

Cultural Identity in the Digital Age: A Humanities Perspective

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Abstract

From its beginnings in the 19th century, coinciding with the dawn of a new industrial period, to the sophisticated, cutting-edge technical digital media tools available to us today, digital media has changed throughout time. Around the world, technology is a major factor in forming cultural identities and customs. The increasing impact of globalisation in the digital era is changing cultural identities. Examine the many studies on cultural identity and digital age that have been published in this article. The review reveals that digital media serve as both a catalyst for cultural expression and a threat to cultural distinctiveness. While offering platforms for cultural preservation and global connectivity, digital tools also risk reinforcing cultural homogenization and power imbalances. Particularly among youth in rural India, social media reshapes self-identity, social values, and cultural norms. The study emphasizes the need for context-sensitive strategies that promote digital literacy, algorithmic fairness, and the celebration of local content. A humanities perspective highlights the reciprocal relationship between technology and culture, urging mindful integration to ensure cultural resilience and diversity in the digital age.

Keywords: Digital Media, Digital Age, Technology, Globalization, Cultural Identities and Preservation, Humanities Perspective, Cultural Resilience and Diversity.

1 Introduction

Nowadays, almost everyone has accessibility to a smart phone or the internet, making digital media a vital part of our life. This has produced an abundance of opportunities for individuals residing in isolated

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regions to establish connections with the outside world, and vice versa. Western ideals have supplanted native beliefs and customs, yet this has also resulted in a homogenisation of cultures [1]. Through the proliferation of social media platforms, digital media has had a significant impact on the cultural fabric. Young people in the area now have a forum for communicating themselves and interact with like-minded people thanks to social media sites like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter [2]. As a result, a new generation has emerged that is more susceptible to global influences, resulting in a degradation of their conventional cultural identity. Additionally, the region's cultural milieu has been significantly influenced by the proliferation of online content and streaming services [3]. Although it has given local artists and filmmakers a stage on which to display their skills, it has also resulted in the domination of popular culture and mainstream media, which often conflicts with the region's traditional values [4]. The younger generation is moving away from their own origins and towards Western culture, which has led to a conflict among the old and the new. The emergence of influencer culture is another facet of how digital media affects cultural identity. The way individuals see and present their cultural identities has changed as a result of the development of social media influencers [5]. A westernised lifestyle, which may be seen as hip and fashionable, is often promoted by several influencers from the area. Their own cultural heritage and customs may therefore be erased as a result. There are some positive aspects, however. North East cultural identity has been preserved and promoted in large part because to digital media. Traditional art forms are reviving as a result of local craftsmen and artisans using social media to display their traditional goods [6].

A. Cultural identity

When it comes to country, race, religion, socioeconomic class, generation, locale, gender, or any other kind of social group with its own unique culture, cultural identification is a component of an individual's identity, or self-concept and self-perception. In this sense, cultural identity is a feature of both the person and a group of people who share the same upbringing or cultural identity [7]. In the discussions of cultural, social, and historical experiences, cultural identity is a dynamic process that is never static. Some individuals alter their cultural identification more than others, whereas others who change their cultural identity less often have a distinct cultural identity. In other words, their cultural assimilation is both dynamic and steady [8].

Social ties, category label, and cultural knowledge are the three components that comprise an individual's cultural identity. Understanding the fundamental traits of one's culture allows one to connect with their identity. This is known as cultural knowledge. A category label is a person's indirect cultural affiliation that connects them to their identity.

An individual's identity is influenced by their social relationships, which are described as "social connections." The process of developing a cultural identity involves many phases [9]. Immersion in a culture's values, beliefs, and customs is the first way for someone to learn about it. After then, the individual's identification as a part of that culture is based on their position in the community. Third, they cultivate relationships with their immediate family, close acquaintances, colleagues, and neighbours [10].

B. The Evolution of Cultural Identity in the Digital Age

1. Digital Media and Cultural Identity Formation

The formation and expression of cultural identity have been significantly altered by digital media. The emergence of digital content creation tools, online forums, and social media platforms has facilitated the curating and sharing of cultural identities with an international audience. Individuals can now establish connections with others who possess comparable cultural experiences and interests, which has resulted in the development of novel forms of cultural expression [11].

Digital media has also made it easier for cultural narratives to spread over the world. Online platforms have made it possible for people all over the world to share cultural material, including literature, art, and music. This has facilitated the homogenisation of cultural practices and the development of global cultural trends.

