

The Role of Communication through "Social Media" in Promoting Intercultural Dialog

دور الاتصال عبر مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي في تعزيز الحوار بين
الثقافات

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Abstract:

The communication between individuals cross the wide world became easier, and technology, especially social media, has been able to break all restrictions, reduce distances between civilizations, and promote dialog between multicultural societies.

Young people find opportunities through social networks to meet others and share cultures, opinions, or habits. This paper attempts to investigate the impact of communication through "social media " in promoting intercultural dialog.

This paper used both qualitative and quantitative methods. The survey was carried out in Palestine and Turkey on a group of 100 young people.

The paper results demonstrate that communication through "social media" has promoted intercultural dialog, social media play a role in bridging the gap between cultures

through dialog, and close the points of views of young people.

Keywords: communication, social media, intercultural, dialog, young people.

ملخص:

يزداد الاتصال بين الأفراد عبر العالم سهولة يومًا عن يوم بفعل التكنولوجيا خاصة وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي التي تمكنت من كسر القيود وتقليص المسافات بين الحضارات المختلفة، وتعزيز الحوار بين المجتمعات متعددة الثقافات، كما يجد الشباب فرصًا من خلال الشبكات الاجتماعية للقاء الآخرين ومشاركة ثقافتهم وآرائهم وعاداتهم.. الخ.

يحاول البحث التعرف على أثر الاتصال عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في تعزيز الحوار بين الثقافات المختلفة من وجهة نظر الشباب.

واستخدم البحث كلا من الأساليب النوعية والكمية، وأجري استطلاعًا عبر صحيفة الاستقصاء على مجموعة مكونة من 100 شاب/ة في كلٍ من فلسطين وتركيا.

وأظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن الاتصال عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي قد عزز الحوار بين الثقافات المختلفة، كما ولعبت دورًا في سد الفجوة بين الثقافات من خلال تعزيز الحوار، والتقريب بين وجهات نظر الشباب المختلفة، وأظهر البحث عددًا من معوقات الاتصال التي يواجهها الشباب عبر مواقع التواصل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاتصال، مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي، الثقافات المتعددة، الحوار، الشباب

1. Introduction

Communication and culture are two organic constructing that complement each other, and with dominance of globalisation and developments in communication and technologies tools, the world is turning into a small village. So that knowledge, cultures and communication tools have begun interaction, tangles and overlap every day.

The culture in which individuals socialize also determines how they will communicate. Hall stated that in order to understand intercultural differences, it is necessary to examine the communication behaviors of societies of cultures. According to Hall, people who live within different cultures also have different skills of handling the information load. In our day, information is transferred by news media very swiftly. This increases the significance of news media in intercultural communication. (Seyfi& Güven, 2016)

1.1 Intercultural communication

When the basis of the concept of acculturation is examined, acculturation could be defined as changes that occur reciprocatively in the original cultural patterns of both groups, when individuals, who are from different cultures, come into direct contact (Redfield 1936, p. 149).

Intercultural dialog involves the process of promoting understanding through interaction to increase the level of understanding, so that the demands of a new cultural environment can be met.

In order to explain intercultural communication, first of all, communication must be perceived as a multi-dimensional process, rather than only an act. Communication must be defined taking into account the cultural features of individuals involved. (Kartarı, 2014).

Intercultural communication is a significant goal of intercultural contact and, as such, has been widely examined. It generally takes into consideration an ideal type of contact, requiring openness and empathy, and resulting in a deep understanding of the other (Ganesh & Holmes, 2011, p. 81–86).

1.2 New media and Social media

New media' refers to a wide range of changes in media production, distribution and use. These are changes that are technological, textual, conventional and cultural.

Bearing this in mind, we nevertheless recognize that since the mid1980s at least (and with some changes over the period) a number of concepts have come to the fore which offer to define the key characteristics of the field of new media as a whole. We consider these here as some of the main terms in discourses about new media. These are: digital, interactive, hypertextual, virtual, networked, and simulated. (Lister & others, 2009)

The past few years have observed an explosion of social networking which have added a fresh social dimension to the web. There have been a rapidly increasing number of online connections among groups of persons who share similar interests, though they are

assembled in an absolute space. (Wilson & Peterson, 2002). Social media has become increasingly popular components of our everyday life in today's globalising society.

It is clear that social networking like: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, and online groups allow People to publish information about them as online profiles. Moreover, users can send personal and public messages to others, play games, write posts, and share photos, so that social networking helps individuals to make new online friends and acquaintances.

