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Syrian Immigrants in Germany: An Exploration into Intercultural Competence, Self-awareness and Well-being of the Minority Group

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Abstract. The intercultural competence of Syrians who reside in Germany was assessed in order to shed light on patterns and behaviours that are practiced by them in a different culture. In total, 308 respondents completed the questionnaire, of which 54 (17.5%) were female and 254 (82.5%) were male. The mean age of the respondents was 30.5 years (SD = 7.5.). The respondents' level of private self-awareness, particularly self-reflection and insight, and their level of well-being (depression, anxiety and aggression) were assessed. Intercultural competence was measured using APTOC, a 15-item scale that consists of 3 main subscales, namely Openness to Other Cultures, Global Mindset, and Narrow Mindset. Private self-awareness was measured with the Self-reflection and Insight Scale. Well-being was measured with three subscales of the Brief Symptom Inventory, namely Depression, Anxiety and Hostility. Openness to other Cultures, Global Mindset and Narrow Mindset were found to have a significant impact on Self-reflection and the well-being determinants (except Anxiety). There was a significant negative correlation between Narrow Mindset and Insight. Conclusively, Intercultural competence was found to have a positive impact on Private Self-awareness (Self-reflection and Insight) and Well-being of Syrians who reside in Germany.

Keywords. Self-Awareness, Private Self-Awareness, Self-reflection, Insight, Intercultural Competence, Well-being, Syrians in Germany.

1. Introduction

Interaction between individuals from various countries and different cultures has been increasing due to the ongoing globalisation (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003). Europe has been witnessing the greatest immigration influx in modern history since the outbreak of the Syrian crisis. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC), over 6 million Syrians were displaced internally in 2017 (IDMC, 2018), whereas around one million Syrians arrived in Europe between 2011 and 2016 (Eurostat, 2018). Since Syria and Germany have different cultures, and Germany is the largest host European country receiving 637,845 Syrians between 2011 and 2016 (The German Federal Statistical Office, 2018), Syrians who reside in Germany are considered as a suitable research subject for the aim of this article.

The topics of intercultural competence and self-awareness have received interest from researchers involved in different arenas such as social and business psychology, management, communication, education, healthcare, social science, and even military (Abbe, Gulick, &

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Herman, 2007; Argyle, 1973). The term intercultural competence is used interchangeably in the literature with terms such as intercultural sensitivity, cultural intelligence, and cultural awareness. However, most of the interchangeable terms refer to the same construct, which is related to "the ability to function effectively in another culture." (Gertsen, 1990, p. 342). Johnson, Lenartowicz and Apud (2006) found three aspects that are underlined by most definitions of intercultural competence: attitudes, skills, and knowledge (Johnson et al., 2006).

Cultural competence as defined by Cross (1988, p. 83) concerns professionals' ability to work together effectively in cross-cultural situations, and such ability is determined by a set mutual behaviours, attitudes and policies. Hammer, Bennett and Wiseman's (2003) definition is about being able "to think and act in intercultural appropriate ways." (Hammer et al., 2003, p. 422). Ang, Van Dyne and Koh (2006, p. 101) use a different term, "cultural intelligence," and they elaborate it further as "an individual's capability to deal effectively in situations characterized by cultural diversity...". Also, Thomas, Elron, Stahl, Ekelund, Ravlin, Cerdin and Maznevski (2008, p. 126) use the term of cultural intelligence, and they define it as "...a system of interacting knowledge and skills, linked by cultural metacognition, that allows people to adapt to, select, and shape the cultural aspects of their environment.". Gelan (2017) focuses on the communication aspect, symbols, and the value system of the culture; she describes the term as the ability to communicate effectively with people from other cultures. Gelan's epistemological aspect of intercultural competence underlines four elements: knowledge, empathy, self-esteem, and cultural identity (Gelan, 2017).

On the other hand, the interest in the subject of self-awareness has mainly stemmed out of a therapeutic stance and/or a philosophical one (Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975); nonetheless, the field of social psychology has become another dominating perspective of self-awareness (Argyle, 1973). Fenigstein and colleagues, after reviewing different approaches to studying self-awareness in therapies, philosophies, and laboratory studies, recognise a common ground that unifies all different approaches to studying self-awareness. They call this ground as the process of self-focused attention, which involves either obsessively scrutinising one's behaviour and overthinking thoughts, or a complete absence of self-consciousness with no understanding of one's motives. (Fenigstein et al., 1975, p. 522). Many interchangeable terms related to self-awareness appear in the literature; Silvia and Duval (2001) describe situational self-awareness as a comparison process that happens automatically between internalised standards and current actions (Silvia & Duval, 2001), whereas dispositional self-awareness, as Fenigstein and colleagues describe, is more of a tendency of an individual than a comparison, and it is concerned with the focus and reflection on one's internal state, experiences, psychological processes, and relationships with others.

Self-awareness has two aspects, public and private (Fenigstein et al., 1975; Kondrat, 1999). Private aspects of the self, according to Morin (2006), embrace emotions, physiological sensations, perceptions, values, goals, motives, etc., and the public aspects of the self "are visible attributes such as behavior and physical appearance." (Morin, 2006, p. 360). Wicklund and Gullwitzer (1987) criticised the distinction between private and public self-awareness, finding that there is an explicated gap between the theoretical and empirical definitions of both private and public self-awareness (Wicklund & Gullwitzer, 1987). Irrespective of the critique presented by Wicklund and Gullwitzer, the work of Carver and Scheier (2012) demonstrates that distinct effects occur as results of focusing on the private and public self-aspects, and these effects are motivational, cognitive, social, and behavioural (Carver & Scheier, 2012). In that regard, Morin (2006) suggests that self-awareness and self-consciousness should not be used and defined the same way as they both are "states" producing distinct effects, and he further elaborates that due to the fact that self-information about private self-awareness is more

conceptual than the public one; attending to the private aspects, self-awareness is considered as a higher form of self-awareness than attending to the public aspects (Morin, 2006).

