

CULTURAL DIPLOMACY THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA: AN ANALYSIS OF TİKA'S SOCIOLOGICAL IMPACT IN SHAPING THE PERCEPTION OF TURKISH CULTURE IN JORDAN

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Abstract:

This study examines the use of media by the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) to sociologically influence cultural dynamics on Jordanians. Employing both survey and thematic analysis, the study contributes to determining the efficiency of TİKA's activities in the sphere of cultural diplomacy and development of the bi-lateral relations between Jordan and Turkey. Research shows that 71.2% of participants did not know about TİKA, and of the informed responders, they realized about this agency through social media platforms (40%). From aware respondents, 75% said TİKA's media shaped their perception of Turkish culture, more so on language and literature at 35%. Moreover, 70% responded that TİKA's media affected their social identity in the Jordanian society and 80% said that projects of TİKA have a positive impact on Jordanian Turkish relations.

Keywords: Cultural, Diplomacy, TİKA, Sociological Impact, Social Media.

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1. Introduction

When cultural diplomacy is growing in importance it become important to differentiate between those cultural policies that are still institutionalized and the rest where the culture plays a part. The relationship between Turkish culture and Turkey, and how it affects perceptions of Turkey in the Middle East will continue to be a key part of Turkey's diplomatic bilateral and multilateral strategies for the foreseeable future (Aliriza 2012). Consequently, this work will endeavour to provide a full account from an original, media-focused methodological approach. The study is based on how Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) uses cultural policies in Jordan and how social media are used as a successful instrument in increasing Turkey's soft power. Besides, TIKA envisions to change the stereotyped perception of Jordanians about Turkey by using social media, and the way Turkey is popularizing itself in the region is more relational and communicative than structural. In this way, it has the opportunity to reach a wide target base; thus, the persuasion aimed at intensifying cultural relations between the people of Turkey and Jordanians, in addition to positively influencing perceptions of Turkish culture, will be effective.

Hence, a specific approach is needed to define the completed or in-progress cultural policy's results for the Turkish and Jordanian regulating bodies and entities of interest – This means thematic media analysis dedicated to these actors. Preceding research discusses the necessity of exploring the promotion of cultural policies by TIKA in Jordan through the perspective of culture and media to gain deeper insights into the Turkish cultural engagements and impact obtained in the area. Thus the purpose of TIKA's efforts is to but begin to build a framework that will enable a qualitative evaluation process of both the hard and soft power of Turkey (Beİgül, 2024). Thus, this research aims at assessing the impact of media facilitated by the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) in the promotion of Turkish cultures in Jordan. In addition, the study will enhance the ability of TIKA to establish better measures for public relations and promotion with regard to the intended message and identity enhancement of TIKA, based on the profile and positioning of target audiences in the region. This approach will not only fit Turkey's strategic interests but will also build understanding and emphasize the cultural relations between Turkey and Jordan.

1.1. Literature Review

Cultural diplomacy is one of the critical approaches to the management of relations between societies and states because it always improves soft power. The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) can be included here as an agent transforming the Turkish culture in the global level.

The relation of TIKA to neo-Ottomanist policies of the Turkish policy is being discussed by Aykaç (2021) or cultural and historical hegemony by Turkey in countries and territories historically belonging to the Ottoman Empire. By restoring and reopening Ottoman-era monuments and founding international posterity sites, TIKA intensifies Turkey's cultural authority. Such attempts also contribute to boosting up the soft power of Turkey and are clearly the instruments of its foreign policy while, at the same time, being manifestations of Turkey's domestic politics.

Grincheva (2023) highlights the increasing reliance on media in cultural diplomacy. TIKA integrates digital campaigns and media platforms to amplify Turkey's cultural narratives. This is complemented by heritage preservation projects, which serve as a medium for promoting shared

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histories and strengthening bilateral ties. Such strategies effectively counter competing cultural narratives, especially in regions like the Middle East.

Jordan is a perfect example by which the sociological effect of TİKA can be analyzed. Hudib and Cousins (2020) examine the manner in which cultural diplomacy objective is supported by capacity building programs for non-western countries. Since TİKA's projects in Jordan are founded on the restoration of historical and cultural properties and cultural festivals, they foster a positive perception of Turkey in the target cultural sphere.

However, TİKA experience some difficulty in promoting the culture as well as gratifying the local demands. Aykaç (2021) considers that the neo-Ottomanist implications in TİKA's projects may cause historical controversies. Furthermore, Khalil (2012) emphasises that cross-cultural communication should be pursued with respect of each participant, so that the spiritual motives of the partners would not be misconstrued.

According to Grincheva (2023), the contemporary cultural diplomacy has expanded the focus on participation and the variety of media. TİKA is a good example of this approach as it combines cultural initiatives, educational schemes and digital actions. However, the agency must overcome several factors such as authenticity and cultural to sustain the agency's work.

