CYBER NAMES: CONSTRUCTING INDIVIDUAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITIES

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The focus of this study is on the construction of individual and cultural identity via one's choice of cyber names in chat rooms.

By using cyber names, the chat room community identifies themselves and their netizens as inhabitants of a different and unorthodox world, but it is nevertheless one that recognizes the netizens as a community in their own cyber domain.

Identity

The relative anonymity of cyberspace allows for the making of identities that are not bound by the conventions of a physical world. In other words, in an alternate, notional world that has no borders or boundaries, netizens are free to construct an individual and cultural identity of their own choice.

A name is one of the things that give individuals their own special identity, while also helping others identify the person.
Matthews, G. (2000) cultural supermarket—
a range of identities to be assumed.

Not a free market there are social
structures within which individual exist
which constrain the amount and scope of
choice available to individual.
Mystique (Raven Darkholme) is a fictional character associated with the Marvel Comics franchise, X-Men. Throughout most of her history, Mystique has been a supervillainess, founding the Brotherhood of Evil Mutants and assassinating several important people involved in mutant affairs. Mystique herself is a mutant, a shapeshifter whose natural appearance is blue skin and yellow eyes. At one point, she mentioned she is over 100 years old. Mystique is the mother of the villain Greydon Creed, the X-Men hero Nightcrawler and foster mother of the hero Rogue. She was forced to abandon Nightcrawler, but raised Rogue for a number of years and the two women have mixed feelings towards one another. Despite Mystique’s history of crime, she was most recently working with the X-Men’s Professor X in a short-lived series. She was later voted straight into the X-Men.

Darkstar (Laynia Petrovna) is a fictional character, a mutant superheroine in the Marvel Comics universe. She has been a member of various super-teams in her career and ultimately died as a member of the X-Corporation in New X-Men. A new Darkstar has since appeared several times as a member of the new Winter Guard.

Cyber name

nymphetamine_gurl
Nymphetamine Fix
Cradle of Filth is an extreme metal band, formed in Suffolk, United Kingdom in 1991.

Gender

nymphetamine_gurl
Ragdoll
Syakila
VampireM
Apek8188
Bart

Ethnic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>kayli</th>
<th>ChaiHaLyan</th>
<th>Ron</th>
<th>iaxzairahman</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iali</td>
<td>muf*tao</td>
<td>Nikki</td>
<td>hairulanwar</td>
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<tr>
<td>mmuurrfy</td>
<td>c123</td>
<td>uncleokui</td>
<td>SarahC</td>
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<tr>
<td>angkasawan-malaysia</td>
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Calling Card

Virgin guy
Looking4gals
heartman_ceylonese35single
BoreD^GaL
Naughty|By|Nature
Milton Gordon (1964) in his 'melting pot' theory looked at melting pot assimilation which involved the fusion, both cultural and biological, of all societal groups into a totally new blend. In this hybrid society, all racial and ethnic groups become 'melted together by the fires of American influence and interaction into a distinctly new type' (Gordon 1964:115). The final outcome of such a homogenizing process is the fusion of formerly distinct groups into an ethnically undifferentiated society.

While assimilation is not the desired outcome in Malaysia's quest to be a globalized nation, multiculturalism—for want of a better term—is. Multiculturalism is seen as one that rejects assimilation into a mainstream culture and an ethnically undifferentiated society. Multiculturalism, in the context of Malaysia, maintains pluralism, that is, the cultural diversity and uniqueness of all ethnic groups in Malaysia. However it does not see the maintenance process as one that rejects 'intimate group relationships' (Gordon 1994; Gans 1997) but rather one that fosters unity in diversity.

Questions?

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Thank you