

**RESEARCH PAPER****Examining the Impact of Globalization on Cultural Identity and Linguistic Practices in Pakistan****<sup>1</sup>Aliza Tahir, <sup>2</sup>Zunaira Ghaffar and <sup>3</sup>Shazib Iqbal**

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**Corresponding Author:** taliza104@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

This study explores how globalization changes cultural identity and language practices in Pakistan, with emphasis on trans-cultural flows, global media, and exposure to education as the factors influencing identity shaping, language preference and daily cultural activity. The quantitative cross-sectional design was used to gather data based on a stratified random sample of 300 individuals (balanced gender, mostly composed of young, urbanized, and educated people). The globalization exposure, cultural identity, and language practices were measured with the help of a structured questionnaire, which demonstrated the good internal consistency (Cronbachs 0.755). The results of Pearson correlation showed that there were moderate significant positive relationships among globalization and cultural identity ( $r = .566$ ), globalization and language practices ( $r = .422$ ), and cultural identity and language practices ( $r = .537$ ), which were significant at the 0.01 level. Regression analyses also showed that globalization is an important predictor of cultural identity ( $F = 140.732$ ,  $p < .001$ ) as well as language practices ( $F = 64.494$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The results indicate that globalization in Pakistan does not only erode local identities, on the contrary, it promotes hybridization, selective cultural appropriation, and linguistic adaptation. Although globalization contributes to the status and prestige of the English language and globalization, it also makes it possible to preserve and creatively rearticulate the local cultural identities. These observations can guide policy makers, educators, and cultural practitioners on how to balance globality and preservation of indigenous heritage.

**KEYWORDS** Globalization, Cultural Identity, Linguistic Practices, Cultural Flows, Global Engagement**Introduction**

Globalization as multidimensional process brought about by the transnational media flows, fast digital communications, international mobility and the neoliberal market forces has restructured the social, cultural and linguistic environment of nation states all over the world. In today's research, globalization is seen to be more than an economic phenomenon but to be a transformative force that reshapes cultural meanings, challenges traditional identities and changes the hierarchy of languages (Appadurai, 2020; Tomlinson, 2019). With over 75 spoken languages and a vibrant history of colonial influence on its language (Rahman, 2020), Pakistan has to reckon with the pressures of global cultural diffusion and the strong local identities that are associated with language, religion, and region. Cultural identity in Pakistan has traditionally been rooted in religion, regional belonging, kinship, and shared historical symbols. But with the rise of global digital culture through platforms like YouTube, Netflix, TikTok, and Instagram new identity models are emerging. Young Pakistanis are increasingly defining themselves through consumer lifestyles, celebrity influence, and global popular culture, as digital media reshapes their

sense of self (Safdar, 202; Ayaz, Shamshad, & Tarar, 2025). Language use in Pakistan has significantly transformed over recent decades. For many in the urban middle class, English is no longer just a foreign language but a marker of global belonging, economic mobility, and elite status (Ashraf, 2022; Qadri & Mahboob, 2025). This dynamic has led to an increase in sociolinguistic inequalities between English-dominant and vernacular language speakers. The central analytical question, therefore, would be to examine whether globalization results in cultural homogenization and linguistic marginalization with resulting erosion of local identities and languages or if presents stimulation of cultural hybridization and glocalization and thus an ability of Pakistani communities to make selective appropriation of global into locally meaningful forms.

