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**HOMOGENIZATION OR DIVERSIFICATION?  
THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON CULTURAL IDENTITY  
OF THE FIRST AND SECOND-GENERATION IMMIGRANTS**

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*Globalization's accelerating influence has been at the forefront of the debate on the potential ramifications of cultures' homogenization. Research has shown that with the increased migration, the world is becoming more multi-culturally diverse, nonetheless more homogenized. This study aims at determining if globalization has positively impacted the participants' cultural identities and lives and examines if this phenomenon leads to the homogenization of cultures. An ethnographic study was conducted on 32 participants from the first and second-generation migrants, originating from 21 countries, to depict globalization's real impact on their cultural identities and lives. The research used a qualitative approach based on structured interviews and employed the content analysis methodology for interpretation. The findings of the research questions revealed that, for the most part, globalization has, in fact, positively impacted individuals' cultural identities and lives. The positive effect of globalization appeared in the form of increased education and employment opportunities and increased open-mindedness regarding cultural diversity. The study also rejected that the world has become more homogenized, but rather that globalization has opened the doors to the enhancement of cultures.*

**Keywords:** *globalization, culture, identity, immigrants.*

### **Introduction**

The increase of international movements across borders has revolutionized the world and increased the interdependency between nations. Different cultures and societies have learned to deal with one another to benefit from new growth opportunities to increase their wealth. Moreover, economic integration has led to the emergence of borderless global markets, significantly contributing to the world's gross domestic product. On the one hand, this movement has proven to be economically prosperous. However, on the other hand, one cannot disregard the adverse side effects.

Although this is a centuries-old phenomenon, it has now become one of the most critical issues of our time. Research recently started examining which aspects of the current wave are being impacted. While some of the most noticeable effects of this

movement revolve around the economy and environment, more and more works are starting to notice its impact on cultural identity.

With the increased migration linked to labor, people are now forced to adapt to new environments, which most often than not signifies learning new languages and adapting to the new culture to fit in. During that process, one's cultural identity can be altered and more importantly, this will directly impact their children's cultural identities and those of their descendants, too.

This research aims to analyze the real impact that globalization has on the cultural identities of individuals and on other aspects of their lives. More specifically, this research focuses on the journey of a sample from the first and second-generation of immigrants from 21 different countries. It aims to determine if globalization is leading to the homogenization of cultures. By doing so, it seeks to investigate the cause and effect relationship between this phenomenon and cultural identities.

## 1. Theoretical Background

### 1.1. Globalization

Marius-Razvan Surugiu and Camelia Surugiu (2015) described globalization as the drive behind the current international integration and global economic growth, which led to increased interdependence between countries. They further defined it as a complex process that enabled the development of communication and which increased the investment expansion as well as the cross-border flows of goods and services. Moreover, it has been described by François Bourguignon as the economic openness that decreased transportation costs and increased foreign direct investment (Howes 2018). Inarguably, this representation of globalization predominantly focuses on the economic dimension which has transformed the societies we know today. Simply put, globalization is indirectly and directly measured by its quantitative contribution to the world rather than its qualitative impact on individuals and societies.

While this new economic interdependence may seem favorable, according to Friedmann (2005), this poses an issue. Since the focus has shifted on economic relations, this tends to render invisible the real effects of globalization on people's daily lives. In fact, Samimi and Jenatabadi (2014) approached this concept from a cause-effect perspective and explained that globalization is a complicated process that impacts different aspects of life. Amongst these are economic growth, poverty, inequality, the environment, and cultural dominance. Hence, this approach allows considering both the positive and negative ramifications caused by this phenomenon and encourages reflecting on the future.

Another essential aspect to consider is history (Shestova and Ariskina 2020). Several historians believe globalization first started in the late fifteenth century triggered by two particular events: Christopher Columbus's arrival in America in 1492 and Vasco da Gama's arrival in India in 1498. Trade expansion is the mothership which gave rise to globalization (O'Rourke and Williamson 2002).

### 1.2. Culture and Cultural Identity

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, culture is a set of 'ideas, customs, and social behavior of a particular people or society.'

