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ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION

Digital and Traditional Intercultural Communication in Maintaining National Identity: Evidence from the Kazakh Diaspora in Turkey and the United States

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Abstract— Geographical separation between the homeland and the diaspora creates difficulties in preserving and recreating identity, particularly within digital and culturally networked spaces. This investigation quantitatively examined the interrelation between traditional and digital intercultural communication as well as the Kazakh diaspora question of the national identity connected with age and extent of residence in a foreign country as controlling aspects. Digital diaspora theory was used to guide the research. The study employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey design of 100 respondents selected using purposive and snowball sampling. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire covering traditional and digital communications, and national identity. The study results exposed that digital communication demonstrated a restrained positive connection with national identity, while traditional communication demonstrated a feeble but statistically substantial constructive connection. The age was positively associated with national identity, while the extent of residence in a foreign country was negatively connected with national identity. Partakers in Turkey stated a superior support to traditional communication, while those in the US stated superior support to digital communication. Additionally, there was a substantial alteration between Turkey and the US national identity data. The study demonstrates that digital communication is a key element for preserving national identity among members of the Kazakh diaspora. This research provides an empirical contribution to the research on the relation between communication modes and host-country context in constructing diaspora identity in the digital age.

Index Terms— Digital age, Identity maintenance, Intercultural communication, Kazakh diaspora, National identity, Social media, Transnational communication

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Introduction

In terms of rapid globalisation, international migration, and digital networks, immigrants continually interact across several cultural, political, and communicative settings, making national identity more dynamic. National identity is now recognized as a socially constructed and perpetually reproduced phenomenon shaped by everyday communication, cultural practices, and cross-border interactions rather than a fixed attachment to the homeland (Tantish & Kaur, 2025; Urbaite, 2024). Because extended stays overseas can expose people to conflicting cultural norms, languages, and social values, migration presents diaspora communities with both opportunities for cultural interchange and difficulties with identity continuity.

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Maintaining a national identity requires constant interaction with the home country, as well as with the environment of the country of residence, through interpersonal interaction, community institutions, and increasingly digital communication platforms (Criss et al., 2025).

These processes can be studied in relation to the Kazakh diaspora. Due to the events in the history of Kazakhstan, such as famine, collectivisation, political displacement, send-offs for education, and migration of the labour force after independence, all contributed to geographically dispersed communities existing on all continents, such as Asia, Europe, and North America (Arslan et al., 2023; Gulina, 2023; Nurbek et al., 2025). The diversity of migration routes does not prevent the preservation of the Kazakh language and cultural memory, as well as the values of the Kazakh people in their homeland but highlights them more in other socio-cultural milieus (Baker, 2022; Shah et al., 2024). The understanding of these influences is increasingly significant as migration becomes more transcontinental, and communication possibilities are reshaping connections across national borders.

Current research claim that communication is being dominant in sustaining diaspora identities. Direct communications within families, community associations, cultural organisations, and traditional media are reinforcing the collective memory as well as the inter-generational cultural spread, whereas digital technologies permit adherents of the diaspora to contribute to birthplace activities nevertheless the geographical detachment (Kianpour et al., 2025; Nurbek et al., 2025). Social networks, messaging applications, online social events, and virtual societies allow a constant linking to birthplace culture, language, and community discourse, strengthening multinational appurtenance and shared identity (Abikenov et al., 2023; Tantish & Kaur, 2025). These developments have shifted diaspora communication from sporadic contact to ongoing interaction, allowing identity to be reproduced through both online and in-person interactions.

Therefore, the present study focuses on the two most prominent and complementary ways in which people in diasporas can actively (re)construct, interact, maintain, and strengthen national identity, namely traditional and digital forms of intercultural communication. Traditional communication is direct communication between individuals and communities, while digital communication is technology-mediated and transcends national boundaries. The two-modality framework was selected because traditional and digital communication represent the two principal channels through which diaspora members maintain interpersonal, community, and transnational connections: direct/offline communication and technology-mediated communication. The selection criterion is therefore the mode or channel through which communication occurs. The disassociation of the two communication modes permits considering their input to identity safeguarding distinctly and in evaluation, whereas permitting other applicable variables to be comprehended as related circumstances rather than as supplementary communication modes. Explicitly, language skill, host-country strategy, and community formal concentration are viewed as related aspects since they define the circumstances under which communication happens rather than establishing separate networks of communication. The language expertise may enable or restrain communication, the host-country strategy may figure the prospects and circumstances for multinational and intercultural collaboration, and the formal concentration may disturb the admission to community-based systems and events. Though, no one of these issues embodies a separate communication canal in the same logic as “traditional/direct” and “digital/technology-mediated” communicative performs. Consequently, these issues are understood as circumstantial background features that may improve or restrain communication, while traditional and digital communication establish the two communication modes scrutinised in this investigation.

In context of this investigation, Turkey and the United States (U.S.) are appropriate comparative contexts to explore these associations, as they are opposing sociocultural frameworks. The U.S. is a state with multi-ethnic and great diaspora communities Bonini Baraldi et al. (2013), Shakhanova (2025), and Timurovna et al. (2025), while Turkey has similar cultural, history, language, and religious connexion that can help sustain national identity. These assessments offer empirical host-country suggestion on whether communication channels (traditional and digital) are similar or different across similar and diverse cultural backgrounds.

