

# GLOCAL BRAND STORYTELLING

PSYCHOLOGY, MEDIA, AND DIGITAL INCLUSION



*Editor*

Adekola Sodiq Adetunji

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**GLOCAL BRAND STORYTELLING: PSYCHOLOGY,  
MEDIA, AND DIGITAL INCLUSION- 2026**

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# **GLOCAL BRAND STORYTELLING: PSYCHOLOGY, MEDIA, AND DIGITAL INCLUSION**

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## **PREFACE**

This volume brings together interdisciplinary studies that examine glocal branding through psychological, cultural, and data-driven perspectives. The chapters collectively address how global brands adapt narratives, communication strategies, and value propositions to resonate with diverse local contexts while operating within increasingly interconnected media and market systems.

A central theme of the book is the psychological dimension of glocal brand storytelling, with particular attention to emotional engagement, identity formation, and cultural resonance. The contributions analyze how cross-cultural communication—especially within national media contexts such as Nigerian television—mediates meaning, audience interpretation, and brand adaptation across cultural boundaries.

The volume further incorporates empirical, data-driven analyses of digital inclusion and financial brand glocalization across multiple countries. By integrating psychological theory, media studies, and quantitative insights, the chapters provide a comprehensive academic framework for understanding glocal branding dynamics in contemporary digital and socio-economic environments.

**Editorial Team**  
**January 29, 2026**  
**Türkiye**

**CHAPTER 1**  
**PSYCHOLOGY OF GLOCAL BRAND**  
**STORYTELLING: EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT,**  
**IDENTITY AND CULTURAL RESONANCE**

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# *GLOCAL BRAND STORYTELLING: PSYCHOLOGY, MEDIA, AND DIGITAL INCLUSION*

## **INTRODUCTION**

In an increasingly interconnected global marketplace, brands face the paradoxical challenge of maintaining universal appeal while resonating with diverse cultural identities. This tension has given rise to "glocalization"—a strategic approach that harmonizes global brand consistency with local cultural adaptation (Steenkamp, 2019). As digital transformation accelerates cross-border consumer engagement, understanding the psychological mechanisms through which glocal brand storytelling influences consumer behavior has become paramount for both academic inquiry and marketing practice. Storytelling is the art of conveying information, ideas or emotions through a narrative. It involves the use of words, visuals, or other forms of media to tell a story that engages and resonates with an audience.

Storytelling has been a fundamental element of human culture for centuries, evolving from ancient oral traditions to contemporary digital platforms. It functions as a means to convey messages, entertain, educate, and inspire, while fostering emotional connections between the storyteller and the audience. Essentially, storytelling entails organizing a sequence of events or experiences in a way that is both engaging and memorable (Gowda & Archana, 2024). Brand storytelling represents the art of connecting a brand's narrative with consumers on an emotional level. In today's highly competitive market, where consumer attention is scarce, brands encounter numerous challenges.

They must cultivate a loyal customer base, transform consumers into brand advocates, and ensure sustained success. Through storytelling, a brand brings its identity to life, evolving from a mere logo into a compelling character within a broader narrative. The Indian market, with its cultural diversity, presents a powerful opportunity for brands to leverage storytelling as a means of fostering deeper consumer engagement. This study explores the crucial relationship between brand storytelling and consumer engagement within the culturally vibrant Indian context (Gupta, 2025). Recent empirical evidence demonstrates that storytelling in marketing can increase conversion rates by up to 30%, with consumers showing 84% greater purchase likelihood when emotionally connected to brands (Chinki Rana, 2025). However, the effectiveness of these narratives is fundamentally mediated by cultural context and alignment with identity.



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When brands tell stories that resonate with cultural values and personal identity, they transform from mere commercial entities into relatable cultural artifacts that consumers integrate into their self-concept (Mandung, 2024). This study investigates the integration of cultural elements into modern packaging design and its effect on eliciting emotional resonance among consumers. As globalization intensifies and consumer preferences diversify, packaging design has transformed from a functional necessity—providing physical protection and product information—into a powerful medium for storytelling, cultural expression, and emotional connection (Gowda & Archana, 2024).

The concept of glocalization, which blends global standardization with local adaptation, has gained significant traction as brands navigate cultural diversity while maintaining coherent brand identity (Figueiredo, 2018; De Mooij, 2019). Fashion functions as a cultural transmitter, reflecting and shaping societal norms, values, and identities, positioning it as a unique medium of nonverbal communication (Piancazzo et al., 2024). This communicative capacity extends across industries, requiring brands to adapt their narratives to align with the cultural "language" of diverse markets. For instance, multinational corporations like McDonald's and Starbucks have successfully implemented glocalization strategies by maintaining core brand identity while adapting menu offerings, store ambiance and marketing campaigns to reflect local preferences and cultural norms (Ali & Santos, 2025).

### ***Theoretical Framework***

The psychological impact of glocal brand storytelling can be understood through three interconnected theoretical lenses: Narrative Transportation Theory (NTT), Social Identity Theory, and the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM). Narrative Transportation Theory (Green & Brock, 2000) explains how audiences become cognitively and emotionally absorbed into story worlds, influencing beliefs and behaviors. Social Identity Theory (Turner & Oakes, 1986; Schmitt, 1999). contextualizes how individuals derive self-concept from brand affiliations. Consumer Culture Theory (Arnould & Thompson, 2005) extends this to cultural consumption and symbolic meaning-making.

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These frameworks intersect to explain why brand narratives are persuasive: they transport consumers into emotional engagement (affect), align with self-concept (identity), and reinforce shared cultural meaning (social context).

### ***Relationship Between Glocal Brand Storytelling and Psychological Dimension***

Brands that successfully engage consumers emotionally create lasting psychological bonds that transcend rational product evaluation (Thomson et al., 2005). Emotional attachment to brands involves affective commitment, passion and connection—psychological states that influence loyalty, forgiveness of brand failures and willingness to pay premium prices (Park et al., 2010). Glocal storytelling must navigate the complex terrain of emotional universality and cultural specificity, while basic emotions may be universal (Ekman, 1992), the situations that elicit them, their appropriate expression, and their meaning within identity and social contexts vary dramatically across cultures (Mesquita & Frijda, 1992). A glocal narrative succeeds emotionally when it triggers culturally appropriate emotional responses while connecting to universal affective themes.

## **1. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Despite extensive research on brand storytelling and globalization separately, limited empirical investigation has examined the intersection of these phenomena—specifically, how glocal brand storytelling influences consumer psychology through the mechanisms of emotional engagement, identity construction, and cultural resonance. Few studies have specifically examined localization within the digital fashion realm, highlighting the need for further research to fully grasp the complexities of localization in digital contexts (Noris et al., 2025). This gap extends across industries, as the psychological processes underlying effective glocal storytelling remain undertheorized and empirically underexplored. Based on review of literature, following Research questions were framed to analyze the Psychology of Glocal Brand Storytelling: Emotional Engagement, Identity and Cultural Resonance:

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- How do glocal brand narratives facilitate emotional engagement across culturally diverse consumer segments?
- What role does cultural identity play in mediating the relationship between glocal storytelling and brand loyalty?
- How do culturally adapted storytelling elements enhance brand resonance while maintaining global brand consistency?
- What are the psychological mechanisms through which glocal storytelling influences consumer attitudes, beliefs, and purchase intentions?

### **2. METHODS**

This study conducted a structured bibliometric and conceptual review of existing literature. Relevant publications on “*brand storytelling, glocalization, emotional engagement, cultural identity and consumer behavior*” were retrieved manually from Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar databases. The search covered the period from 2000 to March 2025, using combinations of keywords. The selection process followed a systematic screening approach. Initially, article titles and abstracts were reviewed to ensure relevance to the study theme. Duplicates, editorials, and non-academic materials were excluded. The final set of studies was examined in detail to identify publication trends, theoretical frameworks, and recurring research themes. Rather than relying on automated bibliometric software, this study adopted a manual content-based analysis to categorize publications according to their focus areas, year of publication, country of origin, and theoretical contributions. Key themes were then synthesized into a conceptual framework illustrating how glocal brand storytelling connects emotional engagement, cultural identity, and consumer attitudes. The approach ensured a qualitative depth and contextual understanding of how storytelling operates as a psychological and cultural process in global branding.

