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Amerika'da Öğrenim Gören Türk Öğrencilerin Motivasyon Kaynakları ve Ülkeye Dönüşleri\*

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Makale Bilgisi	ÖZET
<i>Geliş Tarihi:</i> 15.06.2019	Bu çalışmada Türk uluslararası lisansüstü öğrencilerinin motivasyonlarıyla Amerikalı lisansüstü öğrencilerinin motivasyonları karşılaştırıldı. Ayrıca Türk uluslararası yüksek lisans öğrencilerinin çeşitli motivasyonlarının kendi ülkelerine dönüş kararlarındaki rolü incelenmiştir. Araştırma verileri internet anketi yöntemi ile Amerikan Üniversitelerindeki 167 lisansüstü öğrencisinden toplandı. Verilerin toplanmasında; yaygın olarak kullanılan Akademik Motivasyon Ölçeği ve Başarı Yönelimi Ölçeği'nden yararlanılmıştır. Verilerin analizi için; t testi ve tek yönlü varyans analizi uygulanmıştır. Bulgular Türk lisans üstü öğrencilerinin daha az sıklıkta içsel motivasyon ve performans-yaklaşım motivasyonu yaşadıklarını ve ülkeye geri dönme konusundaki kararsızlığın performans-kaçınma motivasyonu ile ilişkili olduğunu ortaya koydu. <b>Anahtar Sözcükler:</b> Motivasyon, lisans üstü öğrenciler, içsel/dışsal motivasyon, yaklaşma/kaçınma motivasyonu
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The Role of Motivational Orientations and Returning Home Country: Turkish International Graduate Students in the U.S.

Article Information	ABSTRACT
<i>Received:</i> 15.06.2019	This study investigated Turkish international graduate students' motivational orientations to continue their education in relation to U.S. domestic graduate students and the role of motivational orientations in their decision to return to their home country. Data were collected via online surveys with graduate students in U.S. universities (n = 167). The Academic Motivation Scale (AMS, Vallerand et al., 1992) and Achievement Goal Questionnaire-Revised (AGQ- R, Elliot & Murayama, 2008), which are commonly used measures of motivation, were used in this study. In the analysis of the data, independent sample t-tests and one-way ANOVAs were performed. Findings revealed that Turkish graduate students less frequently experience intrinsic motivation and performance-approach motivation, and being undecided about returning to one's home country is associated with increased levels of performance-avoidance motivation. <b>Keywords:</b> Motivation, Turkish graduate students, U.S. domestic students, intrinsic/extrinsic motivation, approach/avoidance motivation
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Each year, hundreds of thousands of international students enroll in graduate programs in the United States (Council of Graduate Schools, 2018), despite the numerous challenges associated with leaving their home countries and cross-cultural transitions (Lee, 2013). Despite these challenges, the majority of international students complete their education successfully (Council of Graduate Schools, 2018); however, few studies have investigated their motivational orientation to continue their

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studies in relation to U.S. domestic graduate students. Common challenges (e.g., academic, social, and cultural barriers) associated with international students, many of which are not typical of native graduate students, have been studied extensively (e.g., Kuo, 2011; Lee, 2013). As a subgroup of international students, Turkish international graduate students are not exceptions at all in the concept of facing everyday challenges. Despite the fact that many Turkish international graduate students are finding the United States an attractive destination to study (Institute of International Education, 2015, 2019; Farrugia & Bhandari, 2015), there have been a few studies focusing on the specific challenges Turkish international graduate students face in the U.S. Many Turkish graduate students want to study abroad, especially in the U.S., because the U.S. has a wealth of higher education opportunities (e.g., world-class institution, academic quality, science and innovation technology, and English language preparation for careers and job placement) in many different fields that are oftentimes not afforded in their home countries. In this concept, a report by the Institute of International Education (2015) found that 82% of prospective Turkish students reported the U.S. as their top choice of country in which to pursue their studies. Turkey is also the top European country to send students to the U.S. to study (IIE, 2015). The majority of these students showed a more positive view of studying in the U.S. than other countries because of several reasons such as a wide range of schools and programs and high quality higher education system (IIE, 2015). In addition, Turkish universities have been facing overwhelming demands for higher education, but local universities have not been able to accommodate the growing number of graduate students (Burkholder, 2014). To address the demands for higher education, Turkey's Ministry of Education has been sponsored many students to pursue graduate studies in U.S. universities. Turkish international graduate students make up a sizable portion of the international graduate student body in the United States; however, little is known about their motivational orientation to continue their studies in relation to U.S. domestic graduate students.