Despite the breadth of studies concerned with migration, transnationalism, and diaspora engagement, there are substantial gaps. Many studies concerning the Kazakh diaspora emphasis on migration aims, cultural assimilation, and demographic features, with only limited quantitative work connected with communication modes in relation to national identity (Nurbek et al., 2025; Urpekova, 2022). Furthermore, previous studies often treat intercultural communication as a holistic construct, without analysing whether communication is conventional or digital, despite differences in channels and outcomes (Hassanpour et al., 2026). In addition to the limited empirical evidence comparing communication modalities, especially across host-country contexts, evidence examining their relationships with national identity, moderated by demographic variables, such as age and duration abroad, is also scarce. Hence, there is a need to address these gaps, as diaspora identity is continually constructed in both traditional and digital communicative contexts.

The study is set to analyse the role of traditional and digital intercultural communication in preserving the national identity of Kazakh citizens living abroad in Turkey and the U.S. The study provides a nuanced description of communication modalities and examines how these modalities relate to other demographic characteristics, including an inferential account of communication and identity formation in diaspora communities. The results add to the theoretical body of knowledge on communicative processes involved in the construction of diaspora identity and provide comparative quantitative evidence from two host-country contexts. From a practical perspective, the outcomes could be used to develop policy that involves the Kazakh diaspora, cultural projects, and digital initiatives as to strengthen Kazakhstan’s relationship with its citizens in the diaspora.

The study examines how traditional and digital forms of intercultural communication contribute to changes in the national identity of representatives of the Kazakh diaspora, including demographic and situational factors, such as age and duration of residence abroad. The following questions are aimed at being answered in the present study:

1. The question to define the interconnection between traditional and digital intercultural communication and national identity between representants of the Kazakh diaspora.

2. What is the association between the age and extent of residence in a foreign country with national identity amongst representants of the Kazakh diaspora?

3. Do the age and extent of residence in a foreign country change the relationships amid traditional and digital intercultural communication and national identity?

Literature Review

Theoretic perceptions on diaspora identity and communication

The "Digital Diaspora Theory" explains social and cultural connections between geographically-dispersed residents by means of digital technologies. In this context digital platforms can benefit for the preservation and fostering of the links to birthplace culture as well as the collective memory Călinescu (2024) and Witteborn (n.d.), multinational acquaintance creation, and multinational arrangements (Mogaji, 2025). However, digital communication should not be measured a solitary course of identity development. Rather, its implication differs according to social and cultural contexts.

This related viewpoint supports the shift from essentialist to constructivist and postmodern perspectives concerned with national identity, which emphasis on collective history, language, communal memory, and cultural codes (Insebayeva & Insebayeva, 2021; Priwati & Sanitioso, 2024). These perspectives can be concurrent in diaspora backgrounds, as continuing attachments to 'home' can be kept together with incessant courses of rebuilding identity relative to the host cultures over the collaboration and contact (Kianpour et al., 2025).

This process is facilitated by the intercultural communication. Identity can be shaped over a cross-cultural collaboration, sociocultural proficiencies can be advanced Magdanovna et al. (2024), Moon (2023), and Sarwari et al. (2024), and the continuity of family communication can donate to the assimilation and social incorporation (Huda Yousif Enad, 2026; Zharkynbekova et al., 2024). Digital spaces spread this progression by giving admission to content and statistics in migrants' birthplace language and values, as well as for preserving cultural contacts while correcting to host cultures (Kranz, 2020; Vainola, 2024). Consequently, identity is not only upheld but also continually shaped and reconstructed by traditional and digital modes in communication. This paper focusses on the "Digital Diaspora Theory" to scrutinise the diverse associations that these communication modes might have with national identity in several diaspora contexts.

The background and experimental suggestion of Kazakh diaspora

Empirical investigations demonstrate that the use of language, cultural practices, instruction and community establishments, media practise, and intergenerational spread are connected with diaspora identity Kichuk & Shevchuk, 2020; (Chapman & Abraham, 2024; Kozhanbergenova et al., 2023). Though, there is restricted quantitative suggestion concerned with the Kazakh diaspora. Current studies describing Kazakhstan give data associated with the cultural preservation but don't sufficiently reflect the place of communication outlines in determining national identity (Alexandrov et al., 2018; Gulina, 2023; Nurbek et al., 2025; Tian, 2025; Urpekova, 2022; Zhang et al., 2021). Studies concerning the neighbouring Uzbek, Kyrgyz, and Mongolian diasporas suggest the rising dependency on digital media for communication, particularly among younger groups (Demircioğlu, 2024; Nurbek et al., 2025).

Likewise, scientific studies propose that communication practices might be predisposed to the milieu of the host nation state. In culturally close contexts (e.g., Turkey), language and religion can enable the offline cultural and official engagement (Nurbek et al., 2025). Diasporas in Western multi-ethnic cultures, otherwise, might be more reliant on multinational and digital networks because of geographical diffusion and assimilation into mainstream organisations (Agnihotri, 2025). Particularly, these alterations are relevant to the Kazakh diaspora, which is dispersed across China, Turkey, Russia, Europe, and the United States (Shakhanova, 2025).

