

## INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND NEW MEDIA

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### ABSTRACT

The 20<sup>th</sup> century portrayed power pack mass media platforms and now 21<sup>st</sup> century is making us witness revolutionary changes in communication and transportation instilled by new media (ICT) at precipitated speed and thus changing the process of globalization in society. This inevitably leads to predominantly cultural homogenization and fostering of intercultural dialogue. Up till now communication scientists have ignored intercultural communication as a distinct and discrete field of study or research has raised even more pressing issues for intercultural communication scholars and practitioners. It is imperative for intercultural communication researchers to further formulate strategically critical reflections on established theories and proven methods and to contemplate on past achievements and future directions. This paper explicates the significance of the condensed relationship between new media and intercultural communication, a vibrant discipline.

The multicultural world is enhanced by the experiences of sojourners, immigrants, and others who successfully make the transition from one culture to another" (Kim, 2001) .Last fifty years have witnessed a steep rise in migration and this paper focuses on the ground breaking impact of new media on intercultural communication which has a powerful capacity to promote cross-culture understanding, language, religion, social identity and gender differences. People from different cultures now communicate for social, professional and recreational requirements regardless of distance. Fortunately, it transports us into a 21st Century way of thinking about culture, communication, and new media." (Kent A. Ono, Professor, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) This paper attempts to investigate the impact of using new media which have brought human interaction and society to a highly complex and interconnected level. My larger goal is to build meta-knowledge about the critical role that intercultural competences and effective technologies solutions that can play in global communication and international relations to enable individuals to control messages in interpersonal media.

New media are ubiquitous, changing the landscape of intercultural communication (Shuter, 2011). This paper discusses area of education and cross-cultural rhetoric on the use of persuasive digital technologies to enable intercultural competencies among students and teachers across the world.

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To lead a successful life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we have to have the ability to communicate in intercultural context. Intercultural communication has now become a necessity and no longer an option for a successful integration to enable individuals to control messages in interpersonal media.

**KEYWORDS:** Communication, Media, Intercultural Communication, Cultural Homogenization.

## INTRODUCTION

The advent of the twenty-first century witnessed a revolution in the contexts and contents of intercultural communication. Technological advances and people's international mobility have given a new meaning to the words "intercultural communication". The remarkable growth in the prevalence now require more sophisticated approaches, theoretical frameworks, and analytical tools to be developed and applied to intercultural communication. We have to explore the interplay between intercultural communication and new technologies and finally examining this across different contexts.

New media is an emerging field for communication scholars and publications in this area are high in demand. Intercultural issue is no stranger to us if we skim through the pages of history where they are there during wars, religious journeys and goods exchange. Today 21<sup>st</sup> century has constrained us to pay meticulous attention as the world has become a small village increasingly interlaced and easily accessible due to unprecedented transformations occurring in technology advancement. With the introduction of internet and computer significant changes in communication were observed in human perception, reachability and control of the media. Beyond being a small village for people, the world has turned into a single scope in which space, speed and cultures meet. In this new world intercultural communication and media research have cumulated a sizable amount of empirical knowledge with a deep penetration, social significance and technological diversity regardless

of proximity. There has been a special focus on new media and intercultural communication research. New media (ICTs) are ubiquitous transforming the landscape of intercultural communication in digital age. Researchers have largely ignored the impact of new media but available research suggests new media play a significant role in intercultural encounters, resulting in the potential for augmentation of twentieth century ICC. Intercultural communication has been widely examined for many years by communication scholars to develop a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives and practices. Some interculturalists see intercultural communication as an academic discipline viz. one branch of communication studies, anchored in its characteristically ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions. Intercultural communication has incredibly transformed its properties at precipitated speed and now social actors interact across geo-linguistic regions and epistemological boundaries. This will continue to demonstrate indispensability across uneven modernities.

Media and communications research is developing rapidly, both theoretically and methodologically, in keeping with the vast expansion in the penetration, technological diversity and social significance of the media globally. New media have changed landscape of intercultural communication and made tremendous progress and brought revolutionary changes in people's extensive and intensive thinking, behaviors, and redefined the sense of

community and restructured human society. Today, new media have made it possible to transfer any information via news media in an instant. This, as a result, is increasing the significance of new media in intercultural communication gleaned from a face-to-face paradigm. It is fairly common but perhaps not altogether innocent to say that the advent of new media has been the most essential and more important avatar of the total media hybrid practice system. McLuhan had suggested the world to be reduced into a "small village" due to globalization and technologies and surpass traditional media. The internet and email are an asynchronous media that transcend time and distance. The convergence of new technologies has reconfigured communications resulting in the dramatic transformation of society. In the wake of the process, not only the already-heterogeneous societies of today are becoming even more multilingual and multicultural. New media's unprecedented ubiquity has made mediated and interpersonal channels of intercultural communication inseparable and human interactions across homogenized cultures are indelibly inscribed.

