

Computer-mediated Communication and Formation of Virtual Communities: Transformation of Culturality and Identity with Special Reference to India

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Abstract

The paper aims at an analysis of the transformation of culturality and identity. With this broad objective, the paper addresses mainly the following points: (1) under the impact of computer-mediated communication, the culturality and identity of the regular net-users are getting transformed, (2) under this impact, new type of group formation, known as, the virtual community of the net-users is taking place in the cyberspace, (3) this formation has come closer to the real community and the interactions of the two communities (virtual and real) is affecting culturality and identity, giving rise to double identity or hybridised identity, (4) the virtual community is governed by its own rules of the game to be internalised, produced and reproduced by its members. This process is transforming the culturality and identity, and evolving transculturality and a distinctive lifestyle among them, (5) the computer-mediated communication develops and adopts its own functional strategy of communication and information sharing, reinforcing the distinctive culturality and identity of the members of the on-line community, (6) the virtual community invites symbolic investments, provides symbolic capital out of it and transforms culturality and identity, and (7) the virtual community works as counter-culture to the adverse effects of the Internet-culture and changes culturality and identity of the members. The paper revolves around these points in an integrated form in different parts of the paper. The paper is based on analysis of secondary sources.

Keywords: Computer-mediated Communication, Virtual Community, Transformation, Culturality, Identity

Introduction

In the age of information, communication and technology, the Internet connected computer-mediated communication has become a powerful, widespread, fast, efficient and easily accessible electronic tool of communication and information sharing. It has become a global phenomenon. It has reached across the globe and has brought the world virtually into an interconnected global community. It has

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