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**Social Media as a Tool of Globalization Its Impact on the Islamic Identity of
University Youth**

A Conceptual Analytical Study

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Abstract:

Identity is considered one of the most pressing topics in various fields of study, particularly in social and anthropological studies. This article aims to shed light on the impact of social media as a tool of globalization on the Islamic cultural identity of young people, highlighting both the positive and negative aspects of this phenomenon. We begin by understanding the intricacies and goals of cultural globalization, which means the unification of a cultural pattern in the world, specifically the American cultural pattern as the strongest. Cultural globalization relies on media and communication means, especially social media, which pose a threat to the Arab Islamic cultural identity. However, the use of these means can be harnessed for the benefit of Islamic cultural identity by employing them to serve the rich Islamic culture, which derives its strength from the power of Islam and its sources.

It is worth noting that this study is not the first of its kind, as this topic has attracted the attention of many researchers and thinkers, such as the scholar "Malek Bennabi," Dr. "Mohammad Abed Al-Jabri," and Professor Dr. "Ahmad Ali Kanaan." This attention underscores the significant importance of the topic and its increasing and accelerating impact on young people and their identities. Therefore, we aim for this study to be a new knowledge addition that contributes to a deeper understanding of the impact of globalization on Islamic cultural identity..

Accordingly, the main objective of this study is to illustrate how social media platforms (specifically Facebook) can contribute to enhancing the elements of Arab culture among Algerian university youth.

Keywords: Islamic cultural identity; cultural globalization; social media (Facebook); university youth.

Introduction:

The topic of globalization and cultural identity holds a central place of concern among researchers, particularly in the fields of sociology and anthropology. The phenomenon of globalization is one of the most critical issues, extending its influence from economic aspects, control, and colonization to encompass Islamic cultural identity. Due to its direct impact on the latter, researchers are divided in their opinions, with some viewing it positively and others negatively .

Proponents see globalization, through media and communication means, especially social media platforms like Facebook, as a way to renew and solidify culture, allowing for cultural exchange and the spread of Arab Islamic culture globally. On the other hand, critics perceive it as intellectual invasion by Western culture and a threat to Arab cultural identity. A third perspective offers a balanced view, distinguishing between the tools and the content of globalization.

When examining the concept of globalization linguistically, it refers to the literal translation of the word "Globalisation," which means giving something a global characteristic, (AL-Milihi & Mohamed, 2005, p. 13)

extending it beyond local or regional confines. Thus, globalization in its linguistic sense means generalizing something and expanding its scope to include the entire world, which can also encompass Arab Islamic culture. This concept is aligned with the universal message brought by Islam before Western globalization, as evidenced by the Quranic verse, "And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds" (Surah Saba, 28).

However, terminologically, defining the concept of globalization has varied due to differences in ideologies and intellectual approaches among those who have defined this term. Here are some definitions:

Dr. Adnan Al-Shakhs defines globalization as "the phenomenon of global belonging, which is a concise expression of several concepts. It includes moving beyond limited regional frameworks, racism, sectarianism, and others, towards broader global belonging (Hussein Abdel Hamid Ahmed Rashwan, 2007, p. 19) Mohammad Abed Al-Jabri describes it as "an ideology that directly expresses the will to dominate the world and Americanize it," seeing it as a byproduct of informatization (Al-Aali, 2008, p. 112)

In discussing globalization, most readings indicate that it is a double-edged sword with both negatives and positives. However, it is essential to understand that globalization is not merely a mechanism of capitalist development but rather an ideology reflecting the will to dominate the world, aiming to unify the world system .

This article seeks to explore the impact of media and communication, as a tool of globalization, particularly social media platforms like Facebook, on the Islamic cultural identity of university youth. One might ask why we focus specifically on university youth rather than other age groups, such as children, who are in the formative and learning stages, or other age groups .

In this context, university youth are at a critical stage of identity formation and are highly engaged with social media, making them a pivotal group for studying the influence of globalization on cultural identity.

