Examining The Role of Social Media: A Causative Agent of New Form of Cultural Imperialism

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Abstract

This paper aims to look at the interaction between culture and social media. It probes the aspects of western culture filtered into the social fabric of masses in the Kohat division of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The study is a quantitative survey analyzed the perceptions of local youths concerning the portrayal of social media in influencing and emphasizing Western ways of living, speaking, and consuming. The study draws on the Cultural Imperialism Theory on how the cultures of the media dominating countries impose their cultures to the rest and the Social Identity Theory on how cultural exposure affects the youths of the region. Data obtained suggests that there is perceived orientation of local culture by western content as more than 50% of the respondents reported changes in lifestyles, language and consumer behavior in line with western influences. Chi-square statistic was obtained and compared to the critical value of the 0.05 level of significance, the obtained value ($X2 = 6.39$) was lower than the critical value (9.49), indicating no significant association between specific social media platform type and adoption of Western lifestyle choices was found. Here, 64% of participants agree that social media brings influence on traditional Pakistani culture, while 70% are worried about the aspect of traditional cultural values. Regarding relationship of type of product (Western products verses country-made products) in relation to the extent of attention the product attracts in social media. The Chi-square value calculated (= 0.74) was significantly lower than the critical value (= 7.81) at the level of 0.05 indicating the differences were very minimal and not significant. Moreover, 80% of respondent of this research deem that gradual exposure of youths through social media results in diminution of indigenous culture respectively in the long run. However, there is a longing to preserve cultural identity as 85% of the respondents were of the view that cultural identity is important especially when the developing world is working hard to go digital. This is a resilience demonstrated by the local youth in their efforts to blend the western mode, with the local culture. Therefore, the paper argues for the adoption of policies that raise media literacy and support cultural identity programs. These measures are vital for the young generation of Pakistan to have their exposure to global culture, along with living the local cultural values, which in turn helps the cause of genuine cultural interchange.

Keywords: Culture, Social Media, Western Influence, Cultural Imperialism, Social Identity- Theory, Youth, Cultural Identity, Traditional Values, Consumer Behavior, Language.

Introduction

Imperialism according to the meaning of the word is where a powerful nation mobilizes its military to conquer a powerless nation, as the Great Britain did to the several world nations when they conquered them. Nowadays imperialism is not the same as having a powerful country seizing another country's military and now the faces of imperialism has also dwindled down to the fields like social media forums wherein it wields considerable influence to control a society. This change in how people live and how they claim to accept the culture of the leaders is cultural imperialism by these developed nations. When a powerful civilization impacts other cultures in a society this is known as cultural imperialism. Therefore, in the line of developing countries of today such as the Pakistan the concept of cultural imperialism is expressed as strong western culture affecting norms, values, and personal identities of these societies. Culture, indeed, has been dominated by other imperialist cultures through marketing products in places where the cultures are made subordinate for politics and other economic reasons.

Thus, people are made to 'want' different kinds of material solutions and in so doing, they are socially conditioned to escape solidarity to be replaced by the hegemony of popular knowledge. Specifically, social media has political impact, when it isolates people from the society, deprives them of their class identity and disrupts individual connections (Petras, 2014). Information shared on social media transforms people's character and assist them in conforming to external peripherals. Over 80% of the social media users are those who belong to a country other than the US and Canada, it therefore portrays that it is used widely. Most social sites such as Facebook, Tikkok, blogging, YouTube, Skype, Wikipedia and twitter provide a method of changing cultures so as to enable people come together and share pictures and movies which comprise of sociocultural practices.

Through social media, people with different cultures, can interact and do things together, but more domination is from developed over developing countries (Dijck, 2010). When cultures meet national borders, virtual cultures are developed. These online communities comprise people who are much alike, but they are more supporting of the dominant foreign culture than the current cultures since these depict higher values to appease societies that are being the bearing, such as the third world societies. They are also called pseudo communities, and since intimate relationships over social media provide both quid and quo without respect to time and space, these may well produce ambiguous and developed hybrid roles.

Social networking is typically to propagate the main cultural regimes while excluding individualisms. Particularly on social media, which is not common in other venues, people from different cultures can sometimes speak directly to each other as well as collaborate on a project.

