

STUDYING THE IMPACT OF MASS MEDIA ON SOCIO CULTURAL AWARENESS OF WOMEN (SCAW): A CASE STUDY OF WOMEN IN LARESTAN

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ABSTRACT

The present study was accomplished to assess women's awareness of their social and cultural, and particularly family rights. Statistical Population of the research included all women of Lar County out of which 383 individuals were randomly selected as sample size of the study. The results of Pearson's test showed that there was no significant relationship between using mass media and women's awareness of social and individual rights, family rights and conditions, and also the family incomes after the marriage. However, findings indicated that there was a negative relationship between mass media and women's awareness of individual rights before the marriage. Meanwhile, there was a positive and significant relationship between the age, trust in media and women's awareness. Results of variance analysis test indicated that there was not any significant relationship between women's academic education, trust in media and using mass media. Also, there was a significant relationship between women's field of study, parents' education and the amount and manners of using mass media.

Key words: *Mass media, Social awareness, and Cultural awareness*

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, in the modern world, awareness and knowledge play a vital role in the human life. Knowledge and awareness as the biggest asset play an important role in the social changes and achieve widespread dimensions either superficially or deeply. So that the members of community have to acquire knowledge and awareness in order to achieve social capital in the societies. Knowledge and information are the most effective and valuable sources of wealth and capital in the society. In another word, knowledge is a common wealth not being damaged; and the more people consume it, the higher benefits will be achieved. Information and awareness are specific amounts of knowledge being shared in between the members of a social network (Bahrami, 2002:3).

In the world of great technological changes, important events happen, only in the countries which manage to progress and develop their community members to take part in great dimensions of important affairs within different social and cultural spheres (Mansoornejad, 2005). Mass media is considered as an essential tool of culture in the modern world, since it plays higher and effective roles in shaping their beliefs, attitudes, motivations and behaviors. Based on different ways of communication, media forms the thoughts and tendencies of people in specific directions (Sardarabadi *et al.*, 2003).

Jackson stated that mass media has affected on 87 per cent of people for promoting their awareness. Meanwhile, social and cultural life of the modern human is strongly influenced by the mass media. With due consideration to the fact that media involves both constructive and destructive aspects and contents, it also requires more attention to the phenomenon of communication, as it effects on the functions (Sarookhani, 2004:33). More than half of the populations in Larestan County are women. As it is already mentioned, knowledge and awareness of women in the community plays an effective role in the construction of future of the country. Considering the influential role of media on all the members of a society, specifically in the present generation; the purpose of this article was to study the role of mass media as one of the extensive devices in transmitting social and cultural awareness and its impact in

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promoting women's awareness. This research aims to investigate the impact of mass media in raising women's social and cultural awareness in Larestan County.

1. *The role of media in the raise of awareness*

In order to initialize the role of media in the promotion of awareness of people, the researcher has drawn substantial questions. How does human being, as a member of human society take his/her awareness, cognition and perception? Do media play an important role in reaching awareness and cognition? How do media form this awareness? What is the effect and place of media in awareness of individuals' national identity? Do media cause the demolition of national identity or do they play a significant role in the creation and reinforcement of national identity? McCoeil emphasized on the performance of media in formation of the national identity and considers the application of media including the approval of personal values, adopting behavioral patterns, identification to others and gaining insights about the self (McCoeil, p. 112). Mc Coeil writes the following phrases about the role of media:

The role of media in these countries is uniting and socializing; and specific function of social media is offering a collective model of experiences and a type of awareness to society which concerns about the specific aspects of the reality (ibid, p. 134).

Alvin Toffler by respecting the role of new media in the process of globalization believes that:

What is important about the leaders of media, is that their support of globalization ideology or at least their transnationalism about the issue. It is the natural aspect of a new economic condition which inevitably acts beyond the national borders and it is the benefit of new leaders of media that are generating this ideology (Toffler, 1991, p. 503).