1.2. Background of TİKA

Many countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus violated in December 25, 1991 because Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was dissolved. This event led to the change of geopolitics that led to formation of sovereign state of Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan (Cornell, 2024). Consequently, Turkey with a shared language, culture, and social memory with these newly emerging nations discovered a favorable environment for the reviving bilateral and regional relations. In other words, the extent of relation of Turkey with these nations is best described in the concept of "one nation, but different states", which is famously associated with the prospects of integration. These relationships have evolved as these performances have become a Turkish foreign policy priority over the past two decades, which have been characterized by an active and complex approach (AnadoluAjansı, 2021).

Up until early 1990s, the main interest of Turkey was to ensure the international recognition of the newly emerged Turkic republics in the Central Asia. Following this, there emerged focus on the promotion of social, economic and cultural development of those countries (Rubin and Kirişci, 2001). At first, Turkey offered humanitarian help as a response to emergencies, but later the aid was aimed at becoming a long-term developmental support and cooperation platform. However, understanding the necessity of having an institution that will specifically be in charge of the implementation of such measures, TİKA, the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency was founded in 1992. TİKA has been an active instrument of Turkey foreign policy especially in countries that have cultural and historical relation with Turkey, however, TİKA also operates at the international level (Belous et al, 2024).

The main goal of TİKA to identified Turkey's role in the development of the Turkic republics in such fields as identification of social systems, institution building, and various deficiencies in technical infrastructures. The agency introduced many programmes in various fields of core interest such as education, health, reconstruction, agriculture and food security, commerce, tourism and trade, and industries. Before proceeding, one of the first major achievements of TİKA may regarded as the opening of the Programme Coordination Office in

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Turkmenistan. After that, such offices in the Eurasian region increased to six offices which is a clear indication that Turkey desires to see more cooperation and development (TIKA, 2024).

Between 1992 and 1995, the agency focused on understanding economic, social, as well as cultural steps. But from 1995, it accorded more importance to education and cultural cooperation in the framework of the Union. Since the lack of education and expertise of the current population is the root of sustainable development, the agency focused on constructing schools, libraries, and laboratories and providing universities with appropriate technology (TIKA, 2024).

The round of the importance of globalization began in the turn of millennium and shaped many factors of development as well as the international relations. To address these changes, TIKA kicked off projects focused on improving the institutional development of the relevant institutions in partner countries. All these initiatives stemmed from the cultural history and such ideals denote the Turkey pride in their forefathers' bond (Fidan and Nurdun, 2008).

Foreign policy of the Turkey started to change after 2000; the new policy prioritizing interventionist and ethical diplomacy. In congruence with such a change in direction, the TIKA is Array further extended by augmenting the number of Programme Coordination Offices from 12 in 2002 to 33 by the end of 2012. TIKA currently has had offices in 170 countries and 63 offices in 61 countries across five continents. It's worth to note that the agency's actions involve a broad spectrum of development cooperation projects aiming at enhancing peace and development in Turkey's neighbourhood and beyond (Akilli and Çelenk, 2019).

TIKA's Amman Program Coordination Office was started in Jordan since 2014. The Office has extended ten projects and programs in a number of fields from educational, health, agricultural, animal husbandry, skill development, establishment reinforcement, and others after its formation. Also, office has vigorously supported and embarked on the restoration of physical and tangible culture .Following its missions and closely working with authorities in Jordan, TİKA to further improve of cooperation between Turkey and Jordan. These measures show that the given agency aims at the postulates of sustainable development and cooperation in the region (Jordan Times, 2019).

1.3. Media as a Catalyst for Cultural Diplomacy

1.3.1. Cultural Diplomacy and Media

For cultural diplomacy as one of the major elements of the foreign policy, there's a great interest from the scholars. Ministers have studied the how states employ media as an instrument in promoting their cultural vales as well as improving the soft power of a state. Culture diplomacy entails the selling of cultural resources with a view of creating goodwill between nations or even changing attitude of people in other nations (Enaim, 2021). In these initiatives, therefore, the media has a particularly critical function because of the tool it offers in punctuating culture to the largest audience. Past academic work notes that culture as perceived through the media is important, while state sponsored media campaigns were commonly used as a mode of communicating a country's branding message (Melissen, 2007). These are indeed planned communication initiatives towards implementing change designed to promote the image of the host country and create a sense of culturalInIm.

1.3.2. Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory (Tajfel& Turner, 1986) helps to understand how people divide themselves and others into categories, and which role the categorization plays in people's perceptions and actions. This theory has been well used in matters concerning the intercultural

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relationships mainly because a culture bears the representations of one culture to another or to their own. Based on the social identity theory, continuity of cultural identity with the content of media affects the perception of attitudes toward other cultures in a way that could strengthen the co-cultural bonds as well as mark the boundary between groups. It has been found that when the media reveals unfamiliar culture in a positive manner, then a person is more accepting of that culture, and integrates into his/her own self-image (Giles, 2002). To analyse the effect which TİKA's media campaigns may have upon the construction of Jordanian social identities through Turkish cultural representations, this theory proves applicable in context.