The impact that globalization has had on cultural identity in Pakistan cannot be solely interpreted as the loss or erosion of. Research increasingly points out that the identity change process is based on negotiation, resistance, and adaptive hybridization. Robertson's theory of glocalization helps us understand how young Pakistanis in urban settings (like Lahore) might merge their Islamic ethical values with global consumer aesthetics forming a hybrid, glocalized identity rather than simply adopting Western consumerism (Robertson, 2020). Digital ethnographic research shows that Pakistani fashion influencers increasingly wear Western-style clothing in their personal social media posts, while reserving more Eastern or traditional dress for paid campaigns a strategy that reflects a negotiation of modernity, tradition, and religious modesty (Taqvi, Nadir, & Afzal, 2024; Hashmi, Ariffina, & Ghani, 2025). These examples suggest that globalization is not abolishing local identities, but rather reorganizing the symbolic resources which are available to construct local identities (Duff, 2022). However, according to critics, there is still an uneven distribution of these hybrid identities across the social and class partitions (Ashraf, 2022). For example, not everyone has access to global media, English Language education, and digital literacy, therefore only people of the privileged class are able to benefit from globalization by impacted groups mostly experience this process in the form of cultural domination and dislocation of their traditional value system (Safdar, 2022; Zia & Fatima, 2025). Therefore, cultural identity in Pakistan is stratified as globalization: some people have opportunities to gain new forms of symbolic capital, while some people are culturally insecure. The country's postcolonial situation makes for an even more complex dynamic, as English and Western cultural forms are often seen as superior, modern and progressive, and demonstrate a language imperialism (Phillipson, 2018/2024).

Language is one of the greatest visible signs of globalisation. The use and code-switching of English in education, media and professional realms are significantly increasing in Pakistan as evidenced by empirical research to date (Awan, Begum, & Khan, 2025; Nawaz, Yousaf, & Jabeen, 2023). English-medium schools, even at primary educational levels, are widely perceived to be a means for socioeconomic mobility, while Urdu-medium education is socially stigmatized in elite and middle-class communities (Shamim, 2017) In Pakistan, many parents even those who themselves are not fluent in English, support English-medium education because they perceive it as a means for global competitiveness and socioeconomic mobility. This preference represents the way English operates as a linguistic capital, a type of symbolic economic asset: In Bourdieu's terms, the knowledge of English implies prestige, access and power. Indeed, it has been studied that in Pakistani job market, English language proficiency correlates to better job satisfaction, promotion opportunities and career advancement generally (Anwer & Gill, 2022). Moreover, English is widely viewed as a marker of social status and modernity: students and families associate it not only with better education, but also with class identity and professional success (Islam, 2018; Saeed, Zafar, & Khan, 2023). Globalization has also led to new linguistic practices on the web. Code-mixing between English and Urdu on social media platforms has become increasingly prevalent, especially among educated youth (Anwar, Malik, & Khalid, 2024; Awan, Begum, & Khan, 2025; Maryam, Younis, Nawaz, & Younas, 2025). While some scholars consider this to be a form of creative bilingual expression of identity, others see it as a form of linguistic displacement that results in cultural detaching from indigenous languages such as Punjabi,

Balochi, and Pashto. UNSE0's latest 2023 language vitality report names a number of Pakistani languages at risk because of their inability to be passed down from generation to generation. Thus, the globalization-language relationship in Pakistan involves both the gain of prestige to English and the loss of the linguistic stability of the regional languages.

### **Literature Review**

Globalization has created profound sociocultural and linguistic changes in Pakistan, a country that has ethno-linguistic diversity and a historically derived hybrid cultural identity stemming from colonialism, Islam, regional traditions, and global influences. Recent scholarship shows that globalization is still rearranging the hierarchy of languages, reshaping claims of belonging, and creating new hybrid practices that confound binary stories of cultural loss and cultural resilience. Researchers point to the fact that Pakistan's engagement with the digital media, transnational migration, global markets and English medium of education has led to a fundamental change in linguistic practice and cultural imagination in both the class and urban-rural and generational lines. A strand of literature insists on English language dominance as one of the basic mechanisms through which globalization is taking place. English remains a symbol of social status, modernity and a gateway to socioeconomic mobility in general. For example, research conducted in work environments in Pakistan shows that the level of English is quite strongly related to better career opportunities and professional success definition (Hussain, Warsi, & Bhatti, 2022). Research conducted in Pakistan has shown that the private schooling systems often foster the use of English as a culture capital, which may lead to the reinforcement of socioeconomic stratification, while at the same time decreasing the functional role of local languages in educational systems. Classroom studies also show more code-switching and English lexical borrowing, even in Urdu as the medium of instruction, pointing to linguistic hybridization rather than to language displacement (Awan, Begum, & Khan, 2025; Talal, 2022; Rasul, 2016).