Oyserman *et al.* (2012) explained that identities are 'the traits and characteristics, social relations, roles and social group memberships that define who one is.' According

to this work, identities orient individuals in life and provide them with a 'meaning-making lens' to assess the world. It elaborates on the principle that one's identity can be focused on the past, the present, and the future. This approach leads to the understanding that identities can change over time. Since part of the identities is heavily based on culture, cultural identities can therefore change. Cultural identity has become the cornerstone of national identity and an individual's cultural identity consists of two parts: 1) the identity of the nation to which the individual belongs to and 2) its multi-dimensional character. The multi-dimensional nature relates to internal psychological processes such as the attitudes, cognitions, and emotions of a specific group. It is the construction of the cultural identity embodied both in a social environment and at individual level.

### 1.3. Biculturalism

Seth J. Schwartz and Jennifer B. Unger (2010) explained that biculturalism has been defined in many ways but most commonly it refers to an individual with a cultural identity composed of one's heritage culture and the culture of the country in which he or she has settled or was born in. For instance, children of immigrants, although they are born into a different culture, they are still embedded with the cultural heritage of their parents and family. It is important to note that this concept can also apply to individuals living in ethnic enclaves, geographic areas with high ethnic concentration.

Furthermore, biculturalism focuses primarily on individuals' cultural behaviors, such as the language spoken, the choice of surroundings, and other preferences (Schwartz and Unger 2010). From this standpoint, individuals would be classified as bicultural if they speak both the host country's language and the language of their cultural heritage. Also, since this concept is based on behaviors, this would mean that biculturalism implies more than just the language, as it is linked to one's values.

Moreover, Schwartz and Unger (2010) explained that individuals will adapt their behavior based on who they interact with. They will also develop some coping strategies in order to navigate across both cultures. This behavior demonstrates a high level of flexibility and adaptation.

On the other hand, biculturalism also opens the door to intragroup marginalization. According to Castillo *et al.* (2007) intragroup marginalization is defined as 'the perceived interpersonal distancing by members of the heritage culture when an individual displays cultural characteristics of the dominant group.' It is the perception of rejection from people of the individual's heritage culture due to not conforming to the prescribed values and expectations. Rejection can cause interpersonal conflicts regarding one's own identity. Therefore, there are both advantages and disadvantages at being bicultural.

### 1.4. Impact of Globalization on Cultural Identity

On the positive impacts, globalization has reduced the stereotyping and misconceptions about other individuals and different cultures. People now have instant access to worldwide information from any location globally, hence it is easier to become more knowledgeable and get a better understanding of foreign values and attitudes. Moreover, Dimova and Gillen (2017) pointed out that while many individuals associate globalization with the uniformity of cultural identities, this also creates a counter-demand

for authenticity, which then becomes a valuable asset on the global market. In other words, people will steer away from homogenization.

Not all good cultural practices were born in one civilization and societies have taught and corrected one another to progress in the right direction. Cultural differences and different ideologies are essential for the advancement of civilization. Exchange of thoughts and comparison need to take place for one to re-evaluate his or her choices and decisions. Societies have become larger in recent decades due to their acceptance and welcoming of people from different backgrounds. Consequently, this created a whole new culture of its own (Wani 2011).

Additionally, Yi Wang (2007) explained that globalization actually enhanced cultural identity. From this author's point of view, the welcoming of new cultures has enabled individuals to become more self-aware of cultural identities than before. Globalization could lead to a sense of 'togetherness' rather than homogenization. Globalization could be seen as the enabler behind cultural identities. In other words, thanks to technology, there is extensive and accessible information about different cultures, and people can now learn and educate themselves without necessarily traveling.

Furthermore, according to the United States Census Bureau, there has been a growth-rate of almost 3 per cent in interracial marriages in the US since 2000, and this rate is expected to increase over the upcoming years (Rico *et al.* 2018). These unions could signify the increase of potential multicultural children which would mean that these individuals would be exposed to different cultures within the same household.

While it may seem that globalization predominantly impacts the economy and the environment, other important aspects need to be acknowledged. Jensen *et al.* (2011) determined that first-hand and indirect interactions with people from diverse cultures are continually increasing, mainly due to various media. This has made it more difficult for individuals to develop a cultural identity of their own. A person can identify with two or more cultures, and his or her identity will depend on individual choices. Following this rationality, a question that could be raised is whether another culture's adoption takes away from one's native culture. For example, if an individual decides to adopt certain Western culture values, does this mean that he or she need to let go of some of his or her current values?

Atuma Okpara and Edwin Agwu (2015) also emphasized the negative impacts of globalization. In particular, they mentioned that when people are moving in and out of countries, they tend to adapt to the prominent culture of that new country. In other words, they will embrace and follow foreign cultures and forsake their own roots. This cultural adjustment could lead to a rise in cultural conflicts and a loss of cultural identity.