This forms a new kind of solidarity where the people of the entire world can gain opportunities for realizing how the other parties feel about what they do and vice versa. This not only results in assimilation or integration of cultures, but it also provides an environment for two different cultures, first, to meet and, second, to build likeness. In the contemporary global digital environment, social media occupies a critically important place as a factor defining cultures, particularly in non-Western societies where western influences are already becoming ever more visible. Appearing cultural crosscurrents, resonance of Western culture in Pakistan is quite significant via social media, resulting in a culture of imported ideals and values, consumption patterns and lifestyle. This has brought to the fore, a several important

questions concerning cultural conservation, especially in societies that have embedded indigenous cultures down their throats.

Kohat Division in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), Pakistan with different cultural traits and social background is one of the fascinating locations to analyze the effects of western contents on local cultures. Kohat has to struggle to combine modernization factors along with having to preserve its cultural essence. This paper analyzes the function of social media in disseminating Western culture in Kohat division that compasses Karak, Hangu and Kohat districts. The district Kurram and Orakzai which also forms part of Kohat division, is, however, currently excluded from the orbit of the study due to accessibility issues out of law-and-order situation. According to the speculations presented by Tomlinson (1991), cultural imperialism deals with the ability of one culture to overlay another, often through the physical means of mass communication. When used to interpret social media activity, the concept postulates that global popular culture in its Western garb may spread through social media and effect local cultures, beliefs, and practices, which may further erode the authority of indigenous communities. This study noted that the youth in Kohat division are examples of such impacts including the language used, dressing code, trends in buying and utilizing products and the manner in which they live their lives are seen to have been influenced by western/settle culture though preceded by believing culture. This influence though widely regarded as an aspect of globalization by some people has others questioning whether traditional family and community values are being replaced by westernized culture.

The study sprawl over the domain with the main question to probe: How does social media promote Western culture, and is it causing local cultures to be pushed aside? This promotion is making or heading towards condemning local culture to the background. Data collected through self-administered survey questionnaire from the social media users of the region specifically in order to understand the ways and to the extent that the western culture is being actively promoted and how it can influence the local culture. The primary objectives of the study therefore are: This research seeks to give an essential insight on how social media could be changing the ways people live in Kohat division, in aspects such as language, dressing code, and other social interactions including the youth population.

The research is positioned within the Cultural Imperialism Theory and Social Identity Theory. Cultural imperialism theory opines that dominant cultures by virtue of force, dominate other cultures and change or erode them through the media (Schiller, 1976). On that front, Social Identity Theory looks into the impact that western exposure has on identity creation among young Pakistanis. This concept is critical to explain how much young users of social media are likely to be affected by the western mode of culture and thus change their social-cultural orientation. By using these theories, the study evaluates whether social media leads to a dual social personality amongst youth in the region in a process of combining Western and local culture.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the current role of social media is to enhance global interaction while energizing cultural modernity as well. Many Pakistan youth to social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and twitter wherein they get to eat, drink, or hear about the western modes of pattern and this at some time may lead to change in culture. However, as a tool of interaction and the reception of the new point of view, social media also has its difficulties for the areas, such as Kohat, which have always evolved in accordance with the policy of cultural independence and development. For people of Kohat division it rises questions how to assimilate part of the aspects of global culture without compromising the inherent lessons of the local culture.

This work adds to the discussion on what the global media is doing to local cultures their attempt to be authentic as the societies of Pakistan study. It is only through knowing how Western culture flows through social media and their impact on the cultural self in the context of Kohat division that this research could offer enlightening understandings of the issues on cultural maintenance in the contemporary and emerging digitally inclined society. Here considerations can help explain relatively recent attempts to identify potential risks as a result of the rampant Westernization and to define strategies that may assist in the protection of indigenous cultures and self-identities.