1.3.3. Cultural Capital and Social Stratification

In analyzing the diffusion of culture, Bourdieu's Cultural Capital theory gives methodologies for viewing culture distribution in societal relations of power. Cultural capital is defined as the information, skills, education, and other cultural assets that are possessed by anybody, which may dictate that that person's position on the social ladder (Webb et al, 2002). Regarding its function, the cultural intelligibility of TİKA's activities might work as cultural capital that could create new social structure within the targeted nation, namely, Jordan. According to the previous studies, it was revealed that in those societies where members of the privileged value cultural capital, those people who get an access to such foreign cultural capital can have a better social status (Reed and Johnson, 2023). This literature leads to the proposition that promotion of Turkish culture may have net positive or negative impact on Jordanian society depending on positions of different groups in Jordanian society and their cultural capital.

1.3.4. Transnational Networks

Identifying the impact of cultural diplomacy initiatives means examining and exploring such transnational social networks. These are network that wake across the boundaries of the countries these are as result of people's movement, ideas and resources with very important role in continuing relationships between those countries. Cultural projects, including those realized under the auspices of TİKA, in many respects act as a starting point for the development of transnational communicative relations and bona fide cooperation between people and organizations of different countries (Levitt, 2001). According to the literature, it is evident that such networks are crucial in the organization of cross cultural commerce and generation of inter Country relations (Sahadevan and Sumangala, 2021). For Jordan and Turkey, these transnational networks can support newly nurtured bilateral relations more effectively through the networks built in TİKA's cultural and development projects.

Empirical works about cultural diplomacy, social identity, cultural capital and international networks can help to comprehend the media campaigns and projects of TİKA in Jordan. This renders the following research questions for this study: how does the local culture of representation of Turkish culture through media impact 'who we are' in an emerging Jordanian social identity? What is the impact of these representations on social mobility or inequality? And finally, how do the connections between Jordan and Turkey as part of a wider network aid in the further reinforcement of the two countries' relationship at a time of culture media flow? In this regard, this study will be useful to expand the discussion of the concept of cultural diplomacy and its effects on social and diplomatic processes.

2. Methodology

This section outlines the methodology employed to investigate the research questions, focusing on the use of surveys to gather quantitative data on Jordanian perceptions of Turkish

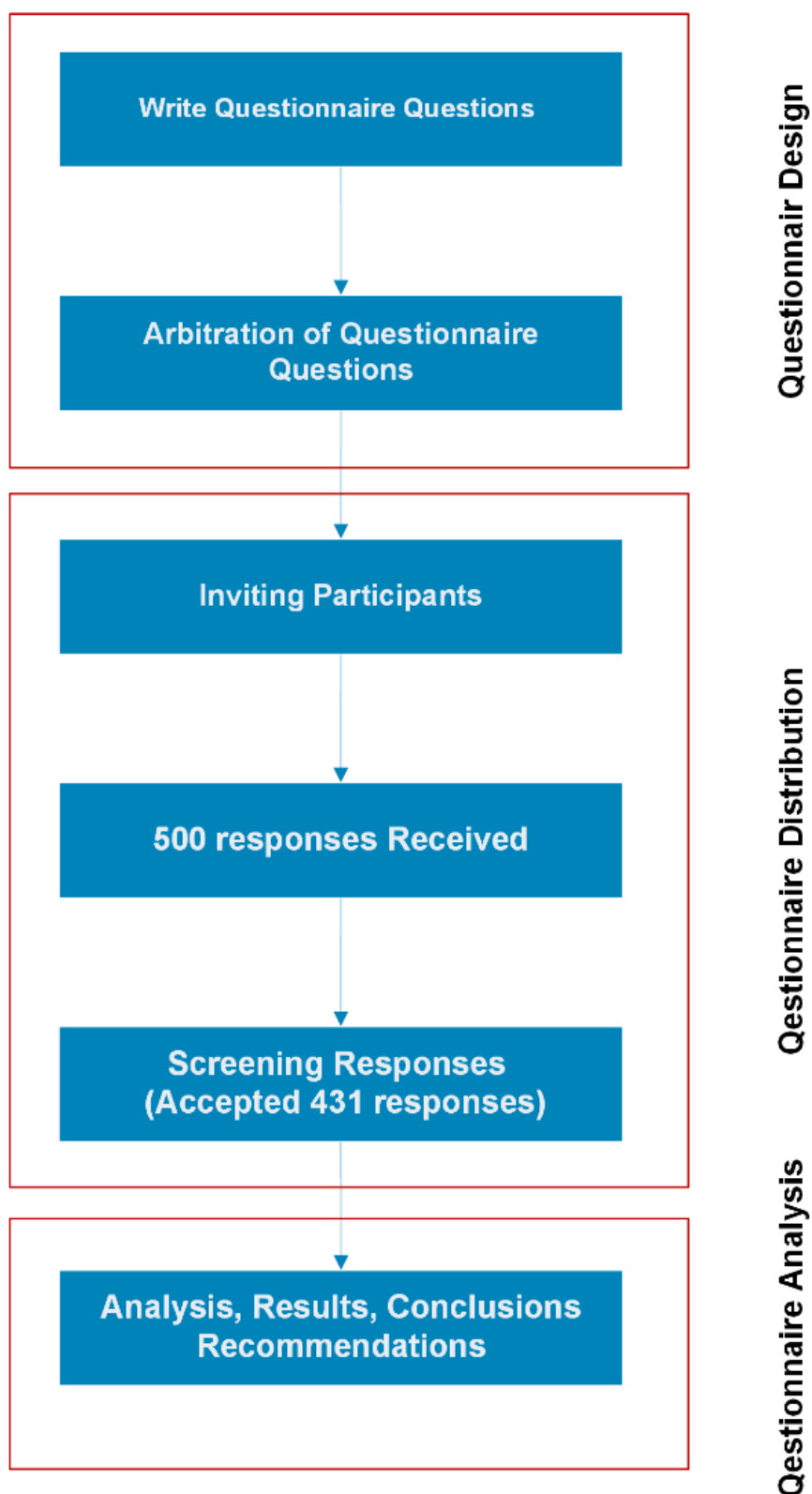
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culture as promoted by TİKA. Specifically, the survey aims to assess how these media representations influence social identities, cultural attitudes, and the degree of cultural integration among Jordanians exposed to TİKA's initiatives.

