

Reflexively negotiating individuality-collectivity: Malaysian teenagers' self identity and their consumption of the global television

ABSTRACT

Like any country, Malaysia experienced the effects of globalization on its cultural identity. Satellite television became one of the conduits for the inflow of transnational culture through the various channels in Malaysia. A study had been conducted to examine how the meeting of the global cultures through the media are shaping young Malaysians' self-identity, by looking at what forms of global identities that are being reproduced. Secondly, if local collective identities and culture are being disembedded out of its locality due to their consumption of the global television programmes. By capturing the narratives of young Malay, Chinese, Indian and Kadazandusuns from their media diaries and focus group interviews, it is found that media globalization have led to the emergence of a fluid and hybrid identities among young Malaysians. Individualised identities based on Western fashion pleasure and music are forms of individualized identity that draws young Malaysians. However, local cultural identity - religion and ethnicity are not being disembedded rather it is negotiated along with global identities and re-embedded in new contexts. Using Giddens' notion of 'self-reflexivity', it is found that young Malaysians reorganized their sense of self not because of the collapsing of the local culture but because of the prevalent forces of local culture in their daily lives that is constraining their position as global-modern subjects.