This context-dependent distinction is established in the literature. In China, close-knit Kazakh societies can help uphold the continuousness of the language and culture Chen et al. (2025), Shakhanova (2025), and Temirgazina et al. (2023), and cultural nearness in Turkey may aid easing face-to-face interaction, public contribution, and intergenerational spread (Bekenova et al., 2025; Bolat et al., 2024; Tleugazina et al., 2022). Otherwise, the more spread-out and minor Kazakh community in the US might depend more on digital and multinational communication (Nurbek et al., 2025; Zhazira, 2023). Contempt these alterations, there is robust provision for the Kazakh language on diverse stages of communication in multinational space Dauren Abiltaevich et al. (2024), and institutional and state-oriented tactics can increase transnational collaboration and diaspora consistency (Ievsieieva et al., 2026; Tleugazina et al., 2022). These dissimilar backgrounds can be a basis to explore how communication mode is connected in a different way to national identity in host countries.

In summary, Digital Diaspora Theory posits that digital technologies empower migrant communities to maintain transnational ties with their homelands, thereby enhancing the construction of cultural identity despite physical distance. According to the reviewed literature, traditional or conventional communication methods, such as face-to-face interactions, family gatherings, and community organizations, remain important and

may complement digital interactions to preserve national identity (Criss et al., 2025; Park, 2024). Literature also suggests that digital engagement often fosters attachment to homeland culture Urbaite (2024), while in-person participation strengthens emotional bonds and identity transmission across generations. These studies emphasized that both forms of communication contribute strongly to the national preservation of identity. Studies have reported that older people are more attached to their homeland than younger people. Likewise, the longer a person stays abroad, the weaker their relationship with or engagement with their homeland, suggesting the influence of demographic factors on this dynamic (Kianpour et al., 2025; Lebrusán & Gómez, 2022). Additionally, host-country contexts, such as close culture and multicultural environments, influence identity maintenance in diaspora communities (Nurbek et al., 2025). Based on the theory and literature, the study formulates the following hypotheses.

H1a: Traditional transcultural statement is definitely related to national identity among representants of the Kazakh diaspora.

H1b: Digital transcultural communication is positively related to national identity among representants of the Kazakh diaspora.

H2a: The age is meaningfully related to national identity among representants of the Kazakh diaspora.

H2b: The extent of residence in a foreign country is meaningfully related to national identity among representants of the Kazakh diaspora.

H3a: The age meaningfully restrains the relationship between traditional intercultural communication and national identity among representants of the Kazakh diaspora.

H3b: The age meaningfully moderates the association between digital transcultural communication and national identity among representants of the Kazakh diaspora.

H3c: The extent of residence in a foreign country meaningfully moderates the relationship between traditional transcultural communication and national identity among representants of the Kazakh diaspora.

H3d: The extent of residence in a foreign country meaningfully moderates the relationship between digital transcultural communication and national identity among representants of the Kazakh diaspora.

Methodology

Research design

The study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional survey design to examine how traditional and digital intercultural communication relate to the national identity of members of the Kazakh diaspora in Turkey and the United States, providing culturally diverse and similar host communities. The design allows exploration of how different host-country settings are associated with the relationships between communication modalities and national identity.

Population and sampling

The target population included representants of the Kazakh diaspora being present in in Turkey and the United States. These 2 host state were chosen for their opposing sociocultural backgrounds. Turkey bonds cultural and linguistic closeness with Kazakhstan, while the US is geographically detached and multi-ethnic. The investigation united “purposive” and “snowball” test group methods for the reason that “probability” sampling was unviable given the absence of a complete test group frame for the Kazakh diaspora (Heckathorn, 2011; Ting et al., 2025).

The eligibility criteria required that participants must be adherents of the Kazakh diaspora is inherent in either Turkey or the United States, enthusiastically contribute to diaspora communication nets, and have widespread social contacts within their societies (Weiner et al., 2017). The staffing procedure started with 12 initial members (seeds) acknowledged by means of goal-directed sampling over social media. The “seeds” were carefully chosen from suitable representants of the Kazakh diaspora in the 2 host states to simplify the admission to partakers with diverse demographic and community experiences. After effectuating the up-to-date agreement, each “seed” acknowledged the inspection and was requested to share it with other suitable representants of their individual and community nets. The recommendation procedure then made supplementary respondents until the compulsory sample size was gotten. Therefore, the twelve “seeds” were the preliminary partakers, while the lasting eighty-eight respondents were found through “snowball” referrals, follow-on in a concluding sample of one hundred respondents. The enrolment was scrutinised to guarantee depiction from both states, with sixty respondents engaged from Turkey and forty from the US, as well as distinction across age groups, extent of residence in a foreign country, and community relationships.

Research instrument

A structured questionnaire was developed using Google Forms for data collection in the Kazakh language. The questionnaire was divided into three parts: Section A presented demographic information, age, gender, education, marital status, profession, income, reason for migration, duration of residence abroad, and country of residence. Section B comprised 12 items on traditional intercultural communication (face-to-face interaction, physical participation in diaspora organizations, cultural events, classical media resources such as television, mass media). Section C comprised 12 items on digital intercultural communication (social media, messaging applications, video calls, online platforms, and other

internet-mediated interaction with Kazakhstan). Responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = never to 5 = always). National identity was measured using a 10-item index assessing national belonging, attachment, cultural commitment, national values, and emotional identification with Kazakhstan (see Appendix I).