Thilini Ferdinando (2015) stressed that with the advancement of science and technology, the world is getting increasingly globalized, and we are slowly witnessing a loss of diversity. Languages are changing into simpler and faster mode of communication and there is an increase of English incorporation (Sarwal 2019). For example, in the Sinhala language, spoken mainly in Sri Lanka, many words were substituted by English words. Hence, this native language has undergone drastic changes and is slowly shifting towards the English language. In the same light, UNESCO shared that between 1950 and 2010, over 230 languages went extinct (Moseley 2010). Furthermore, National Geographic explained that every two weeks another language dies (Strochlic 2018).

Overall, the authors above made it clear that globalization has made the cultural identity development process more difficult, as individuals are conflicted between two

or more cultures. Also, native languages seem to be shifting towards business languages and are also being deprioritized to make room for more 'important' languages. Finally, globalization has an impact on global citizenship identification (Reysen *et al.* 2020).

### 1.5. Globalization and Racism

According to Bosworth *et al.* (2008) racism is very much still alive in this day and age, and globalization might be an important factor behind it. Visible ethnic minorities will suffer the most from this, which will cause serious trauma in the long term. Mistreatment and alienization can push these individuals to feel detached from their host country and its culture. Hence, this could lead to potentially dangerous situations. The authors linked globalization to the higher likelihood of crimes and increased racism.

Idowu *et al.* (2019) and Weisskopf (2009) also elaborated on the influence of globalization on the discrimination against people on account of their ethnic group identity. While this is an age-old phenomenon, globalization today is contributing to the growth of ethnicity-based discrimination and that it is progressing faster than ever before. It is plausible to believe that there is a higher likelihood for discrimination, given that we encounter more people from different backgrounds and cultures.

### 1.6. The Impact of Globalization on the Economy and Education

Globalization has contributed to the increase in the gross domestic product in developing countries and resulted in advancements in health indicators, such as life expectancy. Globalization of technology and information is expected to reduce the inequalities in public health interventions between the rich and the poor. Hence, it is undeniable that the world has greatly benefited from globalization on many levels. More and more developing countries are committed to overcoming the development gaps and are aligned to enhance their economic performance every day. Moreover, multilateral trade rules have been set to ensure that the products meet specific safety and health standards thanks to international trade hence providing people with better product quality overall (Ebrahim *et al.* 2007; Agwu and Okpara 2015; Komlosy 2019).

Notably, there are evident economic and educational opportunities arising from companies moving towards developing countries to acquire labor forces and the enabling of business expansion through the advancement of technology (Agwu and Okpara 2015). People can now work and get educated from anywhere in the world. Globalization has unraveled free movement of capital, communication, and transportation. It is accurate to say that many people now have direct access to real-time information in this day and age. Not to mention that the access to information and data has enabled societies to educate themselves and make sounder and more informed decisions.

Furthermore, over the years, the percentage of international students has significantly increased, positively contributing to the countries' gross domestic product. During the period 2014–2015, the international students contributed to £10.8 bn of UK export earnings, and also due to their spending expenditure, this generated 206,600 jobs.

In conjunction with both the economy and education, there has been a decrease in the low-skilled labor force in many countries, therefore creating a more competitive labor market. It is also important to mention that other important factors, such as people no longer retiring at 65, more women in the workforce, and technology, have also played an essential role in increasing market competitiveness.

Worldwide, there has been a substantial decrease in the number of people without education between 1990 and 2010. For example, if we look at China and Brazil, both these countries had a 20 % to 40 % share of the population, 15 years and older, with no education. Two decades later, that percentage decreased to 0 % to 20 % which is significant considering that these two nations represented 22 % of the total population in 2010 (World Bank 2019a, 2019b).

The average number of years of total schooling across all education levels for the population aged 25 years and over has significantly increased in the period 1990–2017. For instance, India went from zero to three years of education, on average, to six to nine years. Considering that India holds the record for the second-highest population globally (1.339B in 2017), that is once again, a powerful impact.

Agwu and Okpara (2015) also report that while globalization has opened new venues, such as wider and diversified markets, this has dramatically impacted the local and national markets. When companies decide to establish their manufacturing plants in foreign countries for cheaper labor, the host countries generally tend to generate fewer revenues, and most of the profits go to foreign companies. Thus, once again, creating a disparity between economies.

