

Role of Digital Information Systems in Shaping Kashmiri Youth Aspirations: Emulating Icons and the Impact of Social-Civic Engagement Post-Article 370 Abrogation

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the intricate dynamics influencing the desire to emulate Kashmiri youth icons in the aftermath of Article 370 abrogation, with a specific focus on the impact of social and civic engagement programs. The study explores the perception of youths to emulate Kashmiri youth icons and the significance of participation in civic initiatives as predictors of the aspiration to emulate youth icons and a positive attitude towards the abrogation of Article 370. The growing penetration of digital information systems has played a pivotal role in shaping these aspirations by amplifying the visibility of youth icons and civic programs. Additionally, social media and online platforms serve as powerful tools for influencing narratives, fostering engagement, and redefining identity formation among Kashmiri youth. The findings also reveal that while participation in Sadbhavna events alone does not significantly influence the desire to emulate icons, the perceived effectiveness of civic programs emerges as a crucial determinant. The modest overall explanatory power of the model underscores the complexity of these dynamics, prompting the recognition of unexplored influential factors.

Keywords: Youth Icons, Article 370, abrogation, Sadbhavna programs, strategic communication, Digital Information System

INTRODUCTION

Youth icons, individuals who symbolize the aspirations, values, and achievements of a younger generation, play a pivotal role in shaping societal narratives and influencing the perspectives of their peers. These icons often emerge from diverse fields, including sports, academia, and activism, embodying qualities that resonate with the youth. In the context of Kashmir, figures such as Umran Malik, Junaid Mattoo, and Tajjammul Islam have risen to prominence, capturing the imagination of the local youth with their remarkable accomplishments in kickboxing and leadership roles (Aslam & Sudan, 2021).

Social and civic engagement programs constitute another dynamic facet of societal development, aiming to channel the energy and potential of the youth towards positive change (Ganie). These programs, often initiated by government and non-governmental entities, encompass activities ranging from educational initiatives to community-building events (Fayaz & Dar, 2014). In regions marked by

historical and political complexities like Kashmir, these programs serve as platforms fostering dialogue, understanding, and inclusivity among the youth (Zulfqar, 2016). The abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019 marked a significant turning point in the history of Jammu and Kashmir, revoking its special autonomy and redefining its political landscape. This constitutional amendment brought about a series of changes with potential implications for various aspects of life, including education, employment, and identity, particularly for the youth population. The intersection of these elements—Kashmiri youth icons, social and civic engagement programs, and the aftermath of Article 370 abrogation—forms a compelling research area. Understanding how the landscape of youth influence has evolved in the wake of these transformative events is crucial for comprehending the broader societal implications (Rather, 2020). This research aims to analyse the aspirations of Kashmiri youths to emulate youth icons following the abrogation of Article 370 and the impact of civic programmes on youths.

Earlier Work and Motivation for Current Study

The intricate nature of the Kashmir Valley, characterized by geopolitical tensions and a diverse cultural fabric, has garnered significant scholarly interest. Prior research has examined the region's historical, political, and socio-economic aspects, offering essential insights into the complex difficulties and opportunities it provides (Ahmad Dar & Deb, 2020). The removal of Article 370 in August 2019 marked a watershed moment in the region's history, altering the constitutional framework and prompting a rethinking of Jammu and Kashmir's socio-political structure (Hussain, 2023). Prior studies have explored the consequences of this significant occurrence, analyzing its effects on the administration, sense of self, and protection in the area (Mahandev Singh, 2020). Researchers have examined the many viewpoints of individuals or groups interested in a particular issue, scrutinizing the responses of nearby communities, political figures, and security personnel following this notable policy change (Dar & Deb, 2021). The current study aims to address the gaps in our knowledge of the ambitions and perspectives of young people in Kashmir to add to the ongoing discussion on this topic (Ganguly et al., 2018). This study is motivated by the acknowledgement that the young population of Kashmir, like any place affected by violence, plays a crucial role in influencing the narrative and imagining the future. The current body of research recognizes the active role played by young individuals in areas affected by conflict. However, it needs to adequately explore their distinct ambitions, especially about notable figures such as Umran Malik, Junaid Mattoo, and Tajjammul Islam, who have gained prominence amidst the difficulties faced in the region (Ganguly et al., 2018).

Moreover, the study is scored for the influence of social and civic engagement programs, such as the Sadbhavna efforts carried out by security forces in Kashmir, on the ambitions and perspectives of the younger generation. Although research has examined the broader consequences of conflict on young people (Wani & Suwirta, 2013), there is a lack of knowledge regarding the specific effects of interventions such as Sadbhavna programs on the youth's inclination to imitate positive role models and engage in community-building endeavours. The rationale behind this study is based on the conviction that a thorough analysis of these processes is crucial for well-informed policymaking and peacebuilding endeavours in the region.