#### **2.1 Data Collection**

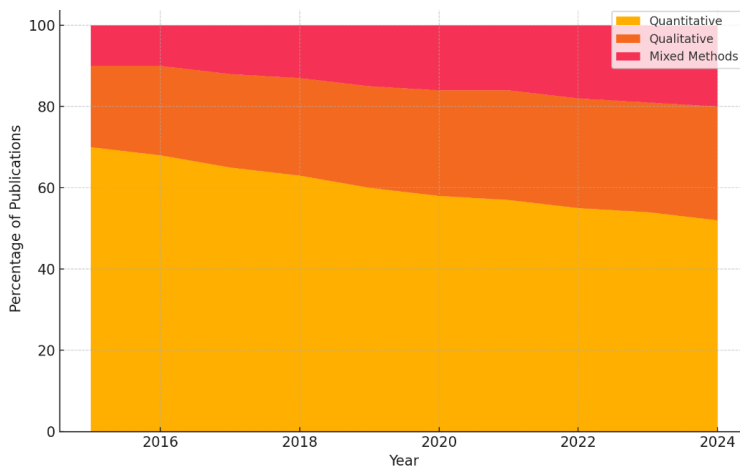
- **Databases:** Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar

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- **Search strings:** ("brand storytelling" OR "narrative marketing" OR "digital storytelling") AND (consumer\* OR branding OR glocal\* OR identity OR cultural\*)
- **Timespan:** 2000–2025
- **Language:** English
- **Document types:** Articles, reviews, and books

### **3. RESULTS**

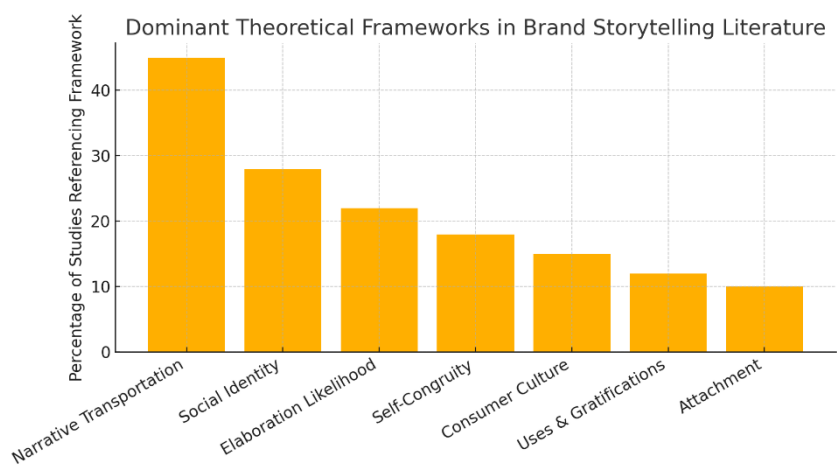
This section reports the main findings derived from the analysis of literature on the psychology of glocal brand storytelling. The results highlight key publication trends, dominant theoretical frameworks, and recurring psychological mechanisms that explain how global brands use culturally adapted storytelling to influence consumer engagement and loyalty. The analysis shows a gradual methodological shift in brand storytelling research from 2015–2025. Quantitative studies remain dominant but have declined over time, while qualitative and mixed-methods approaches have increased, reflecting a move toward richer, context-driven inquiry. This trend indicates growing interest in capturing the emotional, cultural, and psychological complexity of brand narratives beyond purely numerical analysis, which is shown in the figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Evolution of Research Methodologies in Brand Storytelling (2015-2025)

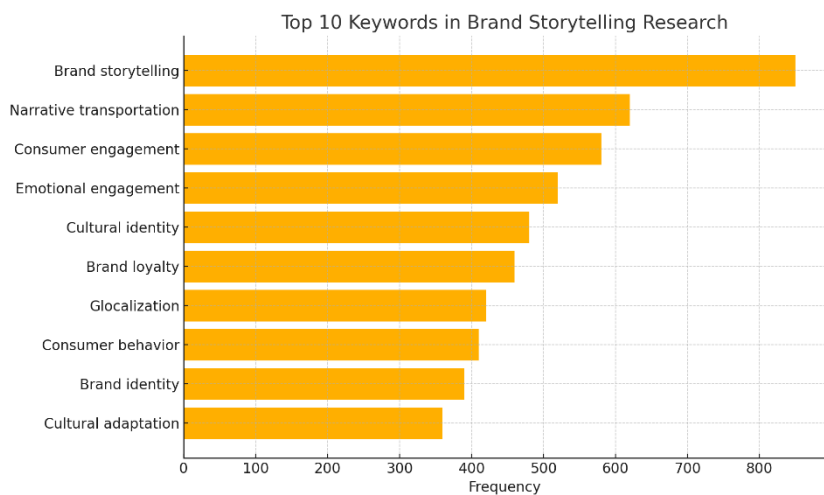
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The figure 2 illustrates the distribution of dominant theoretical frameworks employed in brand storytelling research. Narrative Transportation Theory emerges as the most widely used framework, referenced in approximately 45% of the analyzed studies. This dominance highlights scholars’ emphasis on psychological immersion and emotional engagement as key mechanisms through which stories influence consumer attitudes and behaviors (Green & Brock, 2000). The Social Identity Theory follows with around 28%, indicating strong interest in how brand narratives foster group belonging, self-categorization, and identity-based attachment (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) ranks third (22%), showing the relevance of persuasion routes and message processing in understanding how consumers interpret and internalize brand stories (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).The next tier includes Self-Congruity Theory (18%), emphasizing the alignment between brand personality and consumers’ self-concept (Sirgy, 1982), and Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) (15%), which explores how storytelling functions as a cultural production system reflecting societal meanings (Arnould & Thompson, 2005).Lesser-referenced frameworks include Uses and Gratifications Theory (12%) and Attachment Theory (10%), reflecting emerging but underexplored perspectives on media motivation and emotional bonding between consumers and brands (Bowlby, 1969; Katz et al., 1973).



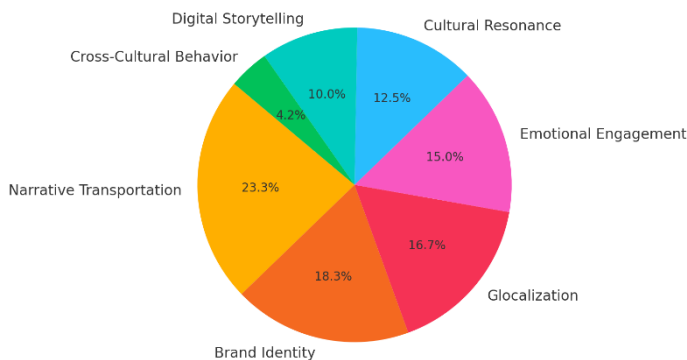
**Figure 2.** Dominant Theoretical Frameworks in Brand Storytelling Literature

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**Figure 3.** Keywords In Brand Storytelling Research

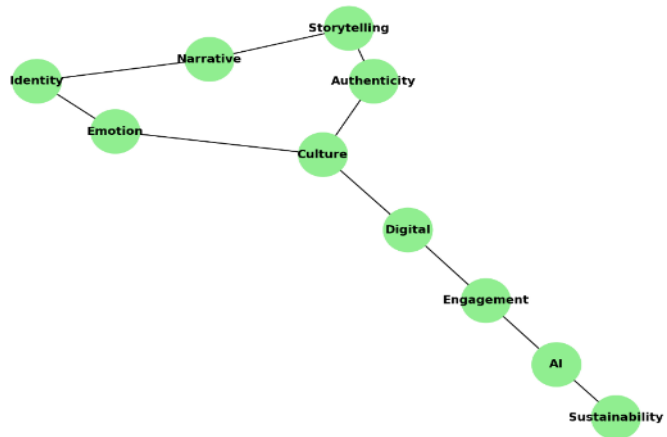
The keyword analysis (Fig 3) reveals that “brand storytelling” is the most dominant research focus, followed by “narrative transportation” and “consumer engagement,” reflecting the psychological emphasis on emotional immersion and audience connection. Frequent mentions of “cultural identity,” “glocalization,” and “cultural adaptation” indicate growing interest in cross-cultural and contextualized brand narratives. Overall, the findings suggest that current scholarship in brand storytelling integrates emotional engagement, identity formation, and cultural resonance within a global marketing framework.



**Figure 4.** Themes Related to Brand Storytelling

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The thematic clustering analysis (fig. 4) reveals that Narrative Transportation (23.3%) is the most dominant research focus, emphasizing audience immersion and psychological engagement as central mechanisms in brand storytelling (Green & Brock, 2000). Brand Identity (18.3%) and Glocalization (16.7%) form the next major clusters, highlighting how stories shape self-brand connections and adapt across cultural contexts. Emotional Engagement (15%) and Cultural Resonance (12.5%) further underline the affective and cultural dimensions driving narrative effectiveness. Meanwhile, Digital Storytelling (10%) and Cross-Cultural Behavior (4.2%) represent emerging yet underexplored areas, suggesting growing scholarly attention toward technology-driven and cross-border consumer experiences. Overall, the findings indicate that brand storytelling research is evolving toward a psychocultural integration—linking emotion, identity, and culture within digital and global branding context.

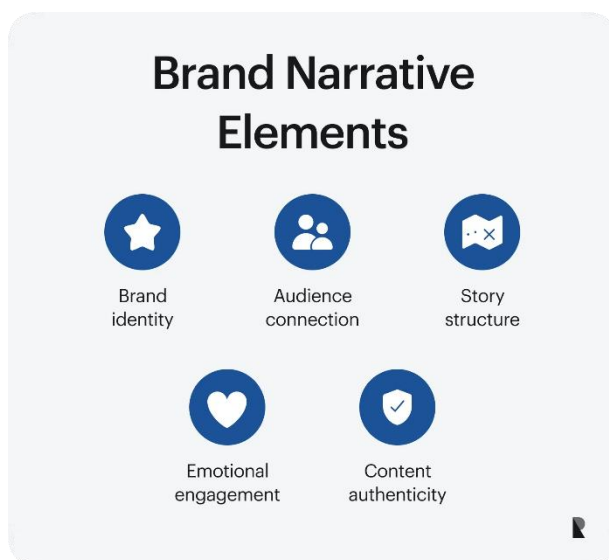


**Figure 5.** Showing Networks in Glocal Brand Storytelling

The network shows that culture, storytelling, and identity form the core of glocal brand storytelling research, emphasizing cultural adaptation and self-concept. Emerging links among digital, AI, and sustainability indicate growing technological and ethical dimensions, while connections between emotion, authenticity, and engagement highlight the psychological foundations of audience resonance.