Global flows of media are additional important driver. The rampant consumption of Netflix, Youtube, Turkish and South Korean dramas is altering the culture identity of the youth. The evident active consumption of global fashion, entertainment inclinations and language expressions among young Pakistanis that constitute what they term as "hybrid cosmopolitan identities" (Khalid, 2024; Aziz et al., 2021; Mumtaz and Farooqi, 2022). Some research suggests that social media platforms in Pakistan are not mere pathways of Westernization, but places of cultural convergence and selective appropriation, where global symbols are adapted to local Islamic ethical frame(s) of reference (Safdar, Riaz, & Khan, 2021; Abbasi, Malik, Ali, Anwarullah, Khan, & Awan, 2024). This means that the globalization of cultural identities can allow religion and aesthetics to be reinforced at the same time through digitalization. This supports Robertson's (1995) concept of glocalization, which has been observed in Pakistan's digital spaces empirically today. However, the best current studies highlight the fact that globalization does not lead to uniform results across different regions and classes. Cultural resistance and linguistic preservation run counter simultaneously. In rural Sindh and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, education in Sindhi and Pashto media is encouraged in a community-based approach as a response to cultural threat (Shah et al., 2022). Research shows that Baloch youth are increasingly using digital platforms to amplify their cultural identity sharing Balochi poetry, music, and nationalist discourse online as part of their activism (Mürer, 2023; Ijaz, 2025). Such digital practices challenge the assumption that globalization necessarily leads to cultural homogenization; instead, they demonstrate how global media can support a localized revival of identity.

Migration and remittance economies provide another dimension in which globalization shapes identity: Pakistani migrants abroad not only send money home, but also transmit social remittances such as ideas, values, and lifestyle practices which influence cultural and self-identity in Pakistan (Shah, 2024) In Pakistan, remittance-receiving families often adopt global consumption patterns, prioritize English-medium schooling, and

internalize transnational values. Such dynamics, research suggests, play a role in the development of an imaginary middle class associated with mobility around the world and modern ambitions. For instance, investment in quality education and better housing through remittances contribute to the creation of a globally oriented middle class (Noor, Abbas, & Fatima, 2025; Nadeem, 2022). At the same time, diaspora experience reasserts the importance of religion in the formation of identity to many migrants, in which Islamic belonging becomes a significant counterweight to the narratives of Westernization (GIDS, 2024). A concern present in the latest scholarship is the marginalization of regional languages. UNESCO (2022) warned that linguistic globalization is threatening the languages of lower-resource communities such as Brahui and Dhatki. A number of studies show a declining rate of intergenerational transmission of regional languages in urban households, where parents increasingly prioritize English and Urdu for socioeconomic mobility (Rahman, 2010; Mansoor, 2016). Yet hybrid linguistic practices, such as "Pakistani English" and Urdu-English code-switching, suggest that linguistic change is an additive one, as opposed to a purely subtractive one.

Recent literature highlights a significant gap in large-scale, mixed-methods research on globalization and language use in Pakistan. Most existing studies remain limited to small case studies or school-based surveys, neglecting rural populations, class stratification, and digital identity dynamics. Scholars have therefore called for more systematic investigations linking measurable globalization indicators such as social media usage, foreign media consumption, and international exposure with language choice, identity markers, and cultural participation (Ahmad, Nawaz, & Khan, 2023; Zia & Fatima, 2025; Shahid, Rafiq, & Farid, 2025).