Literature Review

With the rise of social media cultural exchange has become totally revolutionized, facilitating unprecedented forms of interaction over cross cultural boundaries. This transformation has allowed reforms carried out from dominant Western societies with values, norms and ideologies to affect local practices in the non-Western areas. This trend is known in the world of scholarship as cultural imperialism, in which the cultural values and norms of powerful nations have a tendency of spreading to less powerful regions and has a potential of influencing hugely the identities and values in the local context (Schiller, 1976; Tomlinson, 1991).

Social media however, is the one effect of cultural imperialism; the spaces of social media are also a space for cultural hybridization, they are a space where users merge global inventions with local traditions (Appadurai, 1996). This literature review examines both of these dual aspects of social media as a mechanism of cultural imperialism and a site for cultural resilience and hybridization, with an emphasis on youth and local culture.

Cultural Imperialism and Western Influence

Cultural imperialism in history was done by putting Western culture on other nations who were not so dominant through direct colonialism or that of political power. As Schiller (1976) pointed out, cultural imperialism represents a Western orientated worldview that dominant societies utilize to establish the ideologies and practices of other regions.

In terms of social media, it is done by dissemination of Popular culture, fashion, etc from the West with much subtlety. According to Dijck (2010), social media platforms help expedite this process by posting Western ideals as aspirational, that then motivates users in developing countries to increasingly adopt these norms only too willingly.

Social media has been found to be an especially successful means for promoting Western consumer culture by depicting foreign lifestyles as desirable (Peters, Winschiers, & Mencke, 2015). Nye (2004) describes this phenomenon as soft power or a non-coercive means of influence. Social media influencers act as a window to the world, pushing everything from the latest fashion and technology to a cool lifestyle out in the open. Young people in countries like Pakistan's Kohat Division increasingly turn to these trends (Peters et al., 2015) because they represent modernity and progressiveness.

Social Media's Role in Cultural Hybridization

Whereas other scholars argue that through social media, cultural hybridization is done. The blending of local and global cultural elements to create identities, which are traditional Appadurai (1996). In the boost of social media, users can mix Western influences added with their own cultural traditions. For example, on platforms such as Instagram and TikTok, many young people in non-Western societies show a mix of old and new in terms of fashion, language and lifestyle.

For example, in Pakistan (Kohat Division) youth incorporate global developments such as Western fashion trends into traditional wear and develop a new style that respects its culture

but retains global trends (Peters et al., 2015). Just as young people in the Middle East use social media to discuss local social issues, integrating some of the concepts of Western social discourse available on social rights and freedom of expression (Papaioannou & Olivos, 2013). The hybridization maintains cultural authenticity of the users in contact with the global community, seemingly providing for a type of cultural resilience, as opposed to wholesale cultural adoption.

Impacts on Youth and Local Culture

Non-West indigenous peoples constitute the worst hit youth on the negative effects of social media in that they are very adaptive and thirsty to know how the world is adapting to the global trends. Young people in cyber space are exposed to different ways of life, languages, and cultures, and that which appears to be progressive, language inclusive, and more attractive than traditional practices (Petras, 2014). Such exposure can make a huge mark on cultural values young people choose to take, the way they talk, what they wear, what products they buy and the part of life they have specially seen as normal.

A change which can be seen prominently is that in language use. In Pakistan as well as other non-Western countries, Young social media users increasingly use English slang and expressions popularized by Western influencers in their daily conversations (Shao 2018). It is also replete with western influence, like the fashion, which young people turn to western brands and fashions, some of them going to the extreme of completely washing off the traditional clothing. This is not a phenomenon limited to fashion, though greater lifestyle change is seen, as in some cases Western consumerism and lifestyle choices become aspirational (Peters et al., 2015).

In addition, social media can bring unnecessary tension in the family, as well as among the people in our country, as our old generations perceive this progress as a threat to our old values. For example, in the Kohat Division, older family members may have the problem of comprehending the Western fashion and the consumer habits allure, which can bring creating gaps within the family related to generations (Peters et al., 2015).

The discontinuity of these indicators reveals the impact of social media on forming a generational divide that challenges the sustainability of the tradition of culture being approached by the global generation of youth.

