TV Exposure and North Sinai Youth’s Tribal Identity, National Identity, and Risk Perception

ABSTRACT Based on social identity theory (SIT) and risk perception theory, this study examines the ways in which North Sinai youth’s tribal and national identities are affected by television (TV) exposure, risk perception, and TV bias perception. The findings from a survey of youth in North Sinai demonstrate a significant relationship between exposure to Egyptian TV and tribal identity. Moreover, TV bias perception predicts youth’s tribal identity and risk perception. The study concludes that TV exposure does not affect Sinai youth’s national identity and risk perception, but increases tribal identity.

KEYWORDS television, tribal identity, national identity, risk perception, North Sinai youth

INTRODUCTION

Recognition is a vital component of society, especially for minorities. It shapes their identities and constitutes their concept of self. If society deems and misrecognizes a group or individual, it can cause low self-esteem and destroy their identities (Taylor 1992, 25–26). One of the sources of recognition is the mass media, which shapes the politics of recognition in society.

Bedouins in North Sinai live in exceptional social, political, and security circumstances. North Sinai entered a security vacuum after the revolution of January 25, 2011, and became a scene of terrorist operations (Aziz 2016, 350). The previous Egyptian governments contributed to this situation through their ignorance and neglect of North Sinai. In comparison with South Sinai, where the government built tourist cities, North Sinai is less developed and poorer than the south (Dentice 2018, 16).

The media have participated in the marginalization of the Bedouins and lack of recognition through the blackout of North Sinai in news programs. Zachovà (2016) concluded that Bedouins suffer from economic and political inequalities, ethnicity-motivated accusations of treason, and double-dealing,
leaving them feeling like voiceless, marginalized, second-class citizens. Other researchers have described the state of northern Sinai youth as “social and psychological desertification,” and found that they suffered from severe social and economic circumstances, anxiety, depression, dissatisfaction with society, and even an inability to meet their basic needs (Ibrahim and Shaban 2017).

The present study focuses on the traditional medium of television (TV), which constitutes the official voice of the state, and has been used by the Egyptian government to convey its positions to the public. It focuses on Sinai’s young people, who are struggling to find self-esteem. The identity of the people of Sinai is rooted in the tribes governed by customs rather than laws, and is a result of historical and cultural realities.

There are remarkably few studies on the media impact on the identities of minorities and marginalized peoples in at-risk communities in the Arab region, especially Egypt. Al-Badawi (2012, 35) found that the Nubians feel marginalized and are forbidden to appear, talk, or write in the media because “their views disturb the state despite their reality.” This reflects the approach of the Egyptian media to minorities.

The present study examines various factors affecting the social identity of youth in the at-risk community in North Sinai. It provides an appropriate case study with which to illustrate the notion of mediated recognition or misrecognition. The aim is to analyze the role of the media in shaping the identity of the Sinai youth, the attitudes of the Sinai public toward the image of them presented on Egyptian TV, and their perception of the bias of media coverage of their affairs.

Few studies have examined the perceptions of social risks, which are the most dangerous for minorities. These manifest in misrecognition and affect the formation of social identity. Moreover, while previous studies have examined the impact of ethnic identity on risk perception, this study examines the effect of risk perception on identity formation.

The study attempts to answer several questions:

- Does the Egyptian media work to integrate cultural and ethnic groups in Egyptian society as a whole to overcome the barriers between Sinai Bedouins and the state?
- Alternatively, does the media deepen tribal identity among North Sinai’s youth at the expense of national identity?
- How do young Bedouins perceive mediated recognition or misrecognition?
Based on the following literature review, the study examines the impact of the exposure of Sinai’s youth to Egyptian TV on their national and tribal identity and the impact of intermediating variables (risk perception, TV bias perception of the coverage of their affairs, trust in TV, demographic variables) on this relationship. The following section presents previous studies, first discussing the conditions of the Sinai people, specifically the youth.

ETHNOGRAPHIC SETTING AND CONDITIONS OF YOUTH IN NORTH SINAI

The identity of the indigenous inhabitants of North Sinai consists of a Palestinian element, which is very conscious of its identity and its relations with the inhabitants of Gaza and the West Bank, and a Bedouin element, which is aware of its historical heritage in the Arabian Peninsula and belonging to tribes with branches in Palestine and Jordan (International Crisis Group 2007). Thus, the history, geopolitics, and conflicts in the region affect the identity of Sinai youth who live in hazardous conditions in the border region where they endure the scourges of political conflict and terrorism.