2. New Forms of Cultural Identity in Online Communities

New kinds of cultural identity have emerged as a result of the growth of online networks. People may interact with people who have similar interests by participating in these communities, which are often centred on common pastimes, interests, or cultural customs. Due to the ability to interact with others who have comparable cultural backgrounds and ideals, online communities have emerged as a crucial component of contemporary cultural identity [12]. The following are some essential traits of online cultural identity:

- **Global connectivity:** Through the ability to interact with people worldwide, online networks help people develop a sense of cultural identity.
- **Niche cultural practices:** Online communities often concentrate on certain cultural customs or hobbies, enabling people to interact with like-minded others.
- **Dynamic cultural expression:** Using a variety of digital technologies and media, online platforms allow people to create and express their cultural backgrounds in fresh and creative ways.

C. The Importance of Cultural Identity in Modern Society

Building a feeling of belonging, community, and self-worth requires a strong sense of cultural identification. It forms the basis of a person's self-concept and forms the basis of how they see themselves and engage with the world. Cultural identification encourages continuity and cultivates a strong feeling of pride and fortitude by tying them to their ancestors, families, and larger community [13]. It offers an understanding and expression framework for values, beliefs, and traditions, which greatly enhances mental and emotional health. In a society where many individuals lack a feeling of roots or cultural displacement—often as a result of migration, urbanisation, or globalization—cultural identification serves as a stabilising factor, providing a sense of safety and inclusion in the face of ongoing change [14]. It grounds people in common experiences and collective past, assisting them in navigating the difficulties of contemporary life. Maintaining one's integrity and self-assurance in one's position in

society depends on this anchoring effect. In multicultural communities where differences are respected rather than seen as a source of conflict, celebrating cultural identity is also essential for fostering empathy and understanding [15]. Communities benefit from embracing cultural variety because it fosters tolerance and respect for one another. It promotes candid communication and contact between various ethnic groups, which strengthens social bonds and lessens preconceptions and biases. Society can cultivate innovation and problem-solving by recognising and valuing a diverse array of cultural backgrounds and perspectives [16], [17].

D. Challenges and Opportunities for Political Communication

1. Adapting to the Changing Landscape of Cultural Identity

Political communication has both possibilities and problems as cultural identity changes in the digital era. In addition to being attentive to the complexity of global cultural influences, political communications must be crafted to appeal to a variety of cultural identities. In the digital era, politicians and policymakers need to be aware of the subtleties of cultural identity in order to engage with a variety of audiences [18].

2. The Globalization of Media and Political Messaging

Political messaging has both possibilities and problems as a result of media globalisation. Digital media has the potential to expand the influence and reach of legislators by allowing them to connect with a global audience. However, there are drawbacks to media globalisation as well, as political statements need to be modified to appeal to a variety of cultural situations. In a globalised media environment, some important factors to take into account while crafting political message are:

- **Cultural sensitivity:** "Local cultural narratives and values" must be taken into consideration while crafting political statements.
- **Global relevance:** Global cultural influences and trends must also be reflected in political messaging.
- **Adaptability:** Given the complexity of regional cultural identities, political messaging must be flexible enough to fit a variety of cultural situations.

3. New Forms of Political Engagement and Mobilization

New types of political mobilisation and involvement have been made possible by digital media. People may now rally around common interests and concerns thanks to online platforms that have made it easier to plan advocacy campaigns, demonstrations, and social movements. Particularly for younger generations, this has opened up new avenues for political involvement and participation. There are several critical components of digital political engagement, such as:

- **Hashtag activism:** Hashtags on social media have emerged as a vital instrument for political and social cause mobilisation.
- **Online petitions:** Online petitions have made it possible for people to rally support for certain issues, and they often utilise online platforms to plan offline demonstrations and protests.

- **Digital campaigning:** Digital media has developed novel and innovative methods for politicians to interact with electors, utilising online advertising and social media to reach a wide range of audiences.

2 Literature Review

(Judijanto, Putu, et al., 2024) [19] Using a bibliometric methodology, this research examines how digitalisation and cultural identity interact, with a particular emphasis on local customs in the digital age. According to the report, the study's emphasis is shifting from early attempts at cultural preservation to more recent concerns like innovation, sustainability, and digital leadership. On the other hand, the disparities in representation indicate that there is a necessity for expanding research that integrates the perspectives of under-represented regions. Future research might go in exciting areas thanks to emerging technologies like AI and VR, and striking a balance between cultural authenticity and contemporary adaptations is crucial given the conflict between globalisation and localisation. In order to promote "sustainable cultural preservation in the digital age", this report presents a thorough review of the research environment along with useful recommendations for technologists, cultural practitioners, and politicians.