Social Media as a Platform for Cultural Expression and Exchange

Aside from propelling the spread of cultural values that are popular in the West, social networks help people introduce their individuality to the world. Facebook and Instagram allow their customers to show off their cultural background through images, videos, and narratives and thus promote intercultural communication (Dijck, 2010). Warlaumont (2010) puts emphasis that social media promotes "virtual communities," in which people with different cultures can interact in meaningful ways without regard for geography.

All these interactions can help in promotion of understanding between the two cultures as different users get to work and communicate with people from different cultures. Papaioannou and Olivos (2013) noted that, based on features of analysis by social media users from the Middle East, the audience in the Facebook predominantly discusses specific regional issues, and also occasionally communicates with users from Western countries. Swaps of this nature help the visitors gain understanding of cultural beliefs and practices of the other in order to develop cultural unity other than being a breeding ground for formation of tight cultural prejudices.

Psychological and Social Needs Met by Social Media

Thus, different social networks satisfy the need of people and are especially popular among young individuals in terms of social recognition and identity. According to Lester (2013), social media address needs to belong, self-esteem, and self-actualization according to a Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Some examples of getting these needs met are Facebook, where we can form and join communities, share and get input from others by getting likes and comments.

This feeling of attachment makes users embrace the culture of the groups they join, and such groups emanate from the western countries. It is thus seen that in non-Western society's social media gives the young audience an identity even though this identity is to some extent postmodern Western. According to Chen and Starosta (2005) cultural reliance can make modifications to users' self-image and action, to conform to socially acceptable norms that reflect the dominant cultures.

Cultural Imperialism and Economic Influence

Another critical dimension of cultural imperialism through social media is the economic advantage that Western countries have in disseminating their products and ideologies. Western brands, with significant advertising budgets and digital marketing expertise, can promote their products effectively across social media platforms, creating a global demand for Western goods and lifestyles (Dijck, 2010). In developing countries, where local economies may not compete with Western marketing power, this leads to an influx of Western products and a growing preference for these brands among local consumers.

Facebook, specifically, is a marketplace where western brands can easily access the audience in third world countries. Kroes (1999) observed that this economic benefit allows the Western societies to control the cultural markets where even the buying behavior of the users is determined through foreign advertisement. Such a commercial type of cultural imperialism does not only alter the local consumer culture, but it also affects cultural identity because an increasing number of people relate western brands with quality and status.

The existing body of work on the topic of social media and cultural influence illustrates a duality, both in terms of encouraging culture imperialism through social media and promoting cultural hybridization and resiliency. It affects youth quite effectively in non-Western areas, like the Kohat Division of Pakistan and even in the Middle East, where they are benefiting Western values and at times integrating them with the local ideals of the society. The cultural exchange through social media implies the possibility of cultural appreciation and comprehension, yet, it poses the issue of cultural authenticity and cultural preservation. With the ever-growing spread of social media in the world, future studies need to delve into the implications of such cultural interactions in the long term. Will the hybridizing of culture enhance the localization of identities in the globalized world, or will it result in a homogenized culture, which is dominated by the Western ideals? This dynamic is important in the understanding of policy makers, educators and community leaders who aim at enjoying the positive impact of cultural exchange and at the same time desire to retain cultural heritage.

Research Methodology

The method used in this research study is a quantitative survey research design, which allows the systematic analysis of the effect of social media on cultural values and identity in the region in relation to adopted western culture. Quantitative approach helps in accomplishing objective outcome and further enable the measurement on statistical grounds, which can reveal the overall infiltration levels and intensity of Western cultural import in the regional social media users. This design is appropriate to use in order to establish an attitude, behavior

and perception as stated by the respondents and to obtain relation between social media exposure and cultural attributes.

Theoretical Framework

This study investigates the impact of social networks in the dissemination of Western cultural artifacts and the effect on youth identities in the Kohat Division of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa-Pakistan. There are two theoretical frameworks used in this work: Cultural Imperialism Theory and Social Identity Theory, which can create a critical analysis of the change in cultural values with media and the process of identity management in non-Western societies.

Cultural Imperialism Theory

Following Schiller (1976) Cultural Imperialism Theory argues that dominant states employ media to spread their culture thereby marginalizing and in most cases domination cultures of less dominant societies. Schiller stated that through media, the values, norms and life patter of the dominant countries are put across to less dominant countries in a way that the latter has little or no option but to accept. This causes a creation of a cultural disconnection because foreign content replaces the local culture and its norms (Schiller, 1976).