Social media has become prominent in society and integrated into our everyday life, there are advantages and disadvantages of using social media. Social media sites are convenient and efficient to communicate with people around the world. The online social sites instigate learning through the exchange of messages and the sharing of links, information, and resources. They are online sources where people can stay socially connected to their friends, family, peers, and acquaintances. (Sawyer & Ming Chen, 2012)

The vast penetration of online social networking sites has fundamentally transformed both the nature and extent of individuals' interpersonal communication behaviors in the digital era. Social networking sites (SNSs) are internet-based online applications where users enable establish personal information profiles, articulate their social connections, and tighten relationships with other members through sharing, liking, and commenting on a variety of distinct content (Pang, 2018:01)

In business, in relation to family and social environment,..etc, with those in communication, to share feelings and thoughts, self-expression, to persuade the other person, there is a need for communication to distribute tasks. Communication is an important source of life as much as water is needed in every aspect of life (Hoşgör, 2014:25).

1.3 Factors that affect intercultural communication

Although he/she utilizes the communication technologies; the person becoming estranged towards himself/herself, his environment and the society in which he/she lives is not able to pursue the human relations effectively and experience various conflicts, discrepancies, pains, anger, and failures with himself/herself and among the people as he/she has not learnt or is not practicing the basics of human communication correctly. (Orta, 2009)

Avoiding the lack of communication and having healthy communication between the individuals is possible by first learning the effective communication skills each individual needs. Human life is a process starting from the birth and this process includes training, education and all the practices which are carried on in the web of communication. The paper carried out indicates that people's success in their education is only possible by making use of all their senses and their level of memorization is possible to increase by people's seeing, hearing, doing, living, and realization of the subject matter being discussed. (TatliIojlu, 2018)

These factors that affect intercultural communication naturally expose the necessity of questioning the competency of intercultural communication. With the globalization process in effect, on the one hand, borders are removed, yet on the other, the world disintegrates even more. In this process, on the basis of intercultural dialog and intercultural communication, the concept of intercultural communication competence becomes even more significant. (İlbuğa, 2010, p. 174)

2. Paper Objective (Problem):

While previous studies mainly focused on either multiculturalism, or social media and communication or the relationship of multiculturalism with social media and adaptation [1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10], this paper attempts to investigate the impact of communication through "social media sits" in promoting Intercultural Dialog, and know how social media plays a role in bridging the gap between cultures.

3. Paper Methodology and Sample:

This paper used both qualitative and quantitative methods. The survey was carried out in Oct. 2020 with young people in Palestine and Turkey on a group of 100 young people.

The questionnaire was sent to the sample by e-mail, and the language of the questionnaire was English because it is often used in intercultural dialog globally, and young people who speak English are more able of cultural exchange.

3.1 Paper questions:

The Paper tries to answer the following questions:

- Does social media play a role in bridging the gap between cultures?
- Does social media help young people in understanding ideas and emotions of others in different cultures?
- Does the communication through social media play role in reducing young people fears towards living in a multicultural world?
- Does social media face barriers during Intercultural dialog?

3.2 Paper Hypothesis:

Within this framework, the hypotheses of this paper are the following:

H1: The communication through Social media affects the intercultural dialog.

H2: Social media play a role in bridging the gap between cultures through dialog between young people

H3: The dialog proses with others through social media websites has communication barriers

4. Findings and Results:

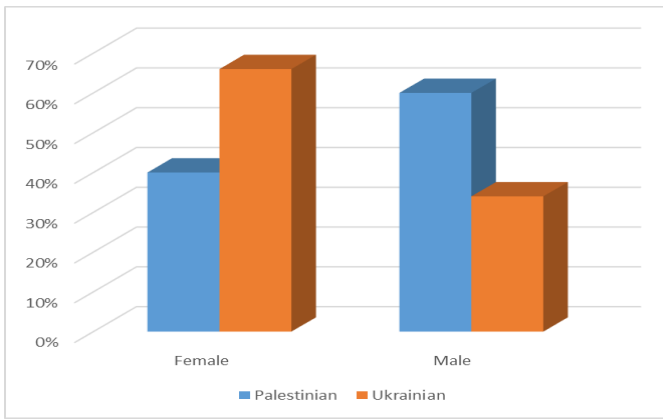
The data tables are as follows:

