

The Effect of Social Networks on National Identity of the Students

Ali Ghaemi, Alireza Khoddami*, Keramatollah Rasekh

Abstract--- *The study has aimed to investigate the effect of modern communicational technologies on national identity of the students in Islamic Azad University of Kerman. The methodology is survey and statistical population includes the students of Islamic Azad University of Kerman. The statistical sample has been calculated as 397, using Cochran formula. The findings of the study were obtained in two sections of descriptive statistics (frequency distribution, graph, mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics using t-test for independent groups, correlation coefficient and regression coefficient in significance level of $P < 0.05$. The findings of this study indicate that national identity of the students based on gender and marital status are not significantly different at the level of 5% while participants' job, house, residence place and education level show significant difference at the same level. Moreover, there is a significant and positive relationship between income and national identity. The rate and type of using modern media have also significant and positive relationship with the students' national identity.*

Keywords--- *Communicational Modern Media, Identity, National Identity, Student, Kerman.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Today, many countries have faced the issue of national identity [1]. The identity, which is based on our encounter with others, can be a constructive power or be converted to a destructive power. In clearer terms, the sense of national identity can be a power for cultural promotion and cooperation if it is sensible and mild. Yet, if it gets stuck in the realm of ethnic, national and racial prejudices or denies and humiliates its cultural heritage at the excuse of challenging with ethnic prejudices, it will be a destructive power [2].

Multiplicity in values, chaos in boundaries and the distinguishing feature of individuals and communities lead to the lack of clear identity of people and societies. People and societies, not committed to their religious and national values, are in doubt in belonging to their identity. In the current conditions, in which the issue of social harmony and national unity have been influenced by both internal solidarity and global pressures and the process of globalization, the role of collective identity, as a very important factor, is necessary to be noticed in line with social coherence, national harmony, cultural protection and social planning more than before [3].

The young people and students have been affected by these developments more than other Iranian people and they have gotten stuck in national challenges and rupture in identification. The expansion of superior technologies of the contemporary era has equipped the new generation, especially the young people and students, to the various facilities and powers which do not tolerate prescriptive normative patterns and persisting on unit interpretation of different conditions and contexts. This new communicational world has based the young people by its own. Moreover, the young people face

*Ali Ghaemi, PhD student in Sociology, Islamic Azad University, Jahrom Branch, Faculty of Social Sciences, Iran
Alireza Khoddami, Assistant Professor, Islamic Azad University, Jahrom Branch, Faculty of Social Sciences, Iran
Keramatollah Rasekh, Associate Professor, Islamic Azad University, Jahrom Branch, Faculty of Human Sciences, Iran*

with structural problems and difficulties such as lack of overt linkage between first and secondary socialization. The peers sometimes operate as a bridge between these two levels of socialization but in case of the absence of such groups, we will face the broken and discontinuous process of making identity [4].

II. THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES

Identity is a semantic process based on cultural feature or an interconnected set of cultural features, which are prioritized on other resources. Identity has not been made of words, feelings and moods but same as other things in the world, it is created from raw materials through history and experience. To make identities, the materials of history, geography, politics, biology, institutions of production and reproduction, collective memory, personal dreams, the system of power and revelation, and religious inspirations are used. yet, people, social groups and societies grow all these raw materials and adjust their meaning from the beginning according to social requirements and cultural projects, rooted in their social construction and time-spatial framework. According to Custlez, the person and his aim for making collective identity determine the symbolic content of the identity and its meaning to the great extent for those, identifying themselves within or out of it. Planned identity will be also realized when social actors make a new identity using any type of available cultural materials, which define their position in the society from the beginning. Therefore, they are sought to transform whole shape of social structure. From this perspective, the issues of education, communicational network width, marital status, age and gender are such cases which may affect the formation or rethinking of individuals' identity.

Hypotheses

Main hypothesis

The rate and type of using new communicational media seem to affect national identity of the students.

Subsidiary hypotheses

- 1- The students' gender in Islamic Azad University of Kerman seems to affect their national identity.
- 2- The students' marital status in Islamic Azad University of Kerman seems to affect their national identity.
- 3- The students' residential type in Islamic Azad University of Kerman seems to affect their national identity.
- 4- The students' educational level in Islamic Azad University of Kerman seems to affect their national identity.
- 5- The students' residential place (city and village) in Islamic Azad University of Kerman seems to affect their national identity.
- 6- The students' income in Islamic Azad University of Kerman seems to affect their national identity.

III. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Gender description

Based on the research findings, frequency distribution of participants based on gender shows that most of them are women with 57.4%. In marital status, most of participants are married with 58.2%. It shows that out of total participants, 67.3% (267 individuals) have their own house and 32.7% (130 individuals) have rented house. Describing the residential place of participants show that out of total participants, 89.2% (354 individuals) live in city and 10.8% (43 individuals) in village.