This questionnaire drawn from various age groups, educational levels, and geographic regions within Jordan to ensure the data reflects a broad spectrum of social perspectives. Stratified sampling used to ensure that all significant demographic groups (age, education, and location) are adequately represented. The inclusion of diverse age groups and education levels will allow for an in-depth understanding of how different segments of the population engage with and perceive Turkish cultural elements promoted by TİKA.

The data collection period spanned from May to December 2024 with participants receiving WhatsApp communications and posting them on social media platforms via smartsurvey.co.uk. 500 questionnaires were distributed and 431 responses were selected to be included in this study. The researchers first used Microsoft Excel to display the data and then processed it through IBM SPSS Statistics 20 before creating frequency distribution tables (Figure 1).

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Figure 1. Flow chart of the used Methodology

3. Results and discussions

This study used an online survey method to obtain the responses and had a total of 500 responses. Finally, 431 responses remained after the removal of the disproportionate and incongruous responses. Figure 2 presents the answers of the survey participants based on the gender classification. The females comprise the larger part of the survey, representing 57.1%, as compared to the 42.9% comprising of male participants.

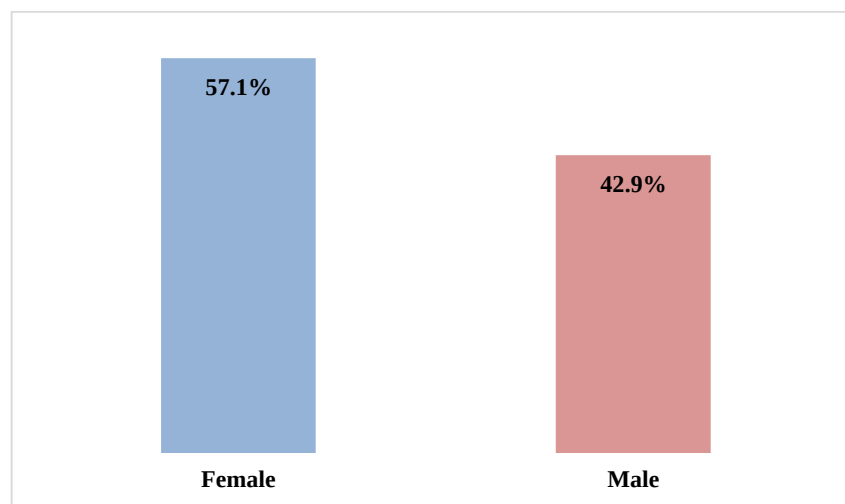


Figure 2. Gender Classification of participants in the Survey.

The result with the most response was the age group 25-34 years, contributing to 30.4% of the total response. Second, those within the age bracket of 18-24 years had a proportion of 28.3%. According to Table 1, 20% of the total responses were received from the age group 35-44 years.

Table 1 shows the response distribution by age group.

Age	Response Percent
18–24 Years	28.3%
25–34 Years	30.4%
35–44 Years	20.0%
45–54 Years	11.6%
55+ Years	9.7%

The results of the analysis also further confirm that majority of the respondents are well educated, whereby 69% of them has acquired a bachelor's degree as pointed out in table 3. There are relatively fewer numbers of respondents having a postgraduate degree 13%, a diploma from a community college 12%, or having high school education or less only 6%.

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Table 3. Distribution of Respondents by Level of Education

Level of Education	No. of responses	Perc entage
High school or less	26	6%
Diploma (community College)	52	12%
Bachelor's degree	297	69%
Postgraduate degree	56	13%

Figure 3 shows the respondents' awareness level of TİKA. 124(28.8%) of the 431 respondents said that they were informed about TİKA, while 307 (71.2%) responded that they were not informed. This suggests that TİKA's mediamay not have reached a large portion of the Jordanian population. Respondents who did not know about TİKA activities were asked to answer only the last question in the questionnaire, which was a general question about the influence of Turkish culture on Jordanians.