Intercultural Communication is not just another buzzword and nobody knows what it is. It has become popular subject in academia and dominant paradigm connecting a plethora of disciplines. Intercultural Communication is a dynamic field with continuous growth and evaluation. Some scholars confine this to communication among individuals hailing from different nationalities while others in contrast encompass inter-ethnic, religious and individuals of different sexual orientations. As the localization and globalization intensify in every nook and corner of the world there will be more fundamental issues of community, humanity and identity. Intercultural communication is the lone way to mitigate identity politics, social integration, religious conflicts and ecological vulnerability in this global village. Since 1950s the

graphs of intercultural communication have shown upward trends as a paradigmatic disciplinary research. Intercultural communication has become a divergent field fulfilling conventional criteria of scientific discipline as we see diversity communicating through geo-linguistic regions and cultural boundaries like any other evolving field of science. But, the epistemological aspiration and ontological assumptions of intercultural communication are subject to interminable debate and that is why the scholarly attention is rising to new heights to gauge relationship between new media and intercultural communication. In this field the methods of research also highlight variations-: reception studies, discourse analysis, cultural analysis, conversation analysis, interviews, surveys, observations etc are all utilized for data collection. Moreover, from many scholarly traditions and academic disciplines, intercultural communication has become a part and parcel of human and social scientists with astonishing leaps to transform the world. Having a wider multiplicity of field, this could be conflicting axiological, ontological and epistemological assumptions about intercultural communication. Inter-cultural studies have undergone sundry changes towards theoretical and methodological pluralism which put them at crossroads thinking dialectically about communication and culture (Martin & Nakayama, 2010, 2013). All said and done, the question "Is the intercultural field truly intercultural?" still awaits a pragmatic answer. It is imperative for intercultural communication researchers to further formulate critical reflects on established stories and proven methods and to contemplate on past achievements and future directions.

Every medium has had its share of effects on the society and has been responsible in their own way for changes in socio-economic and cultural aspects. Each of us is the product of a society and culture and since the 17th century, intercultural

communication has assumed the form of a modernist ethnocentrism based on values such as knowledge, pluralism and individualism. The 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the historical changes created the necessity for new forms of intercultural communication. In the last decade of that century, a transcultural form of communication based on dialogue was proposed as a basis for cross-cultural adaptation, a creation of multicultural identities and a construction of a hybrid multicultural society. With global compressions of time and space, intercultural communication is increasingly taking place in the digital sphere changing the landscape throughout the globe. New communication technology had removed many physical barriers and increased opportunities for intermingling with different cultural groups and sensitized many scholars. Until the dawn of 21<sup>st</sup> century it was beyond the realm of imagination to get electronically connected for communicators. The digital age heralded an unprecedented era of openness and transparency-more communication would happen by more people, more often. Reality has somewhat differed. Despite the best efforts of those involved, intercultural contact has moved to the digital sphere at a pace slower than intercultural disharmony. However, there are tangible advantages to intercultural communication in the digital era. At the start of the second decade of the new millennium, the powerful effects of new media communications have brought sweeping changes and are facilitating face-to-face intercultural contact across the world. As we become interconnected, the challenges and promises become hot topics for researchers and scholars from many disciplines. To surmount challenges practitioners and theoreticians have to articulate the nexuses and links between macro and micro level communication integrating critical and conventional approaches to intercultural, cross-cultural, critical cultural, intracultural and transcultural communication. The 20th century witnessed development of powerful mass media

platforms and in 21st century there is an explosion of new media technologies standing at the crossroads of interpersonal, intercultural, and mass communication. Significantly reconfigured become our senses of space referring to a local regional culture that sees itself not introspectively but as an inflexion of global culture and that favours diversity, plurality, discontinuity?

