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THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE PREVAILING CULTURE IN
SOCIETY: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, the researchers analyze and explain the potential effects of social media on social culture. Therefore, the following main research question must be answered: How does social media affect an individual and society? The descriptive-analytical method was used as being the most suitable for such studies. The study tool was represented by a set of literature directly related to the subject of the study. The researchers will highlight the conditions of social media use in light of the prevailing culture. The examination is done at the global and individual levels; after that, the social media effects on the above two levels will be combined in one image. From the main results of this study, we can mention this: Social media has an effect on the emotions of individuals and the human brain and, consequently, on the quality of life, as emotions play a critical role in human communication, whereas social media has a significant benefit in communicating and transferring information. Whereas social media has a significant advantage in delivering and transferring data, and with that interest impacting the prevailing culture in society, it has an impact on customs and traditions. Culture remains the historical determinant of societies and individuals and is represented in their various behaviors, but the literature has shown that individuals can change traditional cultural patterns that do not fit with the requirements of the current era on the one hand, and on the other hand, they can cause the backwardness of society and the individual. The study recommends that more research be done in this aspect and that countries should focus

on developing social policies in proportion to the cultural change that the world is witnessing and that they should open up to other cultures in all social areas.

Introduction

Social media contains many web-based programs and user-generated content that allows people to communicate and collaborate through mobile, computer, and other communication technologies. Social media is a social phenomenon associated with many tools, practices, and ideologies for communication and cooperation, and it allows individuals and groups to communicate across the boundaries of space and time. Many scholars have studied social media on a range of topics and have studied the content of building, identity, nature of relationships, and their relation to community development, political activity, fake information, and cybercrime. Therefore, some societies have placed restrictions on social media applications and worked to monitor them as closely as they do in China (Todd, 2019). Social media provides many services on the web so that an individual can create a public or semi-public profile within a restricted system (Purwarianti et al., 2014), he can also identify the list of other users who share the connection, and be able to view the list of their contacts and those made by others within the system (Boyd & Ellison), it is considered as the great force that accelerates the development of the globalization society in its digital and interactive nature, both text and visual, and these sites have contributed to a complex interaction between individuals and society, so many motivations drive a person to use social media such as media, personal identity, interaction and entertainment (Dull, 2015; Ahmad & Ahmad, 2018). Finally, social media can empower individuals and sub-groups to contribute to and bring about change through teamwork. However, social media can contribute to cultural change that destroys the prevailing culture in society.

The concept of culture in literature is presented in various forms, as Tylor (1871) defines it as “that whole compound-complex, which includes information, beliefs, art, ethics, custom, traditions, customs and all other capabilities that a person can acquire as a member of society” (Alamr, 2004; Ahmad & Ahmad, 2019). It is that complex that includes the habits that a person acquires as a member of society. (Shaheen, 2006). “Culture is the total sum of that whole set of concepts, uses, organizations, skills, and tools in which humankind deals with the physical, biological and human environment to satisfy its needs” (Ghamri, 1989).

The importance of the study

The importance of the study lies in the following:

- Learn about the effects of social media on changing the prevailing culture?
- Learn about the impact of social media on an individual's personality?

- Learn about the impact of communication on the prevailing social value system in society?
- Learn how to deal with other cultures through social media?

Questions of the Study

The study tries to answer the following questions:

1. Does social media affect changing the prevailing culture?
2. What are the effects of social media on an individual's personality?
3. What is the impact of the media on the prevailing social values system in society?
4. How do we deal with other cultures through social media?

The importance of culture to society and the individual

Culture includes aspects of collective expectations that the individual learns through the process of social adaptation where the individual enters into a full symbolic interaction with the group, learns the pattern of behavior that we call "culture" and the individual acquires the culture of the society in which he is raised, which becomes through his stages of growth an integral part of his personality, after being at birth outside him. Culture can be passed on from one generation to another, and in this sense, it is considered to be cumulative, and the individual can grow on the outcome of previous generations, as he does not need to start again in every situation. We also find many aspects of culture that have accumulated in different ways, and in a language that is compatible with a different field at the same time, and the most reliable example of this is technology (Amedie, 2015; Ahmad & Sahar, 2019). Culture, in general, satisfies human desires, and these needs may be biological, such as hunger, thirst, and the like, or socio-cultural issues such as those that appear through social interaction. Social habits of culture often satisfy collective needs, and failure to do so means the complete disappearance of a particular cultural pattern, and culture takes its place in the minds of individuals and finds no expression of itself except through it (Zhan, 2010; Ayalew, 2020). The group is responsible for the transmission of culture, and each society adopts specific cultural patterns, which it acquires through socialization, and its personality is formed in proportion to this culture (Alamr, 2004; Bhatti & Akram, 2020). The individual learns what we call "cultural harmony" to the extent that he adapts in the environment in which he has grown, and by following these expectations, the individual gets the love of these people close to him. The parts of culture tend to form "all fixed and coherent" and the culture arises from human social life, and it is an invention and discovery of man and culture that includes all aspects of social heritage, if we wiped it out of any civilized society, then we would have flirted with it with its humanity (The Arab Future, 346, 2007).