The state of emergency imposed on North Sinai robs the Bedouins of their rights and hinders free movement, which is a violation of the Bedouins’ nomadic lifestyle (Nasreddine 2018). Moreover, Sinai youth face misrecognition from Egyptian governments. However, the Bedouins are still a military advantage in the war in Sinai, so the army and armed groups such as Salafi-jihadist groups recruit them (Dyer and Kessler 2014). Some Bedouins never hold an Egyptian citizenship card, and others have difficulties obtaining one. Males are excluded from conscription, which affects their chances of getting jobs, and thus their levels of unemployment and poverty are higher (Swale 2015). Consequently, some fall into smuggling drugs, weapons, people, and commodities (Gold 2014). These elements of social status shape Bedouin identity.

Bedouins who live in North Sinai are called at-risk groups (International Crisis Group 2007; Nasreddine 2018). Many geopolitical and security researchers have analyzed the causes of this, most of which focus on the situations of the Bedouins. Some people in the country regard the Bedouins as criminals supporting or embracing terrorism. In marginalized groups, it is easy to attract and influence the inhabitants, especially young people who have already found an identity other than the Egyptian one (Abdel Hamid and Nabil 2014). The Bedouins experience horizontal inequalities in
economic, political, and social aspects (Idris 2017; Zachová 2016). Young Sinai people’s feelings of alienation, social exclusion, and inequality are numerous and rooted in history. They affect all areas of their lives and may influence self-concept, generating threats to identity.

MEDIATED RECOGNITION OF MINORITIES AND IDENTITY

Lorenzana (2016) found that the media can facilitate or hinder recognition through groups’ spaces of self-representation, enabling migrants to build and maintain identities, increase self-esteem, and (re)construct sociality. This section discusses how the mass media can harm or build the identities of minorities. The media’s negative portrayals may lead to stereotyping. As Kidd (2016) outlined, media representations of minority groups negatively affect how they understand themselves, causing them to “self-stereotype” in a way that impairs their creativity and restricts them to limited roles in society. Marôpo (2014, 199) showed that news representations of violence affected the identity of young African migrants. Their identity was distinguished by the categories “mistrustful identity, anguished identity, and stigmatized identity.” This reflects findings showing TV portrayals of African Americans to affect viewers’ perceptions of actual African Americans’ characteristics (Punyanunt-Carter 2008). However, favorable representations affect identity positively. McKinley, Mastro, and Warber (2014) found that exposure to good exemplars of the same ethnic identity on TV improved self-perceptions among Latinos. Hence, depictions of ethnic groups in media content affects them. Some TV also intermingles ethnic and religious identities with the national identity. For example, religious TV content has succeeded in bridging the gap between “multi-ethnic identities” (Rofil, Md Syed, and Hamzah 2015). Thus, representations are sources of empowerment or oppression for an ethnic group (Mastro 2017).

MASS MEDIA REPRESENTATION OF SINAI

While there are many studies on minorities, there are few on minorities in Egypt. Moreover, media studies about Sinai are scarce and exclude many of the media effects on Sinai’s inhabitants. Most address news coverage of the terrorist attacks in Sinai and its effects on youth perception of terrorism (Al-Desouki 2016) and international media discourse about the Russian plane crash in Sinai, which analyzes the international society’s directions as influenced by the news media (Khader 2016). An analytical study by Al
Sayed (2017) showed that the issue of terrorism was covered most among all issues dealt with by Egyptian TV programs about Sinai, while social problems did not receive enough attention. It also showed that the dominant context used to address the issues of Sinai was terrorism. Sand (2016) also found that the Egyptian media sometimes suspect the largely Bedouin population in Sinai and refer to Sinai as a separate place from Egypt itself. Generally, newspapers cover Sinai from a geostrategic perspective while neglecting a socio-economic perspective.

Moreover, the allocation of regional TV channels to serve the governorates of Egypt and the lack of allocation of channels to the Sinai Governorate indicates the media’s disregard of North Sinai. Aside from terrorism coverage, Egyptian TV also airs films with negative stereotypes of the Bedouin population of Sinai. Some soap operas have attempted to address this. At the beginning of 1987, the soap opera Sonbol After the Million drew attention to the Egyptian population’s tense relationship with the Sinai Bedouins, aiming to show that there is an opportunity to reconcile with the Bedouins, of whose culture there is ignorance (Hosni 2013). Darwish and Ishaq (2018) found that the Egyptian media’s disregard for Sinai’s people motivates them to turn to the internet to search for an identity. Generally, the Egyptian media’s disregard for some Egyptian groups has this effect. Accordingly, Al-Badawi (2010) suggested that Nubians feel that the traditional media treats them unfairly.