Relatively few studies investigated the experiences of Turkish students who pursue a graduate degree in the U.S. Burkholder (2014) examined the experience of six Turkish graduate students at a Midwestern U.S. university and found that the language barrier is one of the most common issues the participants face in the U.S. For example, some participants reported that their class preparation is five times more than a native speaker's class preparation time because of language challenges. Similarly, in her study with Turkish graduate students in social sciences, Turan (2012) found that Turkish graduate students face diverse issues in their studies because of the language barrier. On the other hand, research has shown that while Turkish international graduate students have many similar experiences with other international graduate students, they also have some unique experiences. For example, Tatar (2005) states that Turkish graduate students are not found to be silent in classroom, which contradicts with many studies that stated the majority of international students, including Asian international graduate students (Liu, 2001; Kao & Gansnedler, 1995) and African international graduate students (Antwi & Ziyati, 1993), were silent. Moreover, Gertzog (2011) examined the academic experience of Turkish students in U.S. higher education. The study found that Turkish students experience some unique academic-related behaviors that are not shared by other international students. For example, student grouping is not a common practice, which refers to the idea of collectivist behavior, among Turkish students. Therefore, it is important to understand that Turkish international graduate students may have some unique experiences when compared with other international graduate students. Taken together, in the context of unique characteristics of Turkish international graduate students, it is important to highlight that the aim of this study was not to examine the factors that influence students in their decisions to study in the U.S. graduate programs. Instead, this study aimed to explore what types of motivations drive Turkish graduate students to continue studying in their U.S. graduate programs in relation to U.S. domestic graduate students and their intention to return home country. It is important to highlight that Turkish scholarship students are expected to return their home country to serve in universities after completing their education in the U.S. (Celik, 2012). In a study with Turkish college students studying in the U.S., scholarship students are found to experience more adjustment problems because of the pressure to be successful and not to lose their scholarship (Poyrazli, Arbona, Bullington & Pisecco, 2001). To that end, it is also important to investigate whether or not a decision to return to one's home country is associated with a specific type of motivational orientation.

### **1.1. Statement of the Problem**

Previous studies have shown that international students' motivation is significantly associated with their sociocultural adaptation (Hsu, 2011; Sumer, 2009); in particular, students who intend to return to their home country after graduation are typically less motivated to adapt to American culture (Sumer, 2009). Moreover, international students who successfully adapt to their host countries' culture have been found to typically be more intrinsically motivated, such as by investing in mastering the knowledge and skills of their programs of study (see Hsu, 2011). Conversely, international graduate students who are inclined to return to their home country after graduation may be less interested in or willing to adapt to American culture, which may further be reflected an extrinsic and/or avoidant motivational orientation to their programs of study through actions such as engaging in task performance simply to meet class requirements and gain a credential. Given the wealth of literature showing positive associations between intrinsic/approach motivational orientations, as well as negative associations between extrinsic/avoidance motivational orientations, and desirable outcomes such as academic achievement and graduation rates (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Elliot & McGregor, 2001), better understanding the potential links between international graduate students' intentions to stay or return home and their motivational orientations is warranted. Some studies have investigated specific reasons for why international students return to their home country, such as desire to be near family or challenges related to acculturation (e.g., Zhai, 2002). However, most of these studies focus on undergraduates, and the fine-grained nature of these findings renders their practical implications limited; higher education practitioners who work with international graduate students would benefit more from broader and more easily measurable insights into their general motives. To that end,