Masteikiene and Venckuviene (2015) claimed that amongst the many unavoidable negative impacts of globalization is the growing political power of multinational corporations, which consequently led to the devastating overexploitation of human labor and natural resources in emerging markets. It also led to a massive loss of jobs in developed countries.

## 2. Empirical Study

### 2.1. Research Questions, Methodological Approach and Research Design

Based on the above literature review and analysis, we put forward the following two research questions:

- To what extent has globalization impacted first and second generation immigrants' cultural identities and lives?
- Is globalization homogenizing all cultures and slowly dissolving different cultural identities of the first and second-generation immigrants?

To answer these questions, structured interviews were conducted with a total of 32 participants from the first and second-generation immigrants. Initially, the focus of this research was exclusively the second-generation immigrants with the aim of analyzing their experiences as children of immigrants and the impacts of growing up in a different cultural setting. However, given that the challenges and impacts faced by the second generation of immigrants could differ entirely from those faced by the first generation of immigrants, dismissing the first generation would narrow down the results of this research. Moreover, first-generation immigrants needed to be included in the sample in order to truly understand the motives and aspirations behind their decision of moving abroad. Additionally, due to globalization, many individuals would in fact be part of both the first and second generation immigrants and their outlook and experiences would be invaluable to this work. Therefore, the sample included both first and second-generation immigrants.

This approach allowed exploring and conceptualizing every individual's perspective and journey. More importantly, it allowed comparing and contrasting the perspectives

from the two different generations regarding globalization. It also provided an insight into these individuals' decisions when choosing to raise their children abroad. In total, 32 participants between the ages of 22 and 61, from 21 different countries, were interviewed.

Table 1

## Demographics of participants

Countries (21)	# of participants from 1 <sup>st</sup> Generation	# of participants from 2 <sup>nd</sup> Generation	# of participants from both the 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Generation	Total	Age range
Algeria	–	1	1	2	26–27
Andorra	1	–	–	1	29
Cameroon	–	1	–	1	20
Canada	2	9	–	11	24–61
China	–	1	–	1	27
Colombia	–	1	1	2	28
France	1	–	1	2	26
Germany	2	1	1	4	22–36
Guatemala	–	1	–	1	34
India	–	1	2	3	24
Iran	–	–	1	1	33
Italy	1	2	–	3	26
Mauritius	1	–	–	1	25
Mexico	–	1	–	1	30
Morocco	4	3	1	8	24–61
Netherlands	1	2	–	3	26–28
Pakistan	–	1	1	2	26–32
Saudi Arabia	1	–	–	1	27
Spain	1	–	1	2	26–29
South Africa	1	–	–	1	31
United Kingdom	–	1	–	1	30
Total	16	26	10	52	22–61

At first, it was planned to set in place face-to-face interviews. However, given the circumstances revolving around the COVID-19 pandemic, this was not possible and the interviews were held via videoconference, between April and September 2020.

The interviews were structured with a pre-defined set of questions. Two different interview scripts were produced, one for the first-generation immigrants and the other for the second-generation immigrants. They were recorded on the computer from the

videoconference software used in each case, and then transcribed to a Word for Windows file. In the event of any gap or unclear information, participants were re-contacted for clarification. All the interviews lasted between 20 minutes to 70 minutes, with an average of 30 minutes and 21 seconds.

While most of the interviews were conducted in English, some of the respondents were French natives and preferred to respond in French. Their answers were translated to English and any accuracy concerns were discussed with a professional translator.

Table 2

**Coded Questions (Close-ended), the first generation of immigrants**

Question	=1	=2	=3
Did you have any children when you first immigrated? If not, do you have children now?	1= had or have children	2= no children then, no children now	n/a
How easy or hard was it to adjust to a new country? (Cultural shock)	1= easy to adjust	2=not easy to adjust	3= hard at first then easy
Did you learn any new languages after immigrating?	1= yes, learnt a new language	2= no, did not learn a new language	n/a
Why did you decide to immigrate to another country? Why did you choose that country specifically?	1= for better opportunities	2= other reason	n/a
What do you consider yourself (and your children)? ( <i>i.e.</i> , nationality wise)	1= new nationality	2= native nationality	3= both nationalities
How important is it for you that your children speak your native language? Given the choice between having them learn your native language or a business language such as English or Mandarin, what would you choose?	1= business language over native	2= native language over business language	3=both native and business languages
How important is it for you to keep your cultural heritage alive?	1= not important	2=important	n/a
How has <i>globalization</i> impacted your culture?	1= positively	2=negatively	3= both positively and negatively
Do you feel that immigrating to a new country has given you more opportunities in life? For your children?	1= yes	2=no	3=unsure
Do you feel that moving to a new country has had an effect on your values?	1=yes	2=no	3=unsure