SOCIAL IDENTITY AND SELF-CATEGORIZATION

Social identity is a “self-image” formed by social categories (Tajfel and Turner 1979, 40). Tajfel (1982) stated that self-image is based on the tendency to group things together cognitively. The individual tends to exaggerate differences between groups and similarities within the same group. Social categorization explains “them” and “us” bias, which leads to the existence of exclusive groups.

Social identity theory (SIT) holds that people want to believe that the groups to which they belong are somehow better than the groups they do not belong to (Brown 2006). This contributes to the interpretation of attitudes and behaviors affecting decision-making within a group and between groups. It sheds a light on the psychological foundations of discrimination and tolerance among groups (Nasser and Gevorgyan 2009) and explains the processing of information in self-schema, which is different in the in-group from that of other information (Fujioka 2005).
The potential scope of this research is broad and includes individual differences in identity adoption. Whereas some people prefer to identify themselves based on the major groups to which they belong, others avoid classifications and prefer to see themselves as individuals (Huddy 2001). Thus, SIT and self-categorization are used to study different types of identities, such as religious and cultural identities (ElShami 2009), and are less used in the study of national identity.

**RISK PERCEPTION AND SOCIAL IDENTITY**

This study integrates the theories of social identity, self-categorization, and risk perception. It attempts to identify the dialectic relationship between risk perception and social identity. Different social identities can ignite conflict, or alternatively, lead to mutual understanding. In this case, it is called “perception of identity threat” instead of “risk perception” (Haji, McKeown, and Ferguson 2016). Risk perception is an expression of people’s knowledge and emotions towards the probability of serious and negative occurrences (Paek and Hove 2017).

Furthermore, self-categorization is a significant predictor of risk perception. Hence, the perceived social category mediates the relationship between the effects of the presence of the risk and judgments of the risk (Stappel, Reicher, and Spears 1994). In addition, Gandy (2001) examined racial identity as an independent variable to risk perception, finding that it significantly affected the perception of risks of domestic violence faced by black women. Davis and Gandy (1999) also found that African Americans with stronger racial identities are more likely to criticize media content. An individual can consider a multicultural society as enriching or threatening his/her social identity, depending on how they perceive the situation. In perceiving identity threat, people take defensive strategies, generating in-group bias or hostile behavior to escape negative feelings and fulfill the need for self-esteem (Lüders 2016).

The present study examined the social risks to which people may be exposed (social exclusion, social injustice, and misrecognition) that consequently affect the formation of youth’s identity. Some researchers consider threats of stereotypes and discrimination as shaping new generations of minorities. Neither Polish nor Jewish minorities in Lithuania, for example, disclose their ethnic identities lest they face marginalization (Zbarauskaité, Grigutytė, and Gailienė 2015).
In a study of violence cases in North Sinai, Scholz (2013) determined the following reasons for them: government ignorance and the mistreatment of people, lack of development, illegal economic activities, and feelings of exclusion. These all related to societal risk, which threatened the Sinai people’s identity. Conversely, media coverage affects people’s risk perceptions on both societal and personal levels. Further, theoretical models explain how people perceive risks and how psychological, cultural, and social structures of risk influence people’s perceptions and responses (Paek and Hove 2017). Many researchers depend on current risk perception theory, which was developed to distinguish between cognitive and affective factors. Building on this, Trumbo et al. (2016) developed and reformulated a scale based on a psychometric model that is reformulated and applied in this study.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Questionnaire respondents

This questionnaire-based study, conducted from December 2015 to January 2016, used a survey methodology in which a sample of 294 people aged eighteen to forty years from the North Sinai Governorate was chosen after excluding some incomplete questionnaires. It was difficult to obtain a random sample due to challenges of security and physical access. Furthermore, there was no sufficiently credible source for detailed information on the demographics of the populations of the different cities of Sinai. Thus, the sample included several young residents of Al-Arish, Sheikh Zuwaíd, and Bir Al-Abd, whose responses were compiled and distributed among the various districts in North Sinai.

Respondents’ demography

- Gender: the percentages of males and females in the study sample were 59.9 percent and 40.1 percent, respectively.
- Occupation: most respondents were unemployed (50.7 percent), while those who were employed in local businesses constituted 44.9 percent, and the remainder, who worked in private or free businesses, did not exceed 4.4 percent of the total sample.
- Educational levels: 42.9 percent had university degrees, 29.9 percent had intermediate qualifications, 15.6 percent had post-intermediate qualifications, 6.1 percent had postgraduate studies, and 5.4 percent had no educational qualifications.
• Marital status: the percentages of unmarried and married respondents were 52.7 percent and 47.3 percent, respectively.

• Monthly income: the percentages of low-income (< 2000 EGP), middle-income (2000–3000 EGP), and high-income (> 3000 EGP) respondents were 39.1 percent, 52.0 percent, and 8.8 percent, respectively.