attention should have been paid to the role of motivational orientations (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Elliot, 1997) in Turkish international graduate students' decisions to stay in the U.S. or return home. During the 2018-2029 academic year, over 10,000 Turkish international students chose to study higher education institutions in the United States. While Turkish graduate students accounted for 43.4% of total Turkish international student in the U.S. (Institute for International Education, 2019), the present study investigated the proportion of Turkish international graduate students who intend to return to their home country after graduation, and the role of their motivational orientations in that decision.

This study focused on four different types of motivation—intrinsic (e.g., mastery), extrinsic (e.g., performance), approach, and avoidance—drawing on the well-established frameworks of Self Determination Theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Deci & Ryan, 2002), which has been considered as a major theory of motivation by many researchers, and Achievement Goal Theory (Nicholls, 1984, 1989; Elliot, 1997). Following the literature in this field, these motivational types were combined to form six motivational orientations: intrinsic, extrinsic, mastery-approach, performance-approach, mastery-avoidance, and performance-avoidance. Ryan and Deci (2000) distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic forms of motivation; this distinction is central to SDT. While intrinsic motivation refers to natural motivation tendency to do an activity because of interest and enjoyment, extrinsic motivation refers to instrumental value where the activity is done for the sake of external rewards and separable outcome (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Deci & Ryan, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2000). The study also utilizes achievement goal theory as a lens to understand the role of approach and avoidance motivation in graduate students' persistence in their studies. A lot of research provides a comprehensive review of historical considerations on the distinction of approach and avoidance motivation (see Elliot, 1999; Elliot & Covington, 2001). However, for the present purposes, this study focused primarily on the definition of approach and avoidance motivation to provide readers with a basic distinction of approach and avoidance motivation. According to Elliot (2006, 2008), despite both approach and avoidance motivation are necessary for well-being, approach motivation is linked with *thriving*, while avoidance motivation is linked with *surviving*.

## 1.2. Purpose of the Study

To these ends, in order to examine Turkish international graduate student's motivational orientation to continue their education in the U.S. in relation to domestic graduate students, and in relation to their intention to return home country, we propose to address the following research questions;

1. (a) Are there differences between Turkish international graduate students and U.S. domestic graduate students in their levels of different types of motivational orientations (intrinsic, extrinsic, mastery-approach, performance-approach, mastery-avoidance, and performance-avoidance)? (b) What intrinsic/extrinsic factors (e.g., *to know*, *external regulation*) received the overall highest and lowest mean rating for Turkish graduate students and U.S. domestic graduate students?
2. (a) What proportion of Turkish international graduate students intends to return their home country after graduation? (b) Is there a difference in the levels of different types of motivational orientations among Turkish international graduate students who intend to return their home country after graduation compared to those who intend to remain in the United States?

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative research design intended to examine Turkish graduate students' motivations to continue their education in the U.S. in relation to domestic graduate students. A convenience stratified sampling method was utilized to collect data. Participants were recruited via international student listservs and Facebook groups.

### 2.1. Participants

The present study included a sample of  $N=161$  graduate students enrolled in higher educational institutions from across the United States. Data were collected in the spring of 2016. As shown in Table 1, the breakdown of participants by country consisted of 64 Turkish international students and 97 U.S. domestic students who were enrolled in a graduate degree program in the U.S. Of the 161 participants in the survey, the majority of participants identified as U.S. domestic graduate students (59.4%) and female (%56). Only 3 participants did not identify their gender. Participants anonymously completed an online survey comprising a demographic questionnaire, including the question "Are you planning to return to your home country after graduation?" (with response options of "Yes," "No," and "Undecided") to address the second research question. See Table 1 more details on participants' demographic characteristics.