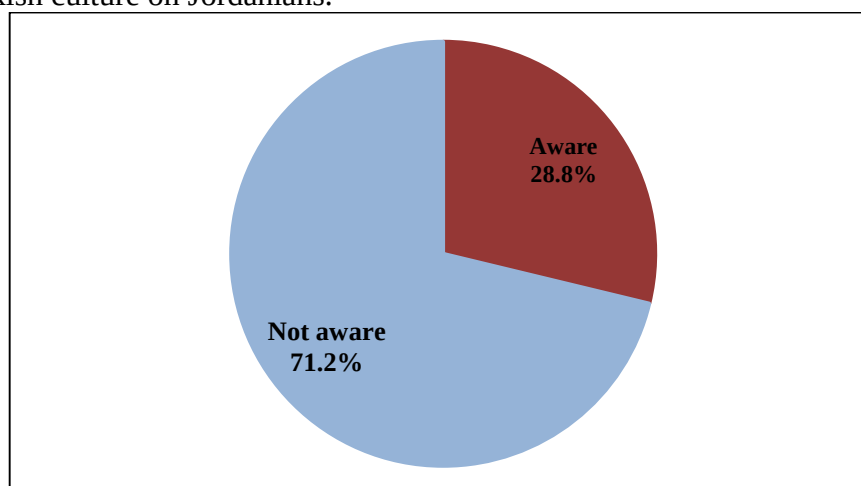

Figure 3. Awareness of TİKA Among Respondents

Figure 4 depicts that the most notable observation is that 40% of respondents learned about TİKA's via social media. 20%of participants indicated that they were learned of TİKA through News articles or websites, while 15% of the respondents mentioned Television or radio as the source through which they learned of TİKA. This points to the significance of social media platforms such Facebook and Instagram, or X (Twitter) in sharing information about TİKA's activities.

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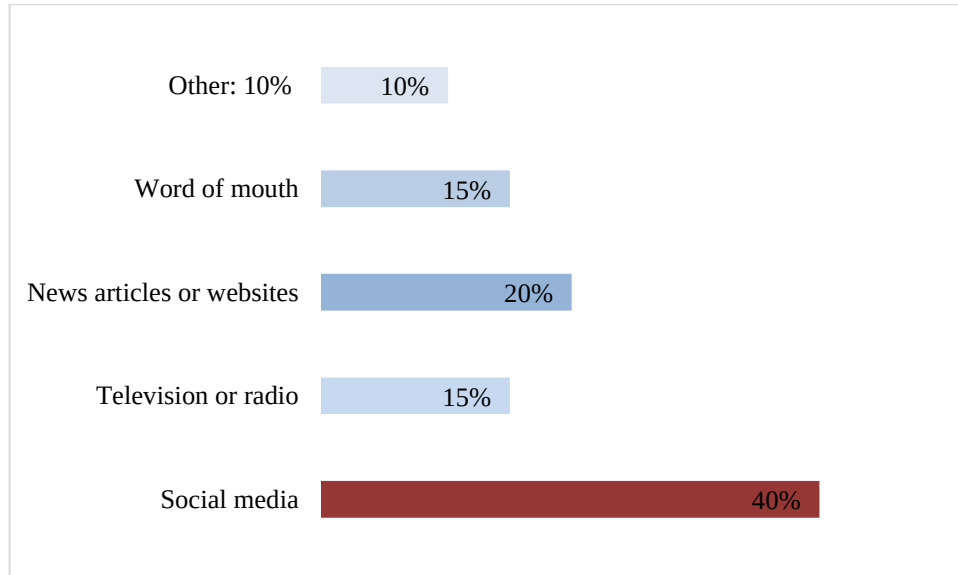


Figure 4. Primary Sources of Awareness About TİKA's Activities

Figure 5 shows the degree of exposure that respondents have with TİKA's media content. Out of the 124 participants who have some knowledge about the TİKA, 40 participants (40% of the total respondents) reported they come across its content occasionally; 37 participants (30% of the total respondents) reported they encounter TİKA's content frequently, while 25 participants, or 20% of the total respondents, stated they come across it rarely. A smaller percentage 10%(12responses) said that they never come across TİKA's media content. According to this distribution, it is clear that a fairly large number of the audience occasionally come across TİKA's contents; however, there is still potential to raise the frequency of its presence in their lives, especially in the least exposed first-never group.