• Tribes: the most prominent tribes to which the youth belonged were Al-Kashif, Al-bik, Al-Sawarka, and Al-Shurbagi at 5.2 percent, 5.0 percent, and 4.7 percent respectively. Tribes such as Al-Aza’ar, Al-Nazaien, Abu Atta, Sharab, Dakahlia, Singer, Al-Ghoul, Al-Rattail, Al-Akharsa, Abu Taweelah, and Al-Ghannam barely registered according to the sample responses in the study indicating a percentage of only 0.3–0.6 percent.

• Membership in political parties: 91.2 percent of respondents were not members of any party.

• Political or intellectual affiliation: 88.4 percent of respondents did not have a particular intellectual or political affiliation.

• Type of political or intellectual affiliation: respondents’ affiliations were divided between Islamists (16), Liberals (6), Nasserites (1), Leftists (1), and other (7).

Validity test
To detect the validity of the study, a test of face validity was conducted. Owing to the authenticity of referees, particularly those in the field of political communication, the research also benefitted greatly from the investigators’ evaluations of the study’s questionnaire. This was in addition to applying the reliability coefficient, Cronbach’s alpha.

Stability test
A stability test was also applied by distributing fifteen questionnaire forms (test–retest), constituting a sample of 5 percent of the respondents of the study group, one week after the end of the field study. The result of this survey reached a stability grade of 0.9 percent, which is considered acceptable.

Variable measures
The study improved upon previous studies in terms of determining the variables and their measurement, as follows:
• TV exposure: this self-report measure consisted of a question about the number of hours of daily TV exposure. The average number of hours of TV exposure per day was 3.25.

• Risk perception scale: as in previous field studies, this research was based on a psychometric paradigm that includes both cognitive and affective elements of risk perception (Jenkin 2006; Oh, Paek and Hove, 2015; Trumbo et al. 2016). As this study measured perceived risk among Sinai youth, five specialized factors were incorporated covering the cognitive aspect. The cognitive aspect is what the Sinai youth know and perceive about the risks they face in their environment. Conversely, the affective aspect is an emotional aspect involving the feelings of the respondents toward the dangers. All factors of the scale consisted of statements; the participants determined their position on the five-point Likert scale (Strongly agree = 5, Agree = 4, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly disagree = 1) as follows:

  • Security risk perception (mean = 16.76, SD = 1.691, Cronbach’s alpha = 0.779). This factor consisted of four statements, with respondents with higher total scores on the scale perceiving greater security hazards. These statements were “Sinai is expected to be subjected to terrorist attacks in the coming months”; “The terrorist attacks in Sinai have severely affected the lives of Sinai people on all levels”; “I am interested in knowing what will be going on in Sinai during the coming months, especially in terms of security”; and “The situation in neighboring Arab countries affects us more than the rest of Egypt.”

  • Economic risk perception (mean = 4.80, SD = 0.547). This factor consisted of a single statement, with respondents with higher total scores on the scale perceiving greater economic risk. This statement was “Economy and trade in Sinai have been affected by security instability.”

  • Social risk perception (misrecognition) (mean = 14.67, SD = 2.190, Cronbach’s alpha = 0.794). Misrecognition is a social risk involving the denial of any risk perception in Sinai, accordingly depriving these societies of receiving any of their rightful dues. This factor consisted of four statements, with respondents with higher total scores on the scale perceiving greater danger of misrecognition. These statements were: “Some governmental agencies prevent me from exercising my rights because I am from
Sinai”; “It is unfair that I do not own the land where I live”; “People suspect me of wrongdoing when they know that I am from Sinai”; and “I sometimes feel that some of the government’s laws on Sinai are unfair.”

- Familiarity or acceptance (mean = 15.97, SD = 1.821, Cronbach’s alpha = 0.802). This factor consisted of four statements, with respondents with higher scores on the scale perceiving the situation in Sinai as more intense. These statements were: “It has become clear to me that Sinai is vulnerable to terrorist attacks, and despite this, I have to manage my own affairs”; “The Sinai citizen can deal with political and economic turmoil in Sinai and live his life normally”; “I have become used to the life of danger because, personally, I have often been influenced by the terrorist attacks in Sinai”; and “I am thinking of emigrating from Sinai and going to another governorate or country” (reverse coded).

- Affective aspect (mean = 21.47, SD = 2.055, Cronbach’s alpha = 0.780). This aspect described the emotional side affecting citizens of Sinai. It consisted of five statements, with respondents with higher total scores on the scale perceiving a greater emotional sense of insecurity. These statements were: “I am afraid that I could be personally attacked as a result of the security chaos”; “I am worried about the future of my children and my family in Sinai”; “I become terrified whenever there is a terrorist attack in Sinai”; “I feel dreadful that things could get worse in Sinai in the coming months”; and “I am thinking of leaving Sinai, but I am anxious about the future of my kids.”

