

The Role of Content Creators in Promoting Cultural Cultivation via YouTube and its Impact on the Awareness of Algerian University Students: A Field Study at The University of Tamanrasset

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Abstract:

This study aims to explore the role of content creators on YouTube in promoting cultural cultivation and its impact on the cultural awareness of students. Using a mixedmethods approach, the study analyzed the content of Mohamed Doumir's channel (20222023), consisting of 85 videos, and surveyed 367 students. The results showed that the content focused on political history (35.3%) and cultural heritage (24.7%) with an average of 156,000 views. Findings revealed a positive impact on awareness dimensions, with cultural identity ranking first (4.0/5), followed by historical knowledge (3.8), values (3.6), and behavioral practices (3.4). No statistically significant differences were found based on gender or academic discipline. Finally, the study recommends supporting local creators, integrating digital content into curricula, and developing media literacy programs.

Keywords: Content Creators, Cultural Cultivation, YouTube, Cultural Awareness, University Students.

Introduction

In an era defined by rapid technological advancements and the pervasive influence of digital media, the landscape of communication has undergone a profound metamorphosis. The traditional one-way model of media dissemination has been supplanted by an interactive, multi-directional paradigm, fundamentally altering how information is produced, consumed, and interpreted (Livingstone, 2008). This transformation extends beyond mere technical shifts, encompassing significant changes in content creation, audience engagement, and the mechanisms of societal influence. A pivotal development in this new media ecology is the rise of "Content Creators"—individuals who leverage digital platforms to produce and disseminate diverse forms of media, thereby

emerging as significant actors in shaping public discourse and cultural narratives (Abidin, 2018).

Among the myriad digital platforms, YouTube stands out as a preeminent force in shaping this new media landscape. With over 2.7 billion monthly active users globally, YouTube has transcended its initial role as a mere entertainment hub to become a powerful conduit for education, enlightenment, and public opinion formation, particularly among the youth demographic who constitute its largest user base (Burgess & Green, 2018). This widespread reach and accessibility have positioned YouTube as a critical site for cultural exchange and identity formation in the 21st century.

The Algerian context provides a particularly fertile ground for examining these phenomena. In recent years, Algeria has witnessed a remarkable proliferation of local content creators who produce a wide array of content, spanning educational, cultural, and entertainment genres. A notable segment of these creators specializes in historical and cultural content, with a deliberate aim to reinforce awareness of Algerian identity and preserve local cultural heritage. This focus on indigenous cultural narratives gains heightened importance amidst the challenges posed by globalization, which often threatens to homogenize cultural distinctiveness and erode local traditions (Bouali, 2023). The interplay between global digital trends and local cultural

preservation efforts makes Algeria an ideal case study for understanding the dynamics of cultural cultivation in a rapidly evolving media environment.

1. Study Problem

The digital landscape in Algeria is characterized by a significant youth demographic, with statistics indicating over 20 million YouTube users, predominantly young individuals (Statista, 2023). This demographic reality positions YouTube as an exceptionally influential tool for shaping public opinion and cultural awareness within the nation. The burgeoning presence of local content creators, who specifically focus on Algerian history, culture, and societal narratives, necessitates a rigorous examination of their impact on the audience. Understanding the dynamics of cultural cultivation in this digital age, particularly within a context rich in historical and cultural heritage like Algeria, becomes not merely academic but a strategic imperative. Consequently, the central problem addressed by this study revolves around a critical inquiry: What is the role of content creators in promoting cultural cultivation via the YouTube platform, and what is its impact on the cultural awareness of Algerian university students? This overarching question is driven by the observable phenomenon of the increasing proliferation of Algerian content creators on YouTube and their growing, yet largely unquantified, influence on the youth. This

influence is particularly salient in the domain of cultural and historical content, which often serves as a primary vehicle for identity formation and cultural transmission. The study seeks to dissect the mechanisms through which these digital narratives contribute to the cultivation of specific cultural perspectives among university students, who represent a crucial segment of the Algerian intellectual and social fabric.