New media are now commonplace and pervasive for individuals and institutions in all walks of life. There is a growing awareness amongst scholars of newer and more interactive media within a diverse, multidisciplinary and international global village. Cosmopolitanism has become a notion of global citizenship and theoretical repertoire that provides nuanced descriptions of what it means to be and communicate as a global citizen, how to critically study interconnectedness within and across cultures, and how to embrace differences without glossing over them. True and trusted intercommunication theories are not comfortably retrofitted to buttress new media contests nor does internet recognize how to communicate fundamental culture. There is a paucity of interaction between path breaking scholarly research and educators on how they impact international and intercultural communication. Conversely, cross-culture psychologists and speech communication experts often ignored the language dimension. But now the situation is fast changing in person and online to gain deeper insight into the cultural, social, cognitive and communicative dimensions. The status of English as a global lingua-franca, pluricentric language, we cannot ignore. There is a growing maturity in the field of cross-culture communication and we have to recognize changing landscape with increasing interconnectedness. If we do a critical assessment of past and present path breaking theory, research methods and practices, it lays emphasis on theoretical diversity within the field and explores ways to integrate and build on these perspectives through a range of methodologies

and approaches. An inter-culturist in short requires a deep knowledge of today's complex, globalizing world communication and culture which frequently intermingle. In a sense, yesterday's citizens have to become tomorrow's netizens. Intercultural communication is no longer an option, but a necessity.

## **THE IMPACT OF NEW MEDIA ON INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION**

We all are product of society and culture and treated as migrants in throes of a worldwide integration of cultures, a tectonic shift of habits and behavior that gives the potential to engage in successful and effective intercultural contacts. When an individual walks into an unknown world in changing demographics, he has to learn to deal and learn with cultural differences and adjust to constitute a multicultural personality (Serbanescu, 2007). With its distinctive features new media have brought revolutionary transformation of society and created a ripple effect changing people's daily lives and bringing about mediatized lifestyles. The old mediums are being revamped and new ones are into popularity. In the traditional sense, the very existence of human communication is also challenged. New media not only influences the form and content of information/ messages, but it also affects how two people from distant countries with distinct cultures can share a habitat of meaning with each other in the process of intercultural communication, intensely present on individual level intrinsically, between culture and ethnic groups, the new media bridge communication gaps and have switched cultural themes, grammar, maps to a new style amounting to loss of traditional cultural logic in human life. Change in life-styles has become increasingly blurred the existing boundaries of cultural practices and the facets of it have undergone sea changes. So, to avoid paranoid and apprehensions, formal studies of the cultural changes are inevitable. The reconstruction of

culture demands realignment of communication within own community whereas new media have reached in the process of intercultural communication. For a daily-life interaction, how to readjust this chaotic stage of cultural change becomes a challenge. Before the emergence of new media, according to Bagdasaryan (2011), traditions and innovations in human society co-existed in a dynamically synchronized way, but the speed and impact of the new media resulted in the inability of traditional values to keep pace with the new cultural values produced by new media. Culture and communication are overlapping concepts and therefore culture is a communication process as well as cultural, This cultural gap has caused difficulty in understanding or communication between generations and among people in the same culture.

New media also extrinsically construct communication gaps between different cultural and ethnic groups. The fragmented nature of new media has switched traditional cultural grammar, cultural themes, or cultural maps to a new pattern, resulting in the loss of traditional cultural logic. The rearrangement or restructuring of cultural patterns, or worldview, demands that members of a culture realign their communication behaviors within their own community, and to learn a new way of interaction with people from differing cultures. New media fosters a new culture in human society, in which the degree of ambiguity and uncertainty has been reshuffled and has reached its highest point, especially in the process of intercultural communication. How to readjust to this new situation and smoothly achieve the goal of mutual understanding for people from different cultural groups in this chaotic stage of cultural change becomes a great challenge for the practical need of interaction in daily life and research in the scholarly community. It is under this circumstance that we see more and more scholars are becoming involved in the

investigation of the relationship between new media and intercultural communication (Allwood & Schroeder, 2000; Pfister & Soliz, 011; Shuter, 2011).

After examining the extant literature, we found that emerging topical areas in this line of research mainly include three categories: (1) the impact of national/ethnic culture on the development of new media, (2) the impact of new media on cultural/social identity, and (3) the impact of new media (especially social media) on different aspects of intercultural interaction (e.g., intercultural relationship, intercultural dialogue, and intercultural conflict).