- Tribal identity (mean = 29.57, SD = 2.656, Cronbach’s alpha = 0.821). This scale consisted of nine statements. Respondents with higher total scores on the scale showed greater adherence to their tribe and higher tribal identity. These statements were “I am very proud of my belonging to my tribe”; “I believe that my tribe is playing an active role in stabilizing the situation in Sinai”; “My affiliation with Egypt is stronger than that with my tribe”; and “I abide by the customs and rules of my tribe more than the laws of the state.” The scale also included statements that measure the social distance between Sinai youth and the young people belonging to other governorates in Egypt. These included: “I have many friends from different governorates in Egypt, and I have no problem with
our friendship”; “It is difficult for me to establish relations with Egyptians in other governorates that are different from Sinai”; and “I can get married to or work with people from other governorates or even belong to tribes other than mine” (reverse coded). Other statements were added to the scale to account for the respondents’ social status in Egyptian society and the way in which they were regarded: “Many factors keep Sinai distanced from the rest of the Egyptian governorates”; and “Others regard my Bedouin culture as less civilized than other cultures in Egyptian society.”

- National identity: to measure national identity, the study applied the Collective Self-Esteem Scale (CSES) developed by Luhtanen and Crocker (1992). This scale consists of 16 statements used to cover all the important aspects of national identity such as the effect of the participation of the individual in a group on the sense of self and membership in the internal community, which includes the personal views of the “internal group” as well as the views of “others” or “external groups,” by measuring on a five-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly opposed.” The CSES was then reformulated by Lilli and Diehl (1999) to measure national identity by tackling diverse issues relevant to it, such as gender, ethnicity, and nationality. Unlike the previous scale, the modified one included twelve statements, ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly opposed,” including all the crucial factors defining national identity. It also used a five-point Likert scale, but it replaced the term used in the original scale “nation” with “Egypt” to be in accordance with the objectives of the study including five factors as follows. All factors of the scale consisted of statements; the participants determined their position on the five-point Likert scale (Strongly agree = 5, Agree = 4, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly disagree = 1).

Membership

Membership tends to be defined as an individual’s tendency to belong to a cluster. It measures the extent of the individual’s belief of his/her worth that leads him/her to participate and compete in this society (Lilli and Diehl 1999).

- Membership (mean = 8.51, SD = 1.344, Cronbach’s alpha = 0.824). The membership factor consisted of two statements. Therefore, the higher the respondents’ total scores on the scale, the greater their sense of membership in their national community, and
vice versa. These statements were: “I am satisfied with my situation within the framework of my country of Egypt”; and “I feel that I am a positive and a cooperative member of my country.”

Private collective self-esteem
This measures the personal view and subjective judgments of the importance and value of the group to which they belong.

- Private collective self-esteem (mean = 13.16, SD = 0.840, Cronbach’s alpha = 0.838). This factor consisted of three statements, and respondents with higher total scores on the scale showed greater pride in their homeland, and vice versa. These statements were: “I am proud to be Egyptian”; “I have positive feelings about my country”; and “But I sometimes feel at a disadvantage being an Egyptian” (reverse coded).

Public collective self-esteem
This measures individuals’ perceptions and evaluations of the perspectives of others toward the community to which they belong.

- Public collective self-esteem (mean = 13.29, SD = 0.836, Cronbach’s alpha = 0.809). This factor consisted of three statements, with respondents with higher total scores on the scale showing more positive beliefs in their nation. These statements were: “I believe that my country, Egypt, is a vital and valuable country”; “Many countries in the world consider Egypt an important state that plays an active role in the region”; and “Others consider Egypt to be not as active as Israel in the Middle East.”

Importance of identity to self-concept
This measures the importance of the individual’s membership in his/her social in-group to self-concept.

- Importance of identity to self-concept (mean = 6.71, SD = 1.180, Cronbach’s alpha = 0.799). This factor consisted of two statements, and respondents with higher total scores on the scale attached higher significance of national identity to their self-concept. These statements were: “Being Egyptian does not greatly affect my sense of self”; and “My belonging to Egypt is not that important to my appreciation of myself.”
Comparison between relative groups

An important concept in SIT is that respondents compare relevant external groups with their own groups. In this study, the word “community” in national identity, on the scale, was replaced with “Egypt.”

- Comparison between relative groups (mean = 6.95, SD = 1.113, Cronbach’s alpha = 0.812). This factor was measured with two statements. Respondents with higher total scores on the scale saw their country as more important than other countries. These statements were: “Egypt cannot compete with the developed countries”; and “Egypt is the least important country in the world.”