Table 1. Gender

Gender	Male	Female	Total
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/Country	No.	%	No.	%	
Palestinian	30	60%	20	40%	53%
Turkish	17	34%	33	66%	47%
Total	53	100%	47	100%	100%

Form 1: Sample's Gender



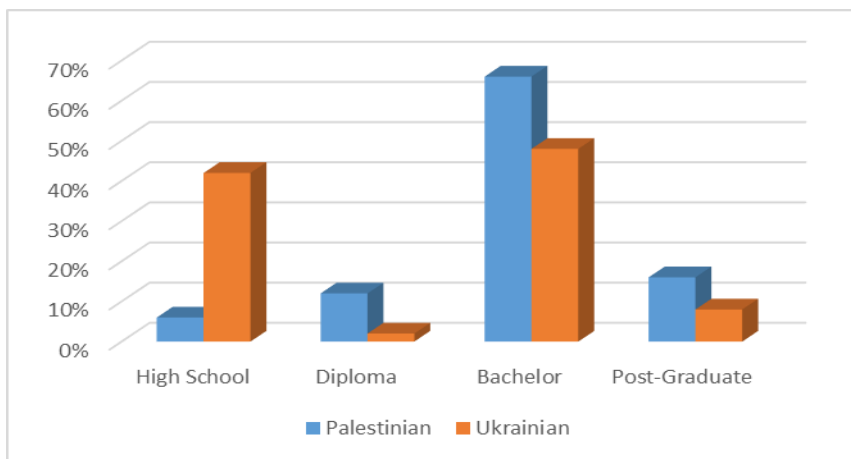
The previous table shows the demographic data of the participants: 53 representing (35%) of the respondents were Male, and 47 representing (47%) were Female.

Table 2. Educational Level

Educational level	Bachelor		High School		Post-Graduate		Diploma		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Palestinian	33	66%	3	6%	8	16%	6	12%	50%

Turkish	24	48%	21	42%	4	8%	1	2%	50%
Total	57	57%	24	24%	12	12%	7	7%	100%

Form 2: Educational Levels of Sample



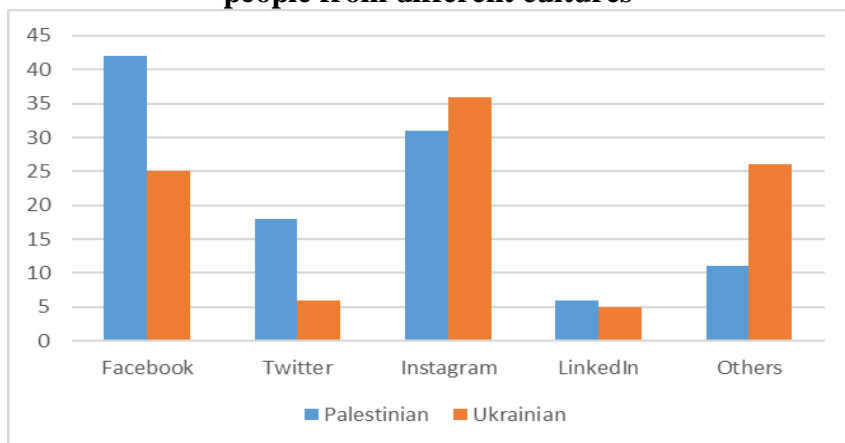
From Table 2 respondents give the following as their highest level of formal education, bachelor 57 (57%), high school 24 (24%), post-graduate 12 (12%), and diploma 7 (7%).

Table 3. The tool used often in social media to communicate with people from different cultures

Tools	FB		IN		TW		LI		Others	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Palestinian	42	84%	31	62%	18	36%	6	12%	3	6%

Turkish	26	50%	36	72%	6	12%	5	10%	4	8%
Total	68	68%	67	67%	24	24%	11	11%	7	7%

Form 3: Tools used often in social media to communicate with people from different cultures



In accordance to Table 3, the findings indicate that 68 (68%) of the young people prefer using Facebook, 67 (67%) prefer Instagram, while 24 (24%) uses Twitter, 11 (11%) use Likened, while 7 (7%) prefer other tools. However, according to study by Jha et al. (2016), Facebook is the most used social media application and it is used across different professions to connect friends and colleagues