Morin and Everett (1990) underline another level of consciousness, which is concerned with the aspect of being aware of the fact that one has self-awareness, and they call it "meta-self-awareness" (Morin & Everett, 1990). The difference between self-awareness and meta-self-awareness is that the latter is the ability to see and analyse one's emotional state and behaviour from a third-person perspective, which perhaps provides more objectivity and neutrality. Although self-awareness and meta-self-awareness do not exactly represent the same level of consciousness, they both require that one has a sense of self-agency which involves knowing that individuals are responsible for their own thoughts and actions (De Vignemont & Fourneret, 2004).

1.1. Theoretical Framework and Conceptualisations of Intercultural Competence and Self-awareness

Identifying the common conceptual frameworks and models of intercultural competence is a central step to understand the way it is measured and assessed (Sinicrope, Norris, & Watanabe, 2007). Thus, five frameworks are presented in this article: the behavioural approach, the European multidimensional model, the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity, the culture-generic approach, and anxiety/uncertainty management.

The behavioural approach focuses on linking the behaviour of an individual in certain intercultural situations with their intercultural competence. In order to understand behaviours, there are necessary measures of competence, according to Ruben (1976). In this regard, Ruben distinguishes seven factors: display of respect, which is about the ability of showing respect to others; interaction posture, which is related to having a non-judgmental response when interacting with others; orientation to knowledge, which means the extent to which knowledge is individual in nature (ibid., p. 339); empathy, which underlines the ability of putting oneself in others' shoes; self-oriented role behaviour, which is concerned with being flexible to be able to function in different roles; interaction management, which means the ability of assessing others' needs so that one can maneuver in a discussion; and tolerance for ambiguity, which demonstrates the ability of being comfortable when facing new ambiguous situations (Ruben, 1976).

The European multidimensional model consists of five determinants: attitude, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness (Byram, 1997). Attitude means having the curiosity and openness towards other cultures; knowledge is about understanding the dynamics of social groups of both one's own culture and others'; having the ability to interpret and relate certain experiences to one's own culture; the ability to use one's knowledge and intercultural interaction skills in order to discover other cultures; critical cultural awareness sheds light on using one's own culture and other cultures as basis upon which evaluations are made (Byram, 1997).

The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) has been commonly used in North America (Sinicrope et al., 2007). Bennett developed DMIS in 1993, with an aim to study cultural differences and how individuals respond to such differences over a period of time (Bennett, 1993). The DMIS combines the so-called ethnocentric and ethnorelative stages. The ethnocentric stage refers to the fact that one's own culture is the central point when it comes to comparing, whereas the ethnorelative stage is concerned with the idea that one standard culture does exist.

The ethnocentric stage includes three substages: the first is denial, which is denying other cultures and cultural differences through imposing psychological or physical barriers; the

second is defence, which is concerned with defending one's own culture in a superior way against other cultures when other cultures pose some threat; the third stage, minimisation, underlines that even though there is awareness of cultural differences, all cultures are regarded akin in their core (Bennett, 1993). The ethnorelative stage includes three substages: acceptance, adaptation and integration. Acceptance is about accepting other cultural differences with values, beliefs and behaviour. Adaptation means using empathy and pluralism as a basis to reframe one's view when encountering other intercultural experiences. Integration sheds light on the ability to assimilate into other cultural norms and habits (Bennett, 1993).

The Culture-Generic Approach to Intercultural Competence was developed by Arasaratnam and Doerfel (2005) who adopted a bottom-up approach, which means that they based their work on interviews first (not theories). Arasaratnam and Doerfel recognized 10 components of intercultural communicative competence: heterogeneity, transmission, other-centered, observant, motivation, sensitivity, respect, relational, investment, and appropriateness (Arasaratnam & Doerfel, 2005).

The Anxiety/Uncertainty Management (AUM) model was developed by Gudykunst (1993). The AUM suggests that some anxious and uncertain feelings arise when dealing with others from different cultural backgrounds; however, mindfulness could be used to manage such anxiety, as one could be mindful of the source of the feelings that may involve connections with the host culture and even how one is perceiving themselves (Gudykunst, 1993).

1.1.1. The Adopted Scale APTOC (Attitudes towards People and Things from Other Cultures). The APTOC scale was adopted to measure intercultural competence. The authors have developed a scale that measures attitudes towards people and things from other cultures for use among Syrians who reside in Germany (Al Khuja & Björkqvist, 2020). APTOC is indebted to and based on Cushner's 32-item Inventory of Cross-cultural Sensitivity (ICCS; Cushner, 1986). A 20-item scale was adapted from Cushner's ICCS and and tested with 308 respondents. After factor and internal consistency analyses, the 20-item scale was reduced to the 15-item scale APTOC, consisting of 3 subscales, namely Openness to Other Cultures (5 items, alpha = .73), Global Mindset (5 items, alpha = .83) and Narrow Mindset (5 items, alpha = .70) (Al Khuja & Björkqvist, 2020). Openness to Other Cultures refers to not only having an open-minded attitude towards other cultures, but also associating such an attitude with actions on a regular basis, for example, inviting people from other cultures to one's home on a regular basis. Global Mindset sheds light on the ability to define oneself as a global citizen; however, it is just a mindset that is limited to positive attitudes towards, opinions about, and interests in other cultures. Narrow Mindset means having an anti-other-cultures mentality, attitude, and opinions.