The importance of this problem lies in several critical aspects. Firstly, there is an urgent need to understand the intricate mechanisms of cultural influence within the novel digital environment. Traditional models of media effects often fall short in capturing the dynamic and interactive nature of online platforms, necessitating new theoretical and empirical approaches to decipher how cultural messages are transmitted, received, and internalized in this context. Secondly, evaluating the effectiveness of local content in enhancing cultural identity is paramount. In an increasingly globalized world, the preservation and promotion of indigenous cultural heritage are vital for fostering a strong sense of national identity and resilience against cultural homogenization. This study seeks to assess the tangible impact of locally produced digital content on these crucial aspects. Thirdly, the behavior of university students, as a significant segment of society and the future leaders of the nation, warrants particular attention. Their engagement with digital media and their susceptibility to cultural influences through

these platforms have profound implications for societal values, traditions, and national cohesion. Understanding their media consumption patterns and the subsequent impact on their cultural awareness is therefore essential for informed policy-making and educational interventions.

1.2. Study Objectives

This study seeks to achieve a set of interrelated objectives:

Main Objective: To explore the role of content creators in promoting cultural cultivation via YouTube and measure its impact on the awareness of Algerian university students.

Sub-Objectives:

- 1 Analyze the content of Mohamed Doumir's channel as a model for Algerian cultural content creators.
- 2 Measure the level of cultural content's impact on various dimensions of awareness (identity, knowledge, values, behavior).
- 3 Examine the differences in the level of impact according to demographic variables.
- 4 Explore the level of students' awareness of the **cultural cultivation** process and **their** methods of dealing with the content.
- 5 Provide recommendations for developing digital cultural content in Algeria.

1.3. Study Importance

This study derives its importance from several aspects:

Theoretical Importance: It contributes to enriching literature on the impact of digital platforms on culture and identity, and the application of the Cultural Cultivation Theory in a new context represented by local digital content.

Practical Importance: It provides important data for educational and media institutions on how to leverage the power of content creators to enhance cultural awareness and helps in developing strategies to support local cultural content. **Societal Importance:** It sheds light on the role of youth in preserving and developing cultural identity and contributes to understanding the challenges and opportunities available in the digital age.

1.4. Study Limits

- **Thematic Limits:** The study focuses on the impact of cultural content creators via YouTube, with a focus on Mohamed Doumir's channel as a model for analysis.
- **Spatial Limits:** The University of Tamanrasset, Algeria.
- **Temporal Limits:** Content analysis for the period 2022-2023, and the field study during the academic year 2023-2024.
- **Human Limits:** University students registered at the University of Tamanrasset.

1.5. Study Questions

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the characteristics of the cultural content presented on Mohamed Doumir's channel?
2. What is the level of cultural content's impact on the various dimensions of awareness among university students?
3. Are there statistically significant differences in the level of influence by cultural content attributable to demographic variables?
4. What is the level of students' awareness of the **cultural cultivation** process, and how do they deal with the information presented?
5. What is the relationship between the different dimensions of cultural awareness among university students?

2. Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies

2.1. Cultivation Theory

Cultivation Theory, pioneered by George Gerbner and his colleagues in the late 1960s, stands as a cornerstone of media effects studies. It posits that prolonged and consistent exposure to media, particularly television, gradually shapes viewers' perceptions of social reality to align with the media's portrayal (Gerbner,

1998). This theory emerged from the Cultural Indicators Project, which aimed to understand the long-term effects of television on societal beliefs and values (Gerbner et al., 1986).

The core premise of Cultivation Theory rests on two fundamental hypotheses. Firstly, media, acting as a pervasive message system, presents a consistent and repetitive pattern of images and messages that form a 'symbolic environment' for society. Secondly, continuous and intensive exposure to this symbolic environment leads to the 'cultivation' of certain beliefs, attitudes, and values in the audience's minds (Gerbner et al., 1994). Unlike traditional mass communication research that focused on immediate, short-term effects of individual messages, Cultivation Theory emphasizes the cumulative and pervasive outcomes of long-term media exposure (Gerbner et al., 1986).

Key concepts within Cultivation Theory include:

- **Mainstreaming:** This refers to the process by which heavy television viewers, despite their diverse backgrounds, tend to develop a more homogeneous worldview that aligns with the dominant narratives presented by television. It suggests that television viewing can reduce or override differences in perspectives stemming from other social, cultural, and

demographic influences (Gerbner et al., 1986).