The participants' educational level description indicates that 45.1% (179 individuals) are studying in B.A., 37% (147 individuals) in M.A. and 17.9% (71 individuals) in Ph.D. The income description revealed that the average income of participants is 2,777,581 with standard deviation of 2,338,387.64 Toman. The reason of large standard deviation is that some of them had no income. The mean of participants' membership time in modern communicational media is 5.59 years

with standard deviation of 2.32. the mean of the use of modern communicational media in a day by the participants is 3.35 hours with standard deviation of 1.93.

Inferential findings

Research hypotheses

- 1- The students' gender in Islamic Azad University of Kerman seems to affect their national identity.

Table 1- independent t-test of comparing the means of national identity given gender

Indicators	Gender	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	Leven test of equality of variances	Significance level	T	Degree of freedom	Significance level
National identity	Man	169	198/81	32/65	2/157	0/143	1/682	395	0/093
	Woman	228	193/68	27/92					

The results show that the mean of national identity among women and men is not significantly different statistically at the level of less than 5% ($P=0.093$, $t=1.682$).

- 2- The students' marital status in Islamic Azad University of Kerman seems to affect their national identity.

Table 2- independent t-test of comparing the means of national identity given participants' marital status

Indicators	Marital status	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	Leven test of equality of variances	Significance level	T	Degree of freedom	Significance level
National identity	Single	166	193/96	29/48	0/055	0/814	1/072	395	0/285
	Married	231	197/24	30/51					

The results show that the mean of national identity among single and married students is not significantly different statistically at the level of less than 5% ($P=0.285$, $t=1.072$).

- 3- The students' residential type in Islamic Azad University of Kerman seems to affect their national identity.

Table 3- independent t-test of comparing the means of national identity given participants' type of residential house

Indicators	Marital status	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	Leven test of equality of variances	Significance level	T	Degree of freedom	Significance level
National identity	Personal	297	199/33	29/66	0/260	0/610	3/328	395	0/001
	Rented	130	188/75	29/82					

The results show that the mean of national identity among the students with personal house or rented one is significantly different statistically at the level of 1% ($P=0.001$, $t=3.328$). therefore, it can be said that the participants with personal house are higher in the mean of national identity than those, having rented house.

- 4- The students' educational level in Islamic Azad University of Kerman seems to affect their national identity.

Table 4- independent t-test of comparing the means of national identity given participants' educational level

Indicator	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean standard error
B.A.	179	191/70	30/62	2/29
M.A.	147	198/71	25/90	2/14
Ph.D.	71	200/49	35/42	4/20

Table 5- variance analysis test of comparing the means given the participants' educational level

Indicators	Variance	Sum of mean squares	Degree of freedom	Mean of sum squares	F	Significance level
National identity	Inter group	5816.047	2	2908.023	3.248	0.04
	Intra group	352709.878	394	895.203		
	Total	358525.924	396			

The obtained results of variance analysis show that the mean of national identity between groups in terms of educational level of participants is significantly different at the level of less than 5% ($P=0.04$, $F=3.248$).

5- The students' residential place (city and village) in Islamic Azad University of Kerman seems to affect their national identity.

Table 6- independent t-test of comparing the means of national identity given participants' type of residential place

Indicators	Marital status	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	Leven test of equality of variances	Significance level	T	Degree of freedom	Significance level
National identity	City	354	194/61	30/35	1/122	0/290	2/401	395	0/017
	Village	43	206/21	25/96					

The results show that the mean of national identity among the students in city or village is significantly different statistically at the level of less than 5% ($P=0.017$, $t=2.401$). Therefore, it can be said that the participants in city are higher in the mean of national identity than those, living in village.

6- The students' income in Islamic Azad University of Kerman seems to affect their national identity.

Table 7- correlation coefficient of the income and national identity

Correlation coefficient	Significance level
0.141	0.005

The table shows the obtained results of Pearson correlation coefficient between national identity and income of the students. The result indicates a positive and significant relationship between participants' income and national identity ($P=0.005$, $r=0.141$). That means the higher the income of individuals, the higher the score of national identity and vice versa.

7- The rate and type of using modern communicational media seem to affect students' national identity.

Table 8- the correlation coefficient of membership duration and the rate of using modern communicational media daily with national identity

Indicator	Membership duration		The rate of daily use	
	Correlation coefficient	Significance level	Correlation coefficient	Significance level
National identity	0.085	0.092	0.151	0.003

The results of the table show that there is no significant relationship at the level of less than 5% between duration of membership in modern communicational media with national identity ($P=0.092$, $r=0.085$). there is a positive and

significant relationship at the level of less than 1% between the rate of using modern communicational media daily with national identity ($P= 0.003, r=0.151$).