The questionnaire underwent expert review by three experts in intercultural communication, diaspora studies, and quantitative research to establish content validity, and their corrections were incorporated into the final version before pilot testing. The concept legitimacy of the 24-item survey was inspected by means of Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The PCA was led on the concluding analytical trial of 100 respondents but not on the 25 experimental respondents. The "national identity scale" (10 items) was examined distinctly since it assisted in the paper's dependent variable. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin ratio was 0.89, representing sampling suitability. "Bartlett's test" of sphericity was statistically significant, $\chi^2(276) = 1{,}284.67$, $p < .001$, representing that the association matrix was appropriate for influence removal. PCA acknowledged 3 mechanisms with eigenvalue of a square matrix superior than 1, clearing up 58.72% of the overall variance (Factor 1-digital communication engagement = 29.68%, Factor 2- traditional communication performs = 17.40%, Factor 3-offline diaspora communication involvement = 11.64%). Subsequent to "Varimax rotation", factor loading fluctuated from 0.65 to 0.77, representing suitable concept validity (See Appendix). The item-factor loading of the 3 mechanisms are accessible in Table I.

The experimental sample consisted of 25 diaspora members and was utilised exclusively to assess the clarity and reliability of the tool. "Cronbach's alpha coefficients" were (traditional communication scale = 0.80, digital communication scale = 0.82, national identity scale = 0.79), representing suitable core steadiness of the scale. The 25 experimental representants were not involved in the concluding analytical taster of 100 representants. A post-hoc power investigation established that the sample final sample size (N = 100) had acceptable statistical power for the ranked regression model and moderation of age and time expended in the diaspora (See Appendix).

Table I
Main constituent analysis of the communication scale (24 Items)

Factor	Items	Influence Loading Variety	Eigenvalue of a square matrix	Alteration Clarified (%)
Digital Communication Assignation	12	0.69–0.77	7.12	29.68
Traditional communication Performs	8	0.65–0.74	4.18	17.40
Offline Diaspora cultural involvement	4	0.66–0.75	2.79	11.64
Overall	24	0.65–0.77	14.09	58.72

The PCA identified 3 mechanisms, but the regression studies were effectuated by means of theoretical concepts. Particularly, the digital communication forecaster was embodied by the "Digital Communication Engagement" factor, while the "Traditional Communication Practices" and "Offline Cultural Involvement" components were united to characterise the wider concept of traditional transcultural communication. This blend was resolute for the reason that the theoretical likeness between the 2, as measured by the association between Components 2 and 3 (r = 0.58) and the dependability constant of the united 12-item traditional communication scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.80$) based on the operation definition of traditional transcultural communication used in the paper. The reasonable constructive association designates that the 2 components characterise associated features of traditional diaspora communication. The reasonable core constancy provides their explanation as a comprehensive traditional transcultural communication concept, theoretical context, and the communication subscales accessible in Tables III and IV.

Data collection and analysis

The survey was administered online over two weeks using Google Forms. The data obtained were analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, and means) were used to summarize data and examine communication practices. Pearson correlation was used to analyse relationships between study variables. A multiple hierarchical regression analysis was used to predict the effect of communication modalities on national identity and the moderation of age and the time spent in the diaspora at a 0.05 level of significance. Model assumptions were evaluated before hypothesis testing. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF = 2.80) indicated no multicollinearity concerns, while the Durbin–Watson (DW = 1.92) indicated no significant autocorrelation in the models.

All demographic variables in section A of the study tool were gathered, it was the age, gender, instruction, matrimonial rank, occupation, revenue, motive of migration, extent of residence in a foreign country, and state of residence. The age and extent of residence in a foreign country were utilised as forecasters and mediators in the inferential studies. The grouping variable in the independent-samples t-test was the state of residence. The gender, instruction, matrimonial rank, occupation, revenue, and motive for migration were gathered as evocative features of the taster and were not involved in any inferential model. Therefore, only the concluding group of demographic variables was excluded from the inferential investigations.

Results

Table II gives the demographic distribution of the respondents in relation to the structure of the Kazakh diaspora before providing the answers to the research questions.

Table II
Demographic distribution of the respondents and structural trend of the Kazakh Diaspora

Demographic Characteristic	Percentage (%)	Trend
Age 18–30	38	38 percent of the group are youth migrants
Age 31–50	37	Dominant working-age group
Age Above 50	25	Smaller but stable group
< 3 years abroad	25	New immigration
3–10 years	41	Normal mid-term settlement
10+ years	34	Long-established diaspora
Turkey	60	High Kazakh diaspora population
US	40	Growing diaspora population

The demographic data of the Kazakh diaspora showed that most working-age people were in the largest proportions (38% and 37%, respectively). The aged group (50+ years) constitutes 25%, and they facilitate the transmission of culture. When it comes to duration of migration, 41 percent have resided in a foreign country for 3-10 years, and 34% for more than 10 years, which portrays a strong diaspora. The respondents are almost evenly divided between Turkey (60%) and the United States (40%) historical and new trends in migration, which are described by the patterns of migration in the past (see Table II). This multicultural profile forms the basis for differences in intercultural communication and the maintenance of national identity maintenance among the Kazakh diaspora.

RQ 1: What is the connexion between traditional and digital transcultural communication and national identity between representants of the Kazakh diaspora?

Tables III and IV demonstrate the descriptive data for the 24 items measuring traditional and digital transcultural communication between 100 partakers beforehand responding RQ 1 and testing H1a and H1b.