In John Kazno's idea, "though by means of globalization a united culture and message" is delivered, this united culture faces different meanings; because people, groups, and different cultures receive the meaning and interpret it, according to the value system and beliefs" (Kazno, 1986). Therefore, a variety of cultures and specific cultural orientations are being considered as the feature of globalized world.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The method applied in this research was descriptive and of the survey type. In order to collect the data required for the research variables, namely women's awareness of social and cultural rights and the impact of mass media on it and the related items, library method was applied and a questionnaire was used for the primary data collection. In addition, the researcher has arranged valid websites in order to obtain the background researches implemented in Iran and overseas. The highest rate of sampling belongs to the humanistic field of study by 54.6%, which includes the courses of philosophy, political sciences, economics, physical education, social sciences, educational sciences, law, accounting, literature, psychology and language.

Moreover, the least size of sampling is equal to 6%, which belongs to the technical and vocational fields of electricity and art. A total of 63 individuals, namely 16.4% of the respondents were single and 315 of the participants, namely 82.2% were married. Moreover, 4.7% of fathers were illiterate. Also, 20.1% were educated in primary school, 31.9% in guidance school, 11.2% under the high school level, and 26.6% had diploma; 0.5 percent were reported with associated diploma, 2.1% and 0.8% of the fathers were reported with Bachelor of arts degree. Also, 8.6% of mothers were illiterate. Basically, 21.2% were educated in primary school, 16.7% in guidance school, 16.4% under high school level, and 28.5% had diploma; 0.5 percent were reported with associated diploma, and 4.7% of the mothers were reported with Bachelor of arts degree. 345 respondents reported the level of their incomes and 38 individuals refused to answer this question. It signifies that income is an important factor to these participants; which they have refused to tell about.

Using mass media during two last month indicates that the highest level of statistics is the usage of media with 41% that lasts 1 to 2 hours during the day, and the least percentage is 3.9% for more than 4 hours a day. Generally, the highest percentage of using mass media for cultural and social activities is 44.1% that

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is 1 or 2 hours a day and the least percentage is 1% for activities more than 4 hours a day. The highest statistics related to the level of using media belongs to Iranian national television with 73.4%, domestic newspapers with 70%, and online social networks with 66.1%; and the least statistics is related to mouth to mouth news from family and friends, declarations and printed posters with 3.7%.

Accordingly, most of the statistics related to the level of social awareness regarding personal laws after marriage is about this question that “paying alimony is the husband’s duty”. The highest statistics belongs to the social awareness in the light of family rights and relationship with the wife, which are arranged around this question that “if I and my wife are interested in each other, we do all the works together” with 81.2%. The highest statistics about social awareness in the light of family rights and the relations with children is arranged around this question that “to what extent do you allocate your time for children” with 85.1%. The highest statistics about social awareness in the light of social rights is around this question that “women even after having children can participate in different social activities” with 85.6%.

Inferential statistics

Statistics of this study consisted of Pearson Correlative and Variance Analysis Tests. Besides, for all hypotheses the sig- level of $P < 0.05$ is achieved. Herewith, we draw the hypotheses of this research as follows:

H1: there is a significant relationship between using communication mass media and women’s awareness of their social rights.

Table 1. The results of Pearson correlation test for using communication mass media and women’s awareness about their social rights

Title of the variable	Pearson correlation coefficient (PCC)	Score	Sig- level
using communication mass media and women’s awareness of their social rights	0.36	360	0.499

As it is illustrated in table 1, based on the results of Pearson test, there is no significant relationship between using communication mass media and women’s awareness of their social rights. Because the Pearson correlation coefficient between using communication mass media and women’s awareness of their social rights is not significant at the level of 0.448, these findings signify the rejection of first hypothesis.

H2: there is a significant relationship between using communication mass media and women’s awareness of their personal rights before and after the marriage

Table 2. The results of Pearson correlation test for using communication mass media and women’s awareness of their personal rights before and after the marriage.

Title of the variable	Pearson correlation coefficient (PCC)	Score	Sig- level
Using communication mass media and women’s awareness of their personal rights before the marriage.	-0.148	363	0.005
Using communication mass media and women’s awareness of their personal rights after the marriage	-0.013	362	0.811

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As it is illustrated in table 2, there is a negative and significant relationship between using communication mass media and women's awareness of their personal rights before the marriage. Henceforth, there is no significant relationship between using communication mass media and women's awareness of their personal rights after the marriage.

H3: there is a significant relationship between using communication mass media and women's awareness of their family rights (relationship with husband)

Table 3. The results of Pearson correlation test for using communication mass media and women's awareness of their family rights (the relationship with husband).