1.2. Conceptualisations of Self-awareness

One important conceptualisation of self-awareness is Brown's model of consciousness, which represents four main levels as follows: the sensorimotor cognition level, the limbic stage, the neocortical level, and the symbolic level (Brown, 1976). First of all, the sensorimotor cognition level (the lowest level) is concerned with being in a deep unconscious state, such as coma. Second, the limbic stage is one level shallower than the previous level, which means that it is a light state of unconsciousness in which the individual is dreaming, and some mental activities are happening without internal or external processing of information. Third, the neocortical level is about consciousness, which means that this level includes directing the attention outward towards the environment that results in actions. Last but not least, the symbolic level is as Brown describes it "objectivization of intrapersonal content" (Brown, 1976, p. 77). Morin

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speculates that the last level of Brown's model (the symbolic one) is concerned with the private type of self-awareness, as the focus of attention is on the intrapersonal (Morin, 2006).

Mindfulness, another conceptualisation of self-awareness, has become very popular over the recent years, especially paired with the subject of well-being (Brown & Ryan, 2003, p. 822), Also, Brown and Ryan explain mindfulness as awareness of current reality or experience. Moreover, Kabat-Zinn describes mindfulness as "paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgementally" (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, p. 4). Since the present reality does not require of an individual to react to and classify experience, it leaves that individual with a receptive attitude, and that is the point of difference between mindfulness other forms of self-awareness (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Also, Teasdale (1999) supports this point of difference as thoughts or feelings are related to as events (not as self or reality) that come and go through the mind (Teasdale, 1999).

Trapnell and Campbell (1999) found that there is an association between high self-attentiveness and self-knowledge and psychological distress, meaning that the higher the level of self-attentiveness one has, the better the knowledge is about oneself, and the more psychologically distressed one is; this is called "self-absorption paradox" (Trapnell & Campbell, 1999). Trapnell and Campbell, after analysing the relationship between self-awareness and the Big Five personality traits, could provide some interpretations that partially resolved the paradox. They found that two of the Big Five traits, neuroticism and openness to experience, correlated with different aspects of self-focused attention: neuroticism correlated with rumination, and openness to experience correlated with reflection. Morin (2006), compares self-reflection with rumination, and suggests that the former can lead to more accurate self-knowledge, as it stems out of a genuine interest in learning more about the self and what it entails such as emotions, values, thought processes, attitudes, etc. whereas the latter is about paying attention to the self-anxious wondering about self-worth and failure. (Morin, 2006, p. 367).

1.2.1. The Self-reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS). Grant, Franklin and Langford (2002) developed the Self-Reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS), which is concerned with measuring the private aspect of self-consciousness. Unlike the well-known scale of Private Self-Consciousness (PrSCS) (Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975), which has a construct suffering from unidimensionality (Britt, 1992), SRIS focuses on measuring reflection and insight separately. This approach was adopted after Grant and colleagues did a comprehensive review of over 280 research papers and found that only 12 papers tap into the distinction between self-reflection and insight (Grant et al., 2002). Self-reflection is about attending to and evaluating some elements such as one's behaviour, thoughts, feelings, and internal state, whereas insight is concerned with the clarity of understanding these elements. Thus, the Self-Reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS) consists of 2 main factors: Self-reflection (SRIS-SR) with 12 items and Insight (SRIS-IN) with 8 items, where Self-reflection (SRIS-SR) comprises 2 determinants: Engagement in self-reflection (6 items) and Need for self-reflection (6 items) (Table 1).

1.3. Hypotheses of the Study

Cultural self-awareness is dependent on the extent to which an individual engages in self-reflection (Lu & Wan, 2018, p. 428). In addition, Lu and Wan's research finds that cultural self-awareness is positively associated with both hedonic and eudaimonic well-being (Lu & Wan, 2018). Spears suggests that the importance of cultural membership is more likely to increase when an individual pays attention to his or her own cultural experience (Spears, 2011). Martinez

and Dukes (1997), whose research is about identity, ethnicity and well-being, explain that the more individuals identify with a certain culture, the more their well-being becomes the purpose of their life (Martinez & Dukes, 1997). In other words, there is a correlation between identification with a certain culture and well-being. Additionally, Nguyen, Wong, Juang and Park (2015) shed light on the same aspect, but the association was with psychological well-being instead. Looking at Lu and Wan's definition of cultural self-awareness, which is about paying attention to cultural elements within oneself as they develop, it could be predicted that there is a positive correlation between intercultural competence and both self-reflection and well-being.

Diener and Srull (1979), referencing Mead's work on self-theory, demonstrated that self-aware people tend to conform to social expectations as they might be more concerned about others' opinions (Diener & Srull, 1979). Even though Diener and Srull obviously referred to the public type of self-awareness, having the ability to see others' opinions could be considered as a prerequisite to the fact that one is open to others; and, in this regard, to other cultures. Moreover, according to AUM, when dealing with foreigners, people usually witness some difficulties such as being anxious and uncertain; these difficulties can be managed through mindfulness, which means that, in other words, one needs to be mindful of the source of anxiety and focus on it (Gudykunst, 1993).

Cognitive flexibility occurs when an individual is aware that he or she has options, and there are alternative ways of doing things in any given moment or situation, and it also occurs when an individual is willing to adapt to the situation (Martin & Rubin, 1995). In the context of the current article, being flexible as well as being adaptable to any given situations could refer to being open to other cultures, and obviously not having a narrow mind when behaving in a culturally complex situation.

In this article, well-being was measured with three subscales of the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI) (Derogatis & Melisaratos, 1983) namely depression, anxiety and hostility/aggression. Also, the authors, as noticed below, did not include "hostility/aggression" in the formulation of the hypotheses, and that is because the authors did not find any supportive links in the literature between intercultural competence and aggression as well as private self-awareness (self-reflection and insight) and aggression.

Hence, taking the aforementioned information into consideration, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H1- There is a positive correlation between openness to other cultures and self-reflection.
H2- There is a positive correlation between openness to other cultures and insight.
H3- There is a negative correlation between openness to other cultures and poor psychological well-being (anxiety and depression).
H4- There is a positive correlation between global mindset and self-reflection.
H5- There is a positive correlation between global mindset and insight.
H6- There is a negative correlation between global mindset and poor psychological well-being (anxiety and depression).
H7- There is a negative correlation between narrow mindedness and self-reflection.
H8- There is a negative correlation between narrow mindedness and insight.
H9- There is a positive correlation between narrow mindedness and anxiety and depression.