Table III
Descriptive statistics for traditional communication (*N*= 100)

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
I communicate with relatives in Kazakhstan through phone calls.	6	14	34	30	16	3.36	1.03
I exchange text messages with friends in Kazakhstan.	7	16	36	28	13	3.24	0.99
I send or receive letters or parcels from Kazakhstan.	10	20	38	22	10	3.02	0.97
I have direct (face-to-face) communication with Kazakh visitors or relatives.	8	18	35	27	12	3.17	0.99
Frequency of Traditional Communication						3.20	0.79
I visit Kazakhstan every year.	15	22	33	20	10	2.88	1.05
I visit Kazakhstan for family events.	12	20	36	22	10	2.98	0.99
I visit Kazakhstan for cultural or religious events.	14	23	34	20	9	2.87	1.02
I travel to Kazakhstan for personal or professional reasons.	10	18	35	25	12	3.11	1.00
Visits to Kazakhstan						2.96	0.83
I attend cultural gatherings organized by the Kazakh diaspora.	5	12	34	32	17	3.44	0.96
I attend offline Kazakh language classes or workshops.	7	15	37	28	13	3.25	0.95
I participate in community celebrations (e.g., Nauryz).	4	10	35	33	18	3.51	0.93
I join offline meetings or networking events for Kazakh migrants.	6	14	36	30	14	3.32	0.96
Participation in Offline Diaspora Events						3.38	0.76
Grand Mean						3.21	0.74

Results indicate moderate engagement in traditional communication practices among the Kazakhstan diaspora, with a Grand Mean of 3.21 (SD = 0.74), indicating their importance despite the prevalence of digital communication practices. Most respondents used phone calls and text messages (M = 3.36, SD = 1.03) when communicating, with fewer participants using letters (M = 3.02, SD = 0.97). Visits to Kazakhstan had the lowest participation (M = 2.96, SD = 0.83), indicating low physical visits due to various factors. However, there was high participation in offline activities (M = 3.38, SD = 0.76), indicating their role in maintaining cultural identity.

Table IV
Descriptive statistics for digital communication (*N*= 100)

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
I communicate with people in Kazakhstan via social media.	2	5	18	45	30	3.96	0.89
I exchange messages with friends/family in Kazakhstan.	3	6	15	40	36	4.00	0.95
I participate in digital conversations with Kazakh communities.	1	7	20	44	28	3.91	0.83
I use digital platforms (WhatsApp, Telegram) to maintain ties with Kazakhstan.	2	4	14	47	33	4.07	0.79
Frequency of Digital Communication						3.99	0.87
I belong to Kazakh Facebook/Telegram cultural groups.	5	13	27	35	20	3.52	1.05
I take part in discussions in online Kazakh communities.	6	14	25	34	21	3.50	1.09
I join virtual Kazakh cultural events (webinars, celebrations).	4	11	28	33	24	3.62	1.03
I contribute content (posts, comments, and media) to cultural groups.	7	12	23	30	28	3.60	1.12
Participation in Kazakh Online Cultural Groups						3.56	1.07
I frequently read Kazakh online news.	1	4	18	36	41	4.12	0.87
I watch Kazakh videos/TV content online.	2	3	15	35	45	4.18	0.88
I listen to Kazakh music or podcasts online.	2	6	14	32	46	4.14	0.94
I follow Kazakh cultural influencers/bloggers online.	1	5	16	30	48	4.19	0.81
Consumption of Kazakh Digital Media						4.15	0.88
Grand Mean						3.90	0.94

Data in Table IV showed a high prevalence of digital intercultural communication among the Kazakhstan diaspora (M = 3.90, SD = 0.94), indicating that digital channels are crucial for sustaining interpersonal and cultural relationships with Kazakhstan and preserving national identity. There was also high engagement with Kazakh digital media (M = 4.15, SD = 0.88), including watching videos, listening to music, and reading news. Social media and messaging platforms also received high engagement, for instance, WhatsApp showed a mean of 4.07 (SD = 0.79). However, online cultural groups received moderate engagement (M = 3.56, SD = 1.07), indicating greater participation in virtual events than in community discussions.

The Pearson correlation was utilised to scrutinise the connection between diverse modalities of transcultural communication (traditional and digital) and national identity, as accessible in Table V.

Table V
Pearson correlation analysis of the connexion between the mode of transcultural communication and national identity (*N* = 100)

Variable	*R*	*p*	Reading
The traditional communication	0.21	0.034	Feeble positive
The digital communication	0.46	0.000	Modest positive
Total communication modality	0.52	0.000	Moderately robust positive

As demonstrated in Table VI, traditional communication had a weak but statistically substantial positive association with national identity (r = 0.21, $p < 0.05$), representing that more recurrent engagement in conservative means of communication was related to sturdier national identity. Therefore, H1b was supported. Digital communication showed a moderate and statistically significant positive relationship with national identity (r = 0.46, $p < 0.05$), indicating that greater engagement with digital communication platforms was associated with stronger national identity. Therefore, H1a was also supported. The combined communication measure showed a moderately stronger positive association with national identity (r = 0.52, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that maintaining communication with the homeland through multiple channels may be particularly relevant to the preservation of national identity. Nevertheless, the stronger correlation for digital communication indicates that digital communication had a stronger bivariate association with national identity than traditional communication.

RQ 2: To what scope are age and extent of residence in a foreign country related to the national identity among representants of the Kazakh diaspora?

To address RQ 2 and assess the H2a and H2b, a multiple regression analysis was conducted. National identity was measured across five core dimensions (national pride, cultural identification, loyalty and commitment, belief in national values, and sense of belonging) and scored using a 5-point response scale. Which demographic factors (age, duration of residence abroad) are associated with the preservation of national identity were examined through multiple regression analysis, as presented in Table VI.