Title of the variable	Pearson correlation coefficient (PCC)	Score	Sig- level
Using communication mass media and women's awareness of their family rights (relationship with husband)	0.034	358	0.521

As it is illustrated in the table 3, based on the results of Pearson test, there is no significant relationship between using communication mass media and women's awareness of their family rights (relationship with husband). Findings signify the rejection of third hypothesis.

H4: there is a significant relationship between using communication mass media and women's awareness of their family rights (the relationship with children)

Table 4. The results of Pearson correlation test for using communication mass media and women's awareness of their family rights (the relationship with children).

Title of the variable	Pearson correlation coefficient (PCC)	Score	Sig- level
Using communication mass media and women's awareness of their family rights (the relationship with children)	0.002	358	0.971

As it is illustrated in table 4, based on the results of Pearson test, there is no significant relationship between using communication mass media and women's awareness of their family rights (the relationship with children). Findings signify the rejection of fourth hypothesis.

H5: there is a significant relationship between using communication mass media and women's awareness of their family conditions.

Table 5. The results of Pearson correlation test for using communication mass media and women's awareness of their family conditions.

Title of the variable	Pearson correlation coefficient (PCC)	Score	Sig- level
Using communication mass media and women's awareness of their family conditions	0.014	362	0.797

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As it is illustrated in table 5, based on the results of Pearson test, there is no significant relationship between using communication mass media and women's awareness of their family conditions. Findings signify the rejection of fifth hypothesis.

H6: there is a significant relationship between women's academic studies and using mass media.

Table 6. The results of Variance analysis F test between women's academic studies and using mass media.

	Sums of groups	Degrees of freedom	Average between groups	Variance analysis	Sig- level
Between groups	127.701	5	25.540	1.859	0.101
Within groups	4807.499	350	13.736		
Total	4935.199	355			

As it is illustrated in table 6, the results of Variance analysis F test between women's academic education and using communicative mass media ($F=1.859$) in the sig level of 0.101 represent no significant relationship. These findings signify the rejection of sixth hypothesis.

H7: there is a significant relationship between women's field of study and using mass media.

Table 7. The results of Variance analysis F test between women's field of study and using mass media

	Sums of groups	Degrees of freedom	Average between groups	Variance analysis	Sig- level
Between groups	132.235	3	44.078	2.521	0.058
Within groups	6155.391	352	17.487		
Total	6287.626	355			

As it is illustrated in table 7, the results of Variance analysis F test between women's field of study and using mass media ($F=2.521$) in the sig level of 0.058, represent no significant relationship. These findings signify the approval of sixth hypothesis.

H8: there is a significant relationship between family's income and using mass media

Table 8. The results of Pearson correlation test between family's income and using communicative mass media.

Title of the variable	Pearson correlation coefficient (PCC)	Score	Sig- level
Family's income and using communicative mass media.	0.086	337	0.115

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As it is illustrated in table 8, based on the results of Pearson test, there is no significant relationship between family's income and using communicative mass media. These findings signify the rejection of eighth hypothesis.

H9: there is a significant relationship between parent's education and using mass media

Table9. The Results of Variance analysis F test between parent's education and using mass media

Title of the variable		Sums of groups	Degrees of freedom	Average between groups	Variance analysis	Sig level
Father's education	Between groups	507.699	7	72.524	4.482	0.000
	Within groups	5646.818	349	16.180		
	Total	6154.487	356			
Mother's education	Between groups	195.446	6	32.574	2.050	0.059
	Within groups	5545.349	349	15.880		
	Total	5740.795	355			

As it is illustrated in table 9, there is a significant relationship between father's education and using mass media ($F=4.482$) in the sig level of 0.000. Meanwhile, there is a significant relationship between mother's education and using mass media ($F=2.050$) in the sig level of 0.059. These findings signify the approval of ninth hypothesis.

H10: there is a significant relationship between age of the women and using mass media

Table10. The results of Pearson correlation test between age of the women and using communicative mass media.

Title of the variable	Pearson correlation coefficient (PCC)	Score	Sig level
age of women and using communicative mass media	0.155	362	0.003

As it is illustrated in table 10, based on the results of Pearson test, there is a positive and significant relationship between age of the women and using communicative mass media. These findings signify the rejection of eighth hypothesis.