What trajectories contour the field of intercultural communication in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? We now realize that challenging issues of intercultural understanding are embedded in other complex questions: What kind of communication is needed by a pluralistic society to be both culturally diverse and unified in common goals? How does communication contribute to creating a climate of respect, not just tolerance, for diversity? Is “cross-cultural communication” just another one of those buzzwords that’s being used everywhere but nobody really knows what it means? Despite the potential hype, cross-cultural competence is nevertheless a widely recognized and valid concept which every expat should be familiar with. People often think that speaking another language fluently is what intercultural communication is all about. Being familiar with cross-cultural communication doesn’t just imply having a vague or rudimentary idea of what the expression means and how it works. Of course, speaking the local language is extremely helpful. However, social interaction is about much more than language skills. Assume you are listening to the gentle drum beats of Africa, melodic didgeridoo of Australia, eating Indian curry, Thai coconut milk and US burger. This will be sum of all cultures compressed into one super-culture

with enriched diversity. The need for cross-cultural awareness and communication is thus more important than ever as cultural anthropology recognizes that a people group may share a common worldview. They then would also share common beliefs/values, institutions, and overt behaviors and artifacts.

Intercultural communication or cross-cultural communication is a relatively new field of research in the communication discipline but have become increasingly popular components of our everyday lives in today’s digital society. It is through intercultural communication that we come to create, understand, and transform culture and identity. Intercultural communication can allow us to step outside of our comfortable, usual frame of reference and see our culture through a different lens. Intercultural communication is complicated, messy, and at times contradictory in its dialectical approach which helps us to capture the dynamism of intercultural communication. In order to achieve effective intercultural communication, we have to learn to manage differences flexibly and mindfully. The new media is a twenty-first century catchall term used to define all what is related to the internet and the interplay between technology, images, and sound. New media is a synonym for digital media which has brought forth “information revolution”. While definitions of new media vary but the terms generally refer to digital information transmitted through computers and wireless handheld devices and include, among others, the Internet, SMS or text messaging, instant messaging, blogs, social media, social games, websites, and virtual communities/worlds. This power to communicate is dramatically reshaping how we understand boundaries between people and places. It is reducing a once vast and isolated world into “the Global Village”. We live in an exciting time because we have, at our fingertips, unlimited potential to communicate with people around the world.

Research shows that people tend to use new media to become more integrated into the host culture during their adaptation and to maintain connections to their home countries. New media have shrunk the world into a much smaller interactive field bringing people from different cultures together in the “global village”. It is because of these reasons that more and more researchers are getting involved to explore the relationship between new media and intercultural communication.

The ubiquitous presence of the new media begs for an analysis of how the fast-paced social and technological innovations of our new media ecology alter various aspects of daily life, transforming national boundaries into transnational spaces, with resonance on communication. New media means that everyone is a publisher and critic (Georgetown University, 2010). As supported by Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, people desire to fulfill a sense of belonging through support from relationships with others. New media provides facility to communicate with others freely, gain knowledge and learn about different opinions and perspectives of issues, topics and events. A host of new media tools like Internet, mobile, Skype, computer, social net-work, YouTube, twitter, face book and blogs etc have enabled people from every corner of the world to remain connected in cyberspace with individuals and masses of myriad cultures. People irrespective of geo-political boundaries are departing from the mass-mediated contacts of the last several centuries and use new media to produce novel styles of communication like status updates and remixes thereby drastically reducing cost and access barriers. . These for a can serve as thriving sites of intercultural communicative exchange when they are unmediated-or, at least, minimally’. In short, new media creates new social networks, social relations, accelerates social exchanges and redefines cultural, geographical boundaries of human society (Steger, 2009)

Although global communication has been unalterably affected by the emergence of new media, there is a paucity of scholarly research on how they impact intercultural communication. While there are myriad ways new media can affect intercultural communication and some fertile areas are: how do national cultures vary in their use of new media to communicate within and across culture and how do co-cultures vary in their use of new media to communicate within and across cultures and in what ways are cultural/ social identities affected by new media? Conversely, are the uses of new media influenced by cultural/ social identities and how do new media affect the process of acculturation? , how do new media/ technologies impact communication between ethnic groups/ races?, How do social media influence intercultural dialogue and how do social media, social games and virtual worlds affect the development and maintenance of intercultural relationships? And how do blogs influence the development of intercultural relationships?