Table 4. Answers given to the questions within the scope of the paper

Questions	Agree	Strongly agree	Total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total	Not sure	Standard deviation
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Social media helps me in understanding ideas of others in different cultures	69	19	88	9	3	12	0	28.3
	69%	19%	88%	9%	3%	12%	0%	
Social media helps me in understanding emotions of others in different cultures	49	14	63	9	1	10	27	18.8
	49%	14%	63%	9%	1%	10%	27%	
Social media websites are promoting my dialog skills with others	40	36	76	7	0	7	17	17.6
	40%	36%	76%	7%	0%	7%	17%	
I know a lot of habits, religions and cultures through communication in social media websites	38	24	62	10	1	11%	27	14.6
	38%	24%	62%	10%	1%	11%	27%	
Social media helps me to have friends from different cultures	45	35	80	4	1	5	15	19.3
	45%	35%	80%	4%	1%	5%	15%	

A questionnaire was used to determine whether Social media help them in understanding ideas of others in different cultures in Table 4. The paper found out that 88 (88%) of the young people believe that social media help them, while 12 (12%) of them do not believe.

According to the next question which states, social media help them in understanding emotions of others in different cultures. The finding found out that 63 (63%) of the young people think that social media help them in understanding emotions of others, and 10 (10%) do not think, but 27 (27%) are not sure.

According to the next question which states, "Social media" are promoting my dialog skills with others. The finding found out that 76 (76%) of the young people agree that social media websites are promoting their dialog skills with others, and 7 (7%) only disagree, but 17 (17%) are not sure.

According to this paper, 62 (62%) of the participants indicate that they know lot of habits, religions and cultures through communication in social media websites, 11 (11%) don't know lot of habits..etc. and 27 (27) are not sure.

Finally in table 4, 80 (80%) of the participants strongly consider that social media help them to have friends from different cultures, 5 (5%) don't, and 15 (15) are not sure.

Table 5. Answers given to the questions within the scope of the paper

Questions	Agree	Strongly agree	Total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total	Not sure	Standard deviation
I share my cultural identity through social media websites	44	22	66	8	4	12	22	15.7
	44%	22%	66%	8%	4%	12%	22%	
Social media facilitates communication with different cultures	39	41	80	6	0	6	14	18.9
	39%	41%	80%	6%	0%	6%	14%	
Social media plays a role in bridging the gap between cultures	52	16	68	9	0	9	23	19.8
	52%	16%	68%	9%	0%	9%	23%	
Communication through social media plays role in reducing fears towards living in a multicultural world	49	17	66	9	2	11	23	18.1
	49%	17%	66%	9%	2%	11%	23%	
I have communication barriers during the dialog with others through social media websites	39	6	45	16	8	24	31	14.5
	39%	6%	45%	16%	8%	24%	31%	

First phrase in table 5 says that participants share their cultural identity through social media websites", the findings reported that 66 (66%) of the participants share their cultural

identity through social media websites, 12 (12%) don't share, and 22 (22%) are not agree.

Communication with different cultures. A question was asked to identify if social media play role in facilitating communication. The findings submit that 80 (80%) of the respondents think that Social media facilitates communication with different cultures, while 6 (6%) don't think, but 14 (14%) are not sure.

The second phase shows that 68 (68%) believe that social media plays a role in bridging the gap between cultures, and 9 (9%) don't believe, but 23 (23%) are not sure.

Accordance with this paper, 66 (66%) of young people confirm that communication through social media plays role in reducing fears towards living in a multicultural world, 11 (11%) only don't, and 23 (23%) are not sure.

Finally in table 5, 45 (45%) of the participants have communication barriers during the dialog with others through social media websites, and 24 (24%) don't have, but 31 (31) are not sure.

3. Conclusion

The objective of this paper was to find out the role of communication through "social media" in promoting intercultural dialog, from the perspective of young people, and know how social media play a role in bridging the gap between cultures through dialog between young people.

The paper reached several results, the most important of which are:

3.1 It is clear that communication through "social media" has promoting intercultural dialog.

3.2 Social media play a role in bridging the gap between cultures through dialog between young people, and close the points of views of young people about many common humanitarian issues.

3.4 There is some barriers affect communication through social media to promote intercultural dialog, such as: fear of

communicate with others, religious differences, language differences, and violations of privacy, as well as the technical barriers.

3.5 Summary of hypotheses analysis is as follows:

Hypotheses	Decision
H1: The communication through Social media affects the intercultural dialog.	Accepted
H2: Social media play a role in bridging the gap between cultures through dialog between young people	Accepted
H3: The dialog prosed with others through social media websites has communication barriers	Accepted

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