Table 1.  
*Demographic Data of Study Population*

Value	Frequency	Percent
Participants by Country		
Turkish	64	39.9
U.S. Domestic	97	59.9
Participants by Gender <sup>a</sup>		
Male	69	43
Female	88	56
Return to Home Country <sup>b</sup>		
Yes	34	53.1
No	20	31.3
Undecided	10	15.6
Total	161	100.0

<sup>a</sup> Four participants did not identify their gender.

<sup>b</sup> Only international students were asked to answer this question.

Below an example is provided for the use of tables and figures. In tables and figures, APA 6 writing style should be used.

## 2.2. Measures

Participants were directed to complete the demographics information after agreeing to participate. Two well-validated and commonly used motivation measures—the Achievement Goal Questionnaire-Revised (Elliot & Murayama, 2008) and the Academic Motivation Scale (Vallerand, Pelletier, Blais, Briere, Senecal, & Vallieres, 1992) were used to operationalize these six motivational orientations using 5-point Likert-type responses. In order to assess both the reliability of the seven subscales and the factor structure underlying item responses, Vallerand et al. (1992) assessed Internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha coefficients. Cronbach's alpha indicated good reliability and internal consistency of the items in scale that values varied from .83 to .86, except for the identified subscale, which had a value of .62. It is important to stress that researchers have called further investigation to examine the validity of the AMS because of some insufficient validity evidence, especially with racial and ethnic minority participants (Cokley, Bernard, Cunningham & Motoike, 2001; Cokley, 2014; Fairchild, Horst, Finney & Barron, 2005). On the other hand, validation of AGQ-R has been examined and supported in several studies (e.g., Elliot & Murayama, 2008; Rosas, 2015). Elliot & Murayama (2008) assessed Internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha coefficients. Cronbach's alpha indicated that each of the four factors has a high degree of internal consistency and reliability (Cronbach's alphas: Mastery-approach,  $\alpha = .84$ ; Mastery-avoidance,  $\alpha = .88$ ; Performance-approach,  $\alpha = .92$ ; and Performance-avoidance,  $\alpha = .94$ ), which were satisfactory.

Although AMS contains 28 items has 7 subscales, only 4 items from the intrinsic motivation subscale and 4 items from the extrinsic motivation subscale were used in this study. A sample item from AMS is "because I experience pleasure and satisfaction while learning new things." AGQ-R is a 12-item questionnaire, which includes three items on mastery-approach goals, three items on mastery-avoidance goals, three items on performance-approach goals, and three items on performance-avoidance goals on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). A sample item from AGQ-R is "I am striving to avoid performing worse than other graduate students." Since both AMS and AGQ-R has been used to measure college students' motivational orientation, some small changes were made on both scales to fit the graduate student population better (e.g., "college degree" was changed to "graduate degree").

## 2.3. Data Analysis

SPSS software was used to analyze the data. To examine research question 1, an independent *t*-test was conducted to assess if levels of different types of motivational orientations (intrinsic, extrinsic, mastery, avoidance) differ between Turkish international graduate students and U.S. domestic graduate students. To examine research question 2, a one-way ANOVA was used to analyze potential mean differences in these motivational orientations as a function of whether the participant indicated an intention to stay in the U.S. or return to his/her home country. In addition, Tukey's post hoc tests were conducted to test for group mean differences in each pairwise comparison in performance-avoidance motivation.