Measure of confidence in Egyptian media

- Measure of confidence in Egyptian media (M = 7.30, SD = 2.203, Cronbach’s alpha = 0.705). This measured respondents’ stance on private TV channels, Egyptian general radio stations, and regional broadcasting according to a three-point scale: [I trust them very much = 2; I trust them to some extent = 1; and I do not trust any of them at all = 0]. Respondents with higher total scores on the scale had greater confidence in the media.

Measure of media bias perception

Measure of media bias perception (mean = 61.48, SD = 5.717, Cronbach’s alpha = 0.825). This scale consisted of fourteen statements, and respondents with higher total scores on the scale believed more strongly in the presence of a negative presentation of Sinai in the Egyptian media. These statements were:

“Whenever I follow Sinai news on the Egyptian media, I feel angry.”
“I always doubt any news transmitted from Sinai.”
“Sinai lacks sufficient media coverage for its issues and news stories.”
“Shows in the Egyptian media do not respect the uniqueness of the Sinai community and, they even sometimes underestimate it.”
“Egyptian programs make us feel that we are second-class citizens.”
“Egyptian television programs overlook the important role of Sinai in Egypt.”
“The Egyptian media sometimes accuse us of treason.”
“The Egyptian media represent Sinai people as if they are fanatical and do not care about the interests of the country.”
“I get so worried whenever I follow what is presented in the Egyptian television programs about Sinai.”
“TV programs are a reflection of the Egyptian government’s practices of marginalizing the Sinai community.”
“Egyptian television programs do not host enough Sinai inhabitants to speak about Sinai issues and affairs.”
“The national TV does not focus on Sinai’s real problems and issues.”
“National TV most accurately presents the problems and issues of Sinai.”
“I only follow national TV if I want an accurate understanding of the real problems and conditions of Sinai.”

Economic level scale
Economic level scale (mean = 3.652, SD = 142.5). The economic level of respondents was derived from their monthly income.

Scale of political or ideological affiliation
The respondents were asked about their political/ideological identities and given the following answer alternatives: Liberal, Political Islamist, Nasserite, Leftist, and others.

RESULTS
The findings indicate that the majority of respondents refrained from participating in commentary on any media outlet addressing a Sinai-related issue, as 66.3 percent of the study sample confirmed that they do not partake in any of these media outlets, whereas the viewership of the remainder varied between regular (14.3 percent) and intermittent viewership (19.4 percent). Regarding means of participation, the internet ranked first, mentioned by 70.6 percent of respondents, followed by TV channels at 21.6 percent and the press at 6.9 percent, while < 1.0 percent cited radio broadcasts.

The final point demonstrates respondents’ confidence in Egyptian TV channels, as shown in figure 1. Respondents’ confidence in Egyptian channels was middling. This may be due to media approaches to dealing with North Sinai and its inhabitants, as found by several previous studies with respect to discourse in media neglecting some subjects. This underscores the media’s Sinai news exclusively concentrating on the security situation in the peninsula, terrorist attacks, and seasonal coverage marking Sinai Liberation Day (Al Sayed 2017; Sand 2016). Moreover, respondents affirmed a high reliance on the internet, which can also be explained in the light of SIT,
which maintains that the identity of the public is influenced by media representation of identities (Harwood and Roy 2005). This is indicative that Egyptian TV channels do not represent the identity and needs of Sinai youth, and hence, minorities resort to the internet to express their collective identity (Al-Badawi 2010; Ranney 2014).

Perhaps one of the significant findings arrived at by the present study is the increase in the number of respondents who believe that media outlets portrayed a negative image of the Sinai community, comprising 87.7 percent of the total study sample (distributed as follows: always, 49.3 percent; and sometimes, 38.4 percent). This, in turn, may explain the previous allusion to declining confidence in the Egyptian media in general. Respondents attributed negative portrayals of North Sinai locals in the media to the reasons outlined in table 1.

Affiliations and allegiances varied between tribal, Sinai, Egyptian, Arab, and Islamic identities. Tribal identity came in first at 27.3 percent; Sinai identity came in second at 23.4 percent; Arab identity came in third at 20.3 percent; Egyptian identity came in fourth at 15.1 percent; and Islamic identity came in last at 13.9 percent. These results indicate that despite the varied identities among respondents, the majority adhered to narrower identities (e.g., tribal identity) compared with broader and generic identities (e.g., national identity).