***RQ1: How Do Glocal Brand Narratives Facilitate Emotional Engagement Across Culturally Diverse Consumer Segments?***

Glocal brand narratives create emotional engagement across cultures by blending universal emotions with local cultural meanings. When stories reflect familiar traditions, values, and symbols, consumers feel personally connected—enhancing narrative transportation and self-brand congruity. This emotional and cultural alignment fosters trust, authenticity, and loyalty across diverse markets. In essence, glocal storytelling works because it speaks to shared human emotions through culturally specific voices, making global brands feel locally relevant and emotionally resonant shown in fig 6.



**Figure 6.** Glocal Brand Narratives Facilitate Emotional Engagement Across Culturally Diverse Consumer Segments

***RQ2: What Role Does Cultural Identity Play in Mediating the Relationship Between Glocal Storytelling and Brand Loyalty?***

Cultural identity serves as a psychological bridge that translates glocal storytelling into brand loyalty. When consumers encounter brand narratives that reflect their cultural values, symbols and social meanings, they experience a sense of belonging and validation (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Markus & Kitayama, 1991).



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This alignment between personal and cultural identity fosters self-brand congruity consumers perceive the brand as part of their extended self (Sirgy, 1982). Through this identification process, cultural identity mediates emotional and cognitive engagement. Glocal storytelling activates shared cultural schemas, thereby enhancing emotional resonance and perceptions of authenticity (Holt, 2004; Torelli & Ahluwalia, 2012). These psychological connections translate into trust, attachment, and long-term loyalty (Escalas & Bettman, 2005).

Culturally adapted storytelling enhances brand resonance by aligning global brand values with locally meaningful narratives that evoke emotional and cultural connection. By integrating local symbols, values, and emotions into global story frameworks, brands activate consumers' cultural identities while preserving a consistent brand essence. This dual strategy—local adaptation and global coherence create what scholars' term glocal authenticity, fostering trust and emotional engagement across markets (Holt, 2004; Aaker & Schmitt, 2001). Such storytelling allows consumers to experience a sense of “local belonging within global familiarity,” strengthening loyalty and long-term brand attachment through culturally resonant yet universally recognizable narratives.

*Glocal Storytelling → Cultural Identity → Emotional Engagement →  
Brand Trust → Brand Loyalty*

### **RQ3: What Are the Psychological Mechanisms Through Which Glocal Storytelling Influences Consumer Attitudes, Beliefs, And Purchase Intentions?**

The thematic synthesis suggests that glocal storytelling influences consumer attitudes and behaviors through a multi-layered psychological pathway beginning with emotional immersion, reinforced by identity congruence and authenticity, and culminating in meaningful cultural resonance. Collectively, these mechanisms illustrate that effective glocal storytelling transcends persuasion—it constructs shared emotional and cultural realities that shape enduring consumer-brand relationships.

## **CONCLUSION**

The findings highlight that glocal brand storytelling acts as a psychological bridge between global identity and local culture, enabling deep emotional engagement among culturally diverse consumers. When stories integrate locally meaningful symbols, values, and emotions, they evoke a sense of belonging and emotional resonance that strengthens brand attachment (Dias, 2021; Gowda & Archana, 2024).

Cultural identity emerges as a key mediator linking storytelling to brand loyalty. Consumers connect more strongly when brand narratives affirm their cultural self-concept, enhancing trust and long-term loyalty (Sirgy, 1982; Acar et al., 2024). Thus, effective glocal stories reflect cultural authenticity while reinforcing consistent brand values, balancing local adaptation and global coherence (Holt, 2004; Beverland & Farrelly, 2010).

Culturally adapted storytelling elements further enhance brand resonance by aligning with audience schemas and emotional codes while retaining universal brand meanings. This dual alignment—cultural relevance plus brand consistency—creates a perception of authenticity that drives deeper engagement and positive evaluations (Torelli & Ahluwalia, 2012).

Psychologically, glocal storytelling influences consumer attitudes, beliefs and purchase intentions through mechanisms such as narrative transportation, emotional engagement, self-brand congruity, and perceived authenticity (Escalas, 2004; Makwana et al., 2025). These processes foster empathy and identification, shaping favourable brand attitudes and behavioural intentions across cultural contexts.

Overall, the study demonstrates that glocal storytelling operates through emotional, cognitive and cultural pathways, making it a powerful strategic tool for building brand resonance and loyalty in global markets.

### ***Implications for Theory and Practice***

Theoretically, this study advances the understanding of brand storytelling as a psychocultural process—one that intertwines emotion, identity, and culture within global consumer contexts. It reinforces the need for integrative frameworks combining narrative psychology, cultural intelligence, and affective science.

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Practically, marketers should design stories that evoke cultural-emotional resonance—embedding local values, authentic symbols, and emotionally engaging narratives while maintaining global brand coherence. This psychological alignment fosters deeper consumer connection and sustained brand equity.

### ***Limitations and Future Implications***

This discussion is based primarily on conceptual and literature synthesis; empirical validation across cultures is needed. Future research could apply experimental or longitudinal designs to test the psychological mechanisms in different national contexts, and explore moderating variables such as cultural intelligence or digital media use

Future research could broaden the scope of cross-cultural investigations by including emerging markets and non-Western audiences to better understand how glocal brand narratives function across diverse cultural settings. Incorporating neuropsychological and affective computing methods would help uncover subconscious emotional reactions that traditional self-report measures may overlook. Additionally, examining the growing influence of AI-driven and digital storytelling platforms could reveal how technology shapes emotional connection and cultural resonance in global branding. Finally, employing longitudinal and experimental research designs would enable a deeper exploration of causal mechanisms underlying storytelling effects, offering more robust insights into how glocal narratives shape consumer psychology over time.

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**CHAPTER 2**  
**THE GLOCAL SCREEN: CROSS-CULTURAL  
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# *GLOCAL BRAND STORYTELLING: PSYCHOLOGY, MEDIA, AND DIGITAL INCLUSION*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The digital age has fundamentally reshaped the landscape of global branding, precipitating a paradigmatic shift from standardized, universalistic global campaigns to a more nuanced, culturally-sensitive strategy of glocalization (Robertson, 1995). This transformation reflects an increased recognition among marketing scholars and practitioners that the assumption of consumer homogeneity across global markets a cornerstone of early globalization theory is empirically and theoretically untenable (Hollensen, 2020). Global brands are increasingly challenged to maintain a unified corporate identity and coherent brand architecture while simultaneously adapting to the hyper-localized expectations, cultural norms, and communication preferences of consumers in diverse markets (Ogunyemi & Ojo, 2023). This tension between standardization and adaptation represents one of the most significant strategic dilemmas confronting contemporary international marketing practice. This dialectical tension is particularly acute in emerging economies like Nigeria, which boasts a large, young, and increasingly digitally savvy population exceeding 220 million people, alongside a deeply entrenched and culturally diverse traditional media environment that continues to exert a substantial influence on consumer attitudes and purchasing behaviour (Ogunyemi & Ojo, 2023). Nigeria's demographic profile characterized by a median age of approximately 18 years and rapid urbanization presents both extraordinary opportunities and formidable challenges for global brands seeking to establish market presence and build brand equity in the region. Nigeria, with its over 250 ethnic groups, more than 500 indigenous languages, and diverse linguistic landscape dominated by three major languages (Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba) alongside English as the official lingua franca, presents a unique and methodologically rich case study for examining the efficacy of cross-cultural communication in brand adaptation (Akaeze, 2025). The country's religious diversity with roughly equal proportions of Muslims and Christians, alongside indigenous religious practices further complicate the cultural terrain that global brands must navigate. This ethno-linguistic and religious heterogeneity creates distinct regional markets with differentiated consumer behaviors, media consumption patterns, and brand preferences, necessitating sophisticated segmentation and targeting strategies.

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While digital platforms offer personalized and algorithmically-targeted communication capabilities, television remains a dominant and influential medium in Nigeria, particularly for mass-market penetration, establishing brand credibility, and reaching consumers across socioeconomic strata (Novatia Consulting, 2024). Television's continued relevance in the Nigerian media landscape despite the proliferation of digital channels can be attributed to several factors: its accessibility across income levels, its role as a communal viewing experience that reinforces social bonds, its perceived legitimacy as an information source, and its capacity to deliver high-impact audiovisual narratives that resonate emotionally with viewers. The medium's ability to simultaneously reach both urban and rural populations makes it indispensable for brands pursuing nationwide market coverage. The challenge for MNCs operating in this environment is not merely translating advertising copy or making superficial aesthetic adjustments, but rather fundamentally reinterpreting the global brand promise its core identity, values, and positioning through a local cultural lens that resonates authentically and meaningfully with the Nigerian consumer (Ihentuge, 2017). This reinterpretation demands a sophisticated understanding of cultural semiotics, consumer psychology, and the socio-cultural contexts that shape meaning-making processes in Nigerian society. Brands must negotiate the delicate balance between maintaining global brand equity built through consistent positioning across markets and achieving local cultural relevance that drives purchase behavior and brand loyalty. This chapter seeks to explore the strategic intersection of glocalization, cross-cultural communication, and television media in Nigeria through a systematic, theoretically-grounded analysis. It aims to answer the central research question: How do global brands adapt their communication strategies within Nigerian television media to achieve cultural congruence and build glocal brand equity? Subsidiary questions include: What specific adaptation strategies do successful brands employ? How do cultural dimensions theory inform these adaptations? What role do linguistic choices, visual semiotics, and celebrity endorsement play in achieving cultural resonance? By synthesizing contemporary literature, drawing on observed brand practices, and applying established theoretical frameworks, this analysis provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the complexities of brand adaptation in a highly fragmented.

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Yet media-saturated emerging market, with implications for both academic understanding and managerial practice.

