

How Does Cantonese Media Affect Chinese Cultural Identity Among Malaysian Chinese?

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Abstract

Cantonese is the carrier of Chinese cultural memory and nostalgia. Malaysian Chinese people have constructed their ethnic cultural identity using Cantonese media. Nevertheless, it remains relatively unclear how Cantonese media affects the construction of Chinese cultural identity in three dimensions (cognition, emotion, and behavior). The present study examined the relationship between Cantonese media use and Chinese cultural identity among Malaysian Chinese in these three dimensions. Based on a survey questionnaire and in-depth interviews with ethnic Chinese in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the analyses yielded three main findings. First, media exposure and the perceived recreational, cultural, and instrumental value of Cantonese media use had a significant positive impact on Chinese cultural cognition. Second, the perceived recreational and cultural value of Cantonese media had a significant positive impact on Chinese cultural emotion. Third, the perceived recreational and instrumental value of Cantonese media had a significant positive impact on Chinese cultural behavior. We highlight the importance of perceived recreational, cultural, and instrumental value and exposure to Cantonese media in shaping three dimensions of Chinese cultural identity and suggest attaching importance to and supporting the development of native language media for the diaspora to realize the integrated development of cultural globalization and diversification.

Keywords: Cantonese media use, Chinese cultural identity, Chinese cultural cognition, Chinese cultural emotion, Chinese cultural behavior