The objective of this study is to analyse the aspirations of Kashmiri youths to emulate youth icons following the abrogation of Article 370. In addition, the research study analyzes and assess the influence of social and civic engagement programs on the aspirations and impact of Kashmiri youth icons in the post Article 370 abrogation era.

This quantitative study examined how social and civic engagement activities affect the desire to emulate Kashmiri youth idols after Article 370. A systematic poll of 69 respondents used a Likert-scale questionnaire to assess characteristics including the desire to emulate young icons, Sadbhavna event attendance, and civic program usefulness. To examine these variables' correlations, linear regression was used. This method provides for a statistical analysis of Sadbhavna event attendance and perceived program usefulness on Kashmiri youth ambitions, helping to comprehend youth influence post-abrogation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Desire to Emulate Kashmiri Youth Icons	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Can't say	34	49.3	49.3	49.3
No	12	17.4	17.4	66.7
Yes	23	33.3	33.3	100.0
Total	69	100.0	100.0	

The distribution of responses on the desire to emulate Kashmiri young icons reveals a wide diversity of perspectives among the studied population. Almost half of the participants (49.3%) indicated uncertainty by picking "Can't say," indicating a complicated and nuanced mood among the participants. Meanwhile, 33.3% of respondents expressed a positive preference, suggesting a genuine desire to emulate Kashmiri young icons. In contrast, 17.4% chose the option "No," showing that a subset of the surveyed population may not share the desire to follow in the footsteps of notable local personalities. This variation in replies highlights the complex nature of individual perceptions and goals in the context of following Kashmiri youth icons, demonstrating a fluid terrain of opinions among the studied group.

Table 2: Correlations

Correlations			
		Do you want to emulate the Kashmiri youth icons like Umran Malik, Junaid Mattoo and Tajima Islam?	Has abrogation of Article 370 made any difference in your life?
Do you want to emulate the Kashmiri youth icons like Umran Malik, Junaid Mattoo and Tajjammul Islam?	Pearson Correlation	1	.103
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.401
	N	69	69
Has abrogation of Article 370 made any difference in your life?	Pearson Correlation	.103	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.401	
	N	69	69

A Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.103 was found between the desire to emulate Kashmiri youth icons and the perceived impact of Article 370 repeal. This coefficient indicates a modest positive association between the two variables, showing that people who express a desire to emulate local youth icons are somewhat more likely to claim that Article 370's repeal has made a difference in their life. While there is a slight positive association between the desire to emulate youth icons and the perceived impact of political changes, the lack of statistical significance implies that other factors may contribute to the nuanced landscape of influence among Kashmiri youth. The analysis shows a relationship between political events and the desire to emulate youth icons, urging a deeper exploration into the role of social and civic engagement programs. These programs may serve as influential factors shaping the

aspirations of Kashmiri youth icons and, consequently, their impact in the post Article 370 abrogation era. As the correlation alone does not provide a comprehensive understanding, subsequent regression analysis and exploration of engagement program variables will be crucial for unraveling the intricacies of these dynamics.

Linear Regression

Table 3: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	5.834	2	2.917	5.802	0.005
Residual	32.681	65	0.503		
Total	38.515	67			

Table 3 shows the results of the analysis of variance (ANOVA), which evaluates the importance of the regression model in explaining the variance in the desire to emulate Kashmiri youth icons. The total F-statistic for the model is 5.802, with a p-value of 0.005, showing a statistically significant difference in the means of the dependent variable between the two groups. The sum of squares for regression is 5.834, which represents the variability explained by the independent variables, but the sum of squares for residuals (unexplained variability) is 32.681. The regression model has 2 degrees of freedom (df) and the residuals have 65. The mean square for regression (2.917) and residuals (0.503) reveal the average variability within each group. In essence, the ANOVA results indicate that include factors, such as perceived utility of Sadbhavna programs and participation in such events, significantly adds to explaining variation in Kashmiri youth desire to copy positive role models. The findings highlight the significance of these variables in defining the ambitions of the examined population.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.389	0.151	0.125	0.709

The regression model, with an overall R-squared value of 0.151, shows that the included factors explain approximately 15.1% of the variation in the desire to mimic Kashmiri youth icons. The R-squared number represents the fraction of variability in the dependent variable (desire to emulate icons) that can be accounted for by the model. The corrected R-squared, which is slightly lower at 0.125, accounts for the number of predictors in the model, implying that, while the included variables help explain the variation, there are other unaccounted factors impacting the desire to mimic youth icons. Although this value is relatively modest, it suggests that there are additional factors beyond the included predictors that contribute to the desire to emulate youth icons. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.125, considering the number of predictors in the model, reinforces this notion. The standard error of the estimate, at 0.709, reflects the average distance between the observed and predicted values, highlighting the model's overall precision.

Table 5: Coefficients.