## 3. RESULTS

The scores from 6 subscales were used to address the first research question. An independent *t*-test was conducted to assess if levels of different types of motivational orientations (intrinsic, extrinsic, mastery-approach, mastery-avoidance, performance-approach, and performance avoidance) differ between Turkish international graduate students and U.S. domestic graduate students. As shown in table 2, U.S. domestic graduate students ( $M = 4.06, SD = 0.66$ ) were significantly higher in their mean level of intrinsic motivation than Turkish graduate students ( $M = 3.82, SD = 0.65$ ),  $t(157) = -2.232, p = 0.02$ . U.S. domestic graduate students were also significantly higher in their mean of performance-approach motivation than Turkish graduate students ( $M = 3.76, SD = 0.92$ ),  $t(159) = -3.018, p = 0.00$ . However, there were no significant differences between U.S. domestic graduate

students and Turkish graduate students on levels of mastery-approach ( $t(159) = -0.579, p = 0.56$ ), mastery-avoidance ( $t(159) = -0.429, p = 0.65$ ), performance-avoidance ( $t(158) = -1.426, p = 0.15$ ), and extrinsic motivation ( $t(155) = -0.426, p = 0.67$ ). Further, while the effect size for intrinsic motivation and performance-approach were at  $d = .37$  and  $d = .48$ , which is considered a small to medium effect size using Cohen's (1988) criteria. The effect sizes (Cohen's  $d$ ) for mastery-approach, mastery-avoidance, performance-avoidance, and extrinsic motivation six sub-scales were all low at  $d = .10, d = .07, d = .23$ , and  $d = .07$  respectively.

Table 2.

*T-Test: Motivation by Scholarship Status*

	Student Status	N	M	SD	SEM	t	df	p
<b>Mstry_Apprch</b>	<b>Turkish</b>	64	4.255	0.894	0.112	-0.579	159	0.56
	<b>U.S. Domestic</b>	97	4.342	0.952	0.097			
<b>Perf_Apprch</b>	<b>Turkish</b>	64	3.760	0.922	0.115	-3.018	159	0.00
	<b>U.S. Domestic</b>	97	4.189	0.853	0.087			
<b>Mstry_Avoid</b>	<b>Turkish</b>	64	3.713	0.997	0.124	-0.429	159	0.66
	<b>U.S. Domestic</b>	97	3.785	1.064	0.108			
<b>Perf_Avoid</b>	<b>Turkish</b>	64	3.692	0.950	0.119	-1.438	159	0.15
	<b>U.S. Domestic</b>	97	3.924	1.031	0.105			
<b>Intrinsic</b>	<b>Turkish</b>	64	3.820	0.650	0.081	-2.232	157	0.02
	<b>U.S. Domestic</b>	95	4.060	0.659	0.068			
<b>Extrinsic</b>	<b>Turkish</b>	64	3.593	0.975	0.121	-0.381	156	0.70
	<b>U.S. Domestic</b>	94	3.652	1.909	0.094			

Note. Mstry\_Apprch = Mastery-Approach, Perf\_Apprch = Performance-Approach, Mstry\_Avoid = Mastery-Avoidance, Perf\_Avoid = Performance-Avoidance

Table 3 presents the means for intrinsic and extrinsic survey items for Turkish graduate student and U.S. domestic graduate students. Of the eight items from two subscales rated (intrinsic/extrinsic), U.S. domestic graduate students had a higher mean rating for all four intrinsic motivation items and three extrinsic motivation items than Turkish graduate students, as illustrated in Table 4. U.S. domestic graduate students rated Item 1 and Item 2 significantly higher than Turkish graduate students. Both Item 1 and Item 2 were designed to measure intrinsic motivation *toward knowledge* (Vallerand et al., 1992). On the other hand, Turkish graduate students and U.S. domestic graduate students did not significantly differ on Item 3 and Item 4, which were designed to measure intrinsic motivation *toward accomplishment* (Vallerand et al., 1992). While Item 5 and Item 6 were designed to measure extrinsic motivation *introjected regulation*, Item 7 and Item 8 were designed to measure extrinsic motivation *external regulation* (Vallerand et al., 1992). U.S. domestic graduate students had higher mean ratings for Item 5 and Item 6, which refer to extrinsic motivation *introjected regulation*. While Item 5, "to prove to myself that I am capable of completing my graduate degree," had the lowest mean rating for Turkish graduate students, U.S. domestic graduate students rated this item significantly higher than Turkish graduate students ( $M = 3.90, SD = 1.00$ ),  $t(155) = -2.124, p = 0.03$ . Both Item 7 and Item 8 refers to the extrinsically motivated behaviors that are least autonomous, where the behavior is instigated by an external incentive (Ryan & Deci; 2000). Interestingly, Item 7, "in order to obtain a more prestigious job later on," had the lowest mean for U.S. domestic students, and this was the only item Turkish graduate students rated significantly higher than U.S. domestic graduate students ( $M = 3.78, SD = 1.00$ ),  $t(154) = 2.854, p = 0.00$ . On the other hand, no significant difference was found on item 8, "to have "the good life" later on" between Turkish and U.S. domestic graduate students.

