

The Role of Information Technologies in Proceeding Cultural Goals

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Abstract. The information technologies play an effective role in shaping our cultural behaviors in the form of satellite channels or internet sites. Making use of these communicative tools is a prerequisite for socialization of the individuals and proceeding the goals of the advanced communities in the cyber space. The role of information technologies could be examined from two aspects: First, the exploitation of mass media tools in a bid to channelize public opinion of other communities and cultures in line with the enforcement of domestic culture diplomacy which can lead to the cultural dominance and changing their behaviors and cultural characteristics. Secondly, the impact of satellite channels or internet sites in a way that it contributes to cultural promotion and public awareness of other communities and makes non-advanced communities better acquainted with the methods of progress among the developed nations; and also results in the internalization of the concepts such as democracy, civil rights, social status and so on among the non-advanced countries. In this article we are trying to examine some instances of the positive and negative effects of the satellite channels as a new cultural and media phenomenon in the cultural structure of the modern communities in order to change the view of their audience.

Keywords: Culture; Community; Behaviour; Interne; Positive; Negative Effects

1. Introduction

Culture can be considered as a series of beliefs, rites, ideas, customs and values pervading a society. Culture is an ideological system that is manifested in discourse and behavior of the individuals in a society. At a general glance, culture is the method and style of living bequeathed to us from our ancestors' thoughts, experiences and findings. However, cultures like other social phenomena do not enjoy a similar and monotonous life; they can rather be reinforced or omitted, or undergo ups and downs and alter as a result of the lapse of time and connection with other phenomena, and interaction with other cultures. In view of this, culture is an evolving notion that is affected by many social, economic, and political conditions prevalent in the society.

The present age is called the second age of media or the age of communication. Launching numerous satellite channels throughout the world can be one of the simple and effective ways to cultural transfer, interaction and/or infiltration.

This modern cultural media that can consist of positive and negative impacts has caused different viewpoints and attitudes by people and authorities. In view of this, the way each of us views this phenomenon plays a fundamental role on how we use it.

2. Discussion and study

Those who have a negative view towards this technology believe that apparently attractive satellite programs weaken the native culture and promote the foreign one. If these programs face negative resistance by other cultures, the cultural incongruity and confrontation will be materialized instead of cultural interaction.

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But if the people of these countries do not show much resistance against the satellite programs, they will distance themselves from their own culture and will become alienated to it. Moreover, the occurrence of this phenomenon can create a cultural congruity. Thus, in a near future, the moral, cultural and social crises of these advanced nations will befall on other countries, too; and we will face a public crisis at a global level. Therefore, there is no reason to use the satellite programs.

They believe that showing such programs in the family has hindered the control of some parents over their children, especially given the fact that children at their childhood and adolescence are more interested in watching TV. This interest causes them to be more susceptible. Thus they communicate very easily with what they see in these programs and adopt models from them.

Showing exciting films with violent scenes make children believe the events and wish to be in the shoes of the hero of the story, and leads them to try to embark on acting violently and physical clashes. They also believe that most of these programs, due to displaying generation incompatibility, have caused children not to respect their parents duly and properly. Besides, the theme of many of the satellite films is to present a false image of freedom that in one way or another promotes heedlessness to the values of the family system which can lead to undermining the family bond and its disintegration. Some of the opponents even have named it a sort of conspiracy by the advanced countries to confront the genuine eastern cultures and the cultures of the developing countries. That's why the usage of the term 'cultural assault' has basically become popular.

But in the current circumstances, where all scientific and cultural arenas are advancing with a spectacular speed, can we be isolated like a deserted island and close all ways of interaction with the outside world, and be aloof from modern technologies? A wise man always understands his time and place well and keeps in pace with it. One of the manifestations of this coordination with the developments of life could be in leaving imperfect beliefs and ineffective methods of the past and making use of modern solutions: "Human psychology is an enormously complex topic our understanding of it is always changing, but a wide body of evidence and experimentation validates the basic claim that humans have a fundamental need for contact with other humans." [1]

The world is going towards globalization. That's why the term 'world village' is used for it. Along with the expansion of the information and communication systems, the borders between nations are going to perish day by day. Cultures in the future world will have a close and wide interaction. The culture of the advanced countries and the values ruling them, be they right or wrong, can affect the cultural entity of other nations like a large river.