2. Methods

2.1. Sample

Around 1 million Syrians moved to Europe between 2011 and 2016 (Eurostat, 2018). The largest host European country for Syrians is Germany that hosted 637,845 displaced Syrians

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between 2011 and 2016 (German Federal Statistical Office, 2018). Hence, the population size was 637,845 displaced Syrians in Germany. A convenience sample of 308 respondents was drawn using mainly Facebook groups for Syrian refugees in Germany.

In total, 308 Syrian respondents filled in the survey. Of the respondents, 17.5% were female (54) and 82.5% were male (254). The respondents' age was on average 30 years old (Mean = 30.45, SD = 7.47).

Additionally, 41.6% of the respondents' highest level of education was "high school" as 128 respondents ticked that option; the same number and proportion went to the respondents whose highest level of education was Bachelor's degree. Only 14.6% of the respondents had a Master's degree, whereas 7 respondents had no education at all. Over half of the respondents were studying something (60.7%), while 56.2% were unemployed. Of the respondents, 48.1% were single, and 44.2% were married; whereas 5.5% were living with a partner; 1.9% were divorced.

55.2% of the respondents (170) had been living in Germany for 3 years, while ~18% and ~12% had lived in Germany for 4 and 2 years respectively. 4 respondents had lived in Germany for a longer time (two for 15 year, one for 25 years and one for 46 years). The residence permit was granted to 98.4% of the respondents.

With regard to the question "Do you consider yourself as a religious person?", 39.3% were undecided, and 21.1% ticked "not at all," followed by 16.9% and 16.9% that considered themselves a little religious and quite much religious respectively, and finally, 5.8% (18) considered themselves very much religious.

2.2. Instrument

In order to collect data, the authors used a descriptive questionnaire that included a total of 66 variables. The questionnaire consisted of 4 main sections, namely "A", "B", "C" and "D". Section "A" featured 9 variables (demographic questions) which were developed by the authors.

Section "B" included 20 items that measure Attitudes towards People and Things from Other Cultures of Syrians who reside in Germany (APTOC) (Al Khuja & Björkqvist, 2020)

Section "C" contained 20 items, which respondents had to answer on a Likert-scale from 0 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree). This section was concerned with the Self-reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS) that was developed by Franklin and Langford (2002) in an attempt to improve the well-known scale for Private Self-Consciousness (PrSCS) (Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975).

Table 1. The Original Self-reflection and Insight Scale (Franklin & Langford, 2002)

Self-reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS)	
Self-reflection (SRIS-SR)	Insight (SRIS-IN)
Engagement in self-reflection (SRIS-SR-E) 1- I don't often think about my thoughts(Reversed) 2- I rarely spend time in self-reflection(Reversed) 3- I frequently examine my feelings 4- I don't really think about why I behave in the way that I do (Reversed) 5- I frequently take time to reflect on my	 IN1- I am usually aware of my thoughts IN2- I'm often confused about the way that I really feel about things (Reversed) IN3- I usually have a very clear idea about why I've behaved in a certain way IN4- I'm often aware that I'm having a feeling, but I often don't quite know what it is (Reversed) IN5- My behaviour often puzzles me

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thoughts 6- I often think about the way I feel about things	(Reversed) IN6- Thinking about my thoughts makes me more confused (Reversed) IN7- Often I find it difficult to make sense of the way I feel about things (Reversed) IN8- I usually know why I feel the way I do
Need for self-reflection (SRIS-SR-N) N1- I am not really interested in analyzing my behaviour (Reversed) N2- It is important for me to evaluate the things that I do N3- I am very interested in examining what I think about N4- It is important to me to try to understand what my feelings mean N5- I have a definite need to understand the way that my mind works N6- It is important to me to be able to understand how my thoughts arise	

The Self-Reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS) consisted of 2 main factors, Self-reflection (SRIS-SR) with 12 items, and Insight (SRIS-IN) with 8 items, where Self-reflection (SRIS-SR) comprised 2 determinants: Engagement in self-reflection (6 items) and Need for self-reflection (6 items) (Table 1).

A factor analysis (principal component, varimax rotation) was conducted in order to investigate whether the 20 items would load on the same proposed subscales (SRIS-SR: SRIS-SR-E & SRIS-SR-N and SRIS-IN). According to the results, there were instead two major factors that 18 items loaded significantly on, meaning that two items (item E2 and item IN8) were removed due to insignificant loading (a significant loading was considered to be more than .40).

The first factor was formed by merging SRIS-SR-E with SRIS-SR-N, as there were no significant loadings on each one of them separately whatsoever. The same issue was found by Grant and his colleagues, as both SRIS-SR-E with SRIS-SR-N loaded on the same factor (Grant et al., 2002, p. 821). Hence, it was necessary to merge SRIS-SR-E and SRIS-SR-N together and consider them as one factor: the Self-reflection (SRIS-SR) subscale. This factor consisted of 11 items (items E3, E5, E6, N1, N2, N3, N4, N5, N6, IN1, and IN3). Nonetheless, 5 items (items E3, E5, N1, IN1, and IN3) were removed in order to increase the Cronbach's Alpha score of the factor, which then reached .86. Moreover, it was noticeable that items IN1 and IN3 that originally belonged to the Insight (SRIS-IN) subscale loaded significantly on the first factor: the merged scale that combined both SRIS-SR-E with SRIS-SR-N; but they were omitted for internal consistency reasons (Table 2).