The results indicate that Sinai youth are suffering from an identity crisis and social alienation within their homeland, which is in essence a political crisis that may engender violence and extremism among Sinai youth and devolve into a clash between identities rather than harmonization and assimilation among them. They also shed a light on the importance of consecrating the principle of equitable citizenship by law with respect to rights and duties.
RESULTS OF THE HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis 1: There is a statistically significant relationship between TV exposure and tribal identity

To investigate this relationship, regression analysis was used to estimate more accurately the effect of TV exposure on tribal identity. The $R^2$ value was 0.138. This means that the independent variable (TV exposure) was able to predict 13 percent of the changes in the dependent variable (tribal identity); the beta-coefficient $B = .618$. As for the explanatory power of this model, the $f$-value was 46.905, which was statistically significant at a level of significance $< 0.01$. That supports the explanatory power of the linear regression model statistically. Since the $T$-value was 6.849, statistically significant at $< 0.01$, it indicates the ability of the TV exposure variable to predict the tribal identity variable. These results indicate that those most exposed to TV were the most adherent to their tribal identities. Feelings of threatened identity, in this case, lead to more adherence and favoritism to the in-group identity (in this case tribal identity) at the expense of the out-group identity (in this case national identity) (Tajfel 1982). According to SIT, we can interpret this result. As the media represent a threatening factor to their in-group identity, this makes them value their identity and devalue the identity of the out-group which marginalizes them.

Hypothesis 2: There is a statistically significant correlation between TV exposure and national identity and risk perception

Furthermore, the statistical analysis findings revealed the absence of a statistically significant correlation between TV exposure and national identity. The Pearson correlation coefficient (PCC) registered ($r = 0.040$, $p = 0.499$). There was also no significant relationship between TV exposure and

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<th>Reasons</th>
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<tr>
<td>Egyptian media focuses only on terrorist attacks carried out in Sinai</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>61.2</td>
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<td>Egyptian media relies only on governmental sources of information</td>
<td>103</td>
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<td>The state’s transcendental policies influence media coverage</td>
<td>76</td>
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<td>Media coverage deliberately fabricates lies and promulgates rumors in</td>
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<td>the light of Sinai locals’ inability to portray a positive image of</td>
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<td>Egyptian media exposes the actual reality in Sinai</td>
<td>28</td>
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risk perception ($r = 0.026$, $p = 0.651$). Jahangiri, Taghi, and Alizade (2016) found a significant relationship between media exposure and national identity of the ethnic group. According to the results of the study’s hypothesis, we can conclude that this is undermined.

This result indicates that TV exposure does not affect Bedouin youths’ risk perception in North Sinai. The results are compatible with the results of Wahlberg and Sjoberg (2000), who concluded that TV watching is not a strong causal factor in risk perception, especially when people live in at-risk communities. This conclusion contradicts Saleh (2011), who revealed a significant relationship between TV exposure and the Egyptian public’s perception of collective insecurity. The differences can be attributed to different samples between the general Egyptian public and specific minority group living for a long period in an at-risk community.

**Hypothesis 3:** The correlation between TV exposure and national/tribal identity is influenced by intermediate variables

The results of the statistical analysis using partial PCCs show that the significance of the relationship between TV exposure and tribal identity was 0.344, which marks a statistically significant value at a level of significance < 0.01. The PCC relationship between variables was 0.372 (i.e., the significance of the correlation between variables was largely not influenced by intermediate variables). The slight difference between both values hardly indicates any influence of intermediate variants on the correlation between the study variables. Accordingly, the results of the hypothesis test, assuming that the relationship between TV exposure and national/tribal identity is influenced by intermediate variables (confidence in Egyptian TV, perception of TV biased coverage of Sinai in Egyptian TV, risk perception), partially supported this hypothesis.

**Hypothesis 4:** There is a correlation between risk perception and national/tribal identity

The statistical analysis results indicated the presence of a correlation between some aspects of risk perception and both national and tribal identity as follows. There exists a directly proportional correlation between tribal identity and overall risk perception ($r = 0.288$, $p = 0.000$). This means that the rise in tribal identity is invariably coupled with high levels of respondents in terms of determinant aspects of cognizance of danger. Additionally, there exists a necessary, proportional correlation between national identity and
overall risk perception ($r = 0.191, p = 0.001$). This also means that the rise in national identity is invariably coupled with high levels of respondents in terms of determinant dimensions of risk perception. Accordingly, the results of testing the hypothesis of the presence of a statistically significant correlation between risk perception and both national and tribal identity supported this premise.

