877) = 10.40$, $p < .00$). The finding that (male) homosexuals are discriminated against on the housing market is in accordance with an earlier study by Ahmed and Hammarstedt (2009). From the direct survey, there is no evidence that Turks are a particularly unpopular group to live with.

The factorial survey yields similar results. As Table 2 shows, women are more popular roommates than men, as indicated by the positive coefficient of 0.298.⁴ The willingness to contact a flat decreases for German and Turkish roommates, suggesting slightly negative evaluations for Turks. Party people are less popular than quiet co-tenants. The coefficients for price and size exhibit the theoretically expected signs. Calculated using ‘a willingness to pay’, respondents would be willing to pay close to 23 Euros more a month to live with a female co-tenant; for a reduced rent of 6 Euros per month, respondents would be willing to move into a flat with a Turkish co-tenant.⁵

Table 2. Multilevel model of discrimination intention with vignette dimensions

	Vignette model 1
Fixed effects	
Intercept	3.315 (0.048)***
<i>Vignette dimensions</i>	
Sex (ref. male)	0.298 (0.030)***
Ethnicity (ref. German)	-0.077 (0.030)***
Party people (ref. no)	-0.072 (0.030)**
Size (m ²)	0.150 (0.000)***
Price (Euros)	-0.013 (0.007)***
Random effects	
Error variance between (δ_{im})	0.473 (0.031)***
Error variance within (σ^2_{eij})	1.477 (0.026)***
Deviance	24087.374
# fixed/# random parameter	7/2
N(vig)/N(resp)	7112/889

Notes: Random intercept model (ML-estimation); dependent variable: willingness to contact a flat (answer scale 1 = definitely not; 6 = definitely); controlling for ordering effects of vignettes; s.e. in parentheses; vignette dimensions ‘size’ and ‘price’ are mean-centred. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

A first look at the findings of the field experiment roughly confirms these results. Of the 633 people who responded to our online adverts, 320 (50.6 per cent) stated that they would reply to both German and to mixed flat-share adverts, 150 (23.7 per cent) would reply to German flat-share adverts only, and a comparable number, 163 (25.8 per cent), to mixed flat-share adverts only.

In sum, none of our three studies yields evidence of substantial ethnic discrimination or discrimination intentions against Turkish students. However, we have argued above that the specific nature of prejudice that may cause discriminatory behaviour is gendered. The factorial survey and the field experiment are ideal methodological approaches for studying such effects. We therefore need to take a closer look at the interaction between the ethnicity and the gender of the students already living in the fictitious flat and take respondents' gender into consideration as well. Due to the complexity of these findings, we present the detailed results of the interaction effects of the factorial survey and the field experiment in Tables 3 and 4 and in graphic form in Figures 1 and 2.⁶

Once the results of the factorial survey are differentiated by gender, the findings look quite different. As we see in Figure 1, both men and women prefer to share their flat with females.⁷ However, for male applicants, this holds true *only* if the roommates are German. In other words, the preference for sharing flats with women vanishes if the flat is to be shared with a *Turkish* woman. A model including a complex four-way interaction effect between respondents' gender, co-tenants' gender, co-tenants' ethnicity and party person (not presented here) shows that adding the information

Figure 1. Reported preference for German compared to German-Turkish shared flat by co-tenant's and respondent's sex (factorial survey)

in the vignettes that the two women already inhabiting the place ‘like to party’, and thus do not match the stereotype of conservative and religious Turks, does not show any effect. Among men who are interested in moving into flats with other men, and among women who are interested in moving into flats with other women, the tendency to prefer German over ethnically mixed places is weak but it exists, as shown in Table 3. In turn, women who are interested in moving into ‘male places’ prefer to move in with a Turkish and a German man rather than with two German men.

Overall, the results from our field experiment point in the same direction (see Figure 2). Just as data from the factorial and from the direct survey suggest, flats that are inhabited by women seem to be, overall, more popular than those inhabited by men; applicants for flats shared by women prefer to move into places inhabited by two German students rather than by a German and a Turkish student. This tendency is about the same for male (19 per cent of applicants for the ‘bi-national’ flat and 26 per cent for the German) and female (23 and 30 per cent respectively) applicants.