- **Resonance:** This occurs when a viewer's real-life experiences are congruent with the media's portrayal of reality. In such cases, the cultivation effect is amplified, as the media messages 'resonate' with the viewer's personal experiences, making the media's depiction seem even more credible and impactful (Gerbner, 1998).

Initially, Cultivation Theory focused primarily on television as the dominant mass medium. However, with the advent of digital platforms and the internet, scholars have increasingly explored the applicability and evolution of Cultivation Theory in the digital age. Digital platforms like YouTube offer a different media landscape characterized by increased interactivity, user-generated content, and algorithmic curation. While the fundamental principles of cultivation remain relevant, the mechanisms and intensity of cultivation effects may differ in this new environment (Morgan, Shanahan, & Signorielli, 2015). The shift from a one-way, broadcast model to an interactive, multidirectional model necessitates a re-evaluation of how cultivation operates, particularly concerning selective exposure and the potential for echo chambers or filter bubbles (Potter, 2014).

2.2. Content Creators and Digital Platforms

In the contemporary digital landscape, the role of 'Content Creators' has become increasingly significant. These individuals produce and publish digital content regularly across various platforms, cultivating loyal audiences and acting as influential figures in shaping public opinion and culture (Abidin, 2018). Content creators leverage platforms like YouTube, which offer unique features such as the ability to produce long-form, in-depth content, advanced analytical tools for audience understanding, and direct interaction through comments and likes (Ben Omar, 2023). However, the algorithmic nature of these platforms also presents challenges, as algorithms largely determine content visibility and can influence the type of cultural messages that gain traction (Covington, Adams, & Sargin, 2016).

2.3. Cultural Identity and Cultural Awareness

Cultural identity is a multifaceted concept encompassing the shared beliefs, values, customs, language, and practices that distinguish a particular group or society from others (Al-Hassan, 2022). It serves as a fundamental framework through which individuals understand themselves and their place in the world (Bennett, 2004). In the Algerian context, cultural identity holds particular significance due to its rich historical tapestry, colonial legacy, and the ongoing

challenges posed by globalization and cultural homogenization (Bouali, 2023).

Cultural awareness, closely linked to cultural identity, refers to an individual's ability to understand, appreciate, and interact effectively with their own culture and the cultures of others (Bouhbila, 2022). This awareness extends beyond mere knowledge of cultural facts to include cultural sensitivity, empathy, and the capacity for appropriate cultural behavior (Burgess & Green, 2018). In the digital age, the dynamics of cultural identity and awareness have undergone significant transformations. Social media platforms, in particular, have emerged as powerful arenas where cultural identities are expressed, negotiated, and sometimes challenged (Zarouki, 2022).

The digital environment presents both opportunities and challenges for cultural identity. On one hand, online platforms facilitate the dissemination and celebration of diverse cultural expressions, allowing individuals to connect with their heritage and engage in cross-cultural dialogue (Castells, 2010). This can strengthen a sense of belonging and foster a deeper appreciation for one's own culture. On the other hand, the pervasive nature of global digital content can lead to concerns about cultural erosion, the dominance of Western cultural narratives, and the potential for misrepresentation or trivialization of local cultures (Hall, 1996). Therefore, understanding how Algerian university students navigate these digital spaces and how their cultural awareness is shaped by online content is crucial

for preserving and promoting local cultural identity in the contemporary era.

2.4. Previous Studies

2.4.1. Arabic Studies

Several Arabic studies have explored the impact of digital platforms and content creators on various aspects of Algerian youth. For instance, **Bouhbila (2022)** investigated the influence of content creators via YouTube on Algerian students' motivation to study abroad. The study revealed that a significant proportion (65%) of students are influenced by content creators in their educational decisions, highlighting the growing role of these creators as a reference point for students regarding their future academic and emigration plans (Bouhbila, 2022). This study also underscored the wide follow-up of cultural and educational content among university students. Another relevant study by **Derrbal (2022)** focused on university students' attitudes towards using YouTube for self-learning. The findings indicated that a substantial majority (78%) of students utilize the platform for educational purposes, with a preference for Arabic-language content over other languages. Derrbal's research suggested that YouTube contributes to simplifying complex concepts, provides diverse information sources, and aids in developing self-learning skills among students (Derrbal, 2022).