Returning to the religious definition, we say: "The youth stage of a human's life is the most critical and precise phase, as it marks the beginning of religious obligations and the prime and freshness of life." (Mohamed Ahmed Kanaan, 2003, p. 4) We have chosen university youth because they are at a high level of awareness and are the most frequent users of Facebook. The youth stage, particularly among the aware youth, is marked by significant changes in personal traits both qualitatively and quantitatively. This stage is characterized by a high degree of complexity, where individuals' desire for self-assertion and the search for social roles that highlight their identity mix with a sense of responsibility and a desire for a more ideal society, necessitating continuous change.

These characteristics reflect what we can call a youthful and conscious personality. Therefore, it is essential to focus on and care for this group by studying all factors that might impact them, either positively or negatively.

Research Significance:

The importance of this research lies in exploring social media platforms as a tool of globalization and their impact on Islamic cultural identity. This identity is a crucial reference point for Arab youth, particularly Algerian youth. Therefore, it is essential to focus on this group and raise their awareness regarding the optimal use of social media to preserve and defend the elements of Islamic identity. Through their practices and interactions, they can reflect their belief in Islamic unity.

Research Objectives:

Through this article, we aim to achieve a number of objectives, the most important of which are as follows:

- To examine the concept of globalization and social media as a tool for it.
- To explore the impacts of cultural globalization on Islamic cultural identity from both positive and negative perspectives.
- To trace the dangers of cultural globalization that aim to marginalize and distort Islamic cultural identity.

- To investigate how university youth use social media to protect Islamic cultural identity and work towards the Islamization of the world instead of its Americanization.

To achieve these objectives, we adopted an analytical approach by defining the key concepts of this topic in the first section, titled "Basic Concepts of the Study." The second section explains the inevitability of the clash between globalization and Islamic cultural identity, ultimately leading to an understanding of the impact of globalization on Islamic cultural identity through the use of social media.

Section One: Basic Concepts of the Study

Before conducting the analysis, it is necessary to define the basic concepts of this study to enable us to analyze them based on their true meaning and real implications:

First Requirement: The Concept of Globalization and Cultural Globalization

In defining the concept of globalization, we face significant diversity and differences among scholars. Transferring any concept from one discipline to another, from one civilization to another, from one culture to another, or even from one language to another causes confusion and ambiguity. This diversity and difference in the formulation of the concept of globalization are attributed to several factors, the most important being the variety of intellectual disciplines held by researchers studying globalization. Each tries to define globalization from the perspective of their specialty. Additionally, the ideological beliefs these researchers hold influence their definition of the concept, whether they support or oppose it.

In this paper, we will focus on defining the concept of globalization in sociology and emphasize the concept of cultural globalization, as it is most relevant to our topic.

The Concept of Globalization

- Globalization refers to all the systems and standards that integrate the world's inhabitants into one global community, known as the "cosmic" community.
- It is the intensification of social relations on a global scale, linking distant places in such a way that local events are shaped by events occurring miles away and vice versa.
- Globalization is a global network that has connected isolated and eager societies on this planet with common and unifying interests in one world.
- It represents the trend towards internationalizing products, the international labor system, new migration from the south to the north, and creating a competitive environment that has accelerated the internationalization of states, making them appear more like organizations in this globalized world than as countries.

- The world has become an international shopping center where ideas and products are available everywhere simultaneously.
- Globalization aims to make the world a small global village, in a more precise expression.

Cultural Globalization

Until recently, the concept of globalization was closely linked to the economy. This term was primarily used to describe some key aspects of the modern transformation in global economic activity. However, its advocates realized that economic changes cannot occur without preceding political, cultural, social, and media transformations. Thus, the concept of globalization branched into various fields, leading to political, cultural, social, media globalization, etc.

Cultural globalization remains the most important, dangerous, and controversial type. From the perspective of globalization advocates, culture is the main cause of division among peoples. The cultural concept of globalization has been associated with the idea of "standardization" or "unification" of the world's cultures.

Cultural globalization works to unify forms of cultural expression worldwide. It is a trend towards global homogenization. Despite the benefits globalization provides, it must be approached cautiously, especially considering its negatives, such as the uniqueness of specific cultural characteristics defining nations' cultural identity.