New media has the capacity to control messages in interpersonal media and capacity of individual control of messages in mass media (Crosbie, 2002) which has raised more pressing issues for intercultural communication scholars and practitioners. The early part of 21<sup>st</sup> century has witnessed that researchers have ignored the impact of new media on intercultural communication in a new media age and instead, concentrated on how new media is utilized in different cultures (Barker & Ota, 2011; Baron & Segerstad, 2010; Koc, 2006), in what ways culture affects new media development and design (Campbell, 2007; DeGoede, Van Vianen, & Klehe, 2011), and how CMC is influenced by culture (Chen, 2012; Gueguen, 2008; Mollov, & Schwartz, 2010). Many difficult and challenging questions need to be answered: What is the impact of new media on intercultural communication, impact of new media on cultural identity and, impact of

new media on different intercultural communications?

## **NEW MEDIA AND CULTURE**

The cultural impact of new media has become a hot topic in popular discussions increasing a major topic of academic study. A plethora of studies are critical, normative and essay the goodness or badness of aspects and implication of new media culture. The new media landscape has created tensions between content producers and copyright holders who are increasingly engaged in a form of culture war over access to and dissemination of information. To transform society, new media support new cultures. New media and culture are intertwined and have dramatically altered communication across cultures as they shape each other around the globe. Now we can communicatively interact across cultural and national borders and influence societal use of new media. In today's technology driven world, the cultural impact of new media has become a major topic of academic study.

From Twitter Revolutions to online literary, the new media are producing intercultural relationship, identities, adaptations, pedagogic and forming global semi-culture. Understanding how media is produced and consumed is key to understanding cultures around the world. It is believed that not only culture affects the social use of media but new media appear to change culture. This is an important dimension of intercultural new media for further commodification and corporatization of public space. A major challenge that faces policy-makers with regard to new media technologies is to ensure that their unique potential as vehicles of truly active cultural exchange is upheld.

Early research on culture and new media focused on computer-mediated communication and explored such topics as intercultural communication and CMC (Ma. 1996) and rise of

electronic culture. Intercultural communication has always been interdisciplinary and ready to absorb multiple theoretical approaches to make space for no dominant, subaltern, counter hegemonic , local knowledge . Exploring the intersection of new media and intercultural communication theory has the potential to refine and expand twentieth-century theories of intercultural grounded in a face-to-face paradigm. Much of the literature on new communication technologies has emphasized the dimensions of technical difference such as temporality, storage capacity, reproducibility, materiality, mobility, reach and so forth.

With its distinctive features new media has brought human society to a highly interconnected and complex level, but at the same time, it challenges the very existence of human communication in the traditional sense. New media not only influences the form and content of information/messages, but it also affects how people understand each other in the process of human communication, especially for those from different cultural or ethnic groups. New media foster a new culture in human society, in which the degree of ambiguity and uncertainty has been reshuffled and has reached its highest point, especially in the process of intercultural communication.

The new culture hatched from new media creates a traditional continuity and communication gaps between different cultures and ethnic groups. This has caused difficulty in understanding between generations and among people in the same culture. The restructuring of cultural patterns demands realignment of communication behaviour.

On the one hand, intrinsically, the new culture hatched from new media creates a continuity gap between traditions and innovations within a culture. Before the emergence of new media, according to Bagdasaryan (2011), traditions and innovations in human society co-existed in a



dynamically synchronized way, but the speed and impact of the new media resulted in the inability of traditional values to keep pace with the new cultural values produced by new media. This cultural gap has caused difficulty in understanding or communication between generations and among people in the same culture

The fragmented nature of new media has switched traditional cultural grammar, cultural themes, or cultural maps to a new pattern, resulting in the loss of traditional cultural logic. The rearrangement or restructuring of cultural patterns, or worldview, demands that members of a culture realign their communication behaviors within their own community, and to learn a new way of interaction with people from differing cultures. New media fosters a new culture in human society, in which the degree of ambiguity and uncertainty has been reshuffled and has reached its highest point, especially in the process of intercultural communication. How to readjust to this new situation and smoothly achieve the goal of mutual understanding for people from different cultural groups in this chaotic stage of cultural change becomes a great challenge for the practical need of interaction in daily life and research in the scholarly community. It is under this circumstance that we see more and more scholars are becoming involved in the investigation of the relationship between new media and intercultural communication (Allwood & Schroeder, 2000; Pfister & Soliz, 2011; Shuter, 2011).