### **1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: GLOCALIZATION AND CULTURAL DIMENSIONS**

The theoretical foundation of this study rests on two core conceptual frameworks: glocalization theory and cross-cultural communication theory, specifically as articulated through Hofstede's cultural dimensions model. These complementary frameworks provide both the macro-level strategic logic (glocalization) and the micro-level cultural mechanics (cultural dimensions) necessary for understanding brand adaptation processes.

#### **1.1 Glocalization as a Strategic Imperative**

Glocalization is a portmanteau of "globalization" and "localization," first popularized by sociologist Roland Robertson (1995) to describe the simultaneous presence of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies in contemporary social, political, and economic life. Robertson's conceptualization emerged from his observation that globalization does not simply impose homogeneity but rather creates new forms of locality and stimulates the production of cultural distinctiveness. In the context of branding and international marketing, glocalization represents the strategic process of designing, positioning, and marketing products or services that maintain global consistency in core brand identity while exhibiting local adaptation in execution, messaging, and consumer touchpoints (Hollensen, 2020).

This approach fundamentally moves beyond the binary opposition between pure standardization (characteristic of ethnocentric international marketing strategies) and pure localization (characteristic of polycentric approaches) to embrace a geocentric strategy that seeks to optimize brand value by systematically balancing global efficiency achieved through economies of scale, knowledge transfer, and consistent brand architecture with local effectiveness achieved through cultural resonance, market-specific positioning, and contextualized communication (Noris, 2025).

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The geocentric orientation recognizes that while certain brand elements (such as core values, logo, and product quality) should remain consistent globally, other elements (such as advertising narratives, linguistic expression, and cultural references) must be adapted to local contexts to achieve maximum persuasive impact. The theoretical foundations of glocalization can be traced to several streams of scholarly inquiry. First, institutional theory suggests that organizations must achieve both external legitimacy (conforming to local cultural expectations) and internal efficiency (maintaining consistent organizational practices), creating a natural tension that glocalization seeks to resolve (Ihentuge, 2017). Second, cultural hybridity theory recognizes that contemporary consumers particularly in postcolonial contexts like Nigeria do not simply choose between local and global cultural forms but rather engage in creative synthesis, producing hybrid cultural identities that incorporate both global and local elements. Third, consumer culture theory emphasizes that consumption is fundamentally a meaning-making activity, and that product meanings are not inherent but are constructed through cultural discourse, suggesting that global brands must participate in local meaning-making processes to achieve relevance.

For MNCs, glocalization is crucial for mitigating the risks associated with cultural imperialism the perception that global brands represent Western cultural dominance and threaten local cultural authenticity and ensuring that the brand message is not only understood cognitively but also accepted emotionally and integrated psychologically into the local consumer culture (Ihentuge, 2017). In a market like Nigeria, where cultural pride, Pan-African consciousness, and demand for local content are increasingly valued particularly among younger, more educated consumers a failure to glocalize can lead to brand rejection, consumer boycotts, or, at best, market indifference and competitive vulnerability. Conversely, brands that successfully glocalize can achieve "cultural citizenship," whereby they are perceived not as foreign impositions but as legitimate participants in local culture, earning the right to commercial success through demonstrated cultural respect and understanding. The strategic implementation of glocalization requires organizational capabilities across multiple dimensions.

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First, market intelligence capabilities enable firms to gather and analyze deep cultural insights rather than superficial demographic data. Second, organizational flexibility allows for decentralized decision-making that empowers local marketing teams to make culturally-informed adaptations within global brand guidelines. Third, creative capabilities enable the reinterpretation of global brand themes in locally resonant ways without compromising brand identity. Fourth, integration mechanisms ensure that local adaptations inform global brand evolution, creating a bidirectional flow of knowledge between headquarters and subsidiaries. These capabilities, taken together, constitute a "glocalization capability" that represents a source of sustained competitive advantage in culturally diverse markets.

### **1.2 Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions in the Nigerian Context**

To operationalize the concept of cultural adaptation and provide empirical grounding for glocalization strategy, this chapter utilizes Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory (Hofstede, 2001), one of the most influential and widely-applied frameworks in cross-cultural research. Hofstede's model, originally developed through factor analysis of employee values data collected from IBM subsidiaries across more than 70 countries, identifies six fundamental dimensions along which national cultures vary: Power Distance, Individualism-Collectivism, Masculinity-Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance, Long-Term Orientation, and Indulgence-Restraint. Each dimension represents a cluster of related values, beliefs, and behavioral norms that systematically influence communication preferences, decision-making processes, and consumption behaviors.

While the application of Hofstede's dimensions to specific sub-cultures within Nigeria is methodologically complex given the country's extraordinary internal diversity national-level scores offer a valuable starting point for understanding the general communication environment and dominant cultural tendencies that shape consumer expectations (Nickerson, 2025). It is important to acknowledge the limitations of applying national-level cultural measures to heterogeneous societies; however, research suggests that despite internal variation, certain cultural patterns do exhibit consistency at the national level, particularly in urban contexts where mass media operates.

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### ***Power Distance***

Nigeria typically scores high on Power Distance (estimated at 77-80 on Hofstede's 100-point scale), indicating a cultural acceptance of hierarchical social structures and a respect for authority, status, and formal position (Hofstede, 2001). In high power distance cultures, individuals accept that power is distributed unequally and that social hierarchies are both natural and necessary for social order. This cultural orientation has several implications for advertising communication. First, it suggests that the use of authoritative figures such as respected elders, religious leaders, government officials, or high-status professionals in advertising can confer legitimacy and persuasiveness to brand messages. Second, it implies that aspirational messaging that positions products as markers of social advancement or status achievement may resonate strongly with consumers. Third, it suggests that testimonials from credible authority figures may be more persuasive than peer endorsements in certain product categories.

In practical terms, Nigerian television advertising frequently employs local celebrity endorsement from actors, musicians, and public figures who occupy high-status positions in the cultural hierarchy (Brandcom, 2025). These celebrities function not merely as attention-getting devices but as authority-legitimizing agents who transfer their social capital to endorsed brands. The selection of celebrities must be culturally astute, considering not only their popularity but also their perceived moral character, their ethnic and regional representation, and their authentic connection to the product category. Brands that fail to recognize power distance dynamics for example, by featuring peer-to-peer recommendations without authoritative endorsement may be perceived as lacking credibility or seriousness.

### ***Collectivism***

Nigeria exhibits strong Collectivism rather than Individualism (scoring approximately 20-30 on the Individualism index, where low scores indicate collectivism), meaning that group harmony, loyalty to in-groups (family, extended kin, community, ethnic group), and collective welfare are prioritized over individual achievement and personal autonomy (Hofstede, 2001).

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In collectivist cultures, the self is fundamentally defined in relational terms as a node in a network of social obligations rather than as an autonomous, self-actualizing agent. This cultural orientation profoundly shapes consumption patterns, as purchasing decisions are often made with consideration for their impact on family members and social networks, and consumption itself frequently occurs in social rather than solitary contexts. This collectivist orientation suggests that brand messaging focused on communal benefits, family values, social harmony, group inclusion, and social acceptance is likely to be significantly more effective than purely individualistic appeals emphasizing personal achievement, self-expression, or individual differentiation (Turchaninova, 2025).

Advertisements that depict products facilitating social bonding such as shared meals, family celebrations, community gatherings, or friendship reinforcement align with deeply-held cultural values. Conversely, advertising that emphasizes individual pleasure, personal indulgence, or standing out from the group may be culturally dissonant and less persuasive. The implications extend beyond message content to visual representation. Collectivist cultures favor group shots over isolated individuals, family settings over solitary consumption, and narratives of relationship maintenance over self-realization. The emotional appeals most effective in such contexts emphasize belonging, acceptance, familial love, and social connectedness rather than personal freedom, uniqueness, or self-actualization.

### *Additional Dimensions*

While Power Distance and Collectivism are particularly salient for understanding Nigerian advertising, other Hofstede dimensions provide additional insights. Nigeria exhibits moderate to high Masculinity (estimated 55-60), suggesting that achievement, success, and material rewards are valued, which makes aspirational advertising and success narratives culturally appropriate. The country shows relatively high Uncertainty Avoidance (estimated 50-55), indicating some preference for clear information, established brands, and risk mitigation in consumption decisions favoring brands with strong reputations and clear product benefits.

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Understanding the full constellation of these dimensions while recognizing their limitations and the importance of within-country variation is critical for tailoring the narrative structure, emotional tone, and rhetorical appeals of television advertisements to ensure they are culturally appropriate, psychologically resonant, and commercially persuasive (Turchaninova, 2025).

### **1.3 Theoretical Integration: From Dimensions to Strategy**

The integration of glocalization theory with cultural dimensions theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding brand adaptation. Glocalization theory provides the strategic logic the "why" of adaptation by explaining how brands must balance global consistency with local relevance to achieve legitimacy and competitiveness. Cultural dimensions theory provides the tactical specification the "how" of adaptation by identifying the specific cultural values and communication preferences that should guide message construction. Together, these frameworks enable the development of culturally-grounded communication strategies that maintain brand integrity while achieving local resonance.

This integrated theoretical framework suggests that effective brand communication in Nigeria requires three levels of adaptation: (1) strategic adaptation, whereby global brand positioning is reinterpreted to align with local cultural priorities (e.g., repositioning individualistic achievement as collective success); (2) semiotic adaptation, whereby visual and linguistic signs are selected to carry culturally-appropriate meanings; and (3) executional adaptation, whereby narrative structure, characters, settings, and production styles reflect local aesthetic preferences and storytelling conventions. The following sections examine how these adaptations manifest across different dimensions of television advertising.