Hypothesis 5: There is a statistically significant relationship between tribal identity and TV bias perception

To investigate this relationship, regression analysis was used to estimate more accurately the effect of tribal identity on TV bias perception. The $R^2$ value was 0.121. This means that the independent variable (tribal identity) can predict 12 percent of the changes in the dependent variable (TV bias perception); and beta-coefficient $B = .162$. As for the explanatory power of this model, the $f$-value was 40.255, which is statistically significant at a level of significance of < 0.01. That confirms the explanatory power of the linear regression model statistically. Since the $T$-value at 6.345 was statistically significant at < 0.01, it indicated the ability of the tribal identity variable to predict the TV bias perception variable. These results suggest that those most adherent to tribal identity perceived the most bias in TV.

Hypothesis 6: There is a statistically significant correlation between respondents’ TV bias perception and national identity, and risk perception

The statistical analysis PCC revealed the absence of a statistically significant correlation between respondents’ perception of biased coverage of Sinai-related issues in Egyptian TV and national identity ($r = 0.052, p = 0.373$). However, it detected a statistically significant correlation between respondents’ perception of biased coverage of Sinai issues in Egyptian TV and overall risk perception ($r = 0.226, p = 0.000$). In the light of this, the results of testing $H_4$ partially support this notion.

Hypothesis 7: There are statistically significant differences among respondents in both national and tribal identity according to demographic variables

The statistical analysis results showed significant differences among respondents in terms of tribal identity purely according to the level of education variable, registering the $F$-value for the value of significance of differences at
6.855, which is statistically significant at the levels of freedom 4 and 289, and a significance level of < 0.01. Respondents with the highest level of education (postgraduate degrees) adhered less to their tribal identity at a mean average of 28.39 compared with respondents with lower levels of education, particularly those with no educational degrees, at a mean average of 30.31.

The statistical analysis results also showed the significance of differences among respondents with respect to national identity purely according to the level of education variable, with the $F$-value for significance of differences registering 3.266, which is statistically significant at the levels of freedom 4 and 289, and a significance level of < 0.05. Respondents with the highest level of education (postgraduate degrees) adhered more to their national identity at a mean average of 29.75 compared with respondents with lower levels of education, particularly those with no educational degrees, at a mean average of 31.83.

The statistical analysis results indicated the insignificance of differences of national identity and tribal identity according to the variables of gender and income, as the values for $T$ and $F$ for differences in variables proved statistically insignificant ($p > 0.05$). This means that the level of education variable gauging Sinai locals succeeded in engendering a difference to the extent of adherence to identity, whether national or tribal. Consequently, the testing of this premise culminated in partial significance in terms of the level of education.

**Hypothesis 8: There is a statistically significant correlation between national identity and tribal identity among respondents**

The statistical analysis results indicated the absence of a statistically significant correlation between national identity and tribal identity among respondents, with the PCC registering a value of 0.281, which is statistically insignificant ($p > 0.05$). In the context of Sinai Bedouins, there is no relationship.

**CONCLUSIONS**

This study shows that Sinai’s exposure to Egyptian TV predicts an increase in Sinai youth’s tribal identity, but not in national identity. SIT provides a framework for strategies for Sinai youth to cope with the threat of stigmatized social identity (in this case, in-group tribal identity). This result also relates to their awareness of the bias of the media content presented. The youth of Sinai view Egyptian TV as contributing to the negative perception of them. The situation in Sinai indicates a climate of danger and threat to the
tribal identity of the Sinai youth. This study revealed the risk factors for Sinai youth, which were associated equally with both national identity and tribal identity. The policy of media ignorance of the integration of minorities with different cultures and ethnicities creates a perceived threat to the ethnic minorities, which in this case leads them to adhere to their tribal identity, deepens the sense of social misrecognition, and devalues their self-concept.

Overall, the study reveals that the messages in Egyptian TV need to be reconceptualized. Greater understanding of the factors of identity formation among the youth of Sinai should be pursued. The most important of these is the risks in the Sinai community and associated media bias, recognizing their tribal identities and cultural and social affiliations to help boost their self-esteem. The alternative is pushing young people to define themselves through conflict with out-group members (Spears, Jetten, and Doosje 2001). Mass media should provide representation of North Sinai Bedouins and incorporate good exemplars in TV programs and drama. The politics of the state have to balance ethnic and national identities so that ethnic groups do not define themselves as different communities (Chee-Beng 2000). The state cannot succeed in shaping a respected international image unless it succeeds in achieving pride of national and cultural identity that increases citizens’ loyalty to the state (Hutcheson, Domke, Billeaudaeaux, and Garland 2004).

Future studies should focus on analyzing the content on Sinai people in social media to identify the stereotypes used to misrepresent this important segment of society. As this study focused on the influence of the media on self-image, other studies that monitor the influence of the media on the Egyptian public’s image of the Sinai community are also needed, using different theoretical approaches such as mediated recognition of minorities and ethnic groups.

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**REFERENCES**