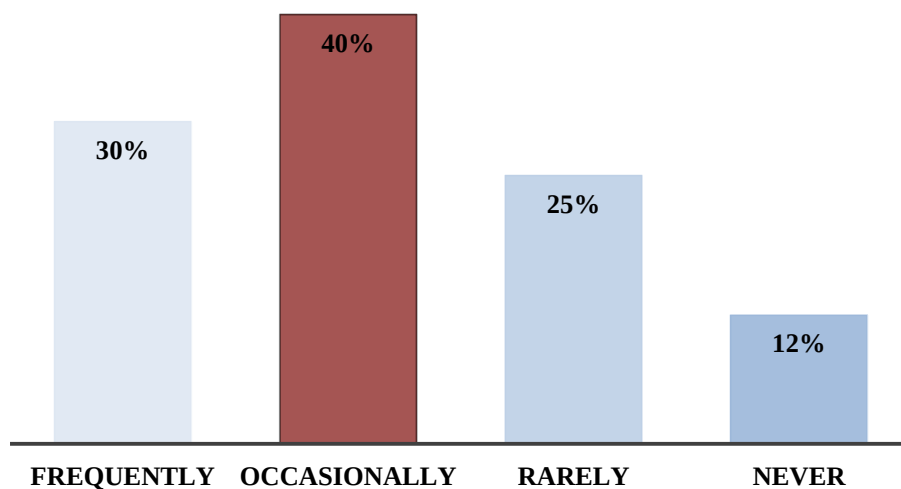


Figure 5. Frequency of Encountering TİKA's Media Content

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Table 3 aims at showing the level of impact that the media content of TİKA has on the respondents' attitude towards Turkish culture. Of 124 respondents who were aware of TİKA, 25% expressed that the media content has contributed positively to what they know about the Turkish culture and 50% said that it has contributed partly. The remaining 25% said that TİKA media content was never relevant to their perception on any level. It is also through this distribution that 75% of the respondents have been exposed somehow to TİKA's media campaigns about Turkish Culture, an indication that media campaigns could be efficient in changing perceptions about culture.

Table 3. Influence of TİKA's Media Content on Perceptions of Turkish Culture

Influence of Media content	No. of responses	Percentage
Yes, significantly	31	25%
Yes, somewhat	62	50%
No, not at all	31	25%

The figure 6 below shows the aspects of Turkish culture that has dominated TİKA's media campaigns as claimed by the respondents. From the findings it was found that language and literature are the most highlighted as they were mentioned by 35% of the respondents as the areas of focus. Food and cuisine come next at 25 percent, which is justified by the fact that the Turkish cuisine is famous all over the world. History and heritage and arts and music each constitute 15 % which shows that they are mild in TİKA's campaigns. Religious and spiritual practices the least featured as 10% of the respondents saw content related to this type. This distribution symbolises the fact that while many of the cultural sensitivities regarding religion yield attention, TİKA's media campaigns resonate more with cultural aspects related to language, literature and food which are easier to relate to by the masses.

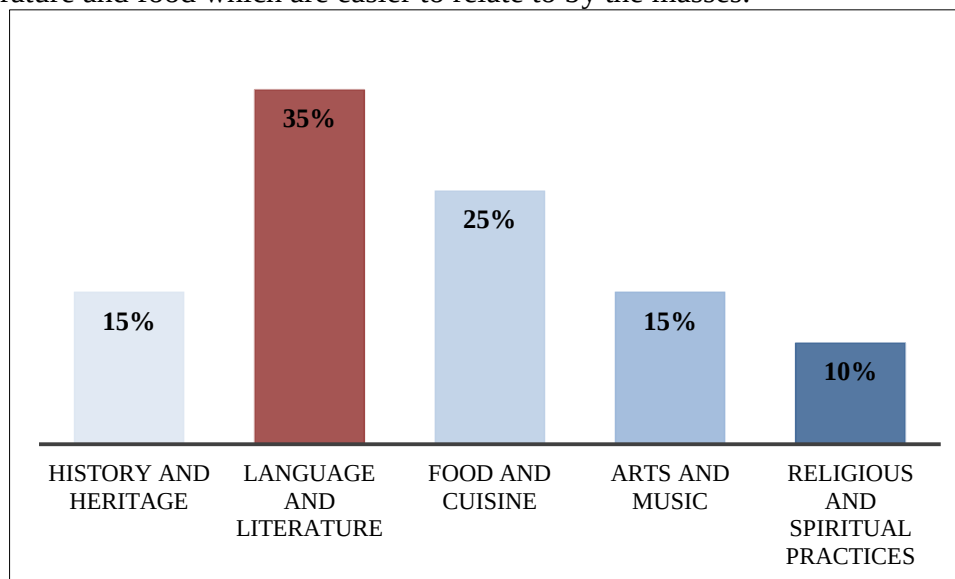


Figure 6. Prominent Aspects of Turkish Culture Featured in TİKA's Media Campaigns

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It might be noted that the results depicted in Figure 7 reflect the level of impact TİKA's media campaigns have made in changing respondents' social identity in Jordan. Of those who participated in the survey, 20% claimed that TİKA's media has greatly influenced their social identity; 50% claimed that TİKA has influenced their identity to some degree. % 30 of the participants reported that TİKA's media has had no impact on their social identity whatsoever. This distribution indicates that 70% of the respondents have been under some level of influence concerning social identity through TİKA's media campaign hence implying that these campaigns have huge impact on identity issues. Nevertheless, 30% of the participants stated that they were not influenced at all by this content; therefore, there is a need to create more effective or relevant content to appeal to a larger cross-section of the Jordanian population.