Table 2 (continued)

Question	=1	=2	=3
How was it (if) when you returned home for the first time?	1= no cultural shock	2=cultural shock	3=somewhat of a cultural shock
Overall, do you have positive or negative feelings in regard to <i>globalization</i> ?	1=positive	2=negative	3=both positive and negative
If you could go back in time, would you do anything different? (E.g.: Choose a new country, raise your children differently, etc.)	1= no	2=yes	3= yes and no
Do you ever plan on moving back to your native country someday?	1=no	2=yes	3=maybe

Table 3

**Coded Questions (Close-ended), the second generation of immigrants**

Question	=1	=2	=3
Can you speak other languages other than your native language?	1= can speak native language and other languages	2= can only speak native language	3= does not speak native language, only other languages
What do you consider yourself (and your children if any)? (i.e.: nationality wise)	1= new nationality	2= native nationality	3= both nationalities
How important is it for you to speak your parents' native language?	1= not important	2=important	3= indifferent
How important is it for you to keep your cultural heritage alive?	1= not important	2=important	3= indifferent
Do you feel that some of your values stem from your parents' culture?	1=no	2= yes	3= unsure
How has <i>globalization</i> impacted your life and culture?	1= positively	2= negatively	3=both positively and negatively
Do you feel that your parents' decision to move abroad has given you more opportunities in life?	1= yes, more opportunities	2=no	3= unsure
Did you ever visit your parents' native country?	1=no	2=yes	3=n/a
Did you experience a culture shock when visiting your parents' native country?	1= yes	2=no	3=somewhat of a cultural shock
Were there challenges growing up as a child of immigrant parents?	1=no challenges	2= many challenges	n/a
Overall, do you have positive or negative feelings in regard to <i>globalization</i> ?	1= positive	2=negative	3= both positive and negative
Do you ever plan on moving to another country?	1=yes	2=no	3=maybe

### 2.2. Data Analysis

Content analysis was used to code and categorize the data into themes. The interviews were open coded to categorize key themes and eventually identify patterns. First, transcripts were read and re-read for situation purposes. Then labeling the relevant pieces was conducted by highlighting relevant words and phrases as well as recurring words. Given that the interviews were structured and that the questions were identical for participants from the same group, the questions were initially used to create the categories and then the relevant codes were grouped into each category. Once this was done, code-filtering was performed by eliminating the irrelevant and repetitive codes. Combining one or more codes together was also done. Once the codes were finalized, categories were reviewed to ensure that there was a clear and distinct relationship between the two. Then a description of the connection between the codes and categories was written. Lastly, no hierarchy or higher importance between the themes was established.

### 2.3. Results

When first and second generations of immigrants were asked if they believed globalization had positively impacted their cultural identities, close to 72 per cent of the participants said yes. The most repetitive answers revolved around the notion that globalization had enabled them to grow in a multicultural environment which in return positively impacted their relationships and allowed them to learn new languages. Moreover, the majority of participants conveyed that the opportunity to grow up in a multicultural environment had allowed them to become more open-minded and respectful towards other cultures. Not to mention that, a noticeable pattern indicated that many individuals retained their native cultural identity and further embraced parts of foreign cultures.

In contrast, while the remaining 28 per cent also agreed that globalization had positively impacted their culture, they explained that there had been some negative impacts as well. More specifically, they explained that they had lost part of their cultural identities over time while immersing themselves in the new culture.

Additionally, there was a unanimous agreement amongst the first-generation immigrant participants that immigrating abroad had separated them from their families, which negatively impacted their lives and mental health for many years.

Regarding the interviewees' overall feelings on globalization, it seems that more than the majority of the interviewees (69 %) pointed out at least one negative aspect. Amongst these were the following: loss of culture, deterioration of our planet, the dependence of nations, and unrealistic benchmark.

The first-generation immigrants were asked if they had learnt a new language after immigrating. 84 per cent of them had learned a new language, while the remaining 16 per cent had not.

Then, when interviewees from the first generation of immigrants were asked the following question: 'Given the choice between having your children learn your native language or a business language such as English or Mandarin, what would you choose?', 83.3 per cent of them answered that they would favor both the native language and the other language(s), which would allow their kids to have more employment opportunities in the future. On the other hand, only 16.7 per cent of the candidates chose the native language over the business language.