The second factor, Insight (SRIS-IN), consisted of 7 items (items E1, E4, IN2, IN4, IN5, IN6, and IN7). According to the internal consistency analysis, items E1 and E4 were omitted, and the final Cronbach's Alpha score of the second factor was .86. Similarly, items E1 and E4 that originally belonged to the Self-reflection (SRIS-SR) subscale loaded significantly on the second factor, the Insight (SRIS-IN) subscale; but they were removed due to the internal consistency analysis results.

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To sum up, according to the factor and internal consistency analyses, the 20-item scale, Self-reflection and Insight (SRIS), consisted in the current article of 2 main subscales; Self-reflection, which had 6 items, and Insight, which had 5 items (see Table 2).

Section "D", the last section of the questionnaire, comprised 3 subscales (depression, anxiety and hostility/aggression) of the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI) by Derogatis and Melisaratos (1983). These 3 subscales included 17 variables that were designed according to a Likert-scale from 0 (not at all) to 4 (very much). Furthermore, the three subscales, depression, anxiety and hostility/aggression, produced reliable Cronbach's Alpha scores: .85, .91 and .79 respectively (Table 2). Thus, there was no need to remove any items to increase the reliability as the Cronbach's Alpha scores were greater than .70, meaning that the model was internally consistent and reliable, according to the criteria by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994).

Table 2. Items with Their Factor loadings, and Cronbach's Alphas of the Subscales in the Study Scales

Attitudes towards people and things from other cultures (APTOC)

Openness to Other Cultures (5 items, α = .79)

a) I invite people from other cultures to my home on a regular basis. (Item loading = .54)
b) I listen to music from other cultures on a regular basis. (Item loading = .67)
c) I decorate my home or room with artifacts from other countries. (Item loading = .70)
d) I think about living within another culture in the future. (Item loading = .67)
e) I eat foods from other cultures at least twice a week. (Item loading = .73)

Global Mindset (5 items, α = .83)

a) The way other people from other cultures express themselves is very interesting to me. (Item loading = .52)
b) I enjoy being with people from other cultures than my own. (Item loading = .68)
c) I enjoy studying about people from other cultures. (Item loading = .70)
d) The very existence of humanity depends on our knowledge about people from other cultures. (Item loading = .72)
e) I like to discuss issues with people from other cultures than my own. (Item loading = .76)

Narrow Mindset (5 items, α = .70)

a) I speak only one language. (Item loading = .45)
b) I dislike eating foods from other cultures than my own. (Item loading = .58)
c) It is better that people from other cultures avoid one another. (Item loading = .68)
d) Culturally mixed marriages are wrong. (Item loading = .64)
e) Residential neighborhoods should be culturally separated. (Item loading = .52)

Self-reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS)

Self-reflection (SRIS-SR) (6 items, α = .86)

a) I often think about the way I feel about things. (Item loading = .60)
b) It is important for me to evaluate the things that I do. (Item loading = .68)
c) I am very interested in examining what I think about. (Item loading = .81)
d) It is important to me to be able to understand how my thoughts arise. (Item loading = .76)
e) I have a definite need to understand the way that my mind works. (Item loading = .72)
f) It is important to me to try to understand what my feelings mean. (Item loading = .79)

Insight (SRIS-IN) (5 items, α = .86)

a) I'm often confused about the way that I really feel about things. (Item loading = .64)
b) I'm often aware that I'm having a feeling. but I often don't quite know what it is. (Item loading = .69)
c) My behaviour often puzzles me. (Item loading = .86)
d) Thinking about my thoughts makes me more confused. (Item loading = .83)
e) Often I find it difficult to make sense of the way I feel about things. (Item loading = .82)

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Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI)

Depression (6 items, α = .85)

a) Feeling hopeless about the future.
b) Feelings of worthlessness.
c) Feeling lonely.
d) Feeling blue.
e) Having no interest in things.
f) Having thoughts of ending your life.

Anxiety (6 items, α = .91)

a) Nervousness or shakiness inside.
b) Being suddenly scared for no reason.
c) Feeling fearful.
d) Feeling tense or keyed up.
e) Spells of terror or panic.
f) Feeling so restless you couldn't sit still.

Hostility/aggression (5 items, α = .79)

a) Feeling easily annoyed or irritated.
b) Temper outbursts that you could not control.
c) Having urges to beat. injure or harm someone.
d) Having urges to break or smash things.
e) Getting into frequent arguments.

2.3. Procedure

For data collection, the questionnaire was distributed electronically on GoogleDrive, and the link of the questionnaire was posted on two large Facebook groups for Syrians in Germany. Therefore, participation was optional and anonymous. Some people were commenting as they had some questions, and the author clarified all the aspects that were asked about.

2.4. Ethical Considerations

The study complies with the principles concerning human research ethics of the declaration of Helsinki (29) adopted by the World Medical Association, as well as guidelines for the responsible conduct of research of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (2012) (30).

3. Results

3.1. Correlations between the Subscales

A Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted in order to investigate the relationships between the included subscales. Most correlations were significant, either at a $p < .01$-level or at a $p < .05$-level (Table 3). Openness to Other Cultures correlated positively with Self-reflection, and negatively with Depression and Hostility. Likewise, Global Mindset was found to correlate positively with Self-reflection, and negatively with Depression, Hostility, and Anxiety; Narrow Mindset correlated negatively with Self-reflection and Insight, while it correlated positively with Depression, Anxiety and Hostility. The single highest positive correlational coefficient was between Global Mindset and Self-reflection ($r = .38$) and the highest negative between Narrow Mindset and Self-reflection ($r = -.22$). However, Openness to Other Cultures did not correlate with neither Insight nor Anxiety; and, Global Mindset showed the same pattern with Insight.