The Concept of Arab (Islamic) Cultural Identity

The issue of identity, in general, and cultural identity, in particular, has occupied the interest of many thinkers and researchers in various fields. In the field of social sciences, the concept of cultural identity is characterized by its multiple meanings and fluidity. From a temporal perspective, it is relatively modern. Recently, there has been an increased focus on the concept of Arab cultural identity, making it one of the most important goals of education: to enhance and establish it among the youth in light of the new challenges of the globalization era.

First: The Concept of Identity and Its Levels

Concept of Identity:

Identity is a set of referential components, whether material, social, or personal, on which the social actor can be identified. It results from the interaction of a set of relational systems and patterns of meanings from which an individual derives the sense of their values. In light of this, an individual can define themselves within the socio-cultural environment, considering it the referential system for their behavior. (Mostafa Hadba, 1996, p. 25)

Levels of Identity

Mohamed Abed Al-Jabri identified three levels of identity: individual, collective, and national.

➤ **Individual Identity:**

This includes personal identifiers such as fingerprints, national ID number, passport, personal relationships, etc.

➤ **Collective Identity:**

This is shared among social groups, such as the academic major of university students.

➤ **National Identity:**

This encompasses a set of general cultural traits and characteristics that, at a minimum, are shared among all individuals belonging to a particular state (citizens of the same country) and can be recognized and distinguished from individuals of other states, such as the national anthem.

Second: The Concept of Culture

➤ **Linguistically:**

"Thaqafa, yathquf, thaqafa" means to be quick-witted and skillful. "Thaqaf al-ilm" means to grasp knowledge quickly, and "thaqafahu thaqfan" means to outwit someone in skill. "Al-taqif" refers to being astute and clever. (Malik bin Nabi, 1984, p. 19)

➤ **Terminologically:**

One of the most renowned definitions comes from the anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917), who was the first to define culture as a complex whole that includes both material and immaterial aspects. According to Tylor, culture encompasses knowledge, beliefs, values, customs, social practices, and other elements that pertain to humans within society.

Additionally, Malek Bennabi offers another definition of culture, describing it as a "spiritual relationship between individual behavior and the way of life in society." (Saida Rahmania, 2012, p. 92)

Third: The Concept of Cultural Identity

The concept of cultural identity can be deduced from the concepts of identity and culture as follows:

It represents the general, fixed, and essential features that distinguish the civilization of a country from other civilizations and a national personality from other nationalities. Its foundation is uniqueness, and cultural identity is the unique material and immaterial cultural distinctiveness.

Fourth: The Concept of Islamic Identity

Islamic identity means belief and faith in the doctrine of the Islamic nation, which involves believing in Allah, His oneness, faith in the prophets and heavenly books, and taking pride in emotional belonging to it. It signifies a love of belonging to the Islamic nation, respecting the cultural and civilizational values of Islam such as Islamic heritage and morals, and expressing and adhering to Islamic rituals. This reflects maintaining the Islamic identity and the feeling of individual and collective distinction and independence. As Allah says: (You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah. If only the People of the Scripture had believed, it would have been better for them. Among them are believers, but most of them are defiantly disobedient) (Surah Al-Imran: 110)

Second Section: The Inevitable Clash Between Globalization and Islamic Identity

After explaining Arab cultural identity and discussing globalization and cultural globalization, it becomes clear that the aim of globalization is to dominate the world's cultures, erasing the identities of nations and peoples to establish a single global culture—specifically, American culture—using various means, including social media platforms like Facebook. In this section, we explore the relationship between cultural globalization and Islamic identity.

Islamic identity is characterized by its global nature, possessing the components, features, and capabilities to confront and resist this globalization. For Islamic identity, surrender, subordination, assimilation, or dissolution are not options. It maintains a steadfast stance against the forces of globalization, ensuring that it can face and challenge these pressures. (Saida Rahmania, 2012, p. 184)

This elucidates the conflict between Islamic identity and cultural globalization, resulting in an identity crisis among youth in the Arab world. The root of this identity crisis in our society is the clash of cultures, which young people perceive as modern compared to the values of their traditional culture. This leads to a sense of alienation, expressing dissatisfaction and rejection of society and its culture. At its core, it is a feeling of loss, creating what is known as cultural alienation and estrangement. (Hafida Mehlab, 2016, p. 34)