Table 3.

*Means for Intrinsic and Extrinsic Survey Items*

Survey Item	Turkish	Domestic
<b>Item 1</b>	3.92	4.23
<b>Item 2</b>	4.00	4.24
<b>Item 3</b>	3.70	3.85
<b>Item 4</b>	3.66	3.90
<b>Item 5</b>	3.42	3.83
<b>Item 6</b>	3.61	3.71
<b>Item 7</b>	3.78	3.24
<b>Item 8</b>	3.56	3.85

\* *Intrinsic motivation (to know): 1, 2; Intrinsic motivation (to accomplish): 3, 4; Extrinsic motivation (introjected regulation): 5, 6; Extrinsic motivation (external regulation); 7, 8.*

Overall, as shown in Table 4, U.S. domestic graduate students ( $M: 4.24, SD: 0.62$ ) were significantly higher in their mean level of intrinsic motivation *to know* than Turkish graduate students ( $M: 3.96, SD: 0.71$ ),  $t(157) = -2.640, p: 0.00$ , but no significant

differences found in relation to intrinsic motivation *to accomplish* ( $t(157) = -1.36, p = 0.17$ ), extrinsic motivation *introjected regulation* ( $t(156) = -1.52, p = 0.12$ ), and extrinsic motivation *external regulation* ( $t(156) = 0.80, p = 0.42$ ).

Table 4.

*T-Test: Motivation by Intrinsic/Extrinsic Factors*

	Student Status	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SEM</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
<b>To know</b>	<b>Turkish</b>	64	3.960	0.708	0.088	-2.640	157	0.00
	<b>U.S. Domestic</b>	95	4.242	0.622	0.063			
<b>To accomplish</b>	<b>Turkish</b>	64	3.679	0.752	0.094	-1.362	157	0.17
	<b>U.S. Domestic</b>	95	3.868	0.920	0.094			
<b>Introjected</b>	<b>Turkish</b>	64	3.515	1.076	0.134	-1.525	156	0.12
	<b>U.S. Domestic</b>	94	3.760	0.929	0.095			
<b>External</b>	<b>Turkish</b>	64	3.671	0.980	0.122	0.803	156	0.42
	<b>U.S. Domestic</b>	94	3.542	1.001	0.103			

\**Intrinsic motivation (to know, to accomplish; Extrinsic motivation (introjected regulation, external regulation)*

With regard to the second research question, 53% of participants indicated they intended to return to their home country, 31% did not intend to return to their home country, and 15% were undecided. The three group means were not statistically significantly different in their levels of intrinsic, extrinsic, mastery-approach, mastery-avoidance, and performance-approach motivational orientations; however, the ANOVA results indicated a marginally significant difference suggesting that performance-avoidance scores differed between the three groups,  $F(2, 63) = 2.71, p = 0.07$ . Tukey's post hoc tests were conducted to test for group mean differences in each pairwise comparison in performance-avoidance motivation, revealing a marginally statistically significant ( $p = 0.06$ ) but strongly practically significant (Cohen's  $d = .90$ ) mean difference between participants who decided not to return ( $M = 3.43, SD = .90$ ) and those who were undecided ( $M = 4.38, SD = 1.13$ ), as well as strongly practically significant (Cohen's  $d = .79$ ) mean difference between participants who decided not to return ( $M = 3.43, SD = 1.13$ ) and those who were undecided.

