

Intergenerational Cultural Transmission in Rapidly Globalizing Societies

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Abstract

This research examines the processes within intergenerational cultural transmission in the context of rapidly globalizing societies. It studies urbanized areas in Asia and Africa to determine traditional cultural knowledge over its preservation, modification, or loss among the youth. The study utilizes ethnographic interviews and digital surveys and shows the impact of technology, education, and migration on cultural practices, revealing both disruption and continuity. Findings highlight the role of global media as a homogenizing force and as an enabling power. The study calls for policies aimed at cultural resilience and intergenerational dialogue in the context of growing globalization and sociocultural interconnectedness.

Keywords: Cultural Transmission; Globalization; Intergenerational Dialogue; Ethnography, Cultural Identity; Youth; Digital Media; Urbanization.

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the most definitive features of any cultural group is its sustainability, which comes from cultural transmission: the passing down of knowledge, customs, and values through generations. However, in the contemporary world which is characterized by advanced globalization, the ways this passing down is done and its results are different. New cultures are being introduced due to the rise of international migration, streaming education, and the availability of global media content, all of which clashes with established cultural practices and tradition alongside ever-present digital technologies.

This change can be seen most prominently in well developing societies. The youth adapt to different forms of cultural practices that tend to be far removed from what their parents or guardians are accustomed to. As many of them attempt to assimilate to global cultures, a gap between parents and children emerges, and the risk of losing intangible cultural heritages increases.

At the same time, globalization enables new avenues for the expression and preservation of culture. For the youth, social media, online archives, and other forms of cultural exchange allow them to engage and reinterpret traditional wisdom in more progressive ways. With these competing factors, the focus becomes evident where globalization is both a challenge and opportunity.

This research aims to focus on the change on intergenerational culture transmission and its evolution in fast advancing societies, particularly in metropolitan areas of Asia and Africa. It looks at the challenges and factors that help to continue the culture over age gaps through ethnographic case studies and survey data, showcasing the change that families, educators, and community leaders deploy to adapt.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Intergenerational cultural transmission is still receiving more attention in research, particularly in light of globalization. In this process, tensions and adaptations are highlighted in recent work. In postcolonial societies, for example, Kausar (2025) examines how cultural globalization creates conflict between tradition and modernity, demonstrating that people frequently manage several identities. Similar to this, Urbaite (2024) investigates how globalization affects cultural identity and notes that, despite concerns about cultural deterioration, some customs are maintained by social support.

Other academics stress how education contributes to the transmission of culture. According to Maynard and Chaudhary (2021), indigenous knowledge is frequently included in national curricula, which can both support and impede the transmission of traditions from one generation to the next. The complex integration processes that young people go through in diverse societies are also covered by Ozer (2019), who highlights the ways in which local and global identities interact in both formal and informal learning environments.

Another major area of interest is the impact of technology. Amin (2024) emphasizes how digital platforms like YouTube and TikTok help spread cultural content and allow young people to interact with a variety of customs. These same platforms, however, run the risk of encouraging cultural homogenization, which prompts demands for media literacy initiatives that encourage critical cultural engagement.

In addition, sociocultural factors like urbanization and migration are important. According to Carter (2025), local axiologies are altered by population shifts and the pressures of globalization, requiring communities to adjust by integrating or rejecting external influences. This viewpoint is consistent with research showing that kinship-based cultural networks are frequently disrupted by urbanization, necessitating the use of corrective measures like community centers and cultural festivals.

In order to place intergenerational cultural transmission at the nexus of tradition, globalization, and contemporary media, this paper presents a comparative analysis across regions and technologies.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a multi-method design that incorporated ethnographic fieldwork, semi-structured interviews, and online surveys. The two primary research sites were selected as Metropolitan Nairobi (Kenya) and Taipei (Taiwan). The metropolitan areas were selected due to their rich cultural diversity and strong interactions with local cultures alongside global influences.

Participant observation was conducted within households, schools, and cultural centers in each ethnographic site. In total, 40 interviews were conducted with elder family members, parents, and youth aged 15-25 representing various families. These interviews were coded thematically with emphasis on trends in the cultural practice, mode of communication, and generational divide using NVivo software.

To supplement the data collected from the field, an online survey was distributed through educational institutions and community organizations, yielding 213 valid responses. The focus of the questions included cultural identity, language, traditional knowledge, and consumption of digital media. Data was treated using descriptive statistics and cross-tabulation methods.

The local university review boards provided ethical approvals. Participants anonymity was taken care of alongside gaining informed consent. Causal comparative research design was used to analyze trends within regions and groups, especially pertaining to problems and solutions related to intergenerational dialogue and transfer.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Both adaptation and disruption were observed in cultural transmission. Continuity of language is fading in Nairobi, but traditional music and storytelling is kept alive through school clubs and church activities. Cultural rituals are sustained in Taipei through intergenerational meals and digital archiving. Survey results suggest that a majority of 68% of youths feel more inclined towards global culture, with 72% expressing interest in learning about their culture.

Digital skills were both distracting and enabling; 45% of respondents claimed to have learnt cultural skills online, while 60% said that time spent on screens reduced interaction with family. Interventions such as intergenerational workshops and cultural storytelling activities showed potential in bridging the gaps.

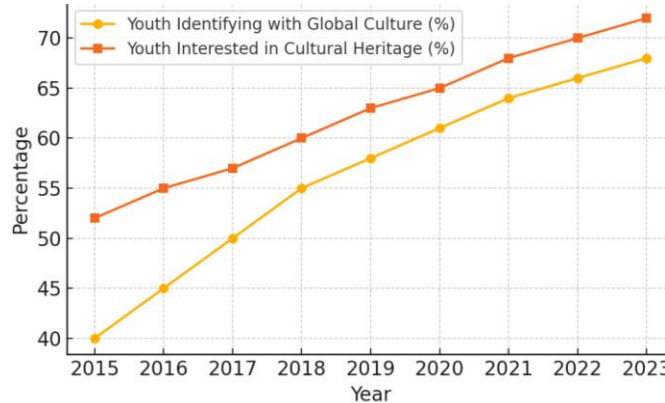


Figure 1: Graph depicting Youth identifying and Youth Interested cultures

Table 1: Intergenerational Cultural Transmission Factors Across Study Sites

Location	Key Transmission Mode	Barriers Identified	Enabling Strategies
Nairobi	Storytelling, Music Clubs	Language Attrition, Urbanization	Churches, School Programs

Taipei	Family Meals, Digital Archives	Screen Time, Academic Pressure	Mobile Apps, Heritage Classes
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V. CONCLUSION

This study illustrates the intricate balance between modernity and tradition in culture transmission. Globalization impacts practices, both by inhibiting certain activities while simultaneously offering novel opportunities for preserving culture. Supportive policies alongside education and active digital participation can enhance the preservation of culture over generations. Further investigate the impact of technology and community-driven solutions on the community.

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