## **2. CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN NIGERIAN TELEVISION MEDIA**

Television remains a primary channel for mass communication in Nigeria, reaching a broad demographic spectrum and acting as a significant cultural gatekeeper that both reflects and shapes cultural values, consumption norms, and social identities (Ogunyemi & Ojo, 2023).



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The medium's power derives not only from its reach but from its capacity for multi-sensory communication combining visual imagery, spoken language, music, and movement that can convey complex cultural meanings and evoke powerful emotional responses. In Nigeria's media landscape, television occupies a unique position, bridging traditional and modern communication forms, serving as both entertainment source and information channel, and functioning as a site where global and local cultures negotiate meaning.

The adaptation of global brand communication on this medium involves strategic decisions across multiple interconnected dimensions. This section examines three key areas: narrative adaptation and cultural storytelling, linguistic strategy and code-switching, and visual semiotics and celebrity endorsement. Each dimension represents a distinct but related aspect of the broader glocalization process, and successful brand communication requires careful orchestration across all three.

### **2.1 Narrative Adaptation and Cultural Storytelling**

The most fundamental and strategically significant aspect of cross-cultural communication is the adaptation of the brand's core narrative the underlying story that explains what the brand stands for, why it exists, and what role it plays in consumers' lives. Global brands typically carry universal themes or archetypal narratives such as happiness and sharing (Coca-Cola), athletic achievement and determination (Nike), convenience and nurturing (Nestlé), or innovation and creativity (Apple) that transcend specific cultural contexts (Akhimien, 2025). However, these abstract themes must be contextualized within the concrete realities of local Nigerian life, translated from universal principles into culturally-specific manifestations that feel authentic and relevant to Nigerian consumers. This process involves moving from a global, often Western-centric and individualistic, storyline to a domestication of the narrative that embeds the brand within recognizable local cultural scenarios, social rituals, and value systems.

#### ***From Individual to Communal Narratives***

The most significant narrative transformation in Nigerian advertising involves the shift from individualistic to collectivistic narrative frames.

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For example, a global advertisement for a carbonated beverage might focus on an individual's moment of personal refreshment a lone runner quenching thirst, a solitary consumer enjoying a private moment of pleasure emphasizing personal satisfaction and individual experience. The glocalized Nigerian equivalent, however, is almost invariably framed around a communal celebration, a family gathering, or a social occasion where the product facilitates connection rather than individual consumption (Novatia Consulting, 2024).

The product is repositioned not as a personal treat or individual indulgence but as a facilitator of social bonding, an enabler of shared experiences, and a symbol of hospitality and generosity values deeply rooted in Nigerian cultural practice. This narrative reframing directly appeals to Nigeria's high collectivism score and acknowledges the reality that in many Nigerian contexts, consumption is inherently social rather than solitary. The sharing of food and drink carries ritual significance, expressing care, building relationships, and fulfilling social obligations. Brands that understand and honor these cultural meanings position themselves as participants in valued social practices rather than as mere commercial transactions.

### ***Incorporation of Local Social Rituals and Values***

Successful narrative adaptation involves incorporating culturally-specific social rituals, seasonal celebrations, and value expressions that resonate deeply with Nigerian audiences. This includes emphasizing the cultural value of hospitality (the expectation that hosts will generously provide for guests), respect for elders and authority figures (manifesting the high power distance), the importance of extended family networks (reflecting collectivism), and the vibrant, often boisterous, celebratory nature of Nigerian social life characterized by energetic social gatherings, elaborate ceremonies, and expressive emotional displays (Akaeze, 2025). Narrative contexts frequently featured in glocalized Nigerian advertising include: traditional weddings with their elaborate multi-day celebrations; naming ceremonies for newborns; religious festivals (both Christian and Muslim); Independence Day celebrations; family reunions; and everyday communal meals.

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By situating products within these culturally-significant contexts, brands demonstrate cultural literacy and position themselves as enablers of valued cultural practices. The narrative arc typically emphasizes restoration of harmony, achievement of social acceptance, fulfillment of social obligations, or celebration of communal achievement all themes that align with collectivist values.

### ***Emotional Tonality and Communication Style***

Beyond narrative content, the emotional tonality and communication style must also be adapted. Nigerian communication culture tends toward high context (where much meaning is conveyed implicitly through context, relationships, and non-verbal cues) and values expressiveness, warmth, and emotional intensity. Advertisements that are emotionally reserved or ironically detached a common style in some Western markets may be perceived as cold or inauthentic. Instead, successful Nigerian advertising typically employs emotional directness, vibrant visual aesthetics, energetic pacing, and warm, enthusiastic voice-over delivery that matches the expressive communication norms of the culture. The goal is to create emotional resonance and affective connection, not merely to convey information.

### **2.2 Linguistic Strategy and Code-Switching**

Nigeria's extraordinary linguistic diversity with English functioning as the official language alongside major regional languages including Hausa (predominant in the North), Igbo (predominant in the Southeast), and Yoruba (predominant in the Southwest), plus hundreds of minority languages and the widespread use of Nigerian Pidgin English as a lingua franca necessitates a sophisticated, culturally-informed linguistic strategy in television advertising (Akaeze, 2025). Language choice is never merely a practical matter of comprehension; it carries profound symbolic significance, signaling identity, group membership, cultural respect, and brand positioning.

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### *The Symbolic Functions of Language Choice*

While English is widely understood, particularly among educated, urban populations and younger demographics, the strategic use of indigenous languages or Nigerian Pidgin English in advertising creates multiple layers of meaning beyond simple linguistic comprehension. First, it creates an immediate sense of intimacy and proximity, signaling that the brand speaks directly to consumers in their heart language rather than maintaining formal distance. Second, it conveys authenticity and local commitment, suggesting that the brand is not a foreign imposer but a local participant. Third, it establishes cultural belonging and identity affirmation, allowing consumers to see their linguistic identity reflected and validated in commercial media. Fourth, it demonstrates cultural respect and humility, acknowledging that English is not necessarily preferred or most comfortable for all consumers (Skotcomms, 2025). The choice to use local languages represents a significant investment in glocalization, as it requires not mere translation but cultural transcreation the creative adaptation of messaging to capture equivalent cultural meanings and emotional tones in a different linguistic system. This process demands native-speaker linguistic expertise, cultural consultation, and often complete re-conceptualization of advertising concepts to ensure cultural appropriateness.

### *Code-Switching as a Glocalization Strategy*

MNCs frequently employ code-switching the practice of alternating between two or more languages within the same communicative interaction seamlessly moving between English and a local language (or between English and Pidgin) within the same advertisement (Akaeze, 2025). This technique is particularly sophisticated because it mirrors the actual daily communication patterns of many Nigerians, particularly in urban contexts where multilingualism is the norm. Young, educated Nigerians routinely code-switch in conversation, and advertisements that replicate this linguistic practice feel naturalistic and culturally authentic. Code-switching serves multiple strategic functions. First, it achieves linguistic inclusivity, allowing the advertisement to simultaneously address different audience segments those who prefer English and those who prefer local languages.

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Second, it creates cultural hybridity, positioning the brand as comfortable in both global and local contexts, as simultaneously modern (through English) and culturally rooted (through local languages). Third, it enables emphasis and emotional intensification, as certain concepts or emotional appeals may be more powerfully expressed in one language than another. For example, formal product information might be delivered in English (signaling modernity and professionalism), while emotional appeals or cultural proverbs might be delivered in a local language (signaling intimacy and cultural rootedness).

### ***Regional Linguistic Segmentation***

The choice of local language depends critically on target demographic characteristics and regional market segmentation. National campaigns may use Pidgin English which is widely understood across regions and ethnic groups as a unifying linguistic strategy. However, regional campaigns often require complete re-recording in major local languages to maximize emotional connection and market penetration in specific geographic areas. A Hausa-language advertisement broadcast in Northern Nigeria conveys profound cultural respect and creates immediate affinity with the dominant ethnic group in that region. Similarly, Igbo and Yoruba versions for Eastern and Western Nigeria respectively demonstrate market-specific commitment. This linguistic adaptation is a direct and visible manifestation of glocalization on the screen, representing the brand's willingness to invest resources in cultural adaptation rather than relying solely on English-language standardization. Brands that successfully implement multi-linguistic strategies coordinating consistent brand messaging across different language versions while allowing for cultural-linguistic adaptation demonstrate advanced glocalization capabilities and earn significant cultural credibility with consumers.

### **2.3 Visual Semiotics and Celebrity Endorsement**

Beyond narrative and linguistic adaptation, the visual elements of television advertising constitute a critical semiotic system that must be rigorously adapted to achieve cultural congruence.

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Visual communication operates through culturally-specific codes that assign meanings to colors, settings, clothing, body language, spatial relationships, and character representations. What appears neutral or universal in one culture may carry unintended meanings in another, and successful glocalization requires sophisticated semiotic analysis and culturally-informed creative direction.

### ***Environmental and Setting Adaptation***

Global advertisements frequently feature predominantly Western settings urban environments recognizable as New York, London, or Paris; domestic interiors reflecting Western architectural and design aesthetics; landscapes characteristic of temperate climates. For Nigerian audiences, such settings create psychological distance and may trigger associations of foreignness or cultural irrelevance (Qeeva, 2025). Glocalized advertisements systematically replace these with scenes depicting recognizable Nigerian urban or domestic environments: Lagos Street scenes with their distinctive yellow buses and vibrant markets; compound houses with their characteristic architecture; village settings with traditional structures; or modern Nigerian homes that reflect local design aesthetics and domestic arrangements. This environmental adaptation serves multiple functions.