Table 5.

*One-way ANOVAS for the six motivational orientations*

		<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
<b>Mstry_Apprch</b>	<b>Between Groups</b>	3.223	2	1.611	2.084	.13
	<b>Within Groups</b>	47.164	61	.773		
	<b>Total</b>	50.587	63			
<b>Perf_Apprch</b>	<b>Between Groups</b>	2.295	2	1.148	1.363	.26
	<b>Within Groups</b>	51.365	61	.842		
	<b>Total</b>	53.660	63			
<b>Mstry_Avoid</b>	<b>Between Groups</b>	2.745	2	1.372	1.398	.25
	<b>Within Groups</b>	59.892	61	.982		
	<b>Total</b>	62.637	63			
<b>Perf_Avoid</b>	<b>Between Groups</b>	4.649	2	2.324	2.711	.07
	<b>Within Groups</b>	52.308	61	.858		
	<b>Total</b>	56.957	63			
<b>Intrinsic</b>	<b>Between Groups</b>	.961	2	.480	1.139	.32
	<b>Within Groups</b>	25.723	61	.422		
	<b>Total</b>	26.684	63			
<b>Extrinsic</b>	<b>Between Groups</b>	2.976	2	1.488	1.594	.21
	<b>Within Groups</b>	56.961	61	.934		
	<b>Total</b>	59.938	63			

*Note.* Mstry\_Apprch = Mastery-Approach, Perf\_Apprch = Performance-Approach, Mstry\_Avoid = Mastery-Avoidance, Perf\_Avoid = Performance-Avoidance

#### 4. DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The findings from this study have provided insights into Turkish graduate students' motivational orientation in relation to U.S. domestic graduate students and their intention to return home country. The current findings suggest that U.S. domestic graduate students more frequently experience performance-approach and intrinsic motivation. This finding is consistent with a past study that showed a positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and performance-approach goal (Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996). A previous study also supported the notion that performance-approach goals led to positive task involvement and enhanced intrinsic motivation (Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996). It is important to note that performance-approach motivation implies a tendency for attaining competence, and such tendency can be beneficial in competitive learning environments (Elliot & Church, 1997; Elliot & McGregor, 2001; Midgley, Kaplan, & Middleton, 2001). Since performance-approach survey items focus on attaining competence, this finding suggests that U.S. domestic graduate students more frequently demonstrate competence or seek challenges in their studies than Turkish graduate students (Elliot & Harackiewicz,

1996; Elliot & Trash; 2002). Therefore, Turkish graduate students' lower level of performance-approach goal can be considered as negative behavior in the context of global competitiveness.

The study also suggested that Turkish graduate students less frequently experience intrinsic motivation. Although U.S. is a top choice of country to pursue graduate education for the majority of Turkish graduate students (IIE, 2015), the notion that Turkish graduate international students were expected to have a higher degree of intrinsic motivation was not supported in this research. From this finding, we can assume that U.S. domestic graduate students have more tendency to study for the pleasure and satisfaction experienced while learning (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Vallerand et al., 1992; Ryan & Deci, 2000). One possible explanation for this might be that Turkish international graduate students' experiences are more stressful and less powerful, leading them to *survive* rather than thriving. International graduate students face unique challenges compare to U.S. domestic graduate students (e.g., Kuo, 2011; Lee, 2013), and Turkish graduate students may tend to avoid challenging tasks and have a lower level of satisfaction in their studies. Another possible explanation for Turkish graduate students' lower level of intrinsic motivation could be due to their scholarship status—the majority of participants identified as a scholarship student. Since a previous study suggests that scholarship students typically have more adjustment problems because of the pressure to keep their scholarship status (Poyrazli, Arbona, Bullington & Pisecco, 2001), this pressure could lead to Turkish graduate scholarship students to less frequently experience intrinsic motivation.