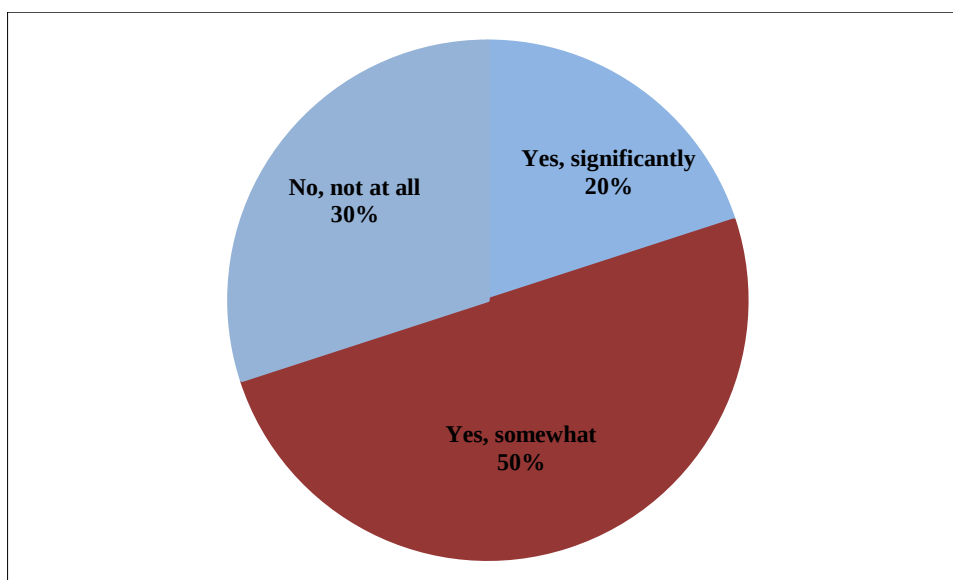


Figure 7. Influence of TİKA's Media Campaigns on Jordanian Social Identity

Reflected in figure 8 below are the views that mobile media influence the Jordanian perspectives on the Turkish culture from the respondents. According to the percentages, 55% of respondents stated that TİKA's media has a positive impact in terms of changing the pre-established attitudes about Turkish culture in a positive manner with the acceptance and appreciation of it. 25% the media of TİKA has no effect on this aspect while 10% said that these media cause either resistance or negative perceptions. This distribution reveals that the large number of respondents recognize the role of TİKA's media in creating positive perceptions about Turkish culture.

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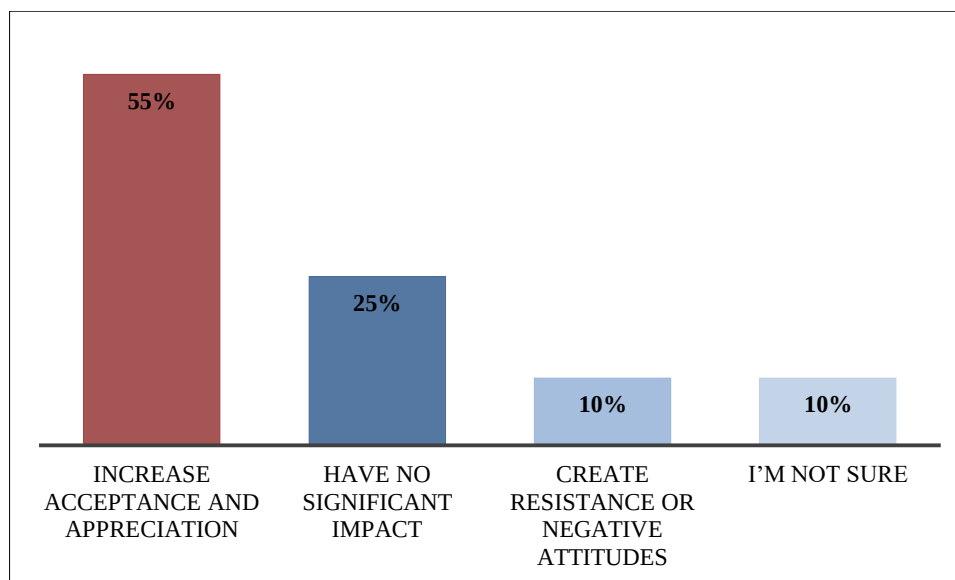


Figure 8. Perceived Impact of TİKA's Media on Jordanians' Attitudes Toward Turkish Culture

Table 4 provides the respondent's scores on the perception whether or not TİKA's initiatives reinforced social relations between the two countries. According to the results obtained in the study, 30% of the respondents think that the activities of TİKA have significantly enhanced these relations and 40% think that they have done so moderately. Whereas, 20% of the respondents opine that TİKA's efforts have not foster social relations. According to this distribution, 70% of the respondents observed that they have initiatives of TİKA have a positive role on fostering the relations between Jordan and Turkey.