Table 3. Reported preference for German compared to German-Turkish shared flat by co-tenant’s and respondent’s sex (cross-level interaction effect)

	Vignette model 2
Fixed effects	
Intercept	3.760 (0.322)***
<i>Vignette dimensions</i>	
Sex (ref. male)	0.159 (0.065)**
Ethnicity (ref. German)	−0.109 (0.064)*
Party people (ref. no)	−0.069 (0.031)**
Size (m ²)	0.150 (0.003)***
Price (Euros)	−0.013 (0.000)***
<i>Interaction effect (vignettes)</i>	
Sex*ethnicity	−0.130 (0.092)
<i>Respondent characteristics</i>	
Sex (ref. male)	−0.352 (0.077)***
Age	−0.016 (0.013)
Lives in shared flat (ref. no)	0.233 (0.056)***
Nationality (ref. not German)	−0.018 (0.122)
<i>Cross-level effects (vignette dimension*respondent characteristics)</i>	
Ethnicity*resp. sex	0.180 (0.086)**
Sex*resp. sex	0.370 (0.087)***
Ethnicity*sex*resp. sex	−0.023 (0.123)
Random effects	
Error variance between (δ_{im})	0.460 (0.031)***
Error variance within (σ^2_{eij})	1.462 (0.027)***
Deviance	23286.261
# fixed/# random parameter	15/2
N(vig)/N(resp)	6880/860

Notes: Random intercept model (ML-estimation); dependent variable: willingness to contact a flat (answer scale 1 = definitely not; 6 = definitely); controlling for ordering effects of vignettes; s.e. in parentheses; vignette dimensions ‘size’ and ‘price’ are mean-centred. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Figure 2. Preference for German compared to German-Turkish *Wohngemeinschaft* (shared apartment) by co-tenant's and respondent's sex (field experiment)

Data collected during the field experiment also confirm the finding from the factorial survey—that this is not the case for the few women applying for a room in flats shared by males, who prefer to live with a Turkish and a German man rather than with two German men (18 and 33 per cent). The only difference between the two methods is that, in the field experiment, this applies to males moving into flats shared with other males as well (17 and 35 per cent). Apart from this, the finding that flats with female roommates are more popular than flats shared with men only if they are shared by two German students is astoundingly robust.

Table 4. Reactions to adverts for flat-sharing by type of flat and applicants' sex (field experiment; applicants with German nationality only; N = 527)

	Applicant ♂				Applicant ♀			
	Male co-tenants only		Female co-tenants only		Male co-tenants only		Female co-tenants only	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Replied to German-only adverts	9	17.3	29	25.9	24	18.0	69	30.0
Replied to both adverts	25	48.1	62	55.4	65	48.9	109	47.4
Replied to German/Turkish flat-share adverts	18	34.6	21	18.8	44	33.1	52	22.6
Total	52	100	112	100	133	100	230	100

Note: Cramer's- $V = 0.118$ (average correlation), $p < .005$.

Summary and Discussion

There are two important results from our study. First, at the aggregate level, ethnic discrimination against Turks does not play a substantial role among university students looking for a place to stay. This result was found in both the direct and the factorial surveys, and in the field experiment. In this regard, our hypothesis that contact avoidance is more widespread in the experimental approaches than in the survey was not supported. Obviously, the lack of discrimination intentions reported in the direct survey is not just caused by socially desirable answers. Likewise, participants in the factorial survey reported an only slightly lesser willingness to contact a place that is inhabited by a German and a Turkish student rather than by two German students.

Second, results from all three studies show a clear preference on the part of both male and female respondents and/or applicants for flats inhabited by females. Data from the factorial survey *and* from the field experiment reveal, however, that this preference for female co-tenants is limited to places inhabited by *German* women. In so far as this finding applies particularly to male applicants, our second expectation—that contact avoidance is stronger among individuals of opposing genders—is confirmed. This finding is robust across the two studies and it is puzzling and not easy to interpret. We can only speculate why female roommates are more popular than male roommates. One intuitively appealing reason is that female roommates are considered to be less messy than male ones. But this interpretation does not shed light on the question of why Turkish female co-tenants are less popular than German female co-tenants, particularly among German men. Another interpretation is that living with women is so popular among men because it may lead to romantic involvement at some point. Given the stereotypical assumptions about Turkish women outlined in the introduction, this would explain why men prefer to share flats with women only if these women are German. However, it cannot explain why German female applicants show the same pattern, although to a lesser extent. And why do both the factorial survey and the field experiment show that female German applicants for flats shared by males have a clear preference for Turkish co-tenants? This cannot be answered at this point based on our knowledge. In any case, our analyses demonstrate that the gender dimension needs to be taken into account when discrimination intentions and ethnic discrimination are investigated in the field of close private interactions.

We limited the analyses of our field-experiment data to descriptive analyses, as many observable incidents of the behavioural responses are needed to study the interaction between different possible dimensions of discrimination in more detail. To do this without revealing to the participants that they are participating in an experiment is a challenge. Factorial surveys are an alternative method in this respect. In our case, we exploited their potential by adding the dimension ‘Likes to party/ Quiet person’ and can show that, contrary to our own expectation, this additional information did not have any impact on the degree of discrimination.

