Studying the Relationship between Worldwide Media Including the Internet, Cellphones, and Satellites, and the Extent of the Youth’s Adherence to National and Religious Identities

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction
In the modern society, identities are highly fluid, interconnected, and instable. In the majority of cases, such fluidity and instability are the results of worldwide media in terms of modern connections and information. These media are constantly striving to weaken and destabilize identities. Consequently, the issues present in the society regarding identities involve the fact that the Iranian identity has been degrading in all aspects, becoming more inconspicuous day by day, especially among teenagers and youngsters. In the present era, the seamless identities of teenagers and youngsters have been transformed into scattered identities under the influence of modern media. As a result, given the absence of a correct understanding of the impacts of media and modern connection technologies such as the internet, cellphones, and satellites on teenagers and youngsters, the related issues caused by these media cannot be confronted logically and scientifically. To this end, the main purpose of the present inquiry is to study the impact of globalizing modern media on national and the religious identities of teenagers and youngsters along with its related challenges.

2. Theoretical Framework
According to Giddens (2000), Castells and Barker (2009), identity is a social construct rather than an inherent notion. Jean Baudrillard(1970) also suggests that the lack of foundations of the world in modern era has led to chaos, absence of identity, and disorder amongst humans. Esther (2003) and Pasteur (1998) have spoken of the freedom and abandonment of individuals from physical, spiritual, and character related features in virtual environments; Giddens (2000), Tate

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(2005), and Fortune (2001) have asserted the possibility of more individualism occurring in people as a result of worldwide media. Overall, theorists in the area of virtual environments can be classified into three groups including the pessimists, optimists, and moderates. Nonetheless, employing a single-dimensional view of the subject cannot provide the necessary means to explain the subject at hand. As a result, the present study seeks to incorporate a realistic perspective regarding the relationship between worldwide media and the national religious identities of individuals. The result of the study could demonstrate whether the impacts of such media on national and religious identities are negative or positive. Subsequently, every outlook on the matter is presented in this study so as to identify a dominant view based on the results.

3. Method
The present study was conducted using the survey method in which data collection was carried out through questionnaires. The validity of religious and national identity questionnaires was examined and confirmed using the face validity method; the reliability analysis using Cronbach’s alpha suggests an acceptable, high reliability scale of 0.88 and 0.92 for the religious and national identities, respectively. The total population of the study included more than 454,589 teenagers and youngsters living in Tabriz city. Of this number, 400 were selected for the study according to Cochran’s formula. In this regard, random cluster sampling was used. Ultimately, the SPSS software (ver. 21) was used to analyze the collected data.

4. Findings
The results of descriptive analysis showed that the extent of adherence to the components of national and religious identities among teenagers and youngsters are at a desirable level, with a mean percentage of 80.5 and 76.7 for national and religious identities, respectively. The inferential findings demonstrate the fact that individuals who use the internet, satellite, and cellphones are of weaker religious and national identities compared to those who do not use such media. Modern media such as the internet, cellphones, and satellite involve a significant, negative impact on the extent of teenagers and youngsters’ adherence to the components of national identity. Meanwhile, the impact of using satellite TV channels on the extent of adherence to the religious identity was negative and significant, with other media having no significant effects. The results of the model suggest that among the variables of the study, the extent of using satellite and age demonstrate 4.2% of changes in the extent of adherence to religious identity components whereas variables of using cellphones, satellites, and age describe 4.7% of changes in the extent of adherence to national identity in youngsters.
5. Discussion and Conclusion

According to the results of the study, worldwide media such as the internet, satellite, and cellphones are considered as one of the major sources that influence the national and religious identities of teenagers and youngsters; albeit, such an influence on their identities have been mainly negative. In the long term, media places individuals’ understanding and awareness under influence through culturalization processes. Since modern media such as the internet, satellite, and cellphones are considered as the most visited among teenagers and youngsters, they have definitely been successful in inviting this group of people to socialize in their own cultural contexts. As a result, it is recommended to prepare continuous programs based on reinforcing various components of religious and national identities within domestic media as well as virtual environments and satellite TV channels in order to take a bold step toward reducing the influence of worldwide media on national and religious identities.

Keywords: Identity, Worldwide Media, Religious and National Identities, Teenagers and Youngsters

References (in Persian)


References (in English)