More than half of Turkish graduate students indicated they intended to return to their home countries upon graduation. This might be due to the majority of participants being a scholarship student. Since the present sample was not nationally representative, this result should be viewed as tentative. However, it could inform practitioners of student affairs and in international offices in higher education to be better prepared to smooth the reaccluturation process for the large number of international graduate students who intend to return to their home countries. Future research should continue to address the stability of and conditioning factors related to the proportions of international graduate students who intend to return to their home countries and their reasons for doing (or not doing) so.

Regarding the second research question, though the results revealed only marginally statistically significant findings, the relatively low power to detect effects combined with the relatively high effect sizes suggest these results are in fact potentially meaningful, and that the research question—which heretofore has not been addressed in the cross-cultural graduate education literature—is worthy of continued investigation. The primary finding here indicated that Turkish international students who were undecided about returning to their home country more frequently experienced performance-avoidance motivation than both students who decided to stay in the U.S. and students who decided to return home country after graduation. This may suggest merely being decided about whether or not to return to one's home country, independent of whether that decision is to stay or return, is important toward one's motivational orientation. Being undecided about returning to one's home country can be frustrating, due in large part to the uncertainty of the potential social, emotional, and financial challenges and costs of staying in the U.S. (e.g., finding a job, being away from one's family) or returning to one's home country (e.g., reaccluturating, rebuilding social support networks; see Lee, 2013). Having greater certainty about one's plans may lead one to be less inclined to avoid failures. Moreover, since performance-avoidance motivation can be detrimental to academic performance (e.g., low competence, fear of failure, avoid incompetence; see Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996; Elliot & Church, 1997; Church, Elliot, & Gabel, 2001; Elliot and McGregor, 2001), the uncertainty may be compounded by a fear of fewer desirable options upon graduation due to a less-marketable grade point average, or even failure to graduate. Therefore, Turkish international graduate students who have not already decided about returning to their home country might be more likely to simply try to *survive* in their graduate studies than students who have greater certainty about their plan. This suggests that higher education practitioners should seek to better understand the degree to which international graduate students are uncertain about their intentions upon graduation and help them explore options and achieve greater certainty to reduce their performance-avoidance motivation (and thus potentially benefit their academic performance).

The present study represents a starting point in this promising line of inquiry. However, given its limitations, further research of international graduate students is thus necessary to better understand their intentions regarding, and the potential link between motivational orientations and uncertainty about returning to their home country. Future investigation is needed to better understand Turkish graduate students' motivation from a broader perspective by utilizing an alternative data collection method and refining research design. For example, in addition to the quantitative aspect of this study, a qualitative method such as interviews could be adopted with a subsample of the respondents to explore Turkish graduate students' motivation to continue their education more in-depth. Motivation is a very broad concept. The use of AGQ-R and AMS is only one way of measuring graduate students' motivation to continue their education. In this concept, another recommendation for future research would be to examine the relationship between different types of motivational orientations (e.g., intrinsic motivation) and other factors (e.g., challenges faced). Therefore, future studies can illustrate the potential link between the types of motivation and other factors that may also influence Turkish graduate students' motivation to continue their education.

The purpose of this study was to investigate different types of psychologically-based motivational factors that contribute to Turkish international graduate students' motivation toward completing their programs, particularly in relation to U.S. domestic graduate students and their intention to return home country. The findings generally support the notion that Turkish graduate students less frequently experience intrinsic motivation and performance-approach motivation. The presence of a few statistically significant findings also suggests that Turkish graduate students' motivational orientations might vary based on

their intention to return home country, which provides a preliminary basis for future research in this area. Overall, this study has attempted to advance our knowledge about the different motivational orientations held by Turkish international graduate students in relation to domestic graduate students.

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