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Cultural Identities in Global World

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Abstract

Globalization has significantly impacted cultural identity by homogenizing diverse cultural expressions into a single Global culture, particularly in a popular culture dominated by Western forms. This has marginalized local cultures, eroded traditional cultural expressions, and commodified culture. The basic proposition of globalization being associated with less national and more transnational identities. The effects of national images on national identities and repercussions must be discussed in the context of globalization. Does globalization encourage cultural homogenization, polarization or hybridization? In a global context, the nature of the identity of a nation and/or people invariably defines its space. Identity crises refer to uncompromising cultural and political conflicts among polarized groups, which struggle with each other over the definition of a national identity. Identities come in constant tension with the context in which the existing political forms that are in crisis and the restructuring processes through new projects are struggling to set up a new society. This paper will explore the impact of globalization on cultural identities and examine how it has affected different regions of the world. It argues that we require awareness of the dreadful consequences of cultural globalization.

Keywords: Identity, Globalization, Culture, Dilemma, Conflicts, Challenges.

Introduction

Conceptual Framework

Cultural issues cover a broad range of concerns including race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender, and disability. Culture is a term that we use to refer to beliefs and customs employed by a particular group. Cultural identity issues have a relationship to mental health both in terms of different attitudes to wellbeing, self, personality and family, as well as issues surrounding struggles with identity and feelings of belonging. Meeting the expectations of two different cultures can put pressure on the individual. Brown states “culture is a way of life. It is the context within which we exist, think, feel and relate to others. It is the glue that binds a group

of people together" (As cited in Ennaji, Moha, 2005). , before the era of globalization, there existed local, autonomous, distinct and well-defined, robust and culturally sustaining connections between geographical place and cultural experience. These connections constituted one's – and one's community's – 'cultural identity'. Into this world of manifold, discrete, but to various degrees vulnerable, cultural identities there suddenly burst (apparently around the middle of the 1980s) the corrosive power of globalization. This, then, is the story that implicates globalization in the destruction of cultural identity, and in the threat to that particular subset of cultural identity that we call 'national identity'. But another, quite contradictory, story can be told: that globalization, far from destroying it, has been perhaps the most significant force in creating and proliferating cultural identity.

A culture is the learned and shared behaviour patterns characteristics of a group of people. Your culture is learned from relatives and other members of your community as well as from various material forms such as books and television programs. You are not born with culture but with the ability to acquire it by such means as observation, imitation, and trial and error. (Oswalt, 1986: 25)

Culture can also be observed as a vital part of one's knowledge of the world. Thus, culture may be defined as a multifaceted whole. The major components of culture include language, norms, traditions, customs, the system of beliefs, values, artefacts, knowledge and other habits developed by people. Identity has been a continuous problem for sociolinguistic theory. Though, the term has changed from identity as a problem to the kind of problem that identity is considered. As Saadawi states: "Identity is a discourse, and it is essential to know who is using it, who decides, who labels me, what all this interest in "cultural identity" means, where does it lead Heinz Lichtenstein declares identity is a human need. According to him, "loss of identity is a specifically human danger, and maintenance of identity a specifically human necessity" (78). Woodward has added to the idea of identity that "identities in the contemporary world derive from a multiplicity of sources— from nationality, ethnicity, social class, community, gender [...It] gives us a location in the world and presents the link between us and the society in which we live [...] Often [it] is most clearly defined by differences, i.e., by what it is not" (Woodward, 1997.1-2).

We 'live' our gender, our sexuality, our nationality and so forth as publicly institutionalized, discursively organized belongings. This diversity of identities includes that people have several social and cultural identities, which they in certain respect combine together. Since the eighteenth century, national identity has been the most spectacularly successful modern mode of orchestrating belonging. And the fact that virtually all of the world's six billion population today either enjoy or claim a national identity is itself testament to the power of the globalization of modernity. It is clear from this that the nation and national identity are not in danger of imminent collapse. But the very dynamism and complexity of globalization is such that the

stability of this form of identification is not guaranteed indefinitely. Kaldor (1999) has aptly called the 'new wars' of the era of globalization. The key point in Kaldor's analysis of these 'globalization wars' is that they are fought around a vicious, particularistic form of 'identity politics' in which 'movements... mobilize around ethnic, racial or religious identity for the purpose of claiming state power' (1999: 76).

American-German psychologist, Erik Erikson, described identity as a "mutual relation in that it connotes both a persistent sameness within oneself (selfsameness) and a persistent sharing of some kind of essential character with others". (Erikson, 1959:109)

This more complex formulation clearly implies that cultural identity is not likely to be the easy prey of globalization. This is because identity is not in fact merely some fragile communal-psychic attachment, but a considerable dimension of institutionalized social life in modernity the complexities and tensions introduced by the multiethnic constitution of societies arising from global population movements – a chronic feature of all modern nation-states (Smith 1995; Geertz 2000) – pose obvious problems for the continued cultural 'binding' of twenty-first-century nations into coherent identity positions.