Zarouki (2022) conducted a field study on the usage patterns of YouTube content among female university students at the University of

M'sila. Her research concluded that educational and cultural content constitutes 45% of the total followed content, and female students tend to prefer content that reinforces local cultural identity (Zarouki, 2022). This finding emphasizes the role of YouTube in shaping and affirming cultural identity among specific demographic groups.

Furthermore, **Ben Omar (2023)** addressed the role of YouTube in supporting academic achievement among university students at the University of Ouargla. The study found that 82% of students consider YouTube an important source for academic information, and notably, local content achieves a greater impact compared to foreign content in this context (Ben Omar, 2023). This highlights the effectiveness of culturally relevant content in engaging students and supporting their academic pursuits.

Finally, **Al-Hassan (2022)** and **Bouali (2023)**, though not directly focused on YouTube, provided broader insights into the impact of digital media on cultural identity in Algeria. Al-Hassan's work emphasized the role of digital content in enhancing national identity (Al-Hassan, 2022), while Bouali's research explored the complex relationship between digital media and cultural identity, noting both positive and negative impacts depending on the nature of the content and context (Bouali, 2023). These studies collectively underscore the critical importance of understanding the digital media landscape in shaping cultural awareness among Algerian youth.

2.4.2. Foreign Studies

Beyond the Algerian context, numerous foreign studies have examined Cultivation Theory and the impact of digital platforms. **Morgan, Shanahan, and Signorielli (2015)** conducted a comprehensive study on the application of Cultivation Theory in the digital environment. They concluded that digital platforms, despite their interactive nature, can achieve similar long-term effects to traditional television in shaping perceptions of reality, albeit with important differences related to interactivity and user selectivity (Potter, 2014). This suggests that while the medium has evolved, the fundamental principles of cultivation remain relevant.

Duffy (2017) explored the influence of content creators on youth, highlighting their increasingly significant role in shaping attitudes and values, particularly in social and cultural domains (Duffy, 2017). Her work emphasizes the power of individual creators in mediating cultural messages and influencing their audiences.

Green and Burgess (2018) provided an indepth analysis of the culture of participation on YouTube. They affirmed that the platform transcends its role as a mere entertainment medium, serving as a crucial space for cultural expression, identity formation, and community building (Burgess & Green, 2018). Their research sheds light on how users actively engage with and contribute to cultural narratives on YouTube.

Other studies, such as those by **Covington, Adams, & Sargin (2016)**, have delved into the algorithmic aspects of platforms like YouTube, demonstrating how these algorithms largely determine content visibility and can influence the spread and impact of cultural messages (Covington, Adams, & Sargin, 2016). This algorithmic curation introduces a new layer of complexity to cultivation effects, as it can reinforce certain narratives and limit exposure to others. Collectively, these foreign studies provide a broader theoretical and empirical context for understanding the dynamics of cultural cultivation in the digital age.

2.5. Research Gap

Despite the growing body of literature on the impact of YouTube and content creators, a significant research gap persists, particularly concerning the Algerian context. While numerous studies have explored the educational or entertainment facets of digital content, there remains a clear paucity of research that specifically addresses the influence of local cultural content creators on the cultural awareness of university youth in Algeria (Rantanen, 2005). Most existing studies tend to focus on broader media effects or concentrate on foreign content, often overlooking the nuanced interplay between indigenous cultural narratives and the formation of identity in a rapidly globalizing world.

This study endeavors to bridge this critical gap by providing an in-depth analysis of how

local cultural content, disseminated through platforms like YouTube, contributes to the cultural cultivation process among Algerian university students. By applying Cultivation Theory to this specific context, the research aims to:

- **Examine the unique characteristics** of local cultural content and its resonance with Algerian youth.
- **Quantify the impact** of such content on various dimensions of cultural awareness, including identity, historical knowledge, values, and behaviors.
- **Uncover the mechanisms** through which local content creators facilitate cultural cultivation, considering the interactive nature of digital platforms.
- **Provide empirical evidence** to inform strategies for leveraging digital media to preserve and promote Algerian cultural identity.

By addressing these aspects, this study seeks to offer a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play, thereby contributing significantly to both theoretical advancements in media effects research and practical applications in cultural preservation and education within the Algerian digital landscape.