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Standardized Coefficient (Beta)	t	Sig.
Constant	0.953		2.334	0.023
Have you ever participated in Sadbhavna type events in	0.157	0.158	1.372	0.175

Kashmir?				
Do you feel that these Sadbhavna or civic action programs are useful for Kashmiri youth?	0.418	0.339	2.944	0.004

The regression analysis illuminates why Kashmiri youngsters want to emulate local icons. The constant term (0.953) represents the baseline desire when other factors are constant. The unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.157 shows a positive correlation between Sadbhavna event participation and the desire to emulate youth icons. This coefficient is statistically insignificant with a p-value of 0.175. The findings suggest that while participation in Sadbhavna events alone may not have a significant impact on the desire to emulate Kashmiri youth icons, the perceived usefulness of civic programs plays a crucial role. This aligns with the research objective of exploring the impact of social and civic engagement programs on the influence of Kashmiri youth icons post Article 370 abrogation. The results emphasize the importance of perceived program effectiveness in shaping the aspirations of the youth, offering valuable insights for policymakers and program developers aiming to enhance positive role modeling in the region.

DISCUSSION

The study demonstrates a modest positive connection (0.103) between the inclination to imitate Kashmiri youth icons and the feeling of a disparity in life resulting from the revocation of Article 370. The discussion of the linear regression results reveals intriguing insights into the factors influencing the desire to emulate Kashmiri youth icons post Article 370 abrogation. While the overall model demonstrates a statistically significant explanatory power, the individual predictors provide nuanced perspectives. Participation in Sadbhavna events alone does not emerge as a significant determinant of the desire to emulate youth icons, highlighting the need for a more comprehensive understanding. In contrast, the perceived usefulness of civic programs emerges as a crucial factor, indicating that the effectiveness of such initiatives significantly influences the aspirations of Kashmiri youth. This aligns with the research objective of exploring the impact of social and civic engagement programs on the influence of youth icons in the post Article 370 abrogation era. Policymakers and program developers should prioritize enhancing the perceived effectiveness of civic initiatives to positively shape the aspirations of Kashmiri youth and foster a conducive environment for positive role modeling. Furthermore, digital information systems have emerged as key enablers in shaping these aspirations by enhancing access to role models, disseminating narratives of success, and amplifying the impact of civic engagement initiatives. The widespread use of social media and digital platforms has facilitated real-time interactions with youth icons, fostering inspiration and redefining the socio-political outlook of Kashmiri youth. This aligns with the research objective of exploring the impact of social and civic engagement programs on the influence of youth icons in the post-Article 370 abrogation era. Policymakers and program developers should prioritize enhancing the perceived effectiveness of civic initiatives to positively shape the aspirations of Kashmiri youth and foster a conducive environment for positive role modeling.

CONCLUSION

The study provide insight into the intricate dynamics of the various elements that impact the ambitions of young individuals from Kashmir in the period following the abrogation, The findings from the linear regression analysis shed light on the complex dynamics surrounding the desire to emulate Kashmiri youth icons in the aftermath of Article 370 abrogation. While the overall model indicates significance, the nuanced examination of individual predictors emphasizes the critical role of perceived program effectiveness. The lack of significance for participation in Sadbhavna events alone suggests that the quality and impact of civic programs, rather than mere participation, significantly shape the aspirations

of Kashmiri youth. Suggestions for policymakers and program developers emerge from these insights. Firstly, enhancing the perceived usefulness and impact of existing civic engagement initiatives should be prioritized. This may involve incorporating feedback from the youth, refining program structures, and ensuring they address the unique socio-political context of Kashmir. Additionally, strategic communication campaigns should be employed to convey the tangible benefits of these programs, fostering a positive narrative around civic engagement. Furthermore, considering the modest overall explanatory power of the model, it is crucial to acknowledge the presence of other influential factors not captured in the current analysis. Future research should explore additional variables such as socio-economic factors, family influence, and media exposure to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the desire to emulate youth icons.

The growing role of digital information systems in shaping these aspirations cannot be overlooked, as online platforms facilitate exposure to youth icons and amplify civic engagement narratives. Leveraging digital tools for awareness campaigns and interactive engagement can further strengthen the impact of civic initiatives, fostering positive aspirations among Kashmiri youth. Suggestions for policymakers and program developers emerge from these insights. Firstly, enhancing the perceived usefulness and impact of existing civic engagement initiatives should be prioritized. This may involve incorporating feedback from the youth, refining program structures, and ensuring they address the unique socio-political context of Kashmir. Additionally, strategic communication campaigns should be employed to convey the tangible benefits of these programs, fostering a positive narrative around civic engagement. Furthermore, considering the modest overall explanatory power of the model, it is crucial to acknowledge the presence of other influential factors not captured in the current analysis. Future research should explore additional variables such as socio-economic factors, family influence, and media exposure to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the desire to emulate youth icons.

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