Given the explorative nature of our study, these findings cannot easily be generalised. First, we were unable to assess students' actual willingness to move into a place inhabited by a Turkish student but only their willingness to take a closer look at such a place. Yet, considering that taking a look at a flat is less of a commitment than actually moving in, it could be assumed that our results underestimate the actual extent of discrimination. Second, the group in focus in our study, German university students, is primarily interesting for theoretical reasons, mainly because they can be expected to show large differences between reported attitudes and actual behaviour. But overall they should still be less prone to discriminate than other parts of the population. The fictitious Turks 'involved' in our study belong to the still-very-small group of Turks who are enrolled in tertiary education in Germany. This group is certainly not at the centre of public debate on migrants whose integration has allegedly failed and who are accused of withdrawing into ethnic communities. Furthermore, they already live together with a native German and are thus already socially integrated in the eyes of many Germans. For these reasons, our findings should not be taken as an estimate for the extent of discrimination against Turks in German society at large—as such they would probably be far too conservative. Lastly, our attempt to measure statistical discrimination by adding the characteristic 'Likes to party' to the Turkish name turned out to be somewhat inadequate. While our idea was that being a party person is a positive signal to a potential co-tenant, our survey showed that, in fact, calm people are preferred over party people. The fact that adding this piece of information leaves our findings unaffected should thus not be taken as proof that taste-based rather than statistical discrimination is at work.

Nevertheless, our study provides an example of the effectiveness of approaching the topic of discrimination in a way that goes beyond collecting—often biased—survey data on discrimination intentions and assessing the differential treatment of people who differ only with regard to their names in audit studies. We could show that a more sophisticated methodological approach renders it possible to study the impact of *specific* constellations of characteristics of those discriminating and those being discriminated against. This, of course, requires sound theoretical assumptions about the nature of the prejudices causing discrimination—in our case gendered assumptions about Turkish men and women.

Notes

- [1] For the sake of brevity, we use the term 'Turks' throughout this paper for first-generation migrants from Turkey and their children, notwithstanding their citizenship. After all, we are essentially interested in the question of whether a Turkish ethnic *background* evokes discrimination.
- [2] We did not incorporate a third condition (both roommates are Turkish) in our study because this would have made the design even more complex and the experiment easier to detect. We also assume that places inhabited by two Turks are very unpopular in the eyes of many native Germans, an assumption that needs to be tested in further studies.

- [3] They had to be university cities and to be medium-sized so that the information ‘flat is centrally located’ in the adverts was clear enough; the use of the internet platform had to be popular. Per federal German state, the two largest university towns—with up to 250,000 inhabitants—were chosen.
- [4] The model presented in Table 2 was estimated using a multi-level approach due to the hierarchical structure of vignette data. Since every respondent (level 2) rates eight vignettes (level 1), the ratings per respondent are not independent of each other; from a statistical point of view, the assumption of uncorrelated error terms is violated and estimating OLS-regression models would yield inaccurate standard errors (Hox *et al.* 1991). Vignette dimensions are independent variables at level 1; respondent characteristics such as gender are independent variables at level 2. Interaction effects between vignette dimensions and respondent characteristics are called cross-level effects. The coefficients presented in Table 2 and 4 are interpreted in the same way as those from OLS-regressions, e.g. in Table 2—controlling for ethnicity, the inclination to go partying, flat size and price—the mean willingness to contact a flat is 0.298 points higher for a flat with all-female co-tenants than for all-male co-tenants.
- [5] Part-worth utilities of a non-monetary attribute k were calculated by dividing the respective coefficient β_k by the coefficient of the monetary attribute β_m multiplied by -1: $\frac{\beta_k}{\beta_m}$.
- [6] In Table 3 we examine willingness to contact a flat for female and male respondents by including cross-level effects for respondents’ gender with vignette dimensions ‘ethnicity’ and ‘sex’. We control for respondents’ age, nationality, gender and whether respondents live in a shared flat. Our model yields positive and significant cross-level effects for respondents’ gender with ‘ethnicity’ and ‘sex’, suggesting that male respondents prefer to share their flat with German roommates; female as well as male respondents prefer to live with female rather than male roommates.
- [7] Despite the differences in the number of responses to female and male flat-shares (421 versus 201 responses), this finding needs to be taken with a grain of salt, since it could also reflect locality-specific differences in the popularity of the platform (ads for flat-sharing with males and with females had to be published in different cities).

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