3. Methods and Materials

3.1. Study Approach

This study adopted the **Mixed Methods** approach, combining qualitative and

quantitative methods (Morgan et al., 2015). The first stage included content analysis of Mohamed Doumir's YouTube channel, and the second stage included a field study using a questionnaire.

3.2. Data Collection Tools

3.2.1. Content Analysis Sample

The sample consisted of 85 videos from Mohamed Doumir's channel during 2022-2023.

3.2.2. The Questionnaire

A questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 367 students at the University of Tamanrasset.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Content Analysis Results The content analysis of Mohamed Doumir's channel for the period 2022-2023 showed a clear diversity in the topics presented, with a strong focus on Algerian historical and cultural content. Out of 85 videos analyzed, political and diplomatic history ranked first with 35.5% of the total content, followed by cultural identity and heritage at 24.7%, and then political and academic criticism at 20%.

Table 1: Content Categories on Mohamed Doumir's Channel (2022-2023)

Content Category	Number of Videos	Percentage	Average Views	Average Interaction Rate (%)
Political and Diplomatic History	30	35.5	520,000	96
Cultural Identity and Heritage	21	24.7	380,000	94
Political and Academic Criticism	17	20.0	450,000	95
Applied Geography and History	13	15.3	320,000	93
Historical and Methodological Criticism	3	3.5	280,000	92
Technology and Modernity	2	2.4	200,000	90

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on the content analysis of the channel (2023).

4.2. Field Study Results

4.1. Impact Level on Awareness Dimensions

The field study results revealed a positive impact of cultural content on the different dimensions of awareness among university students. The cultural identity dimension achieved the highest average, while the behavior and practices dimension recorded the lowest average.

Table 2: Impact Level on Awareness Dimensions among Students

Dimension	Mean (out of 5)	Standard Deviation	Impact Level
Cultural Identity	4.0	0.8	Strong
Historical Knowledge	3.8	0.9	Strong
Values and Attitudes	3.6	1.0	Strong to Moderate
Behavior and Practices	3.4	1.1	Moderate

Source: Results of the field study (2024).

Cultural Identity: This dimension achieved the highest average impact at 4.0 out of 5 (SD = 0.8), indicating a strong influence of cultural content on students' sense of belonging and national identity.

Historical Knowledge: The average impact reached 3.8 out of 5 (SD = 0.9), confirming the important role of the content in enhancing students' historical knowledge.

Values and Attitudes: Achieved an average of 3.6 out of 5 (SD = 1.0), indicating a moderate to strong influence on the system of values and attitudes.

Behavior and Practices: Recorded the lowest average at 3.4 out of 5 (SD = 1.1), suggesting that the impact on behavior requires a longer time and more intensive exposure.

Differences by Demographic Variables

Specialization: One-way ANOVA showed no statistically significant differences between different specializations ($F = 2.15, p > 0.05$), reflecting the comprehensive impact of the content across various disciplines.

Knowledge of Mohamed Doumir's Channel: No statistically significant differences were found between students who know the channel and those who do not ($t =$

Table 3: Differences in Impact Level by Demographic Variables

Variable	t/F Value	Degrees of Freedom	Significance Level	Statistical Significance
Gender	1.23	283	0.219	Not Significant
Specialization	2.15	3	0.094	Not Significant
Knowledge of Mohamed Doumir's Channel	1.87	283	0.063	Not Significant

Source: Results of the field study (2024).

Statistical tests were conducted to examine the differences in the level of impact according to demographic variables.

Gender: The results showed no statistically significant differences between males and females in the overall level of impact ($t = 1.23, p > 0.05$), indicating an equal influence of the content on both genders.

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4.2.2. Differences by Demographic Variables

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Knowledge of Mohamed Doumir's Channel: No statistically significant differences were found between students who know the channel and those who do not ($t = 1.87, p > 0.05$), suggesting that the influence is not limited to followers of a single channel.

4.2.3. Correlational Relationships

The results showed strong positive correlations between the different dimensions of impact, with correlation coefficients ranging

between 0.58 and 0.74, indicating the integrated nature of the cultural inculcation process.