The results of the multiple regression analysis confirmed that age and duration of residence abroad were significantly related to national identity among the Kazakh diaspora (F (2, 97) = 14.49, $p < 0.05$). The model clarified 23% of the alteration in national identity (R^2 = 0.23).

Table VI
Multiple regression analysis of demographic factors predicting national identity

Predictors	B	SE	*β*	*t*	*F*	Df	*p*
Constant	18.50	1.12	–	16.52	14.49	2	0.000
Age (years)	0.12	0.04	0.20	3.00		97	0.003
Duration abroad (years)	-0.25	0.05	-0.35	-5.00		97	0.000
Model							
R	0.48						
R^2	0.23						
Adjusted R^2	0.21						
Std. Error of Estimate	2.45						

The data display that the age is positively related to the safeguarding of national identity (B = 0.12, *β* = 0.20), representing that older persons stated sturdier national identity, supportive to H2a. In the interim, extent of residence in a foreign country has a negative indication associated with national identity (B = –0.25, *β* = –0.35), representing that for every supplementary year spent in a foreign country, their national identity safeguarding declines, it supports the H2b. Such data designate that national identity is sturdier with age but declines with longer extent of residence in a foreign country.

RQ 3. To what scope do the age and extent of residence in a foreign country moderate the relationships between traditional and digital trans-cultural communication and national identity?

The "hierarchical multiple regression analysis" was utilised to reply the RQ 3 and assess hypotheses H3a, H3b, H3c, and H3d, if the age and the extent of residence alter the relationship between communication modalities and national identity, as accessible in Table VII.

Table VII
Hierarchical moderation analysis predicting national identity

Forecasters	Model 1 *β* (95% CI)	Model 2 *β* (95% CI)	Model 3 *β* (95% CI)		
The traditional communication	0.12 (–0.02, 0.26)	0.10 (–0.04, 0.24)	0.08 (–0.06, 0.22)		
The digital communication	0.42* (0.27, 0.56)	0.38* (0.23, 0.52)	0.34* (0.18, 0.49)		
The age		0.19* (0.05, 0.33)	0.16 (–0.01, 0.31)		
The extent in a foreign country		–0.31* (–0.46, –0.16)	–0.28* (–0.44, –0.12)		
Traditional × Age			0.06 (–0.09, 0.20)		
Traditional × Duration			–0.05 (–0.19, 0.10)		
Digital × Age			0.18* (0.03, 0.32)		
Digital × Duration			–0.21* (–0.36, –0.06)		
Model	R^2	Adjusted R^2	ΔR^2	*F*	*P*
1	0.26	0.22	0	—	
2	0.39	0.36	0.12	9.35	0.000
3	0.44	0.39	0.05	2.03	0.10

The presented data demonstrated that in Model 1, digital communication was positively related to the national identity (*β* = 0.42, 95% CI [0.27, 0.56]), nevertheless traditional communication did not (*β* = 0.12, 95% CI [−0.02, 0.26]). In Model 2, digital communication persisted substantial (*β* = 0.38, 95% CI [0.23, 0.52]), whereas the age was non-significant (*β* = 0.16, 95% CI [−0.01, 0.31]) and the extent in a foreign country was negatively related to the national identity (*β* = −0.31, 95% CI [−0.46, −0.16]). In the Model 3, digital communication persisted important (*β* = 0.34, 95% CI [0.18, 0.49]), where traditional communication persisted non-significant (*β* = 0.08, 95% CI [−0.06, 0.22]).

The communication interaction terms showed that Traditional Communication × Age was non-significant (*β* = 0.06, 95% CI [−0.09, 0.20]), demonstrating no provision for the H3a, while Digital Communication × Age was substantial (*β* = 0.18, 95% CI [0.03, 0.32]), supportive to the H3b. Traditional Communication × Duration was likewise non-significant (*β* = −0.05, 95% CI [−0.19, 0.10]), demonstrating no provision for the H3c, while Digital Communication × Duration was significant (*β* = −0.21, 95% CI [−0.36, −0.06]), demonstrating provision for the H3d. Consequently, the H3 established limited support, with the H3b and H3d maintained, while the H3a and H3c were not supported.

The data from the "hierarchical moderation analysis" point to the transcultural communication variables interpretation for 26% of the variance in national identity (R^2 = 0.26). Once the age and extent in the state are involved in Model 2, the clarified variance upsurges to 39% (R^2 = 0.39), demonstrating a substantial alteration (ΔR^2 = 0.12, F (2, 95) = 9.35, $p < 0.05$). The model 3, which includes the contact terms, supplementary increases the variance to 44% (R^2 = 0.44), with a supplementary growth of 5% (ΔR^2 = 0.05, F (4, 91) = 2.03, $p > 0.05$), representing that the communication block as a whole did not produce a statistically significant incremental enhancement in model fit.

In addition to the results, a comparative analysis was conducted between the Turkey and United States sub-samples to examine differences in communication patterns and national identity using independent samples t-tests.