Moreover, when the second generation immigrant participants were asked which languages they could speak, 100 per cent of them declared that they could speak both their parents' native language(s) and new languages. Hence, indicating that native languages have not been impacted.

In addition, when the participants of the first generation immigrant were asked if they had experienced a cultural shock when they returned home for the first time, at least 42 per cent of them said yes. On the other hand, many of the remaining participants explained that the cultural shock happened many years later, once they got used to their host environment.

Also, 100 per cent of the first-generation immigrant participants claimed that maybe someday they would want to move back to their country of origin.

Another repetitive theme that surfaced during the interviews is the challenges faced by the second-generation immigrants. When the interviewees were asked if they had experienced challenges growing up as children of immigrants in a different society, every single participant but one claimed that they did. A common pattern of lack of belonging was detected amongst most of the participants. Furthermore, many of them claimed that their parents were very conservative, which consequently made the whole process much harder.

When first and second generation of immigrants were asked if they believed that globalization had given them more opportunities in life, the results revealed that 100 per cent of the candidates, from both generations, believed that moving abroad had increased their life opportunities. The most repetitive answers revolved around the opportunities linked to education and career.

There was an agreement amongst all the participants from the first-generation immigrants concerning the increase in job opportunities abroad as well as higher financial incentives. Also, within the same group, those with children explained that one of the main motives for choosing to move overseas was to give their children a better education, which would ensure better employment opportunities in the future. Furthermore, when asked if they wished to go back in time and do anything differently (*e.g.*, choose a different country), none of them said yes.

The second-generation immigrants were also of the opinion that globalization increased their job opportunities, however, their answers largely focused on education. Many of the participants expressed their gratefulness towards their parents and how growing up abroad had positively altered their lives. At least 66 per cent of the people interviewed have studied abroad at least once throughout their education and more than 62 per cent of the interviewees have worked abroad at least once.

Furthermore, both groups explained that living in multicultural societies had allowed them to build an international network which turned out to be fruitful for their careers.

Based on the data gathered for the research question above, there is a clear indication that first and second-generation immigrants have embraced their host country's culture. Having said that, the findings also indicate that there is a strong desire to preserve their cultural heritage, especially for the future generations to come.

One of the first questions of the interview focused on the national identification and imprint on every individual. When participants were asked about what nationality they consider themselves to be, as well as their children, 62.5 per cent of the participants

from the first and second generations acknowledged both nationalities when asked. On the other hand, 34.4 per cent of the participants who answered 'native nationality' only have one nationality; hence that was the only possible answer. Finally, the remainder 3.1 per cent chose the 'new nationality' over their native one. Therefore, all the participants with dual citizenship owned up to both nationalities.

Moreover, when both groups of participants were asked about the importance of preserving their cultural heritage, most interviewees reported that it was crucial to preserve the cultural heritage for the future generations to come. Many of them expressed a strong sense of pride in regard to their traditions, language and most importantly history. A common pattern revolved around the ideology that we are living in a fast-changing world and it is up to us to protect and uphold our culture. Likewise, almost all the participants admitted that globalization had not changed their values.

#### *2.4. Discussion*

The research demonstrated that there is a cause-effect relationship between globalization and cultural identity. Additionally, based on the sample studied, the data suggests that the benefits associated to globalization have outweighed the negative ramifications. More specifically immigrants have positively benefited from globalization in terms of their education and employment opportunities, as well as languages. Also, globalization gave birth to multiculturalism, which in return has proven to be highly enriching for these individuals in terms of their open-mindedness and overall knowledge.

Furthermore, while the literature review proved that globalization is in fact slowly homogenizing all the cultures, more precisely, in terms of languages, the analysis does not completely support that claim. The results from the interview clearly demonstrated that at this stage, all the participants have retained their native language and have also learned new languages. Moreover, the majority of the participants clearly indicated that their values and native culture has not disappeared, rather, they have also embraced parts of other cultures.

Having said that, it is important to mention the negative ramifications associated to globalization. The most common theme was associated to the cultural shocks and challenges faced by both the first and second-generation immigrants.