Indicator	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Awareness of Content Creators' Influence	Aware	200	70.2
	Unaware	57	20.0
	Unsure	28	9.8
Feeling of Persuasion Attempts	Always	85	29.8
	Sometimes	100	35.1
	Rarely	100	35.1
	Source Verification	100	35.1

Methods of Dealing with Information	Discussion with Others	71	24.9
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Table 4: Correlation between Dimensions of Cultural Awareness and Viewing Hours

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level	Strength of Relationship
Cultural Identity * Historical Knowledge	0.74	0.000	Strong
Cultural Identity * Values and Attitudes	0.68	0.000	Strong
Historical Knowledge * Behavior and Practices	0.58	0.000	Moderate
Viewing Hours * Overall Impact	0.23	0.008	Weak

Source: Results of the field study (2024).

The results showed a weak but statistically significant positive correlation between daily viewing hours and the overall level of impact ($r = 0.23, p < 0.01$).

4.2.4. Awareness of the Cultural Inculcation Process

The study results revealed that 70% of students are aware that content creators influence their opinions and beliefs. 20% indicated they were unaware of the influence, and 10% were unsure. At the same time, 65% of students indicated that they often feel attempts at persuasion in the content presented.

Table 5: Students' Awareness and Interaction with the Cultural Inculcation Process

	Seeking Different Opinions	57	20.0
	Acceptance without Verification	57	20.0

Source: Results of the field study (2024).

Regarding the methods of dealing with information, 35% indicated that they verify the information's accuracy from other sources, 25% indicated that they discuss the content with others, and 20% indicated that they accept the information without verification.

5. Discussion

This study provides compelling evidence for the continued relevance of **Cultivation Theory** in the digital age, particularly within the context of YouTube and its influence on Algerian university students. The findings underscore how intensive and consistent exposure to cultural content, as exemplified by

Mohamed Doumir's channel, significantly shapes students' perceptions of social reality and their cultural awareness [8, 12].

5.1. Interpretation of Content Analysis

Results

The content analysis of Mohamed Doumir's channel revealed a strategic focus on Algerian historical and cultural aspects, aligning perfectly with the principles of cultural cultivation. The predominance of political and diplomatic history (35.5%) suggests a deliberate effort to construct a specific narrative about Algeria's historical role, which can be interpreted as a form of "institutional messages" that are central to Cultivation Theory (Gerbner, 1998). The diversity of topics, ranging from historical events to cultural heritage and academic criticism, indicates a comprehensive strategy designed to reach a broad audience with varied interests, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of the cultural cultivation process (Morgan, Shanahan, & Signorielli, 2015). The high reliance on historical documents and sources (78% of videos) not only boosts the content's credibility but also contributes to what Potter (2014) refers to as "perceived authenticity," a crucial factor for the audience's acceptance of embedded messages (Covington, Adams, & Sargin, 2016). The impressive viewing and interaction rates further confirm the channel's success in building a loyal audience, which is essential for the cumulative effects of cultivation to manifest over time (Gerbner et al., 1994).

5.2. Interpretation of Field Study Results

5.2.1. Impact Level on Different Dimensions

The field study results demonstrated a varied yet significant impact on different dimensions of cultural awareness. The highest impact on cultural identity (Mean = 4.0) is particularly noteworthy. This strong influence can be attributed to the content's emphasis on highlighting Algerian cultural specificity and national heritage pride, which resonates deeply with the audience's sense of belonging. This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that content promoting national

belonging tends to have a greater impact on identity compared to behavioral aspects (AlHassan, 2022). The moderate impact on behavior and practices (Mean = 3.4) aligns with Cultivation Theory's distinction between first-order effects (general beliefs) and second-order effects (specific attitudes and behaviors) (Covington, Adams, & Sargin, 2016). Behavioral changes typically require more prolonged exposure and are influenced by a broader array of social and environmental factors beyond media content alone (Duffy, 2017).

5.2.2. Absence of Statistical Differences

The absence of statistically significant differences across gender, specialization, or prior knowledge of Mohamed Doumir's channel is a critical finding. This suggests a pervasive and unified influence of the cultural content across diverse segments of the university student population. This outcome challenges some earlier studies that identified gender-based differences in media consumption and effects (Burgess & Green, 2018). The uniformity of impact observed here could be attributed to the universal appeal of cultural and historical content within the Algerian context, where issues of national identity and history hold profound importance for all societal groups.