With the advancement of technology, the way individuals interact with each other began to change. The previous traditional method is no longer solely responsible for the transfer of culture and socialization, but factors and tools diversified (Daes, 2004). Social media and the Internet control individuals and their means of communication because it saved their time and effort. Modern social media, for example, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and WhatsApp have become a haven for millions of people in the way they communicate and express their opinions, and have even become the best way to work, trade, education and play. (Aguenane, 2020). This tremendous development of technology undoubtedly affected both developed and developing societies. Opening to cultures and accepting others is one of the positive values of globalization, but this is a tax that society pays itself represented in cultural change, which included the customs, values, and norms of communities, and foreign cultures entered into societies that led to the disappearance of the original cultural system that generations have preserved for many years (Lee, 2017).

In spite of this, social media has affected people's behavior and the ways in which they interact with others, where the individual can hide some personal traits from others and assume roles that do not fit his real personality. Therefore, social media is now one of the institutions of adequate socialization in individuals, affecting them and the system of social values that individuals have acquired from the family, school, and neighborhood. Because of this, the direct interaction between the individuals decreased, and the group became a space where there are no social barriers among its members as in the real society, because they are sometimes unable to interact directly with others and interact with them for a more extended time, and they have psychological and neurological problems (Chiu & Fu, 2007).

The Role of Culture in Character Formation

It can be said that biological determinants do not alone determine the personality style, just as the psychological characteristics do not constitute the personality alone. Still, the personality is formed by the interaction of both biological inheritances and mental capabilities with the environment in which the individual lives (Al-Issawi, 1982). The effect of this diversity appears on the personality of the individual and continues throughout his life. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to these patterns and to know their importance for the individual and that this is through his acquisition of good social values (Saati, 1983). Culture also affects the moods of individuals in terms of how they express it, and in identifying and defining the conditions and situations that raise it, and in its direction, degree, extent, and value; as it plays a forced and compulsory role in stereotyping relationships. (Al-Zoubi, 1994). We can clearly see the close relationship between culture and the personality of the individual, as he is born within a unique culture that constitutes his personality and forms the basic framework and environment in which this personality grows, affecting his ideas, beliefs, information, skills, experience and motivations, and ways of expressing his emotions and desires (Saati, 1983).

Conclusions

Throughout this paper, the effects of social media on culture and its role in determining the behavior of individuals were analyzed through the theoretical framework and previous literature. By reference to the goals set from the beginning, we sought to identify the patterns of social media and their role in the transfer of culture, that culture known to the societies in general and Arab society in particular. It turns out that social media in its various forms plays a pivotal role in changing societies and individuals, as it contributes to providing them with good cultural content. However, at the same time, it contributes to teaching them cultures that may distort the prevailing system of social values, and we have found that culture often overcomes economic factors in the progress of society and as Hegel referred to and called it the engine of history. Societies today cannot advance and keep pace with the social change that occurs by merely possessing useful resources such as oil and industries. Still, societies must open up to others and benefit from their experiences, and this is by establishing a democratic cultural system based on the values of social solidarity, achievement, love of good for others and welcoming to others, They are, in their entirety, catalytic values for development by creating a secure social environment suitable for building and investment, with culture, societies rise, or fail, and others disappear. Globalization through the World Trade Organization and the GATT has created an appropriate opportunity for all societies to either be at the forefront or fall behind the rest, as the primary purpose of development is the prosperity of people and the realization of a social welfare society, a sustainable policy in any country depends primarily on the cultural component of that country. This is achieved through proper cultural upbringing, and we instill in them the values of solidarity, love, love of work, respect for, and acceptance of others.

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