Table 3. Pearson Correlations between the Subscales (N= 308)

	Self-reflection	Insight	Depression	Anxiety	Hostility

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Openness to Other Cultures	.18**	.07	-.15**	-.08	-.15**
Global Mindset	.38**	.07	-.16**	-.12*	-.18**
Narrow Mindset	-.22**	-.13*	.18**	.11*	.14*

** p < .01; *p < .05.

3.2. Results of Three Multivariate Analyses of Variance

The three variables Openness to Other Cultures, Global Mindset, and Narrow Mindset were all divided into two groups, those scoring above vs. below the mean on the variable in question. Three multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) were then conducted in order to compare the means of the two groups (Above Mean and Below Mean) with the concerned subscales as dependent variables: Self-reflection, Insight, Depression, Anxiety and Hostility. In the first MANOVA, Openness to Other Cultures served as the independent variable (Table 4). The multivariate result was found to be significant. The univariate results showed that the Above Mean group scored significantly higher on Self-reflection, whereas the Below Mean group scored significantly higher on Depression and Hostility. There was not a significant deference between the two groups on Insight and Anxiety (Table 4, Figure 1).

Table 4. Results of a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) with Openness to Other Cultures as an Independent Variable and 5 Scales as Dependent Variables (N = 308). For Mean Values, cf. Fig.1

	F	*df*	$p \leq$	ηp^2	Group with higher mean
Openness to Other Cultures					
Multivariate Analysis	2.989	5. 302	.012	.047	
Univariate Analysis					
Self-reflection (SRIS-SR)	5.655	1. 306	.018	.018	Above Mean group
Insight (SRIS-IN)	2.620	,,	.107	.008	
Depression (BSI)	8.012	,,	.005	.026	Below Mean group
Anxiety (BSI)	2.561	,,	.111	.008	
Hostility (BSI)	4.911	,,	.027	.016	Below Mean group

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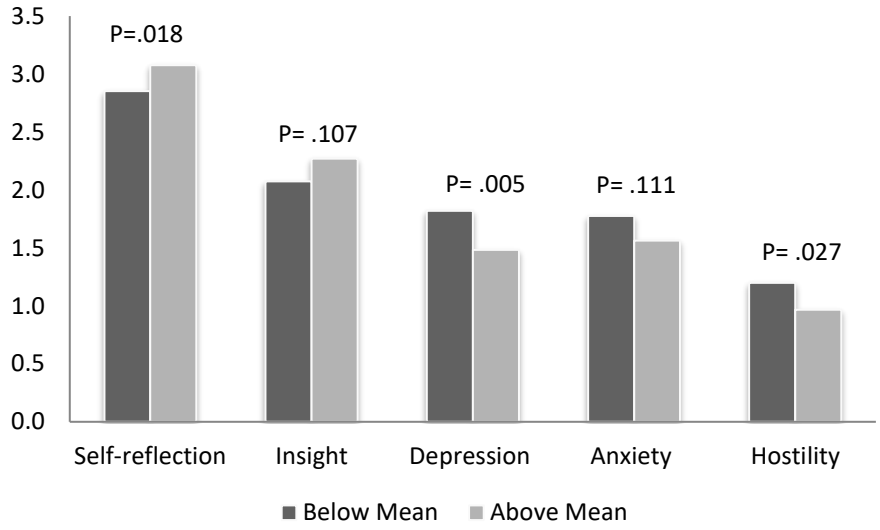

Figure 1. Mean scores on the five subscales in relation to Openness to Other Cultures for Below Mean (*n* = 146) and Above Mean (*n* = 162) groups (*N*=308). For statistical analyses, cf. Table 4

Another multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted with Global Mindset (dichotomised) as an independent variable, and the same five subscales as dependent variables: Self-reflection, Insight, Depression, Anxiety and Hostility (Table 5, Figure 2). The multivariate result was significant ($p < .001$). The univariate tests indicated that the Above Mean group scored significantly higher on Self-reflection, and significantly lower on Depression and Hostility. There was only a tendency ($p < .10$) towards a significant difference between the two groups (Above Mean and Below Mean) on Insight and Anxiety (Table 5, Figure 2).

Table 5. Results of a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) with Global Mindset as an Independent Variable and Five Scales as Dependent Variables (N=308). For Mean Values, cf. Fig. 2

	F	*df*	$p \leq$	η_p^2	Group with higher mean
Global Mindset					
Multivariate Analysis	7.454	5. 302	.001	.110	
Univariate Analysis					
Self-reflection (SRIS-SR)	23.746	1. 306	.001	.072	Above Mean group
Insight (SRIS-IN)	3.689	,,	.056	.012	(Above Mean group)
Depression (BSI)	5.269	,,	.022	.017	Below Mean group
Anxiety (BSI)	3.526	,,	.061	.011	(Below Mean group)
Hostility (BSI)	10.111	,,	.002	.032	Below Mean group

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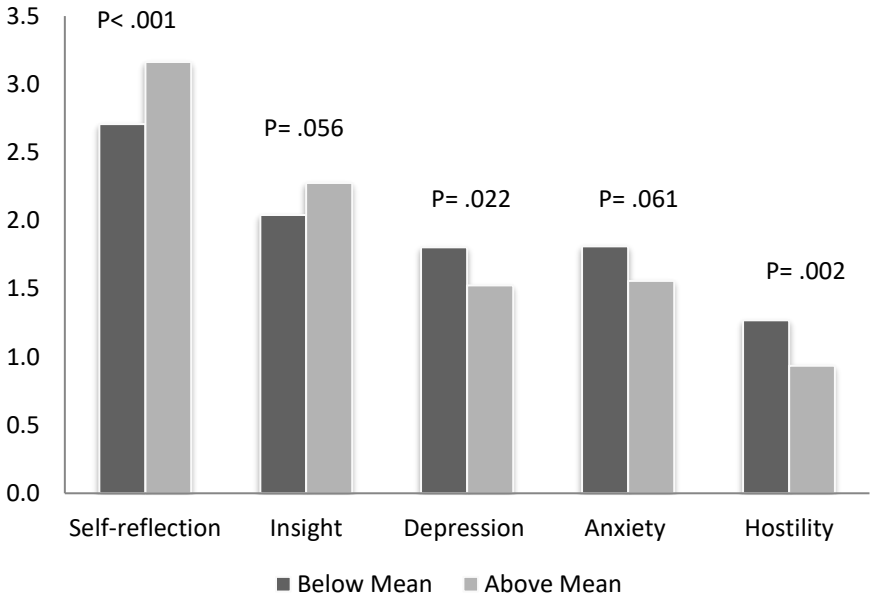