5.2.3. Awareness of the Cultural Cultivation Process

The high level of awareness among students (70%) regarding the influence of content creators on their opinions and beliefs indicates a strong degree of media literacy within the university demographic. This awareness is crucial as it can modulate how individuals interact with and are influenced by media content (Abidin, 2018). The fact that 65% of participants reported feeling persuasive attempts in the content further validates the effectiveness of the cultural cultivation strategies employed, aligning with Gerbner's assertion that cultivation is often a gradual and indirect process (Gerbner, 1998). The students' reported methods of dealing with information—such as verifying accuracy, discussing content with peers, or seeking

diverse opinions—highlight a commendable level of critical thinking. This critical engagement suggests that the cultivation process, while effective, is not necessarily passive, but rather involves an active interpretation and integration of media messages.

5.3. Correlational Relationships and Theoretical Interpretations

The strong positive correlations observed between the different dimensions of impact (ranging from 0.58 to 0.74) reinforce the integrated nature of the cultural cultivation process (Morgan, Shanahan, & Signorielli, 2015). This supports the theoretical understanding that media influence is a holistic process, affecting various facets of awareness in an interconnected manner (Gerbner et al., 1994). The statistically significant, albeit weak, positive correlation between viewing hours and overall impact ($r = 0.23$) further supports the fundamental hypothesis of Cultivation Theory regarding the importance of exposure intensity in achieving media effects (Gerbner, 1998). This indicates that even in a highly interactive digital environment, the sheer volume of exposure to consistent messages contributes to the cultivation of beliefs and attitudes.

5.4. Comparison with Previous Studies

The findings of this study resonate with several previous Arabic studies. For instance, the observed influence of content creators on Algerian students aligns with Bouhbila's (2022) findings regarding students' decisions (Bouhbila, 2022). Similarly, the extensive use of YouTube for self-learning among students mirrors Derrbal's (2022) conclusions (Derrbal, 2022). However, this study's results diverge from some Arabic studies, such as Bouali (2023), which reported a negative impact of digital media on cultural identity (Bouali, 2023). This divergence can be explained by the specific focus of this research on local cultural content, which tends to reinforce national identity, as opposed to foreign content that might introduce conflicting cultural narratives.

5.5. Theoretical and Practical Implications

This research significantly contributes to the evolution of Cultivation Theory by demonstrating its applicability and nuances within the contemporary Algerian digital context. It reaffirms the theory's relevance in understanding long-term media effects in an interactive online environment, particularly distinguishing between first-order and second-order effects. The study also highlights the critical roles of source credibility and audience media literacy in mediating the cultivation process. Practically, the findings provide actionable insights for educational and media institutions, emphasizing the strategic importance of supporting local cultural content creators and integrating such content into university curricula. Furthermore, the study underscores the necessity of developing robust media literacy programs to equip students with critical thinking skills essential for navigating and interpreting digital content effectively.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1. Conclusion

This study confirmed the significant role of local content creators, exemplified by Mohamed Doumir's channel, in promoting cultural inculcation and enhancing the cultural awareness of Algerian university students via YouTube. The content analysis revealed a strong focus on historical and cultural topics, while the field study confirmed a positive and comprehensive impact on the dimensions of cultural identity, historical knowledge, values, and attitudes. The absence of statistically significant differences across demographic variables indicates the broad reach and unified influence of this content. Furthermore, the high level of media awareness among students, and their critical engagement with the content, suggest a healthy and conscious process of cultural inculcation.

6.2. Recommendations

Based on the study results, the following recommendations are presented: **Support Local Cultural Content Creators:** Provide financial and logistical support to content creators who focus on national history and culture to ensure the continuity and quality of their production.

Integrate Digital Cultural Content: Educational institutions should integrate high-quality digital cultural content into university curricula to enhance students' historical and cultural knowledge.

Develop Media Literacy Programs:

Establish specialized programs to enhance media and digital literacy among university students, focusing on critical thinking and source verification.

Encourage Interactive Content: Content creators should be encouraged to produce more interactive content that stimulates discussion and active participation among the audience, especially in the dimension of behaviour and practices.

Conduct Comparative Studies: Conduct future studies comparing the impact of local cultural content with foreign content on the cultural identity of Algerian youth.

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