This clearly shows the identity crisis that youth are experiencing, deeply rooted in our society, particularly with the influx of values and cultures from more advanced societies. Our communities suffer from weaknesses and backwardness

on all fronts compared to the advanced civilizational models presented to them. This results in the consumption of the values and culture of these societies, which has become a symbol of social status. Consequently, there is a quest for everything foreign, leading to transformations in the value and cultural structures of our societies. (Hafida Mehlab, 2016, p. 34) However, when we talk about conflict or confrontation here, it does not necessarily mean the same thing as Samuel Huntington's concept, which involves confronting the other, eliminating, and eradicating them. Rather, the intended meaning of the conflict is to gather material and moral forces to face this globalization. This leads us to discuss the stance on globalization. (Hafida Mehlab, 2016, p. 184)

First Requirement: Globalization Between Acceptance and Rejection (AL-Milihi & Mohamed, 2005, pp. 49-56)

➤ **Absolute Acceptance of Globalization:**

Proponents of this view believe that globalization is inevitable and a cosmic fate over which nations have no choice. They argue that it is essential to participate in globalization, benefit from its advantages, and minimize its disadvantages as much as possible. Any attempt to resist it is seen as a form of self-destruction. One researcher clarifies this point by stating that the inability of people today to control decisions and information once they flow into electronic communication networks makes globalization appear, with its daily positive and negative outcomes, as an inevitable fate. This view calls for accepting globalization or adopting it as a lifestyle.

➤ **Absolute Rejection of Globalization:**

Opponents of this view argue that it is necessary to "stand against globalization and block all pathways and channels through which it can penetrate our society." They believe that the first thing we will lose due to globalization is our cultural identity, which will be distorted and transformed into a faint imitation of Western, particularly American, society.

Proponents of this view express the severity of the issue and the potential harms and dangers it can bring to the nation, distorting our identity and turning it into a disfigured entity, caught between holding onto its roots and chasing the illusion of globalization.

➤ **A Balanced Approach:**

This perspective advocates for accepting certain aspects of globalization and benefiting from its advantages while rejecting other aspects that conflict with fundamental principles and values. Protecting Islamic cultural identity from the negatives and dangers of globalization does not involve withdrawing into oneself and rejecting the other. Instead, it involves highlighting Islamic heritage and requires defending Islamic cultural identity by reducing admiration and influence

by Western culture, resisting its powerful attraction, and bringing it back within its limits. It also involves debunking the myth of its universality, recognizing that every culture originates in a specific environment and time period before spreading beyond these boundaries through dominance and media communication.

Second Requirement: Social Media (Facebook) as a Tool of Cultural Globalization

Given the extensive range of uses for social media sites and networks, as well as the variety of services these platforms offer and the goals they achieve, multiple definitions have emerged. They can be summarized as follows:

"Social media refers to a group of websites on the Internet that enable communication with the advent of the second generation of the web, known as Web 2.0." (Mariam Nariman Noumar, 2012, p. 45)

Second Requirement: Social Media (Facebook) as a Tool of Cultural Globalization

Given the extensive range of uses for social media sites and networks, as well as the variety of services these platforms offer and the goals they achieve, multiple definitions have emerged. They can be summarized as follows:

"Social media refers to a group of websites on the Internet that enable communication with the advent of the second generation of the web, known as Web 2.0."

These platforms facilitate communication among individuals in a virtual community environment, uniting members with common interests or semi-affiliations (such as country, school, universities, companies, etc.). Users interact through messages, view personal profiles, and stay updated with news and information shared for public display. Social media serves as an effective means of social interaction among individuals, whether they are friends we meet in real life or friends we meet in a virtual environment.

These websites allow users to create personal pages visible to the public within a specific site or system. They act as a communication tool between the page creator and their acquaintances or other system users. They provide services for exchanging information among users of that site, such as "MySpace" and "Facebook." (Nish, Azouz; Lotfi, Dekani, 2015, p. 184)

Facebook: facebook.com

Facebook is one of the most important and widely used social media platforms. It has become an easy electronic base through which anyone can interact in various fields such as education, commerce, politics, entertainment, and more.