Figure 2. Mean scores of the five subscales in relation to Global Mindset subscale for Below Mean (n=130) and Above Mean (n= 178) groups (N=308). For statistical analyses, cf. Table 5

A third multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted with Narrow Mindset as independent variable and the same five subscales as dependent variables: Self-reflection, Insight, Depression, Anxiety and Hostility (Table 6). The multivariate result was significant (p = .025). The univariate results showed that the Below Mean group scored significantly higher on Self-reflection, and the Above Mean group scored higher on Depression. However, there were no significant differences between the groups on the scales of Insight, Anxiety, and Hostility (Table 6, Figure 3).

Table 6. Results of a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) with Narrow Mindset as Independent Variable and Five Scales as Dependent Variables (N=308). For Mean Values, cf. Fig. 3

	F	*df*	$p \leq$	ηp^2	Group with higher mean
Narrow Mindset					
Multivariate Analysis	2.60	5.302	.025	.041	
Univariate Analysis					
Self-reflection (SRIS-SR)	6.686	1.306	.010	.021	Below Mean group
Insight (SRIS-IN)	2.428	,,	.120	.008	
Depression (BSI)	4.324	,,	.038	.014	Above Mean group
Anxiety (BSI)	.648	,,	.421	.002	
Hostility (BSI)	2.075	,,	.151	.007	

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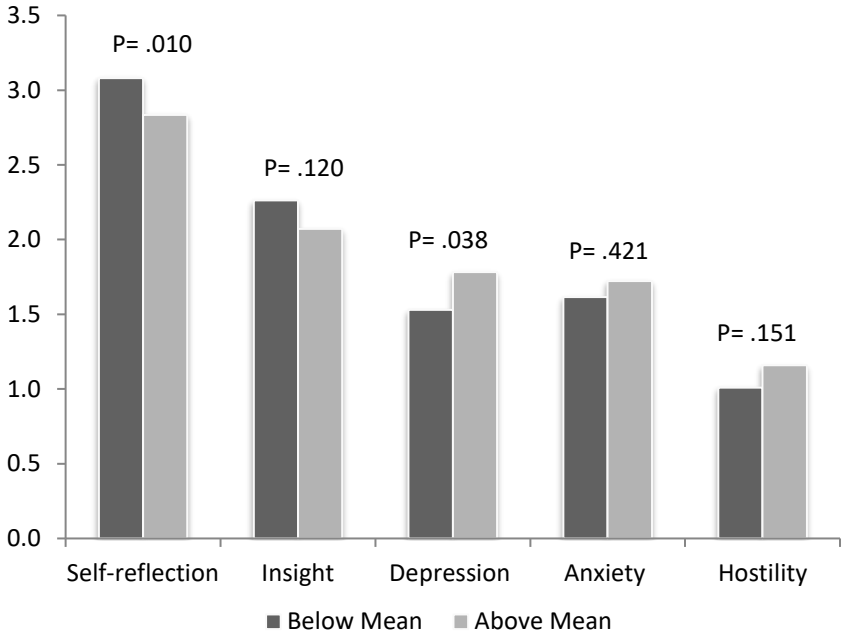

Figure 3. Mean scores of the five subscales in relation to Narrow Mindset for Below Mean (*n* = 170) and Above Mean (*n* = 138) groups (*N* = 308). For statistical analyses, cf. Table 6

3.3. Other Results

Some other notable results were discovered when analysing the data. First of all, there was a significant correlation between the length of stay in Germany and Global Mindset, but that correlation was negative ($r = -.15$, $p < .01$), meaning that the longer the respondents had stayed, the less global mindset they had. That might be because new arrivals are always excited about their new lives in a different culture, but that excitement might be depending on many factors such as meeting the personal, financial, cultural, social expectations of the individual in the new culture. Thus, when these expectations were not met, the excitement would fade away with time and negativity would be thrown at the host culture resulting in a less global mindset. Second, the statement "Do you consider yourself as a religious person" correlated negatively with Openness to Other Cultures ($r = -.34$, $p < .01$) and Global Mindset ($r = -.11$, $p < .05$), and positively with Narrow Mindset ($r = .32$, $p < .01$). This means that intercultural competence lies on one end of the spectrum, whereas the religious faith lies on the opposite. Finally, compared to those with no education at all, the respondents who had high education tended to score higher on Insight, as the results of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed [$F_{(3, 304)} = 6.784$, $p = .001$], with Insight as the dependent variable and Level of Education as the Independent one. In other words, the higher the level of education, the respondents had the more in tune they were with their internal state.

4. Discussion

4.1. Summary of Findings

The findings supported the theoretical foundation of the employed model, and that the model was suitable for Syrians who are in Germany. However, not all of the theoretical hypotheses could be corroborated, particularly those that were concerned with the correlations between two subscales of intercultural competence (Openness to Other Cultures and Global Mindset) and both Insight and Anxiety.

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4.1.1. The First Hypothesis (H1) – Openness to Other Cultures and Self-reflection. Respondents who were open to other cultures tended to have a high degree of self-reflection, as the correlation was significant and positive. Not only was the number of respondents who belonged to Above Mean group greater than those that belonged to Below Mean group, but they also scored high on both Openness to Other Culture and Self-reflection resulting in a significant correlation. Therefore, H1 was corroborated.

