

Abstract

The accelerated globalization and its impact on all aspects of human life have become a focal topic in the academic community. Volumes of works have been written to explore and theorize the concept of globalization. Despite all these efforts, however, much has been left inadequately explored—especially at the individual level. This study attempts to examine the manifestation of globalization at the individual level (e.g. individual globality) and its relationship with media consumption. To investigate such a relationship, this study first constructs several scales of attributes of individual globality and then correlates them with individuals' media consumption. Guiding this investigation is a conceptual framework constructed on the basis of the media system dependency theory.

The research method for this study is a random-sampling survey. Five cities in China, Beijing, Chengdu, Changchun, Lanzhou, and Wuhan, are selected as the sites of this study based on their geopolitical location, level of economic development and access to both overseas and domestic media. Those five cities serve well as representatives of Chinese cities. Through a multi-stage cluster sampling procedure, data of a sample of 1316 adults have been collected. The main measures of individual globality fall into four major categories: political/ideological globality, cultural globality, social globality, and consumption/lifestyle globality. The main measures of media consumption are overall media exposure, exposure to foreign/overseas media, and exposure to different media types and content.

The data have been analyzed by the use of several statistical tools, such as correlation, multiple regression, and ANOVA. In light of the assumptions of

the media system dependency theory, this study expects to generate empirical evidence that tests the above media theory in the Chinese context and the assumed positive relationship between various types of media exposure and the level of individual globality. The major findings include: i) Urban Chinese demonstrate a moderately high level of individual globality, and the level is not significant different between the cities; ii) Mass media have been found to be closely correlated with individual globality, however, no significant difference is figured out in terms of the source of media; iii) The media dependency relationship with individual globality has been partially supported; iv) Intervening effects on the relationship have been identified with demographic data collected at the five cities and it appears that locality, income level, and English language ability play a major role in enhancing globality in Chinese setting.

Overall, this preliminary study developed a self-reported instrument designed to capture and access the figures of globality and yielded some interesting results that are better suited for generating hypotheses for future study. The findings present a clear relationship between electronic media use and individual globality and underscore the benefits of taking a comprehensive and integrated approach to examine the impact of globalization at individual level and the media function in shaping people's consciousness of becoming a global citizen. The globality scales contribute some much-needed empirical data to the ongoing discussions of globality in other media and cultural contexts or geopolitical regions. In the future, the investigations of media genres and printed media are needed to better understand the role of mass media in formulating individual globality.