The site was founded by Mark Zuckerberg, who launched it on February 4, 2004, while he was a student at Harvard University. Zuckerberg has since become the world's youngest billionaire.

In Europe, Facebook traditionally refers to a paper book that contains photos and information about individuals in a specific university or group. This concept inspired the name of the website. (Wael Mubarak Hadher Fadlallah, 2011, p. 12)

The Media and Communication Dictionary defines Facebook as "a social networking site established in 2004 that allows the publication of personal profiles. Initially designed to serve university students, faculty, and staff, it has since expanded to include everyone." (Mariam Nariman Noumar, 2012, p. 55)

Third Requirement: Social Media and Islamic Cultural Identity - What Relationship?

One of the serious impacts of cultural globalization on Islamic identity and the particularities of Muslims relates to the family, specifically the basic social institution comprising the father, mother, and children. Other critical issues include the status of women, the rights of children, and human rights. (Mustafa Al-Masmoudi, 1985, p. 166)

social media platforms, including Facebook, serve multiple purposes, ranging from communication and information sharing to entertainment and cultural exchange. They play a crucial role in the process of cultural globalization, influencing how people interact, share information, and experience the world.

-Family Structure: The portrayal of family dynamics and relationships on social media can influence and sometimes undermine traditional Islamic family values, leading to shifts in how family roles are perceived and practiced.

-Women's Issues: Social media often highlights global feminist movements and ideologies, which can clash with traditional Islamic views on gender roles and the status of women, creating tension and debate within Muslim communities.

- Children's Rights: The exposure to diverse viewpoints on children's rights and upbringing practices can challenge established norms in Islamic societies, leading to conflicts between modern perspectives and traditional values.

Human Rights: The promotion of a universal human rights framework through social media can sometimes be at odds with Islamic teachings, necessitating a careful balance between respecting global norms and preserving Islamic identity.

while social media offers numerous opportunities for engagement and information exchange, it also poses significant challenges to maintaining and protecting Islamic cultural identity in the face of pervasive cultural globalization.

Indeed, Professor Yusuf al-Qaradawi, in his discussion about globalization, emphasized its dangers by stating that the most perilous and far-reaching aspect of globalization on Islamic identity is cultural globalization. He remarked:

"Cultural globalization seeks to strip us of our skin, to detach us from our identity, or to remove our identity altogether. It aims to inundate our nation with its intellectual products and its culturally radiated, death- and destruction-bearing canned goods." (Abu Bakr Rafiq, 2007, pp. 9-10)

Modern media devices, including social media platforms, are entrusted with the role of helping cultures cross-fertilize and providing them with the fresh air needed to prevent suffocation. At the same time, these media are responsible for protecting these cultures from violent storms and destructive currents. Today, we are well aware of the challenges and dangers that threaten culture. (Mustafa Al-Masmoudi, 1985, p. 172)

"Just as any disruption in the nervous system affects personality, no matter how strong it is, any imbalance related to the flow of information has its repercussions on an individual's view of the cultural components of society. These components provide the foundations from which individuals derive their origins and establish their belonging to this society." (Mustafa Al-Masmoudi, 1985, p. 172)

The role of media is to protect Islamic cultural identity. Through these media, Islamic culture can confront challenges by showcasing its features and educating nations about its cultural and social values, making it attractive to others and earning their respect and appreciation.

Social media platforms work to safeguard Islamic cultural identity from foreign intellectual invasion and protect its foundational authenticity from the impurities of Western cultural currents that distort its nature and harm the future of young Arab Muslims.

This function must be actively pursued by university youth, as Islamic cultural identity serves as the bridge connecting successive generations. Utilizing media devices and social platforms to convey the message of Prophet Muhammad is a trust placed upon the youth. They are obligated to preserve it, as any negligence in conveying the message allows Western culture to distort Islam, thereby causing moral harm to future generations and leading them to lose their national and cultural identity.