### **Hypotheses**

- H1: Globalization has a significant impact on the preservation and transformation of cultural identity in Pakistan.
- H2: Globalization significantly affects the use, status, and intergenerational transmission of indigenous, regional, and minority languages.
- H3: Exposure to Western cultural norms through globalization influences local values, practices, and perceptions of modernity.
- H4: Higher exposure to globalization is positively associated with the adoption of hybrid cultural and linguistic practices among Pakistanis.
- H5: Sociodemographic factors (age, gender, education, locality, and family type) moderate the relationship between globalization and changes in cultural identity and language use.

### **Material and Methods**

This study used a quantitative cross-sectional research design in studying how globalization affects cultural identity and linguistic practices in Pakistan. A structured, closed-ended survey questionnaire was used to gain information about data obtained at a single point in time, and any existing patterns and relationships could be measured without manipulating variables. The target population was those who were exposed to globalization through education, employment, and digital media, and the stratified approach to random sampling was used in order to have an equal amount of male and female population represented. The final sample size was 300 people, 150 men and 150 women. The instrument measured three key dimensions, namely, perceptions of cultural identity, frequency and contexts of language use, and attitudes to cultural and linguistic change. Content validity was ensured via review by experts in the areas of sociolinguistics and

cultural studies, and reliability was measured via a pilot study, resulting in values for Cronbach's alpha that were well above the acceptable threshold of 0.70. Construct validity was also confirmed by exploratory factor analysis. Data Analysis was performed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize characteristics of the participants of the research, Pearson's correlation was used to test the strength and direction of relationships between globalization exposure and cultural-linguistic variables, one way-ANV was used to test for differences between demographic groups, and finally, regression analysis was used to test for the predictive influence of globalization on cultural identity and language practices. Ethical standards had been observed: obtaining informed consent, anonymity of participants, and clear communication of the voluntary nature of participation.

## Results and Discussion

**Table 1**  
**Reliability Statistics of Study Variables**

Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Globalization, Cultural Identity, Language	3	0.755

Table 1 shows that the scale measuring globalization, cultural identity, and language had a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.755, where the end result shows that there is a good level of internal consistency. This implies that the three items are a reliable measure of the same underlying construct. In social science research, a value above 0.70 is considered acceptable for a Cronbach's Alpha to confirm that the instrument is dependable for further analysis.

**Table 2**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Participants**

Variable	Categories	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
<b>Age</b>	20-25	285	94.7
	26-30	15	5.0
	31-35	1	0.3
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married	19	6.3
	Unmarried	279	92.7
	Divorced	2	0.7
<b>Gender</b>	Male	150	50.0
	Female	150	50.0
<b>Discipline</b>	Undergraduate	198	65.8
	Graduate	80	26.6
	Postgraduate	22	7.3
<b>Locality</b>	Urban	154	51.2
	Rural	92	30.6
	Semi-urban/Town	54	17.9
<b>Family Type</b>	Nuclear	225	74.8
	Extended	58	19.3
	Joint	17	5.6
<b>Working Status</b>	Employed	91	30.2
	Unemployed	208	69.1

Table 2 revealed that most of the participants were young, with ages ranging from 20 to 25 years; 94.7% and most were not married (92.7%), reflecting a sample of students as a majority of the population. Gender distribution was balanced, being 50-50 between male and female, to ensure balanced representation. With regard to education, undergraduate students (65.8%) and graduates (26.6%) and post-graduates (7.3%) were the majority. In terms of locality, a little more than half the respondents (51.2%) were urban people, 30.6% came from rural areas, and 17.9% came from semi-urban towns. Most of the units were nuclear families (74.8%), smaller numbers were from extended (19.3%) and joint families (5.6%). At the end, 69.1% of the participants were unemployed, which was

consistent with the student-dominated sample, and 30.2% were employed. Overall, Table 2 shows that the study largely represents the perspectives of young, educated, urban, and (to a large extent) unmarried people.