H11: there is a significant relationship between trusting the media and using mass media

Table11. The results of Pearson correlation test between trusting the media and using mass media

Title of the variable	Pearson correlation coefficient (PCC)	Score	Sig- level
trusting the media and using mass media	0.158	361	0.027

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As it is illustrated in table 11, based on the results of Pearson test, there is no significant relationship between trusting the media and using mass media.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings of the research indicate that there is not any significant relationship between mass media and women's awareness of their social rights. In today's world there is regular exchange of information and means of communications are widely developed; more attention should be paid to the information by the mass media, in order to engage members of the society in global information exchanges. However, the conditions of public access to mass media, namely the visual, audio, writing, and electronics should be improved. E-government services ought to be expanded, especially in the pertinent field of study. Citizens must perceive the facility, speed and low cost for the raise of awareness due to their rights. Meanwhile, the social associations and non-governmental organizations ought to improve the three dimensional attitudes of individuals toward women's awareness, versus the individual and social rights, by using mass media. Nevertheless, findings of the researches implemented by Mahdavi and Mirzapoor are not in accordance with present research. These findings indicated that there was a significant and negative relationship between mass media and women's awareness of their individual rights, before the marriage. Hence force, there was no significant relationship between using mass media and women's awareness of their individual rights after, the marriage. Meanwhile, there was no significant relationship between using mass media and women's awareness of their family rights, due to the relationship with spouse and children. Accordingly, there was not any significant relationship between women's academic education and using mass media. On the contrary, findings of Dowler, Mahdavi and Mirzapoor's research showed that there was a significant relationship between using mass media and women's education. Whereas, there was a significant relationship between women's field of education and the manners of using mass media. Findings of the research implemented by Hamedei are not in line with the results of the present research. Henceforth, there was no relationship between media literacy and gender, marital status, field of study, age, as well as social-economic stances. However, there was a relationship between the levels of education, cultural capitals, media consumptions or media diet, trust in media, value of media fascination and the motivation for using media and media literacy. Research accomplished by Bahrami showed that there was not any significant relationship between the field of study and amounts of mass media utilization. There was no significant relationship between family income and amounts of mass media utilization. In this regard, Industrialization of the modern world and also the technological advances require creating entertainment for the human mankind. However, one of the concerns of media is making leisure time and entertainment for members of the community, in order to satisfy the first human needs such as the food, clothes, home, as well as the increase of revenue for the leisure time. Researches done by Bahrami, Mahdavi and Mirzapoor, indicated that there was a significant relationship between family incomes and mass media. Meanwhile, there was a significant relationship between father's education and the amount and manners of using mass media. Henceforth, there was a significant relationship between mother's education and the amount and manners of using mass media. Results of the researches implemented by Mahdavi and Mirzapoor illustrated that there was a positive and significant relationship between women's age and the amount and manners of using mass media. Results of the research accomplished by Dowler are completely in line with findings of the present study, in which a significant relationship is declared between women's age and using mass media. However, Hamedei's findings did not confirm the above mentioned results. Meanwhile, the results of present research which indicated that there was not any significant relationship between trust in media and the amounts of using mass media were in line with findings of the researches accomplished by Haghigatian and Omidi, Aghaei, Javaheri and Balakhan.

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Conclusion

Nowadays, in the modern world, awareness and knowledge play a vital role in human life. Knowledge and awareness as the biggest asset play an important role in social changes and achieve widespread dimensions either superficially or deeply; so that in order to achieve social capital in the societies, people have to acquire knowledge and awareness.

The present study was accomplished to assess women's awareness of their social and cultural and particularly family rights. The results of Pearson's test showed that there was no significant relationship between using mass media and women's awareness of social and individual rights, family rights and conditions, and also the family income after marriage. However, findings indicated that there was a negative relationship between mass media and women's awareness of individual rights before the marriage. Meanwhile, there was a positive and significant relationship between the age, trust in media and women's awareness. Results of variance analysis test indicated that there was not any significant relationship between women's academic education, trust in media and using mass media. Also, there was a significant relationship between women's field of study, parents' education and the amount and manner of using mass media.

This study suggests that message and associations should be used to promote women's awareness of their rights.

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