Modernity also institutionalizes and regulates cultural practices, including those by which we imagine attachment and belonging to a place or a community. The mode of such imagination it promotes is what we have come to know as 'cultural identity' – self and communal definitions based around specific, usually politically inflected, differentiations: gender, sexuality, class, religion, race and ethnicity, nationality's the claims of identity are inextricably mixed with issues of political and economic justice, there is the indication that what is being argued for is a right to an ethnic 'homeland' that is conceived as coexistent and compatible with a national identity.

Globalization has significantly impacted the world since the 1980s. The increased integration of economic, political, and cultural systems has resulted in a more interconnected world. This process has far-reaching impacts on various aspects of life, such as business, communication, and culture. In particular, globalization has transformed cultural identities in various ways, generating both negative and positive effects. This research paper seeks to explore the effects of globalization on cultural identity and how they manifest in different regions of the world. Globalization refers to the process of integrating cultures, economies, and societies on a global scale. This integration occurs through factors such as increased international trade, communication, and technological advancements. In essence, globalization generates a shared culture based on common ideals, values, and preferences. This process is transforming cultural identities worldwide as traditional ways of life, beliefs, and values confront the dominant Western culture.

Impact of Globalisation on Cultural Identity

One of the primary effects of globalization on cultural identity is the erosion of cultural uniqueness. The homogenization of cultural identities leads to the loss of traditional practices and beliefs unique to a particular group. This homogenization of cultures is mostly the result of the spread of popular culture through media channels, such as movies and music. As a result, traditional cultures are substituted by globalized and commercialized cultures, as people seek to associate with the dominant culture. The second effect of globalization on cultural identity is the formation of hybrid cultures. Hybrid cultures can result in the evolution of new cultures that draw from both traditional and modern cultural practices. Globalization has resulted in the emergence of individualistic societies. The promotion of liberal values through globalization has led to a decline in traditional values such as collectivism. Consequently, societies have become more individualistic, as values such as consumerism take center stage. Globalization can have both positive and negative impacts on cultural identity:

Positive Impact

Globalization can help local beliefs and cultural values become universal, and it can promote cultural identity by providing global significance to local knowledge. It can also increase interconnectedness among different cultures and populations, and help people form shared norms and knowledge.

Positive impacts of globalization on cultural identity include exposure and recognition of different cultures. This exposure creates a platform for cultural exchange, leading to the recognition of other cultures.

The second positive impact of globalization on cultural identity is cultural tourism. This exposes people to different forms of culture, leading to the recognition and preservation of unique cultural practices.

Negative Impact

Globalization can also homogenize diverse cultural expressions into a single global culture, particularly one dominated by Western forms. This can marginalize local cultures, erode traditional cultural expressions, and commodify culture. Globalization can also lead to identity confusion, as some people may feel at home in neither local nor global culture.

The negative impacts of globalization on cultural identity include the loss of cultural heritage and traditional values. The increased emphasis on Western culture leads to the rejection of traditional cultural practices. However, globalization threatens the survival of these practices, leading to a decline in cultural identity.

The other negative impact of globalization on cultural identity is cultural imperialism.

This occurs when a powerful culture imposes its practices on other cultures, leading to their decline. Technology, such as the internet and social media, can also contribute to the erosion of cultural identity by diffusing cultural expressions and creating a global culture.

Conclusion

Manuel Castells devoted an entire volume of his celebrated analysis of 'The Information Age' to the proposition that: 'Our world and our lives are being shaped by the conflicting trends of globalization and identity.' For Castells, the primary opposition to the power of globalization lies in 'the widespread surge of powerful expressions of collective identity that challenge globalization . . . on behalf of cultural singularity and people's control over their lives and environment' (1997: 2).

In conclusion, globalization has significant impacts on cultural identity. The homogenization of cultures leads to the loss of traditional practices and beliefs, while the formation of hybrid cultures creates new cultural practices. Globalization can result in the erosion of cultural identity and the emergence of new forms of identity. While the negative impacts of globalization include the loss of cultural heritage and cultural imperialism, the positive impact includes exposure and recognition of different cultures and cultural tourism. As such, it is essential to preserve cultural identities while embracing globalization. Cultural diversity and integration of cultures are essential for the sustainability of globalization. The implication of understanding identity as a specifically modern cultural imagination is sufficient to undermine the simple idea that globalization destroys identity. But the stronger claim that globalization actually generates identity – and, indeed, the danger that, in some circumstances, it produces too much identity – requires more elaboration. The most discussed aspect of this sort of shift – particularly within cultural studies and in post-colonial studies – is the emergence of 'hybrid' cultural identities as a consequence both of the multicultural constitution of modern nationstates and of the emergence of transnational forms of popular culture (Nederveen Pieterse 1995; Werbner and Modood 1997). The kernel of truth in the claim that national identity is threatened by globalization lies in the fact that the proliferation of identity positions may be producing challenges to the dominance of national identity.

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