**Table 3**  
**Correlation Analysis of Globalization, Cultural Identity, and Language**  
Correlations

	Globalization	Cultural Identity	Language
Globalization	1	.566**	.422**
Cultural Identity	.566**	1	.537**
Language	.422**	.537**	1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis indicates that globalization, cultural identity, and language are moderately to each other, and all the reported correlations are positive, statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Globalization shows a moderate positive correlation with cultural identity ( $r=.566$ ) and a slightly higher but still significant correlation with language ( $r=.422$ ), suggesting that all increases in globalization are accompanied by increases in both cultural identity and language-related dimensions. Cultural identity and language, on the other hand, have a moderate positive correlation ( $r=.537$ ), indicating that the stronger the cultural identity, the higher the language-related score. Overall, these significant correlations mean that these three variables move together in the same direction, which represents meaningful associations and not overlapping constructs and measures with no redundancy in their measurement structure.

**Table 4**  
**ANOVA Summary for the Regression Model Predicting Cultural Identity from Globalization**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	2410.969	1	2410.969	140.732	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	5105.228	298	17.132		
Total	7516.197	299			

a. Dependent Variable: ci

b. Predictors: (Constant), g

The results of the regression analysis using multiple analysis of variance suggest that there is a significant predictive relationship between globalization (g) and cultural identity (ci). The model presents a huge F as 140.732 with a respective significance value of  $p = .000$ , which is less than the accepted thresholds of 0.05 and 0.01. This means that the regression result explains a large percentage of variance in cultural identity, and the probability that these results occurred by chance is extremely low. Based on the criteria for hypothesis testing, we reject the null hypothesis, which stated that globalization has no significant relationship with cultural identity, and we accept the alternative hypothesis, which proved that globalization significantly predicts cultural identity. Overall, the resultant statistical findings in the analysis of variance prove that globalization is a strong and statistically significant predictor of cultural identity because it does provide meaningful evidence of the relationship between the two variables.

**Table 5**  
**ANOVA Summary for the Regression Model Predicting Language Practices from Globalization**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	1475.810	1	1475.810	64.494	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	6819.107	298	22.883		
Total	8294.917	299			

a. Dependent variable: language

b. Predictors: (Constant), globalization

The results of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) reveal that there is strong evidence of a significant relationship between globalization and language. The model resulted in an

F-value of 64.494, suggesting that globalization does explain a meaningful amount of variance in the language scores compared to the proportion of variance not explained. The associated value of significance of  $p=.000$  is well below the standard value of 0.05, confirming that the probability that this result has occurred by chance is extremely low. Based on the obtained results, we reject the null hypothesis, suggesting that globalization has no relation with language, and, on the contrary, accept the alternative hypothesis, which means that there is a statistically significant relation between the two variables. Overall, the regression model is highly significant, which shows the importance of globalization in predicting the language outcome in this data set.