First, it creates immediate visual recognition, allowing viewers to instantly identify the setting as familiar rather than foreign. Second, it establishes cultural authenticity, demonstrating that the advertisement was created specifically for Nigerian audiences rather than being a generic or adapted foreign advertisement. Third, it enables aspiration within cultural context, showing consumers lifestyles and environments, they can relate to and realistically aspire toward, rather than distant Western scenarios that feel unattainable or irrelevant.

### ***Character Representation and Casting***

Character representation extends beyond simply using Nigerian actors to encompass more subtle elements of authentic cultural representation.

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This includes attention to ethnic diversity and regional representation, ensuring that casting reflects Nigeria's multiethnic composition and avoiding the perception that advertisements privilege one ethnic group over others a critically important consideration in a country where ethnic politics remain salient. It includes authentic representation of age and family structures, showing extended family configurations and multigenerational interactions that reflect Nigerian family patterns rather than Western nuclear family models. It includes appropriate representation of social roles and gender relations, navigating the complex terrain of evolving gender norms while respecting cultural values regarding family roles and responsibilities.

Clothing and styling must also receive careful attention, balancing contemporary fashion with culturally appropriate dress. Many successful advertisements strategically incorporate elements of traditional Nigerian dress such as agbada, buba, gele head wraps, or other ethnic attire alongside modern fashion, visually expressing cultural hybridity and honoring traditional cultural forms while acknowledging contemporary lifestyles. Non-verbal communication including gestures, facial expressions, proxemics (use of personal space), and body language must reflect Nigerian communication norms, which tend toward greater physical expressiveness and closer interpersonal distance than some other cultures.

### ***Celebrity Endorsement as Cultural Bridge***

The strategic use of local celebrity endorsement represents one of the most powerful and widely-employed glocalization tools in Nigerian television advertising (Brandcom, 2025). By featuring popular Nigerian actors, Nollywood stars (Nigeria's prolific film industry), musicians (especially Afrobeats artists whose music is itself a form of cultural glocalization, blending global music genres with West African traditions), comedians, or social media influencers, brands strategically transfer the celebrity's local credibility, cultural capital, and affective connection to the global product. This strategy operates through several psychological mechanisms. First, through source credibility theory, celebrities who are perceived as trustworthy and expert in their domains lend credibility to endorsed products.

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Second, through meaning transfer theory, the symbolic meanings associated with celebrities their persona, values, lifestyle, and cultural positioning transfer to endorsed brands through associative processes. Third, through parasocial relationships, the feelings of intimacy and connection that audiences develop with media personalities extend to brands these personalities endorse. Fourth, through cultural gatekeeping, celebrities function as arbiters of cultural appropriateness, essentially providing a cultural stamp of approval that signals to consumers that the global brand is "for them" and understands their context (The Alvin Report, 2025). The selection of celebrity endorsers requires strategic consideration of multiple factors. Cultural positioning: Does the celebrity embody values consistent with the brand? Are they perceived as authentic or as sell-outs? Demographic alignment: Does the celebrity appeal to the target market segment? Cultural breadth: Can they appeal across ethnic and regional boundaries, or do they represent a specific ethnic group? Scandal risk: Do they have sufficient moral standing to represent the brand? The celebrity acts as a cultural bridge, mediating between the global brand identity (with its associations of quality, innovation, or status) and the local consumer's cultural context and identity, making the foreign familiar and the global local.

### ***Color, Music, and Aesthetic Adaptation***

Additional visual and auditory semiotic elements require adaptation. Color symbolism varies across cultures, and Nigerian advertising must account for local color associations for example, the cultural significance of green and white (national colors), or specific color associations with ethnic groups or religious traditions. Musical scoring frequently incorporates Afrobeats, highlife, juju, or other Nigerian musical genres that create immediate cultural recognition and emotional resonance. The overall aesthetic style including editing pace, shot composition, lighting schemes, and production values should balance global production quality standards with local aesthetic preferences that tend toward vibrancy, color saturation, and visual richness.

### **3. CASE STUDIES OF GLOCAL BRAND ADAPTATION**

The theoretical frameworks and strategic principles articulated above can be illuminated through detailed examination of specific brand cases.



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The glocalization strategies of multinational brands operating in Nigeria offer concrete examples of successful cross-cultural communication, illustrating how abstract principles translate into practical creative executions. These cases demonstrate both the strategic variety possible within glocalization approaches and the common elements that characterize successful adaptation.

### **3.1 Coca-Cola Nigeria: The Domestication of Happiness**

Coca-Cola, arguably the quintessential global brand with operations in virtually every country worldwide, provides a classic illustration of sophisticated and effective glocalization strategy in Nigeria (Akhimien, 2025). The company's global brand identity, consistently maintained across markets for over a century, centers on universal themes of "happiness," "refreshment," "optimism," and "sharing moments of joy." The iconic red color, distinctive script logo, and contour bottle shape remain standardized globally, creating instant brand recognition worldwide. However, the communication of these themes how happiness is depicted, what refreshment looks like, what moments of joy are considered significant undergoes substantial adaptation to align with local cultural contexts.

#### ***Narrative Domestication Strategy***

Coca-Cola's Nigerian television campaigns consistently domesticate the abstract concept of happiness by translating it into culturally-specific manifestations that resonate with Nigerian collectivist values. Global Coca-Cola advertising has historically featured a range of scenarios from individual consumption to social sharing, but Nigerian adaptations almost exclusively emphasize the social, communal dimension. Advertisements rarely if ever feature isolated individuals enjoying solitary refreshment moments. Instead, they systematically showcase large, multi-generational families gathered together, groups of friends celebrating together, or community members sharing occasions together during holidays, weddings, traditional festivals, or simple communal meals (Novatia Consulting, 2024). This adaptation ensures that the global message of happiness is culturally reinterpreted as communal joy, social harmony, and collective celebration concepts that align perfectly with the high collectivism characteristic of Nigerian culture.

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The product is positioned not as a personal pleasure but as a social facilitator, something that brings people together and enhances shared experiences. The implicit message is that Coca-Cola's value lies not in individual sensory satisfaction but in its role in creating and enhancing valued social occasions. This narrative strategy directly addresses Nigerian cultural priorities and demonstrates sophisticated understanding of local values.

### *Visual and Setting Authenticity*

Coca-Cola Nigeria's advertisements are characteristically shot in vibrant, immediately recognizable Nigerian settings bustling markets with characteristic architecture and commercial activity, family compounds with distinctive spatial organization, modern Nigerian homes reflecting local middle-class aesthetics, or outdoor celebration spaces. The advertisements feature Nigerian actors of diverse ethnic backgrounds, dressed in a mix of contemporary fashion and traditional attire, engaging in communication styles characteristic of Nigerian interpersonal interaction expressive, warm, physically demonstrative, with close proxemics and animated gestures (Akhimien, 2025).

The production quality maintains global Coca-Cola standards high production values, sophisticated cinematography, professional editing ensuring that the brand's premium positioning is maintained. However, the aesthetic style incorporates Nigerian visual preferences: vibrant color palettes, energetic pacing, bright lighting schemes, and dynamic camera movement that creates visual excitement matching the emotional energy of Nigerian celebrations. This combination of global production quality with local aesthetic preferences exemplifies successful glocalization maintaining brand consistency while achieving cultural resonance.

### *Linguistic Strategy*

Linguistically, Coca-Cola Nigeria campaigns strategically employ code-switching, seamlessly alternating between English and Nigerian Pidgin English, occasionally incorporating phrases in major local languages (Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba). The linguistic strategy reflects actual Nigerian multilingual practices, creating a sense of authenticity and cultural belonging.

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Formal brand messaging or product information typically appears in English (maintaining the brand's global positioning), while emotional appeals, personal interactions between characters, and expressions of joy or celebration often employ Pidgin or local languages (creating intimacy and emotional intensity). This linguistic hybridity positions Coca-Cola as simultaneously global (modern, international, aspirational) and local (accessible, culturally aware, community-oriented).

### ***Musical Integration***

Music represents another critical dimension of Coca-Cola's glocalization strategy. While the brand maintains certain global audio signatures, Nigerian campaigns prominently feature Afrobeats, highlife, or contemporary Nigerian popular music, often commissioning original compositions from popular Nigerian artists. The infectious rhythms, call-and-response patterns, and celebratory tonality of these musical genres reinforce the communal, festive positioning of the brand. By associating Coca-Cola with the soundtrack of Nigerian celebration and youth culture, the brand embeds itself within the cultural life of its target consumers. Some campaigns have featured collaborations with major Nigerian music stars, further leveraging celebrity endorsement to enhance brand credibility and cultural resonance.

### ***Strategic Outcomes***

The systematic glocalization approach has enabled Coca-Cola to maintain market leadership in Nigeria's highly competitive soft drinks sector. The brand successfully navigates the tension between maintaining its global identity (through consistent visual branding, quality standards, and core messaging) and achieving local cultural relevance (through narrative adaptation, linguistic strategy, and cultural contextualization). Consumer research suggests that Nigerian consumers perceive Coca-Cola as both a premium international brand and a brand that "understands Nigeria," demonstrating the successful achievement of glocal brand equity.

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### **3.2 Nestlé Nigeria: Health, Nutrition, and Local Ingredients**

Nestlé, another major MNC with extensive global operations, has successfully adapted its product portfolio and communication strategy to the Nigerian market through a distinct but equally sophisticated glocalization approach. While Coca-Cola's strategy emphasizes celebratory social occasions, Nestlé's approach centers on maternal care, family nutrition, and everyday meal preparation themes that align closely with Nigerian cultural values regarding family, food, and care-giving responsibilities.