## **NATIONAL/ ETHNIC CULTURE AND NEW MEDIA**

As Weick (1983) pointed out, in the international electronic exchange culture plays a significant role in affecting the process and outcome of the interaction. In other words, culture as a communication context may dictate the use of media. Chen (2000) found that three cultural factors, namely thinking patterns, expression

styles, and cultural context, are the three prominent cultural factors that influence how people behave in electronic media, and the three factors are the manifestation of cultural values (Chen & Starosta, 2005). Based on the distinction of low-context culture and high-context culture categorized by Hall (1976), Chung and Chen (2007) proposed possible communication differences for members in the two groups in the process of electronic interaction (p. 285)

It is assumed that cultural values will influence the social networking process in new media (Vasslou, Joinson, & Coourvoisier, 2010; Veltri & Elgarah, 2009; Vinuales, 2011). Hall's (1976) low-context and high-context cultures and Hofstede's (2001) individualism and collectivism dimensions of cultural values are two of the most common models used in the study of the relationship between culture and media. For example, Kim, Sohn, and Choi (2010) found that cultural value orientations affect a user's attitude when using new media.

Their study demonstrates that although the motives for using social media are similar for students, those in high-contexts, collectivistic cultures, such as Korean college students, show more emphasis on attaining social support from existing social relationships, while those in low-context, individualistic cultures, such as American college students, tend to show more interest in seeking entertainment rather than social relationships. Moreover, Rosen, Stefanone, and Lackaff (2010) as well found that, compared to high-context, collectivistic cultures in the process of new media interaction, people in low-context, individualistic cultures tend to emphasize individual achievements and self-promotion to extend their social relations network, though the orientation may trade privacy in the network

## **NEW MEDIA AND CULTURAL IDENTITY**

The convergence of new media and globalization brings about at least six new experiences for

human beings, including new textual experiences, new ways of representing the world, new relationships between users and new media technologies, new conceptions of the biological body's relationship to technological media, and new patterns of organization and production (Lister, Dovery, Giddings, Grant, & Kelly, 2009). These experiences will inevitably challenge the traditional formation and definition of social or cultural identity. In other words, the use of new media is shaking the root of cultural identity by weakening or strengthening the intensity of the relationship between people and community (Hampton & Wellman, 1999; Singh, 2010). The time and space compression caused by the convergence of new media and globalization creates a universal cyberspace in which new cultural identity is emerging in different virtual communities.

The new cultural identity formed by new media may not change the traditional meaning of cultural identity as a unique product through interaction in a specific group context, which gives members a sense of belongings to the group, but it will directly challenge the traditional attributes of cultural identity, namely, temporality, territoriality, contrastivity, interactivity, and multiplicity (Belay, 1996). More specifically, cultural identity fostered by new media is no longer a product of historical development (i.e., temporality) confined in an avowal process of people in a geographical place (i.e., territoriality).

It may still be a distinct collective consciousness based on the members' sense-making process (i.e., contrastivity). The virtual community is characterized by a higher degree of heterogeneity and a lower level of interconnection (Van Dijk, 1998). In addition, social interaction (i.e., interactivity) as the foundation of developing cultural identity remains unchanged in the age of new media, but the nature of interpersonal and group relationships via social interaction in the virtual

community is unlike those constructed from traditional face-to-face interaction.

Finally, it is still unknown if the new cultural identity formed by new media will continue to be a multi-faceted concept or practice (i.e., multiplicity), which can contrast with the six facets of traditional cultural identity indicated by Belay (1996), including sociological identities, occupational identities, geobasic identities, national identities, co-cultural identities, and ethnic identities.

In sum, new media continues to establish different kinds of new communities without the limit of time and space, which makes cultural identity more dynamic, fluid, and relativized, and imposes austere challenges to the autonomy and stability of cultural identity (Tan, 2005; Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2010). The impact of new media on cultural identity has become one of the issues intercultural communication scholars are most concerned about (e.g., Chen & Zhang, 2010; Cheong & Gary, 2011; Chiang, 2010; Halualani, 2008; Huffaker & Calvert, 2006; Kennedy, 2006; Koc, 2006; Wang, Huang, Huang, & Wang, 2009; Wang, Walther, & Hancock, 2009; Weber & Mitchell, 2008; William, Martins, Consalvo, & Ivory, 2009)

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