(Maehler & Daikeler, 2024) [20] In addition to identifying key elements associated with the creation of cultural identities, the meta-analysis examined the commitment of first-generation adult immigrants to both their new cultural surroundings and their old culture. According to the findings of the random-effects analysis, first-generation adult immigrants had a moderate level of identification with their home nation and a high identification with their culture of origin. The questionnaire language, gender, immigrant type, place of origin, and cultural distance all influenced the degree of identification. Methodological concerns and mediator implications are examined for the research of identity development in acculturation contexts.

(Alsaleh, 2024) [21] Recognising both the advantages and disadvantages of technology in various cultural settings, this essay examines the intricate link among technology and cultural change. Our results demonstrate that technology serves as a catalyst for innovation, adaptability, and cultural interchange, facilitating previously unheard-of levels of international communication and idea sharing. The dual character of technology impact is shown by this study: while it promotes connectedness and cultural enrichment, it also presents threats to cultural variety and fairness. Our research provides policymakers, educators, and technologists with valuable insights, underscoring the necessity of culturally sensitive strategies to guarantee that technological advancements in the digital era contribute to, rather than diminish, cultural heritage.

(Condemayta Soto et al., 2023) [22] In order to investigate how university students in the Global South use social media to enact their cultural identities, this research uses both performance and polymedia as key conceptual lenses. We contend that this set of young Bolivians navigates social media as polymedia environments, using its potential and exploring its limitations while performing their multiplex identities. Our findings "depend on 17 focus groups with 105 students from Bolivian institutions". Three main

conclusions were drawn from the study: (1) Students primarily cited instances of national identity and cosmopolitan performances; (2) national belonging performances displayed a vague blend of self-glorification and self-reflection; and (3) indigenous identities were seldom exhibited on the platforms used.

(D & ASSISTANT, 2025) [23] "In Akki-alur, Hangal Taluk, Haveri District, Karnataka", young people between the ages of 18 and 24 are the subjects of this study, which attempts to investigate the ways in which social media affects their cultural values, sense of self, and social behaviours. The research looks at how media exposure affects how they see themselves, their social roles, and how they interact with others and society. By revealing how media use patterns influence young people's identities and experiences in a rural Indian setting, the results seek to clarify the intricate link among "media consumption and the development of youth culture". In addition to contributing to the ongoing discussion regarding the influence of media on youth in the digital era, this comparative study emphasises the potential of social media as both a platform for identity construction and an instrument for cultural exchange.

(Hazarika et al., 2024) [24] Due to homogenisation and cultural dilution, the introduction of digital media has had a substantial influence on the region's cultural identity. The impact of digital media on the cultural fabric of Northeast India is examined in this research, which also looks at influencer culture, social media, and streaming services. This research highlights the need of striking a balance between contemporary technology and cultural origins, even as it acknowledges the advantages of digital media in fostering economic development and cultural preservation. Cultural dilution and homogenisation have resulted from the introduction of digital media, which has had a profound effect on the region's cultural identity. This investigation investigates the impact of digital media on the cultural fabric of North East India, with a particular emphasis on influencer culture, streaming services, and social media.

(Manara & Weber, 2023) [25] This investigation investigates the manner in which local communities in the United Kingdom negotiate their cultural identities in the face of "the ubiquitous influence of global cultural narratives and digital platforms". In conclusion, the results indicate that digital platforms present both opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, they impact younger generations in particular by exposing local cultures to homogenising global trends. However, these platforms serve as effective means of disseminating and conserving regional customs, allowing communities to reclaim their cultural uniqueness on a worldwide scale. In order to promote a harmonious coexistence of local and global influences, discussions highlight the vital role "that digital literacy and proactive cultural policies play".

(BALA & Vanessa, 2024) [26] This study examined how digital media has been used to investigate cultural identity in a variety of ways by reviewing the body of current research. It adds to the current discussion about cultural identity and digital media. In addition, the report clarified the difficulties that digital media provide for cultural identity, including differences in digital literacy and access, subscriptions, and cyber threat dangers. The study's conclusions emphasise how important it is to fully use the range of channels that digital media offers for exposure, empowerment, and cultural identity expression. To encourage polite interaction, digital literacy, and inclusion for users, the report suggests

that stakeholders and governments provide more free training and awareness-raising on the various digital media technologies.