Table VIII
Independent-samples *t*-test results for the Turkey and U.S. subsamples

Variable	Turkey Mean (SD)	United States Mean (SD)	*t*	*P*	*df*	Cohen's *d*
Traditional communication	3.40 (0.76)	3.02 (0.71)	2.52	0.013	98	0.51
Digital communication	3.70 (0.70)	4.10 (0.62)	−2.96	0.003	98	0.60
National identity	4.07 (0.57)	3.65 (0.67)	3.39	0.001	98	0.69

The independent-samples t-test revealed that the traditional communication scores were significantly higher in Turkey than in the United States, t (98) = 2.52, $p < 0.05$, $d = 0.51$. However, significantly more respondents reported using digital communication in the United States, t (98) = −2.96, $p < 0.05$, $d = 0.60$. Furthermore, there was a significant difference in terms of national identity between the two groups, t (98) = 3.39, $p < 0.05$, $d = 0.69$, with higher scores being obtained by the respondents in Turkey.

Discussion

The current research paper explored how the Kazakh diaspora sustains intercultural communication with Kazakhstan, the association of demographic variables with national identity, and the interaction between the communication modalities and identity preservation. The findings demonstrate that traditional and digital communication jointly contribute to national identity preservation, although digital communication emerged as the stronger predictor. In addition, age and duration of residence abroad were significantly associated with national identity. However, age partially moderated the association between intercultural communication and national identity.

Even though the study mainly covers the field of communication and diaspora studies, its findings also have explicit interdisciplinary implications, such as sociology, media studies, migration, and pedagogy. With the prominent role of digital communication, when complemented by conventional community organizations to strengthen the preservation of culture for many generations. These findings also provide practical evidence for policymakers seeking to engage overseas Kazakh communities through digital platforms.

The descriptive findings showed that digital communication was frequently used compared to traditional communication among Kazakh members in the diaspora. There was high engagement with digital media (watching videos, listening to music, reading news), social media, messaging applications, and online groups. Other traditional means of communication, including physical visits to Kazakhstan, occurred less frequently. These findings are in line with transnationalism theory, which assumes that continued interaction with the homeland can be sustained through communication technologies despite geographical separation (Iseni, 2026; Nassimov, 2024). The findings also indicate that digital technologies have become an important mechanism through which diaspora members access homeland news, participate in cultural activities, and maintain social relationships.

Findings from the correlation and regression analyses demonstrated that both traditional and digital communication have positive and statistically significant relationships with national identity, with different strengths. Traditional communication showed a weak relationship, while the relationship between digital communication and national identity was stronger. However, the strongest relationship was observed from the combination of the two modalities, indicating that identity preservation can benefit more from their use, supporting Hypothesis 1, that traditional communication continues to support digital communication despite its prevalence. These findings extend previous diaspora research, with the quantitative results demonstrating that digital communication has become a medium for maintaining national identity without replacing the continuing symbolic importance of face-to-face family interactions and community participation. This implies that despite the growing dominance of digital communication, traditional communication remains an important complementary channel. Consequently, both communication modalities revealed complementary roles rather than competing functions within the diaspora communities. These findings are also consistent with the literature from Central Asian and other Asian diasporas communities, where online resources helped them to preserve their cultural continuity and collective identity through sustained transnational communication, digital community participation, and engagement with homeland culture (Mukhamejanova & Konurbayeva, 2023; Nurbek et al., 2025; Zharkynbekova et al., 2024; Zhazira, 2023). Similarly, Berg (2020) in his study observed that Turkish diaspora communities continue to rely on established community institutions and traditional communication networks. This finding contradicts the present study, which found greater reliance on digital communication than traditional communication among members of the Kazakh diaspora, not because the findings are inconsistent, but because the studies have different structural contexts. Berg (2020) examined the Turkish diaspora, whereas the present study examined the Kazakh diaspora residing in Turkey and the geographically dispersed United States. This difference is likely explained by differences in the diaspora context rather than by contradictory evidence (Berg, 2020; Kianpour et al., 2025; Zharkynbekova et al., 2024).

The moderation investigation specifies that association between transcultural communication and national identity varied under some socio-demographic settings, mainly for digital transcultural communication. Though the combined communication rapports did not produce a statistically substantial total rise in elucidated variance, the distinct communication coefficients offer suggestion of explicit moderation effects. Precisely, the age meaningfully moderated the connexion between digital transcultural communication and national identity (Digital Communication × Age, $\beta = 0.18$), supporting H3b. This designates that the asset of the confident connotation between digital intercultural communication and

national identity varied crossways the age clusters. The extent of residence in a foreign country likewise meaningfully moderated the connexion between digital transcultural communication and national identity (Digital Communication × Duration of Residence Abroad), supporting H3d. The adverse communication designates that the positive association between digital communication and national identity deteriorated as the extent of residence in a foreign country augmented. In divergence, neither the Traditional Communication × Age interaction (β = 0.06) nor the Traditional Communication × Extent of Residence In a foreign country interaction was statistically substantial, providing no sustenance for the H3a and H3c. Overall, the results offer incomplete provision for the H3, with restraint effects apparent for digital transcultural communication but not for traditional transcultural communication. Given the cross-sectional strategy, these restraint effects should be understood as provisional connotations rather than contributing effects. These data coincide with the ones stated by Lebrusán and Gómez (2022), who suggest that the attachment to identity variates with the time. Though, the distinct communication effects were not statistically substantial. Consequently, these results should be understood as suggestions of variance associations rather than suggestion of a substantial general moderation outcome for the communication block.