Table 4. TİKA's Impact on Jordan-Turkey Social Networks

Perception	No. of Responses	Percentage
Yes, significantly	37	30%
Yes, somewhat	50	40%
No, not at all	25	20%
I'm not sure	12	10%

Figure 9 summarizes the respondents' understanding of the role of TİKA's projects in the subject bilateral relations of Jordan and Turkey. The survey data suggests that 40% of the respondents think that TİKA's projects bring a very positive impact and another 40% think that they bring a somewhat positive impact; all suggesting a highly positive perception of TİKA's role in promoting positive bilateral relations. 15% is less likely to believe that they do not care at all while 2% have a negative perception about the effect of TİKA's projects. However, 3 % cannot state how much they believe the social responsibility contributes. This distribution shows that 80% of respondents have positive attitude towards TİKA's initiatives in Jordan-Turkey relationship confirming the agency's efficiency in increasing the interest in cooperation.

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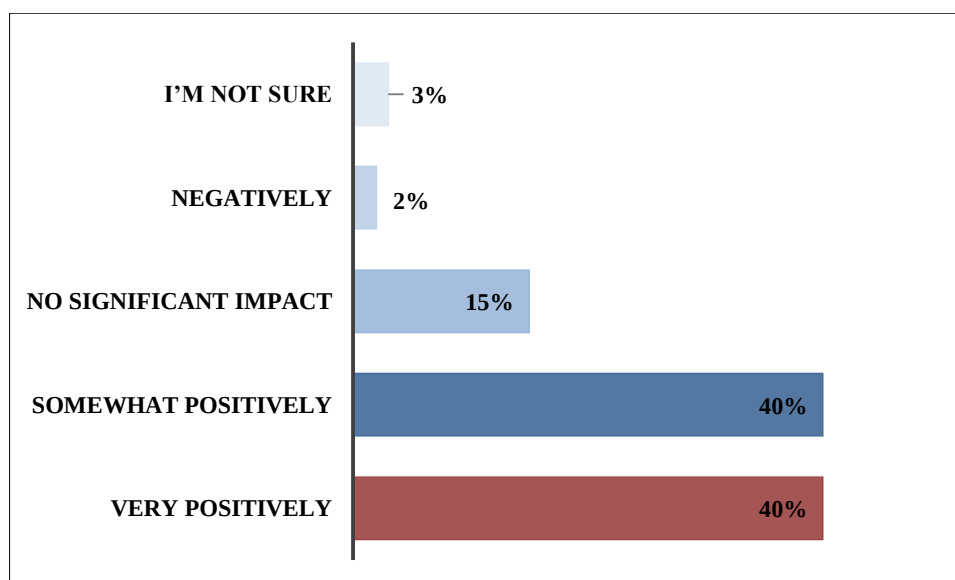


Figure 9: TİKA's Contribution to Jordan-Turkey Relations

Table 5 reveals respondent's perception regarding the role of cultural diplomacy including TİKA in influencing the Jordanian public opinion about other cultures. Investigating the awareness the respondents have on Cultural diplomacy the result shows that 50% of the respondent rate it very important, as can be seen from the figure above hence very useful in altering cultural perception. 6% of the respondents consider this factor very important, another 30% consider it somewhat important, and 15% consider it as not so important. Only a tiny group, 5% of the participants, consider it unimportant. This distribution shows that an overwhelming majority of respondents (80%) find cultural diplomacy useful in influencing perception and a large proportion (50%) considering it impact as high.

Table 5: Importance of Cultural Diplomacy

Perception	No. of Responses	Percentage
Not important	6	5%
Slightly important	19	15%
Moderately important	37	30%
Very important	62	50%

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study aims to measure the extent of the Impact of TİKA media in shaping Jordanians' perceptions of Turkish culture. Although a large percentage of respondents (71.2%) are unaware of TİKA activities in Jordan, however those who are aware of these activities have learned about them through social media, which confirms the effectiveness of social media in spreading Turkish culture among Jordanians. 75% of respondents also indicated that TİKA activities had a positive effectiveness on their perceptions of Turkish culture, with 25% indicating a significant impact and 50% indicating a medium impact, which confirms the role of TİKA media in influencing Jordanians' social perceptions of Turkish culture.

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Jordanian respondents also indicated that language and literature (35%) are the most prominent cultural aspects that have influenced them through TİKA media, while 70% indicated that TİKA activities have influenced them positively, in addition to the fact that 80% believe that TİKA activities contribute positively to improving Jordanian-Turkish relations.

To enhance the effectiveness of TİKA's cultural diplomacy efforts in Jordan, several recommendations were proposed. First, TİKA should increase its use of social media to publicize its activities inside Jordan, which would help reach a wider audience.

Second, TİKA should work on publishing attractive media materials in Arabic - the official language of Jordan - or create pages on social media platforms dedicated to the activities of the Jordan office, focusing on cultural aspects such as language and literature, which are widely accepted by Jordanians.

Finally, TİKA should focus on organizing cultural exchange programs, workshops and cooperative projects in order to reach a wider audience by building partnerships with schools, universities and cultural centers, which will positively reflect on involving a larger audience in the agency's activities.

In conclusion, TİKA's cultural initiatives and media outlets have proven their ability to shape a positive perception among Jordanians about Turkish culture, which requires the agency to expand its activities in order to enhance its role as a major player in cultural diplomacy, which will enhance joint cooperation between Jordan and Turkey.

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