Thus, in the perspective of current globalization of media social networks – mainly created and controlled by Western companies – Western cultural values enter non-Western (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Through Internet social networking sites, the Kohat Division social media users come across constantly with Western fashion, languages, behaviors and ideologies which in a way or often transform their views, goals and even practices.

Since youth are more active on social media the changes are more likely to affect them as they grow socially through various stages in life. As such, Schiller's idea of cultural imperialism provides a relevant framework to analyses how the varieties of Western practices are assimilated into the local setting, without even realizing the impracticability of cultural implement, through the application of digital media platforms.

Social Identity Theory

The second perspective framework to consider is Social Identity Theory advanced by Tajfel and Turner in the year 1979. In the light of the afore mentioned cultural exposure arise from social media platform, Social Identity Theory offers complementary framework toward explaining individual and collective identities of people. In this theory people classify themselves and others in different social groups so that they can have a positive identity and concept (Tajfel and Turner 1979).

Though, in the context of employing social media, the youths of Pakistan with exposure to the Western culture may form a 'mimic-paradigm' identity or 'hybrid identity' where they remain a part of two different world and their personalities suit different environments and situations. They refer to it as blending or "hybridization" and can be observed through youth who act in a western manner on the Internet, but continue to exhibit tradition manners in other aspects of life (Slevin 2000). For instance, they may deal with fashion introduced by the West as well as the language through, for instance, Instagram or TikTok reflecting the aspect of attainment linked to global culture. However, they might follow the trends and norms of their country or community while being online, so they possess a sophisticated dual self-identity, a global component and local culture.

Population and Sample

Target population; youths in Kohat division aged between 18 and 30 years of age are the most frequent users of social networking sites, thus are more likely to be affected by social change through contents imported from the western countries. Exactly 300 respondents were administered self-developed questionnaires, 100 respondents from each district including

Kohat, Karak and Hangu districts, with the help of a simple random sampling technique to enable fairness between those living in Kohat division Khyber Pakhtunkhwa areas. It is favorable for generating statistical validity and generalizability of the results in the context of population in the region.

Data Collection

The study data gathered by questionnaire and the questions were presented in 5-point Likert scale survey with 12 questions focusing on Western cultural influence in respondents' level of agreement or their practice of identified activities. All the responses remain anonymous to allow participants to be as genuine as possible and the participants were given information on the study and its ethical implications.

Data Analysis

The quantitative collected data was analyzed by means of descriptive statistics. Frequency distribution and measures of central tendency like Mean, Median and Mode were determined to elicit the general responses of the concerned population of the study.

Ethical Considerations

Verbal consent was initially sought from the participants to participate in the survey and told that filling the survey is voluntary and they can pull out at any time they want. The information collected only used for analysis and no individual identified.

Findings

The survey collected quantitative data on the influence of social media on cultural values among the population of Kohat Division, KPK, Pakistan. The results reflect significant trends regarding the adoption of Western cultural practices, the perceived influence of Western media, and concerns about cultural identity.

1. **Promotion of Western Cultural Values**

When asked about as to whether social media promotes Western cultural values in Pakistan, 39% strongly agreed, while 36% agreed, followed by 13, 7 and 5 percent respectively replied to the neutral, disagree and strongly disagree categories that social media promotes Western cultural values in Pakistan, indicating a strong perceived influence of Western content on local cultural perceptions.

2. **Adoption of Western Lifestyles due to social media**

To a question as to how frequently they find Adopting Western lifestyle choices (language, fashion, shopping etc.) due to social media contents, 23% replied as very frequently that social media has led to adopting Western lifestyle choices, while 32% frequently, while the rest of 19% replied as sometimes, 15% rarely and 11% never. This suggests a moderate trend toward Western lifestyle adoption among social media users.