At the beginning of the research, it was hypothesized that if nothing changes, globalization will slowly homogenize most cultures, leading to a loss of cultural identity. The results gathered from the interviews mainly indicated the opposite. Individuals exhibited the retention of their values and cultural characteristics, as well as the desire to preserve that legacy for future generations to come. It was also predicted that due to the increased competitiveness in the job market, students would be encouraged to learn new languages, which in return would mean that they would have to focus on the 'business' languages and deprioritize their native language(s). In that same line of thought, it was believed that parents would often be conflicted in choosing between teaching their kids their native language(s) or teaching them a language that would give them a competitive advantage in the future. The results for this segment were the most shocking. The data completely disproved the original hypothesis. It was expected that many people would not have the ability to speak their parents' native language; however, the opposite was true.

Secondly, the interviews' findings met the expectations in regard to the positive impact of globalization on individuals' education, employment and open-mindedness. Eve-

ry single participant reported that they had positively benefited from globalization in terms of their education or careers. Most of them also manifested their increased open-mindedness in regard to other culture and individuals.

Based on this research, globalization has positively impacted individuals' cultural identities. According to the participants, the biggest benefit is their increase of open-mindedness and general knowledge on other cultures. From this perspective, this can positively impact one's relationships with people from different backgrounds, but it can also open their minds to different experiences and improve their lives. For example, an individual may get acquainted with international cuisine or adopt new customs from a different culture. Moreover, based on this research, individuals explained that learning about new cultures did not take away from their own culture; therefore altogether, it has been a gain rather than a loss. For instance, individuals still associate to their native nationalities, but they have now added a new one to their lives.

Most of the first-generation immigrant participants described not experiencing a cultural shock when going back to their countries initially, but that as years passed by, every time they would go back to their home country, the cultural shock would grow. This is a clear indication that globalization is in fact changing the cultural identities of individuals, as their home countries suddenly feel different. Manifestly, one's mentality and ideologies can change over time, especially if the individual in question moved to a different environment.

Another important aspect touched upon was the challenges faced by second generation immigrants. Based on the results, most of the participants felt as though they did not belong and that their parents had conservative views. Interestingly, many participants also further explained that in order to fit in, they would adapt and change their behavior. Evidently, this demonstrated that to a certain extent, that globalization did in fact push people to assimilate and adapt which means that it is impacting their cultural identity and beliefs.

Overall, it is safe to say that both first and second generation immigrants faced some challenges. First, regarding education, it is undeniable that effects of globalization have been profoundly advantageous. It has resulted in teaching methods that are more interconnected and widespread and has enabled students to study in several parts of the world. Both the results of the interviews and the data gathered from previous research have demonstrated that individuals are now exposed to higher education. Nowadays, most universities have partner universities worldwide and offer students the opportunity to study abroad for a semester or two. Subsequently, students are increasingly becoming prepared for multinational roles and the business scene. In fact, over 66 per cent of the participants claimed to have studied abroad at least once.

Moreover, multicultural education has also increased the cultural knowledge and open-mindedness of students. As societies are slowly becoming more multicultural, children are being raised in more open-minded environments, pushing them to understand the individuals around them better. They also develop an eagerness to learn and an appreciation for differences.

Globalization also led to a significant increase in the literacy level globally and average schooling years. Globalization has, without a doubt, positively impacted education.

Lastly, in regard to employment opportunities, both first and second-generation immigrants have agreed that one of the most significant impacts of globalization is the

opening of doors to new markets and workplaces. More than 62 per cent of the interviewees have worked abroad at least once. While these results met the expectations, the number of responses that included the word 'multicultural' when discussing their work experience was nonetheless surprising. Hence there was a clear positive pattern between employment and multicultural environment. Participants explained that working in a multicultural environment enabled them to grow, remain challenged, and learn more about different cultures.

Globalization has undoubtedly maximized diversity within many firms globally. From a business perspective, individuals learn more about cultural differences and can then adapt to the different types of clients. Furthermore, diversity and inclusion create a healthy environment for the workers; hence, employees tend to feel accepted and valued, making them feel happier.

In fact, striking findings showed evidence that the participants feel this sense of pride when talking about their cultural heritage and they expressed their desire to preserve and cultivate their culture for future generations.

Another important aspect that should be touched upon is prejudices and racism. The desire to assimilate or discriminate against another individual may stem from the lack of understanding or knowledge concerning another culture. Individuals born in multicultural environments express fewer prejudices regarding other people because it is their 'normality'. Hence, they will not necessarily attempt to change people. Interestingly, the data gathered from the interview points in the direction that globalization leads to the increase of awareness of different cultures, which broadens one's mind and decreases prejudices and discrimination. One of the common patterns detected was the acceptance of others. Therefore, the results do not support the previous research from the literature review.