#### ***Product and Communication Localization***

Nestlé's television advertising for products like Maggi seasoning cubes exemplifies comprehensive glocalization at both product and communication levels. While bouillon cubes are a global product category, the communication strategy is entirely localized to Nigerian culinary culture (Nestlé Nigeria, 2025). The product itself has been adapted to suit Nigerian flavor preferences, with specific formulations designed for Nigerian cuisine that differ from versions sold in other markets. This demonstrates glocalization extending beyond communication into product development itself recognizing that achieving cultural congruence may require adapting the core offering, not merely its marketing.

#### ***Narrative Strategy: The Cultural Significance of Food***

Advertisements focus intensively on Nigerian cuisine, featuring recognizable local dishes jollof rice, egusi soup, pepper soup, pounded yam, fried rice, stew and showcasing traditional Nigerian cooking methods and kitchen environments. The narrative consistently centers on a mother figure or grandmother, reinforcing traditional family roles and the cultural importance of female food preparation as an expression of love, care, and family maintenance (Independent.ng, 2025). This narrative structure directly appeals to cultural values regarding family structure, gender roles (while acknowledging contemporary sensitivities), and the symbolic significance of home-cooked meals as expressions of maternal devotion and family cohesion.

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The advertisements typically follow a narrative arc where the mother/cook prepares a meal using Maggi products, family members gather to eat together (reinforcing collectivism), and the meal becomes an occasion for family bonding, conversation, and the transmission of values across generations. The product is positioned not merely as a flavor enhancer but as an enabler of family unity and maternal care roles that carry profound cultural significance in Nigerian society. This positions Maggi as a participant in valued cultural practices rather than simply a commercial product, building deep emotional connections with consumers.

### *Linguistic and Cultural Authenticity*

Linguistically, Maggi advertisements employ authentic Nigerian communication patterns, with characters speaking in natural, colloquial Nigerian English, Pidgin, or local languages depending on regional targeting. The dialogue reflects realistic family interactions including the hierarchical respect patterns characteristic of high-power distance cultures (children addressing parents respectfully, younger siblings deferring to older ones) and the warm, expressive communication style typical of Nigerian family life. Proverbs, culturally-specific expressions, and verbal patterns authentic to Nigerian discourse are woven throughout, creating a sense that these are real Nigerian families rather than actors performing scripts.

### *Visual Semiotics and Setting*

Visually, the advertisements are meticulously designed to reflect authentic Nigerian domestic environments. Kitchens feature locally-appropriate equipment, utensils, and spatial organization. Characters wear clothing appropriate to domestic settings sometimes traditional wrappers and head ties for women, casual home attire for men and children. The overall aesthetic emphasizes warmth, vibrancy, and the sensory richness of cooking the steam rising from pots, the vibrant colors of fresh ingredients, the textures of Nigerian dishes creating a multisensory experience that evokes the emotional associations Nigerians have with home cooking.

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### ***Corporate Social Responsibility Integration***

Beyond commercial advertising, Nestlé Nigeria has strategically positioned itself as a socially responsible local entity through commitment to media partnerships focused on nutrition education, health awareness, and environmental sustainability (Independent.ng, 2025). This corporate social responsibility (CSR) positioning reinforces glocalization by demonstrating that the company is not merely extracting commercial value from the Nigerian market but is invested in addressing local social challenges and contributing to community welfare. Television campaigns sometimes incorporate educational messaging about balanced nutrition or maternal health, positioning Nestlé as a trusted advisor rather than simply a vendor. This approach builds brand equity beyond functional product benefits, creating emotional and ethical connections with consumers.

### ***Strategic Outcomes and Market Position***

Through this comprehensive glocalization strategy, Nestlé has achieved market leadership in multiple product categories in Nigeria. The Maggi brand has become so culturally embedded that it is often used generically to refer to any seasoning cubes (a sign of ultimate brand success). The brand successfully balances its global identity as a Swiss multinational focused on nutrition, quality, and science with a local identity as a brand that understands Nigerian cooking, respects Nigerian family values, and participates meaningfully in Nigerian daily life. This demonstrates how effective glocalization can create cultural citizenship for global brands, whereby they are perceived as legitimate local participants rather than foreign impositions.

### **3.3 Comparative Analysis: Multiple Pathways to Glocalization**

The Coca-Cola and Nestlé cases, while both exemplifying successful glocalization, demonstrate that there are multiple strategic pathways to achieving cultural congruence. Coca-Cola emphasizes celebratory social occasions, positioning itself in moments of joy and festivity, while Nestlé emphasizes everyday family nutrition, positioning itself in daily care practices. Coca-Cola leverages youth culture and contemporary music, while Nestlé emphasizes traditional family roles and multigenerational continuity.

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Both approaches succeed because they identify culturally-significant consumption contexts and position their brands as enablers of valued cultural practices. The cases also illustrate that successful glocalization requires substantial investment in local market understanding, creative adaptation, and often product modification. It is not a superficial exercise in translation or cosmetic adjustment but rather a fundamental strategic commitment to achieving cultural resonance while maintaining global brand integrity. Brands that attempt to minimize localization costs by relying on minimally-adapted global campaigns consistently underperform those that make substantial localization investments, suggesting that glocalization capabilities represent a source of competitive advantage.

### **4. A COMPREHENSIVE MODEL FOR CROSS-CULTURAL BRAND COMMUNICATION IN EMERGING MARKETS**

Based on the theoretical frameworks analyzed, the empirical cases examined, and the challenges identified, this section proposes a comprehensive model for effective cross-cultural brand communication in emerging markets like Nigeria. This model integrates strategic, tactical, and operational dimensions of glocalization, providing both theoretical coherence and practical guidance for brand managers.

#### **4.1. The Glocal Brand Communication Framework**

The proposed framework conceptualizes glocalization as operating across four interconnected levels:

##### ***Strategic Level: Brand Architecture and Positioning***

At the strategic level, organizations must determine the brand architecture which brand elements remain globally standardized (typically: brand name, logo, core positioning, quality standards, and fundamental brand promise) and which elements are available for local adaptation (typically: advertising narratives, language, celebrity endorsers, pricing strategies, and distribution approaches).

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This requires explicit decision-making about the brand's global identity core the non-negotiable elements that define the brand across all markets versus the adaptive periphery elements that can and should flex to accommodate local contexts. Global-local positioning must be explicitly addressed: Should the brand emphasize its global origins and international credibility, or should it emphasize local commitment and cultural citizenship? The optimal balance depends on product category, target segment, and competitive positioning. Premium categories may benefit from emphasizing global credentials, while mass-market categories may benefit from emphasizing local belonging.

### ***Cultural Level: Deep Cultural Intelligence***

At the cultural level, organizations must develop deep cultural intelligence moving beyond superficial awareness of cultural differences to sophisticated understanding of cultural meaning systems, value structures, communication preferences, and consumption contexts. This requires systematic application of cultural frameworks (such as Hofstede's dimensions, but also contextualized through local ethnographic research) to inform creative strategy.

Cultural intelligence development requires:

- ethnographic research that observes actual consumer behaviors and cultural practices in natural settings;
- semiotic analysis that decodes the meaning systems through which consumers interpret advertising;
- local creative collaboration that empowers local talent to shape brand communication; and
- continuous cultural monitoring that tracks evolving cultural patterns, particularly in rapidly-changing emerging markets.

### ***Communicative Level: Multi-Dimensional Adaptation***

At the communicative level, the framework specifies adaptation requirements across multiple dimensions:

- Narrative Adaptation: Reinterpret global brand themes through locally-resonant storylines, characters, and contexts



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- **Linguistic Adaptation:** Employ appropriate language choices, code-switching strategies, and discourse patterns
- **Visual Semiotic Adaptation:** Ensure settings, casting, clothing, colors, and visual style reflect local cultural codes
- **Musical/Auditory Adaptation:** Incorporate local musical genres, sound effects, and audio aesthetics
- **Celebrity/Influencer Strategy:** Leverage local cultural gatekeepers to transfer credibility and cultural capital
- **Emotional Tonality:** Match the emotional expression style to local communication norms

Each dimension requires specialized expertise and must be orchestrated coherently to create an integrated, culturally-congruent communication experience.

### ***Operational Level: Implementation and Measurement***

At the operational level, organizations must establish:

- **Local creative capabilities:** Either through local agencies, in-house creative teams, or hybrid models that combine global strategic direction with local creative execution
- **Cultural governance:** Processes for evaluating cultural appropriateness and authenticity before campaign launch
- **Performance measurement systems:** Metrics that capture not only commercial outcomes but also cultural resonance, authenticity perceptions, and brand citizenship
- **Learning mechanisms:** Processes for capturing insights from local market experiences and feeding them back into global brand strategy

### **4.2 Implementation Principles**

The framework's successful implementation depends on adherence to several key principles:

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### ***Authenticity Over Superficiality***

Cultural adaptation must be authentic and substantive, not superficial tokenism. This requires genuine commitment of resources, genuine collaboration with local creative talent, and genuine respect for local culture not merely adding local music or featuring local actors in otherwise unchanged global campaigns.

### ***Consumer-Centricity Over Ethnocentrism***

Decision-making must center on local consumer perspectives, values, and meaning systems rather than on headquarters' assumptions about what should resonate. This requires organizational humility and willingness to defer to local expertise, even when local recommendations conflict with global preferences or assumptions.