Table 9- Correlation coefficient of the type of using modern communicational media with national identity

Indicator	National identity	
	Correlation coefficient	Significance level
The reality of the information contained in virtual social networks	0.250	0.0001
Your trust in the information contained in social networks	0.052	0.305
Looking at friends' profiles, photos and personal albums	0.001	0.986
Just reading, getting inspired and discussing the last topics	0.226	0.0001
Often reading and sometimes writing on the wall and discussed topics	0.167	0.001
Starting a new discussion among member groups	0.183	0.0001
Following the news link and political topics	0.291	0.0001
Following social and cultural issues	0.325	0.0001

Table 9 shows that except the variables of “your trust on available information in social networks” and “looking at profiles, photos and personal albums of friends”, the rest of variables have positive and significant relationship at the error level of less than 0.01 with the students’ national identity.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The underlying variables (income, gender, marital status, educational level, the type of housing and the place of residence (city and village) seem to affect the national identity of students in Islamic Azad University of Kerman.

Given the obtained results, marital status and gender have not affected national identity that is the mean of national identity is not significantly different statistically among married and single participants as well as between women and men.

Given the residential house (personal or rented), the mean of national identity of participants, having personal house, is significantly different with those who have rented house. The mean of national identity of participants with personal house is more than those with rented house. People, having personal house, are in better situation than participants, having rented house, in terms of financial safety. It causes them to have better performance in political and social identity.

Given the residential place of participants (urban or rural), the mean of national identity is more in participants, living in village than those, living in city. This event might be because of their commitment to traditional customs (cultural) and avoidance of occupational and machine concerns in comparison with urban people. Socially, it might be also because of commuting and being with each other as well as accepting each other.

Given the participants’ job (unemployed, self-employed and the employed ones), the mean of national identity of self-employed participants is less than unemployed or housewife participants as well as employed ones but the mean of national identity among employed individuals and unemployed or housewives is not significantly different statistically. To be more clear, self-employed people have less mean than two other groups in religious, cultural and historical aspects. This case can be because of studying and effect of colleagues especially in employed participants. in case of unemployed people, since most of people in this group are women and housewife, they have better performance in religious and social aspects.

Given the educational level, the results show that the mean of participants in B.A. is less than M.A. and Ph.D. but the mean of M.A. and Ph.D. students’ national identity is not significantly different statistically. It is resulted that the higher

education level will be followed by the more national identity. It might be because of the effect of education on cultural, historic and political aspects.

There is a positive and significant relationship between participants' income and their national identity that is the mean of national identity will be more if the income is more or vice versa. Justifying it, income brings financial safety and lack of concern in social aspects and also positive attitude towards cultural and political aspects of national identity. The results of the current study are not consistent with the results of Hasani (2009) [5]. His results show that among effective variables on national identity, gender, the rate of using foreign media, the rate using internal media, age and marital status have respectively more share in determining national identity tendency while gender and marital status did not have significant effect on national identity.

Media affect the components of national identity directly or indirectly and increase or decrease people's desire or hatred for these components depending on their bias. Through their positive function, the media internalize and transfer the identity components to the future generation. If the components of national identity are not internalized and transferred well because of negative function of media, national identity will face numerous problems.

REFERENCES

- [1] Jones, F. L., & Smith, P. Individual and societal bases of national identity: A comparative multi-level analysis. *European sociological Review*, 2001; 14 (2): 103-118.
- [2] Ashraf, A. Iranian identity: From antiquity to the end of Pahlavi, translated and edited by Hamid Ahmadi, Tehran: Ney Publishing, 2016.
- [3] Jahangiri, J., & Moeini, M. Investigating the Relationship between Social Capital and National Identity: A Case Study of Shiraz University Students ", *Journal of Social Sciences*, 2010; 7 (2): 37-74.
- [4] Schefers, B. *Fundamentals of Youth Sociology*. Translated by Keramatullah Rasekh. Tehran: Ney Publishing, 2004.
- [5] Hasani, M. Mass Media and National Identity: A Case Study of Isfahan University Students ", *Quarterly Journal of Communication Research*, 2009; 16(2): 65-93.
- [6] Gidenz, Anthony (2015). *Sociology*, translated by Hassan Chavoshian, Tehran: Ney Publishing.
- [7] Jenkins and Richard (2002). *Social Identity*, translated by Touraj Yarahmadi, Tehran: Shirazeh Publications.
- [8] Long, J H, Chen G M (2007). Impact Internet on Adolescent Self-Identity Development. *China Media Research*, 3 (1), 99-109.