3. **Specifying the social media effects**

In comparison to social media forums regarding influence in propelling to adopt Western lifestyle choices, Chi-square statistic was obtained and compared to the critical value of the 0.05 level of significance, the obtained value ($X^2 = 6.39$) was lower than the critical value (9.49), implying that there was no significant difference in the extent to which users of various platforms embraced western lifestyles.

Finding shows that 19% replied that it was Facebook and TikTok forums that bears very frequent effects while 13% mentioned YouTube and Twitter. 23% mentioned Facebook and Tik Tok the category of 'frequently' while 17% stated it to be You Tube and Twitter. 11% falls in sometimes category for Facebook and Tik Tok while 6% for You Tube and Twitter. 4% as rarely category for Facebook and Tik Tok while 3% for You Tube and Twitter. 1% comes as never category for Facebook and Tik Tok whereas 3% for You Tube and Twitter.

4. Impact on Traditional Pakistani Cultural Values

The findings shows that 43% deemed it as very high influence, while 21% as high influence, 17% moderate influence and the rest of respondents as 13% and 6% respectively low and no influence, believing that social media negatively influences traditional cultural values.

5. Effect on Cultural Identity

A majority of 47% strongly agreed, while 27% agreed, 12% remained neutral and the rest of 9% and 5% respectively disagreed and strongly disagreed that social media affects the cultural identity of young Pakistanis. This is showing the perceived role of social media in defining cultural identity and may result in cultural disorientation.

6. Western Content Viewed as Cultural Control.

Respondents of 35% and 31% responded very high and high respectively, with the remaining 21% responding moderate, 8% low and 5% none as Western media content was the form of cultural control. This is an indication of an attitudes held by most people in the West, that Western material is instrumental in advancing western values at the expense of the local culture.

7. Language Preferences: There has been an effect on how language is influenced.

It is believed that exposure to Western culture on social media has an effect on language preferences of young people with 47% reporting it to have high extents and 32% of such extent being of very high degree. And 11, 6 and 4 percent respectively was left as moderate, low and to no extent. This shift indicates a possible linguistic change due to social media exposure.

6. Preference for Western Consumer Products

More than half 53% of respondents strongly agreed observing that social media encourages a preference for Western consumer products, while 26% agreed, 10% neutral, only 6% and 5% in both categories of disagree and strongly disagree believed it has no influence. This finding suggests a tangible economic impact of cultural influence on consumer choices.

7. Perceived Superiority of Western Culture

A notable 36% replied as very often, 31% often, while 16% sometimes and 5% rarely and 12% as never respectively, feeling that social media portrays Western culture as superior. This perception may contribute to diminishing local cultural pride among social media users.

8. Attraction for Western Consumer Products

In comparison to the country made consumer products and Western consumer products which catch their attention more on social media forums. The frequencies of the level of attention between Western and country-made products exhibited minor variations, the Chi-square value calculated (= 0.74) was significantly lower than the critical value (= 7.81) at the level of 0.05. This means that the differences that were observed were very minimal and not significant.

In comparison 15% and 11% replied as very often for both Western and the country made consumer products respectively. While 19% and 15% replied as often for Western and the country made consumer products respectively. 13% and 12% as sometimes respectively and 9% and 6% replied as rarely, respectively for both the categories in comparison.

9. Concern for Cultural Identity in the Future

When asked about cultural identity concerns, 51%, 31% replied as very likely and likely while 7% neutral, and 4% unlikely and 7% very unlikely that continuous exposure to Western culture through social media could weaken Pakistan's cultural identity over time. The high level of concern signals a collective awareness of the potential erosion of cultural values.

10. Importance of Maintaining Cultural Identity

Despite these influences, 56% replied as extremely important, 27% as very important and the rest 13%, 2% and 2% as moderately important, and slightly important and not important while emphasized the importance of maintaining cultural identity in a connected world.