Building a huge dam is not the way to counter this deep river, because if we want to play a positive and active role in the direction of the developments of the future world, we have to know these developments, accept their entity, participate in them and distinguish the opportunities existing in them; hence exploit them in due time.

That's why the proponents of cultural interaction do not consider destructive watching satellite programs and do not regard it a kind of conspiracy, for, they are ware of the point that every culture has its specific features and manifestations. Therefore, we should encourage our family members to benefit from its positive parts and we must thwart the parts that are incongruous with our cultural criteria through proper education for all strata of the society. Indeed (they think) that the term 'cultural assault' cannot be a correct term because culture can never be aggressive and destructive, but it is lack of culture, unawareness, incorrect imitations, and unwise behavior that are perilous and harmful. To confront with some of the incompatible cultural models of other countries we have to be equipped with knowledge, awareness, and modern technologies to be able to present our culture to other nations; and we should never become desperate and hopeless in this direction. No doubt, violent behaviors are not a proper solution to resolve this problem, for, showing belligerent behaviors will ensue defensive state among some parts of the society and families that are inclined to exploit this modern technology. Enhancement of the awareness of society to recognize its native culture is the best way to a cold welcome to the foreign culture. Using the lever of omission and denial is not the solution to the issue but merely deletion of the issue. If we are concerned about our children we should know that what they learn from our behaviors is more than what they learn from the satellite programs. In addition, we can keep the incompatible programs away from their access and explain the reason why they must not watch some of the

TV channels. Because when the family enjoys a psychological health, nobody will be deviated. Acquaintance with the culture and customs of other nations, and knowing their lifestyle and inclinations are not harmful and destructive, for, if we have a rich culture and enjoy adequate knowledge and insight to discern between cultures, we will never allow the incompatible elements of the foreign culture to infiltrate into our culture. Moreover, through strengthening our national identity and culture we will be able to resist against incorrect customs and undesired models that are not in conformity with our ideas and beliefs. Regarding the fact that in our country, Iran, the establishment of private TV channels has not been allowed and the state TV is not permitted, TV programmers and officials exactly execute the major policies of the statesmen and there is no opportunity to present different viewpoints. In such a one-sided atmosphere, indeed there is no possibility of exchanging of ideas and views. Therefore, one of the important reasons for people's welcome to the satellite channels is to hear different news and ideas and also programs that are not permitted to be aired because of various political and cultural reasons via state channels. We should not forget that in every society there are creative forces and elite who can be the source of development and progress. Blocking the communication channels such as internet sites or satellite will harm us greatly on the way to get access to the science of the day, because if we look pessimistically at the cultural and technological interactions of other societies many of the deadlocks in different economic, industrial and cultural fields won't be opened.

3. Conclusion

A man of reflection thinks more of dialogue and cooperation, rather than dispute and confrontation. Thus with a proper control and planning, we had better think of exploiting the positive results of this technology and dismissing its negative repercussions instead of omitting and denying it.

Those who have a negative to the promotion of information technologies of the foreign media, consider it as cultural authoritarianism and undermining the structure of the native culture which will lead to destroying native culture. Therefore, they regard any interaction as cultural dominance; while the world is the scene of interaction among cultures and not the scene of battle and dominance.

Undoubtedly, culture is a precious heritage to which the identity of every society is dependent and it remains from the past generations for the future ones. But are cultures devoid of any imperfection and deficiency? Like many other phenomena culture becomes more dynamic and perfect by the passage of time. So, instead of insisting on using some of the incorrect cultural patterns, is it not better to preserve our cultural values and good habits, and recognize the unpleasant habits and some incorrect behavioral patterns to try to reform them?

Furthermore, instead of worrying about the cultural dominance of other nations we'd better try to enter the arena of competition with other societies and present our cultural capabilities to them by producing our own cultural products.

4. References

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