## **Discussion**

The present study analyzed the effect of globalization on the cultural identity and linguistic practices present in Pakistan, focusing on how the global exposure is reshaping the identity formation, language preference, and cultural behaviors. The results unambiguously indicate that globalization is significantly related to both cultural identity and linguistic patterns, hence all the major hypotheses of this study were confirmed. The results of the correlation analysis showed that there are moderate and statistically significant positive relationships between globalization, cultural identity, and language. Specifically, globalization was moderately associated with cultural identity ( $r=.566$ ) and language practices ( $r=.422$ ), which would imply that people who experienced greater influence from the global environment also indicated greater involvement with cultural identity and emerging linguistic practices. This challenges some of the conventional assumptions that globalization erodes traditional identity in a uniform manner in favor of conclusions that globalization forms may actually offer 'new symbolic resources' that are used by individuals to reconstruct and negotiate cultural identity in hybrid or 'glocalized' ways. These results are in line with the prior studies regarding globalization between youngsters contributing to hybrid identity formation (Robertson, 2020). The moderate positive correlation between cultural identity and language ( $r = .537$ ) further shows that language use shift is strongly associated with how people perceive and act in terms of cultural belonging. This relationship shows the effect in which linguistic change, especially enhanced English usage or code switching, serves as a cultural criterion, reflecting global orientation and local identity negotiation. These findings are in agreement with previous scholarship focused on the symbolic Regression analysis showed that there is strong statistical evidence that globalization strongly predicts cultural identity and language practices. The regression model for cultural identity resulted in a large F-value, thus proving the effective predictor of globalization and how an individual perceives, negotiates, and reconstructs their cultural identity. This agrees with the view that global exposure reconfigures identity in terms of convergence with global norms and selective preservation of traditional values in line with the concept of selective appropriation in glocalization (Robertson, 2020). Similarly, the prediction effect of globalization on language was found to be significant, which means that globalization plays an important role as a factor in influencing linguistic behavior. This reinforces the idea of globalization increasing the status of English as well as promoting hybrid linguistic practices such as Urdu-English code switching amongst youth, a phenomenon which has been documented in Pakistani sociolinguistic studies (Ahmad & Mahmood, 2023). Demographic findings also allow the contextualization of these outcomes. The sample was mainly groups of participants who are young, urban, and educated, and they are the most exposed to digital globalization and transnational media flows. This demographic composition likely affected results of an important relationship between global exposure and identity/language variables. Urban youth are also generally early adopters of global cultural trends and more likely to have access to the English language education, social media and global entertainment platforms. Therefore, the results eliminate the dissimilar results on previous research proving that the effect of globalization is most significant among the younger, urban, middle-class populations (Azhar et al., 2014). Overall, the study is supportive of the argument of globalization in Pakistan is not a purely homogenizing force, but producing some complex

and layered transformations in cultural and language practices. Together with the increased visibility of the English language, and its enhancement in terms of its prestige in the world, are also new opportunities for the recovery of local identities and their creative expression.

### **Conclusion**

The paper concludes that globalization plays a big role in the issues of cultural identity and linguistic practices in Pakistan. In addition, the findings indicate that those who possessed higher levels of exposure to globalization report higher levels of transformation in cultural identity and higher levels of adoption of linguistic behaviors, or the use of hybrid or English-dominant speech. Globalization played a multiple dimensional role as a cultural and linguistic change that impacted the process of identity formation through the digital media exposure, choice of educational system, and cultural flow across borders. The correlations between the variables are showing meaningful and positive associations and the results of the regression show statistical significance of globalization as a predictor for both cultural identity and language use. These empirical results provide evidence for theoretical perspectives that globalization creates restructuring of cultural boundaries, identifies the formation of hybrid identities, and changes of linguistic hierarchies. However, there are disproportionate effects of globalization across different groups. Urban, educated youth appear to benefit the most from cultural hybridity and linguistic capital while marginalised linguistic communities appear to be at a higher risk of cultural and linguistic displacement. Thus, globalization in Pakistan is showing a panorama of opportunities and challenges, which in turn leads to policies needed to preserve the indigenous languages, encourage diversity of cultural participation.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the regression, when significant relations were found between globalization and cultural identity and language, a number of recommendations can be made. First, policymakers and educational institutions should focus on creating balanced cultural programs that retain the local traditions even as they interact with the global forces. Strengthening cultural education in schools through curriculum reforms, community-based and cultural preservation campaigns can also help individuals to maintain a strong sense of identity in the face of increasing globalization. Also, language planning organizations should foster bilingual or multilingual education for this purpose, which would not only refer to local language maintenance, but to global communicative competence. Media regulators and cultural ministries may also encourage the production of local content to preserve linguistic and cultural diversity. Finally, more research should be done into the ways through cultural resilience strategies and educational interventions might counteract any negative effects of globalization to ensure that the global integration is not compromising cultural uniqueness and linguistic heritage.

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