4.1.2. The Second Hypothesis (H2) – Openness to Other Cultures and Insight. There was not any significant correlation between Openness to Other Culture and Insight. The findings were contrary to the second hypothesis (H2) as well as to Sutton's claim that Insight is associated with acceptance (Sutton, 2016). Sutton means by acceptance that the ability to accept others, and in order for one to accept others, he/she needs to be open to others first. Hence, H2 was rejected.

4.1.3. The Third Hypothesis (H3) – Openness to Other Cultures and Well-being. The respondents' scores were correlated negatively and significantly between the following dimensions: Openness to Other Cultures, Depression and Hostility, but not with Anxiety. Those who scored high on Openness to Other Cultures scored low on Depression and Hostility, meaning that those of the respondents who suffered from depression and whose answers supported hostile behaviour did not show open attitude towards other cultures. Thus, even though there was no significant correlation between Openness to Other Cultures and Anxiety, the third hypothesis (H3) was still corroborated as the well-being subscale consisted of three subscales, and two of them (depression and Hostility) had significant correlations with Openness to Other Cultures.

4.1.4. The Forth Hypothesis (H4) – Global Mindset and Self-reflection. Respondents with global mindset scored high on Self-reflection, as the correlation was significant and positive. Furthermore, not only were the respondents that belonged to Above Mean group greater in number than those that belonged to below Mean group, but they also scored high on both Global Mindset and Self-reflection. Therefore, H4 was corroborated.

4.1.5. The Fifth Hypothesis (H5) – Global Mindset and Insight. There was not any significant correlation between Global Mindset and Insight. Even though there was a tendency towards a significant difference between the two groups (Above Mean group and Below Mean group), the number of the respondents that belonged to Above Mean group was greater than Below Mean group. That means that there were more respondents who were in touch with their internal state, but that fact did not correlate with Global Mindset whatsoever (Table 5, Figure 2). Hence, H5 was rejected.

4.1.6. The Sixth Hypothesis (H6) – Global Mindset and Well-being. The respondents' scores were correlated negatively and significantly between the following dimensions: Global Mindset, Depression and Hostility. Those who scored high on Global Mindset scored rather low on Depression, Anxiety and Hostility, and that means those of the respondents who suffered from depression, anxiety, and whose answers supported hostile behaviour were not inclined towards having a global mindset. Therefore, the sixth hypothesis (H6) was corroborated.

4.1.7. The Seventh Hypothesis (H7) – Narrow Mindset and Self-reflection. Respondents who were narrow minded towards other cultures scored low on Self-reflection, as the correlation was significant and negative; and, not only was the number of respondents that belonged to Below Mean group greater than those that belonged to Above Mean group, but also they scored high on Narrow mindset and low on Self-reflection resulting in a significant negative correlation. Therefore, H7 was corroborated.

4.1.8. The Eighth Hypothesis (H8) – Narrow Mindset and Insight. There was not a significant correlation between Narrow Mindset and Insight. However, there were more respondents that belonged to Below Mean group than Above Mean group, meaning that there were less respondents who were narrow minded towards other cultures, and those respondents were not quite in touch with their internal state, their insight. Thus, the eighth hypostasis (H8) can be regarded as corroborated.

4.1.9. The Ninth Hypothesis (H9) – Narrow Mindset and Well-being. Narrow Mindset correlated positively and significantly with Depression, Anxiety and Hostility. The number of respondents that belonged to Above Mean group were less than those that belonged to Below Mean group, and the respondents' scores were correlated positively and significantly between the following dimensions: Narrow Mindset and Depression; meaning that those who scored high on Narrow Mindset scored high on Depression. Therefore, the ninth hypothesis (H9) was corroborated.

4.2. Limitations and Implications of the Study

This article is concerned with intercultural competence, private self-awareness, and well-being of Syrians who reside in Germany. One limitation of the study concerns the sampling method. The questionnaire was distributed electronically via two separate Facebook groups for Syrians in Germany. Accordingly, the sample cannot be regarded as fully representative, and conclusions have to be treated with caution.

The three dimensions of intercultural competence correlated significantly with Self-reflection. Not only does that make sense factually, but also it was indirectly referred to by Bennett (1993). Bennet, describing the ethnorelative stage, taps into three aspects: acceptance, adaptation and integration; acceptance means that one is able to consider values and behaviour of others from different cultures as a basis of this acceptance; adaptation demonstrates the ability to reframe one's view depending on the culture that s/he is in through empathy and pluralism; integration is about adopting other cultural norms, habits and so on (Bennett, 1993). Adaptation is very relevant to what is being discussed here, as in order for one to be able to frame their own view, they need to be aware of and reflect upon that view; and, pluralism could refer to having a global mindset.

Some other findings were contrary to the literature and theories (correlations between intercultural competence dimensions and Insight). In relation to Insight, being narrow minded towards other cultures (or probably some cultures), and not being aware of the mental source of those aspects as they happen, does not necessarily mean that when one is aware of such aspects, they will end up being open and global minded towards other cultures. Also, there could have been a misunderstanding of some statements due to the uncommon use of some terms in Arabic, which led to no correlation between Insight and Global Mindset and Openness to Other Culture.

Regarding the correlations between the three dimensions of intercultural competence and Well-being, the literature generally supported the same stance of the findings of this article. For

instance, Lu and Wan (2018) suggested that cultural self-awareness is positively associated with both hedonic and eudaimonic well-being; and, since eudaimonic sheds light on self-realization and the fact the well-being is based on the level of a persons' full functionality (Ryan & Deci, 2001), eudaimonic well-being means the exact opposite to depression, anxiety and hostility, which, again, leads to the negative link between cultural self-awareness and depression, anxiety and hostility.

All in all, the results of the sample of Syrians living in Germany showed that the respondents who are interculturally competent are more self-aware and better off in terms of mental health (well-being). In other words, intercultural competence was found to have a positive impact on private self-awareness (Self-reflection and Insight) and well-being of Syrians who reside in Germany.

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