### 2.5. Implications for Cultural Identities

While, on the one hand, previous studies have discussed cultures potentially becoming more homogenized, other studies have discussed the increasing number of bicultural individuals. Once again, as mentioned earlier, in some parts of the world, the interracial marriage rates have increased. Hence, globalization has, without a doubt, increased the number of bicultural people. Naturally, in some specific cases, there is a higher likelihood that specific cultural customs might be abandoned in order to co-exist better within the same household. In cases where children are involved, couples are involuntary or voluntary forced to make mutual decisions in regard to the upbringing of their children. They need to decide what they will teach their children and what part of their culture they wish to incorporate when raising them.

In different circumstances, this can, in fact, increase one's flexibility and resilience. Of course, everyone has a different outlook when it comes to what a person from a certain culture should be like or behave like. Due to this, certain people might choose to reject or not associate with a bi-cultural person. Consequently, a bicultural individual can feel as though they do not fully belong to any cultural group and feel conflicted about their identity. As explained by Castillo *et al.* (2007), this thought process can often be associated to intragroup marginalization. In other words, this is the experience of rejecting one's heritage culture. Therefore, being bicultural can have both advantages and disadvantages.

Moreover, cultural identities and diversity make the world so great and unique. Looking back on history, many cultures have been wiped out by globalization, technology and the rapidly changing economic landscape. For instance, as mentioned above by National Geographic, every two weeks a language goes extinct. Therefore, there is no argument that cultural identity is at risk.

As proven by this research, there are numerous advantages in globalization and its impacts on languages, such as the retention of native languages and learning of new languages. So, one can help but wonder the actual implications of the disappearance of cultural identities and its impact on societies. As more and more individuals prioritize business languages to increase their education and employment opportunities, the risk of language extinction increases. At this rate, more languages will go extinct and many more will become endangered.

Thus, efforts and actions will be needed to preserve different cultures and diversity over time. Thankfully, we live in an era of technology where everything can be stored and saved.

Overall, cultural identities will continue to be effected as long as globalization progresses in the same direction. It will be up to each individual to decide if they want to preserve their culture and pass it on to the future generations to come.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this research aimed to determine the impacts of globalization on cultural identities, more specifically to understand whether this phenomenon is leading to homogenization of cultures on the first and second generation immigrants.

Initially, it was hypothesized that globalization would lead to homogenization of culture as well as to disappearance of native languages. Furthermore, it was also expected that this movement would positively impact education and employment opportunities as well as increase the open-mindedness of individuals.

Given the nature of this research, an interview-based approach within a qualitative methodology would enable to better understand the real impacts of globalization on cultural and a more in-depth understanding of each individual's journey.

Interestingly, not all the results matched the expectations. Based primarily on qualitative analysis, results concluded that the cultural identities of the sample studied were not negatively impacted by globalization or homogenized. The majority of participants preserved their values and culture despite living in a foreign country. Most of the participants were determined to protect their cultural heritage in order to pass it on to the future generations. Moreover, there was a definite positive impact on languages. Once again, all the participants claimed to be able to speak their native languages and also learned new ones.

By analyzing each individual's immigration journey, this research has shown that globalization has in fact positively impacted most of the participants' cultural identities. It has increased their open-mindedness as well as cultural knowledge, therefore improving cross-cultural communications. Not to mention that their multicultural environment has allowed them to perform better in school and in their workplace. Also, many individuals clearly explained that globalization has actually enhanced their cultural identities since they can choose to adopt the best characteristics of each culture.

Nonetheless, as mentioned throughout, there is clear evidence based on previous research that globalization can in fact lead to the loss of cultural identity. This research also discussed about a few outliers which indicated that globalization can negatively impact one's cultural identity. While globalization may have not negatively impacted these individuals' cultural identities, it does not mean that it cannot happen in the future.

Lastly, this research opens the door for further studies on the enhancing of globalization on cultural identities rather than its potential homogenization. Based on the sample interviewed, the conclusion is that globalization could, in fact, be beneficial for cultures, especially in this day and age where technology enables us to store and preserve the evidence of different cultures. Also, globalization could completely redefine the ideology behind 'cultural identity', whereas cultural identity would become 'multicultural identity'. Individuals could decide to embrace specific characteristics of different cultures, rather than just one.

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