Discussion

The data collected through this research indicates that there is a complex interplay between the increasing prevalence of social media use and the notion of cultural value. The data shows that the use of social media helps to transfer the value system of Western culture to people located in Kohat Division. The data shows that this transfer is perceived as threatening to the traditional values of Pakistan by many of the respondents. The themes derived from the analysis of the interviews:

1. Cultural Shifts and Identity Concerns

All of the respondents were concerned about the impact that the use of social media has on cultural identity, especially for youth. The data indicates that, in the process of accessing social media, younger individuals will potentially adopt the cultural beliefs and ideologies of Western culture over the local beliefs and traditions that they were raised with. This raises many questions regarding the potential effect that this cultural shift will have on the long-term viability and continuity of Pakistani culture. The strong correlation found between the use of social media and the use of language supports this assertion that the exposure to the Western cultural influence through social media will likely result in a change in the way that young Pakistanis communicate.

2. Economic and Consumer Preferences

A large percentage of the respondents surveyed noted that there has been a change in the type of products that they purchase due to the influence of social media. Many of the respondents have seen that, because of their use of social media, they have developed an interest in purchasing products that come from Western countries. This change is not limited to just a change in lifestyle but is also resulting in significant changes in the way that individuals make purchasing decisions. As social media continues to present images of Western cultures as being desirable and aspirational, it can also lead to purchasing habits that may have significant implications for local economies.

3. Perceived Cultural Superiority and Cultural Erosion

A perception of superiority over Western cultures could increase a diminishing pride that the young Pakistani generation feels because of the strong presence of Western Culture on social media, especially in light of the opinions of the majority of people surveyed. As a result, many of these individuals experience conflicts related to their cultural identities due to this perceived superiority of Western Culture and the access through the portal of social media.

4. Resistance and Cultural Resilience

Despite the strong influence of social media, respondents also expressed a commitment to cultural preservation, who stressed the importance of maintaining cultural identity. This suggests a level of resilience where individuals recognize the impact of globalization but are inclined to preserve their heritage.

5. Implications for Policy and Education

Based on the survey, policymakers need to develop targeted cultural policies and educational initiatives that create a framework that embraces local cultural values and promotes media literacy. Providing young people with the necessary critical thinking skills to analyze the media content that they consume will enable policymakers to create a balanced approach where people have access to information about and exposure to global media culture but remain

firmly connected to their local cultural traditions. The survey results reveal that while social media can facilitate communication between different cultures, it also creates obstacles that hinder the preservation of an individual's local cultural identity. Therefore, a key finding of this survey is that there needs to be an approach that encourages individuals to be open to other cultures while having the self-esteem and pride in their cultural heritage to not feel pressured to abandon their traditions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the research identifies social media as a powerful means of facilitating the cross-national movement of individuals between two or more cultures and providing opportunities for individuals to connect with each other. However, social media also provides many challenges to the preservation of culture for many communities, including communities within Kohat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Additionally, the research identifies social media as an instrumental force in promoting culture Imperialism by the West.

The research claims that young Pakistanis are heavily influenced by the cultural products of the West, and therefore, the movement toward Westernism will contribute to replacing traditional norms with modern western behaviors and values. Western domination of cultural products has resulted in a culture of control of the cultural products of the West in non-western communities via the social media platforms of Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. In turn, the participants in the research also indicated their desire to continue to maintain their cultural heritage of Pakistan and retain their traditional place within their communities as individuals of cultural authenticity.

Young Pakistanis have the opportunity to simultaneously experience foreign media while still being proud of their own culture. This duality between the adoption and promotion of foreign cultures creates a unique tension between globalization (due to social media) and the desire to retain and protect indigenous (local) values. The authors write that both of these issues are ultimately educational and social/political agendas, and that a comprehensive media literacy/culture learning approach will give the youth of Pakistan the necessary tools to differentiate between the positive aspects of cross-cultural exchange and those which lead to the erosion of their identity. Using a combination of media literacy and cultural promotion, policymakers should encourage the youth of Pakistan to enjoy and explore the vast diversity of global cultures while still retaining their heritage and identity. By following this balanced strategy, the youth of Pakistan can obtain the power to participate fully in a globalized, digital world without sacrificing their cultural identity.

This study come to a conclusion that social media is one of the major source of promoting cross cultural social interaction and valuably serve as a medium operating cultural imperialism as well as cultural paranoia in the era of digitalization. Taking into broader perspective, the research also provides a platform for a future discussion questioning the ways and means of how to sustain and maintain effectively representation of local culture in a globalized perspective.

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