(Judijanto, Amalia, et al., 2024) [27] This study utilises "the VOS viewer to conduct a bibliometric analysis and visualise" the complex research landscape that surrounds the themes of digitalisation, cultural transformation, organisational practices, and the impact of global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. It demonstrates the ways in which digitalisation intersects with a variety of societal dimensions, affecting business practices, sustainability, cultural heritage, and education. The report promotes policies that improve digital literacy and inclusion by highlighting the role that digital technologies play in enabling important social and organisational developments. The analysis of authorship networks also illuminates the dynamics of collaboration and the influence of influential scholars, offering valuable insights that can inform future research orientations. In order to effectively navigate current and upcoming problems, the research emphasises the need for flexible business models that include sustainability and resilience.

(Sugiarto & Arif, 2024) [28] This study explores how cultural identity is represented by English-speaking behaviours on social media sites including Twitter, Instagram, and online discussion boards. Important conclusions show that power dynamics, demographics, globalisation, platform dynamics, and cultural environment all influence how people use English on social media. Users from non-native English-speaking countries frequently integrate English into their native languages and cultures in order to convey a sense of global belonging or modernity. The research offers helpful suggestions and emphasises how crucial it is to acknowledge English's function as a conduit of cultural identity. In the digital era, it advocates for a greater awareness of the cultural variety reflected via language and recommends using social media to promote cross-cultural communication and understanding. Broader ramifications of these observations include encouraging cultural awareness and creating inclusive frameworks for international communication.

3 Research Gap

Though a lot of study has been done on how digital technologies affect cultural expression and communication, from a humanities standpoint there is still a great knowledge vacuum on how cultural identity is created, negotiated, and kept in the digital age. Most current research concentrate on technical or sociological aspects, often ignoring the sophisticated, interpretive frameworks provided by philosophy, history, literature, and cultural studies. Moreover, the worldwide character of digital platforms brings hybridity, new kinds of cultural engagement, and conflict requiring more thorough critical examination. How digital media reinterpret ancient stories, rituals, and collective memory across many cultures has received little consideration. Furthermore lacking are multidisciplinary methods that affect cultural identity by means of digitisation. Comprehensive knowledge of the changing dynamics of cultural identity in an increasingly linked digital environment depends on closing this divide.

4 Research Objective

- “In this article study the evolution of Cultural Identity in the Digital Age.
- Study the importance of Cultural Identity in Modern Society.
- Study the various literature perspective on Cultural Identity in the Digital Age”.

5 Research Methodology

Using secondary data and a comprehensive literature analysis, this review study uses a qualitative research method to investigate the complex interaction between cultural identity and the digital age. The study makes use of academic papers, reports, and case studies released between 2018 and 2025 to provide a complete knowledge of the changing cultural scene. Combining ideas from many disciplines—media studies, political communication, sociology, and cultural studies—the study investigates important themes including the relevance of cultural identity in modern society, the function of digital media in forming young culture, and the more general sociopolitical consequences. This approach helps one to critically analyse the possibilities and difficulties presented by technology developments in affecting social structures, values, and cultural standards.

6 Conclusion

This review reveals that while digital tools offer powerful means for expressing and preserving cultural identities, their success depends on context-aware and strategic application. The relationship between culture and technology is reciprocal and ever-evolving, involving adaptation and transformation. Digital platforms, particularly social media, shape how cultural norms and identities are constructed, especially among youth. In rural India and regions like North East India, digital media offers both opportunities for cultural empowerment and risks of homogenization and cultural erosion. Active engagement with digital tools often reshapes self-perception and social values, while less active users retain more traditional outlooks. Key challenges include algorithmic bias, digital illiteracy, and global content dominance, which limit equitable cultural representation. The study concludes that a balanced, inclusive approach is essential. Digital media must be harnessed to celebrate cultural diversity while protecting traditional practices. Promoting digital literacy, ensuring fair algorithmic practices, and amplifying local voices are crucial. Humanities perspectives help illuminate the nuanced interplay between tradition and technology, guiding efforts to preserve cultural identities in a globalized digital landscape. This approach fosters resilience, inclusivity, and a deeper understanding of cultural identity in the digital age.

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