Third Requirement: Recommendations to Address the Challenges of Western Cultural Globalization and Preserve Islamic Identity Using Social Media (Facebook)

Based on the findings of this study titled "Social Media as a Tool of Globalization and Its Impact on the Islamic Cultural Identity of Algerian University Youth," several recommendations have been made as follows:

- **Strengthening Identity Elements by Returning to Islam, Faith, and Doctrine:** The role of Facebook is highlighted through interaction with topics related to faith and doctrine and defending them.
- **Emphasizing the Arabic Language in Media and Social Media Platforms:** This includes improving educational curricula so that young Muslims can continuously learn about their religion and teach it to future generations, whether through reading, listening to lectures, or giving religious lessons on social media platforms. This contributes to solidifying Islamic identity.
- **Holding onto Islamic Heritage:** Showcase the positives of Islam and its universality to Muslims before others, so they can draw inspiration from their glorious past and take pride in their identity.
- **Positive Interaction with Society:** Muslims should participate positively and constructively in the societies they live in, adhering to Islamic values and ethics while maintaining their Islamic identity and values.
- **Awareness and Communication:** Muslims should strive to understand the challenges facing their Islamic identity and engage in constructive dialogue with others to exchange views and mutual understanding, working towards the upliftment of the nation in various fields—religious, cultural, and political.
- **Confronting the Drawbacks of Western Cultural Globalization:** Reveal the strengths and weaknesses of globalization, study its negatives and positives with an open Islamic perspective.
- **Integrated Coordination and Cooperation:** Ministries of Education, Higher Education, Culture, Media, Awqaf, Islamic Affairs, and Justice should work together to protect Islamic identity from any negative influences.
- **Media's Role in Identity Preservation:** Media should fulfill their duties in preserving and supporting Islamic identity instead of importing programs that undermine it without scrutinizing them.
- **Education's Role in Enhancing Islamic Identity:** Education should reveal the harms of Western globalization on youth and future generations.
- **Enhancing Social Interaction and Cultural Dialogue:** Engage in Arab cultural dialogue with other cultures through social media platforms, enriching our Arab-Islamic culture with beneficial aspects of other global cultures. Simultaneously, introduce global cultures to our rich heritage, traditions, and values rooted in Islam, promoting Islamic globalization.
- **Raising Awareness among University Youth:** Encourage university youth to use social media to spread the Islamic message to everyone and

represent this message positively and effectively, becoming a source of inspiration for the world.

Conclusion

In this article, titled "Social Media as a Tool of Globalization and Its Impact on the Islamic Cultural Identity of Algerian University Youth," we explored the concept of globalization and cultural globalization, along with identity and Arab-Islamic cultural identity. After delving into the debate of acceptance and rejection of globalization, we discussed the role of media, with a special focus on social media platforms, particularly Facebook, which is widely used in Algerian society. We noted that the majority of its users are young people of both genders with diverse interests and goals.

Ultimately, we aimed to answer how these platforms can influence or serve the Arab-Islamic cultural identity. Information and communication technology has intruded upon the cultural identity of Arab youth in general and Algerian youth in particular. The Islamic cultural identity forms the essential reference point, the foundation of an individual's existence and survival, reflecting their values, customs, morals, and sense of belonging. While maintaining the Islamic cultural identity is a societal responsibility, its preservation and continuity fall upon the youth, especially university students, as future leaders.

The identity crisis faced by youth, alongside intellectual and cultural invasion and the dominance of globalization, leads to cultural alienation. Addressing the challenges posed by globalization and the communication revolution in Arab societies cannot be achieved by rejecting globalization. Instead, it requires mastering its mechanisms and leveraging them to rebuild these societies and restore confidence in their social and cultural strengths. It is essential to preserve the Islamic identity, strengthen the sense of belonging, and employ it to counter cultural globalization. Educating people, particularly the youth, about the dangers and seriousness of cultural globalization in eradicating Islamic cultural identity is crucial.

Efforts should be made to disseminate Islamic values and culture, fostering pride in them. Utilizing modern technology to spread these ideas and principles is key. Guiding university students on the importance of using social media to benefit their Arab-Muslim cultural identity and represent it well before other cultures is vital. Additionally, organizing training courses and workshops to highlight the positive uses of social media can further these efforts.

Social media platforms, as tools of cultural globalization, often promote values and norms that may conflict with traditional Islamic principles and practices. This interaction raises several key concerns.

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