The comparative data further indicate that the host-country context may have predisposed communication conduct and national identities. This may be attributed to differences in the sociocultural backgrounds of the host states (Turkey and the United States), and the higher occurrence of traditional communication amid representants living in Turkey and the higher dependence on digital communication amongst those living in the United States. Direct personal connections and a sense of national identity may be improved by cultural and linguistic aspects and sturdier co-ethnic bonds with Turkey. However, in the United States, where individuals live in a diverse multi-ethnic milieu, their necessity for digital technologies to connect with Kazakhstan may be greater due to the absence of geographical concentration. Though, the background alterations do require to be measured descriptively, it does not mean that the moderation examination didn't assess the host state as a mediator.

These findings reinforce previous diaspora research emphasizing that identity preservation depends not only on communication frequency but also on the broader host-country context. Where strong community institutions, cultural proximity, and established co-ethnic networks exist, traditional communication continues to play an important role in sustaining identity (Berg, 2020). Conversely, in geographically dispersed diaspora settings with fewer opportunities for regular face-to-face interaction, digital communication becomes increasingly important for maintaining transnational relationships and cultural continuity (Mukhamejanova & Konurbayeva, 2023; Nurbek et al., 2025; Zharkynbekova et al., 2024). Collectively, the findings suggest that traditional and digital communication operate as complementary mechanisms whose relative importance varies according to the demographic characteristics of diaspora members and the structural context of the host country. This study therefore extends existing diaspora scholarship by providing quantitative evidence that communication modality, demographic characteristics, and host-country context jointly relate to the preservation of national identity among members of the Kazakh diaspora.

Limitations

The results should be understood in light of some limitations. The chosen cross-sectional strategy limits causal inferences, since the direction and temporal sequence of the detected relationships cannot be established. The self-report procedures utilised in the investigation may be pretentious by social desirability predisposition. The utilisation of "purposive" and "snowball" sampling, with all twelve preliminary "seeds" recruited through social-media networks, may have introduced digital assortment predisposition and restricted the representativeness of the Kazakh diaspora. Therefore, the constructive connotation between digital communication and national identity, counting the moderation things, may moderately reproduce partakers who were more digitally opened. The paper likewise did not consider potentially relevant factors, such as socioeconomic status, instructive achievement, and host-country language expertise. Lastly, concentrating on Kazakh diaspora representants in Turkey and the United States limits the transferability of the results to other host-country contexts.

Conclusion

This investigation examined how the Kazakh diaspora can engage in transcultural communication with Kazakhstan, how demographic factors contribute to the preservation of national identity, and how communication modes and self-identification as Kazakh are interrelated. The data show that national identity was meaningfully and positively connected with digital transcultural communication, but not with traditional transcultural communication. The moderation data moderately maintained the H3. The association between digital communication and national identity was meaningfully moderated by age and by the length of residence in a foreign country, supportive to the H3b and H3d. No provision for the H3a and H3c was detected, as the associations between traditional communication and age, and between traditional communication and length of residence were not substantial. But the communication block did not meaningfully develop the overall model. These findings should therefore be interpreted with caution, as they indicate associations rather than cause-and-effect relations. The findings demonstrated that the total of time spent in a foreign country was destructively related to national identity; the age was not a substantial self-determining forecaster in the concluding model. Additionally, digital transcultural communication was sturdily connected with the national identity, while traditional intercultural communication was not. The findings indicate that, in the present sample, the use of digital communication was more related to national identity than the length of residence in a foreign country, and that a longer period of residence in a foreign country was more associated

with reduced national identity. The findings reveal the importance of digital communication as a key component in preserving national identity amongst representants of the Kazakh diaspora.

This investigation has numerous practical implications for Kazakhstan. Digital platforms, online cultural communities, messaging apps, and media in the Kazakh language can be used to enhance diaspora engagement, as digital communication was positively connected with national identity and be contingent on the age and extent outside Kazakhstan. However, traditional communication should not be measured inappropriate, as it disclosed no connotation between national identities, representing it may be articulated over other canals not verified in this paper. The opportunities for individuals to interact with the family, for cultural proceedings, and time together may match digital engagement and benefit to reinforce intergenerational cultural contacts.

More diverse models and long¬itudinal strategies should be utilised in future revisions to analyse time tendencies in communication performs and national identity. Moreover, future studies should include other communication and social media platforms, as well as individuals who utilise both digital and non-digital communication tools, to reduce sampling bias. Additional factors, such as settings of the host state and community features, should similarly be examined to get a complete image of how diaspora communication is related to national identity.

Author contributions

Zhaniya Khassiyetova: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal Analysis, Visualization, Writing – Review & Editing, Investigation
Zukhra Ismagambetova: Investigation, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Writing – Original Draft
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Leskhan Askar: Resources, Visualization, Writing – Review & Editing, Project Administration
Saltanat Aubakirova: Methodology, Validation, Investigation, Writing – Original Draft

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Ethical approval

The study was approved by the Local Ethics Committee of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, IRB No. A1729, dated 07 October 2025, valid until 04 October 2028.

The research was conducted in accordance with international and national ethical standards for scientific research.

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Data availability statement

All data used to support the findings of this study will be made available on reasonable request.

Disclaimer

The opinions and interpretations in this research are purely those of the researchers and may not be the same as those of any institutions that the researchers are connected with.

AI declaration statement

The authors state that Grammarly and QuillBot AI tools were applied ethically to check grammar, enhance clarity and coherence, and were not used in the production of original data, analysis, illustrations, figures, and other significant scholarly material.

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