### ***Long-Term Cultural Investment Over Short-Term Efficiency***

Glocalization requires patient, sustained investment in building cultural understanding, relationships, and legitimacy. Brands seeking quick wins or attempting to minimize localization costs typically achieve superficial results and fail to build enduring brand equity. Cultural citizenship the perception that a brand legitimately belongs in the local context can only be earned through demonstrated long-term commitment.

### ***Bidirectional Learning***

The relationship between global headquarters and local markets should be bidirectional, with local innovations and insights informing global strategy evolution. Some of the most successful global brand innovations have emerged from local market adaptations that were subsequently scaled globally. Organizations should view local markets not merely as recipients of global strategy but as sources of innovation and insight.

## **4.3 Success Criteria for Glocal Brand Communication**

Successful glocalization should be evaluated against multiple criteria:

Cultural Authenticity: Do local consumers perceive the brand communication as culturally authentic and respectful?

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- Emotional Resonance: Does the communication evoke appropriate emotional responses aligned with brand positioning?
- Brand Identity Consistency: Despite local adaptation, does the brand maintain recognizable consistency with its global identity?
- Commercial Effectiveness: Does the communication drive awareness, preference, and purchase behavior?
- Cultural Citizenship: Is the brand perceived as a legitimate local participant rather than a foreign imposition?
- Competitive Differentiation: Does the glocalization strategy create competitive advantage versus both global and local competitors?

### **CONCLUSION**

The reinterpretation and adaptation of global brand identity in the digital age, particularly in diverse emerging markets like Nigeria, represents a complex, multifaceted exercise in glocalization that requires strategic sophistication, cultural intelligence, creative excellence, and substantial organizational commitment. This analysis has demonstrated that successful cross-cultural communication in Nigerian television media is not achieved through superficial translation or cosmetic adaptation, but through deep, strategic, and multi-dimensional cultural adaptation of the brand's core narrative, linguistic expression, visual semiotics, and communicative style to align with local cultural values, consumption contexts, and meaning systems.

The theoretical frameworks of glocalization theory and Hofstede's cultural dimensions provide valuable conceptual tools for understanding the strategic logic and cultural mechanics of brand adaptation. However, their effective application requires contextualization through deep, ethnographic understanding of specific market conditions and consumer cultures. The Nigerian context, characterized by extraordinary linguistic diversity, cultural heterogeneity, and coexisting traditional and modern value systems, exemplifies the complexity that global brands must navigate in emerging markets worldwide.

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The case studies of Coca-Cola and Nestlé demonstrate that global brands can successfully act as cultural chameleons, maintaining their essential global identity their brand architecture, quality standards, and core positioning while embracing and authentically expressing local cultural contexts through adapted communication strategies. These brands achieve cultural congruence not by abandoning their global identity but by reinterpreting it through local cultural lenses, demonstrating that globalization and localization are not mutually exclusive but rather complementary strategies that, when skillfully integrated, create glocal brand equity brands perceived as simultaneously international (bringing global quality, innovation, and prestige) and local (understanding local contexts, respecting local values, and serving local needs).

The strategic use of television, with its continued mass reach, cultural influence, and capacity for multi-sensory storytelling, requires MNCs to carefully align their messaging with Nigeria's cultural dimensions particularly its high collectivism (prioritizing communal over individual appeals), high power distance (leveraging authority and celebrity endorsement), and expressive communication culture (employing emotional directness and vibrant aesthetics). Success requires prioritizing communal narratives over individualistic appeals, strategically employing code-switching between English and local languages, leveraging local cultural gatekeepers through celebrity endorsement, incorporating authentic visual representations of Nigerian life, and maintaining production quality that signals brand prestige while achieving cultural authenticity.

However, glocalization is not without challenges. The extraordinary internal diversity of markets like Nigeria creates tension between national-level adaptation and more granular regional or ethnic segmentation. Rapidly evolving social values create uncertainty about whether to emphasize traditional or modern cultural expressions. Economic constraints pressure brands to minimize localization investment. The risk of cultural stereotyping threatens authenticity. And the difficulty of measuring cultural outcomes complicates investment justification. These challenges require sophisticated strategic thinking, organizational flexibility, and sustained commitment to cultural learning.

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Looking forward, the continued evolution of media technologies, consumer expectations, and cultural dynamics will require brands to continuously adapt their glocalization strategies. The rise of digital platforms creates both opportunities for more granular personalization and challenges for achieving the mass-market reach that television historically provided. The growing cultural confidence of emerging market consumers increasingly demanding not just culturally-adapted communication but authentic local participation and value creation will raise the bar for what constitutes successful glocalization. The emergence of successful local brands that leverage cultural authenticity as competitive advantage will intensify competitive pressure on multinationals to demonstrate genuine cultural citizenship.

Ultimately, the glocal screen in Nigeria serves as a powerful testament to a fundamental truth of contemporary global marketing: in the digital era, brand identity is most effectively built when brands think globally but communicate profoundly locally. The future belongs not to brands that merely translate their messages or superficially adapt their aesthetics, but to brands that develop genuine cultural intelligence, demonstrate authentic cultural respect, make substantial commitments to local markets, and earn cultural citizenship through demonstrated understanding of and contribution to local cultural life. The brands that master this delicate balance maintaining global coherence while achieving local resonance will build enduring competitive advantage in the culturally diverse, rapidly evolving markets that represent the future of global commerce.

In the final analysis, glocalization represents more than a marketing strategy; it embodies a philosophy of cultural engagement in an interconnected yet diverse world a recognition that global success requires not cultural imperialism but cultural humility, not standardization but adaptation, not dominance but dialogue. The glocal screen, in Nigeria and beyond, reflects not the triumph of global homogenization but rather the creative negotiation between global and local, the dynamic interplay between universal themes and particular expressions, and the possibility that commercial success and cultural respect need not be mutually exclusive but can, when pursued with sophistication and authenticity, be mutually reinforcing.

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**CHAPTER 3**  
**DATA-DRIVEN INSIGHTS ON DIGITAL INCLUSION  
AND FINANCIAL BRAND GLOCALIZATION: A  
CROSS-COUNTRY ANALYSIS**

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# *GLOCAL BRAND STORYTELLING: PSYCHOLOGY, MEDIA, AND DIGITAL INCLUSION*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The twenty-first century has witnessed a global acceleration in digital transformation, reshaping how individuals, firms, and financial institutions interact. Access to digital infrastructure and affordable devices now determines economic participation and inclusion in the global market. The Global Digital Inclusion Partnership (GDIP, 2024) reports that while global connectivity continues to expand, device affordability remains a critical barrier, particularly in low- and middle-income countries where the cost of smartphones can exceed 40% of average monthly income. Similar concerns have been echoed by the Broadband Commission (2023), which emphasizes that meaningful connectivity combining affordable devices, sufficient data, and digital literacy is essential for sustainable digital inclusion.

At the same time, global financial brands and fintech firms have expanded their digital reach, yet their ability to localize effectively within diverse digital ecosystems remains uneven. Studies by Kapferer (2012) and Keller (2013) suggest that brand identity must evolve dynamically across markets, balancing global consistency with local relevance. In regions where digital inclusion is low, global financial brands face challenges in aligning their digital identity with local user realities. Consequently, understanding digital inclusion variations across countries has become essential for guiding both financial inclusion and brand strategy adaptation.

Despite rapid growth in digital finance and global branding, significant disparities persist in device affordability and internet accessibility. These disparities hinder equitable participation in digital financial ecosystems. Many global brands design marketing and delivery strategies based on assumptions of digital readiness that do not hold true across developing economies (Donthu & Gustafsson, 2020). This mismatch creates a disconnect between global brand communication and local market conditions, especially where affordability and connectivity gaps limit consumer engagement. Current research has not sufficiently linked cross-country digital inclusion data to brand glocalization strategies in the financial services industry, leaving a notable empirical gap that this chapter seeks to address.

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The primary objective of this study is to analyse cross-country digital inclusion indicators using the GDIP dataset and to interpret their implications for financial brand glocalization. Specifically, the chapter aims to:

- Examine and compare device affordability and other digital inclusion indicators across global regions.
- Identify clusters of countries with similar digital inclusion characteristics and interpret their relevance to financial brand adaptation.
- Construct a Digital Financial Inclusion Index (DFII) to rank economies by their level of inclusion and explore how this ranking informs brand localization strategies.

This study directly contributes to the book's theme "*From Global to Glocal: The Reinterpretation of Brand Identity in the Digital Age*" by merging financial inclusion analytics with branding theory. It demonstrates how empirical data on digital inclusion can illuminate the contexts in which global financial brands must adapt their strategies to achieve local relevance. As brands navigate markets with varying levels of connectivity and affordability, understanding the data-driven disparities becomes essential to sustaining equitable digital finance ecosystems. The findings also support policy formulation toward bridging the digital divide, thereby linking corporate brand strategy with inclusive digital development goals (World Bank, 2023).

### **1. LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### ***Conceptualizing Digital Inclusion and Financial Brand Glocalization***

Digital inclusion refers to the equitable access, affordability, and effective use of digital technologies necessary for full participation in modern society. It encompasses three interrelated dimensions: access to affordable devices and connectivity, development of digital skills, and meaningful engagement with online services (van Dijk, 2020). The Interaction Design Foundation (IDF, 2023) defines Digital inclusion is the access and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) like the internet and its infrastructure, hardware, software and digital literacy training by all people, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, nationality, mobility, physical and cognitive abilities, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

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Digital inclusion helps everyone, especially those who are disadvantaged or historically excluded, to have the access and skills to fully participate in the digital world. Financial brand glocalization, on the other hand, merges the global brand identity framework with localized adaptation. As explained by Holt (2002), global brands succeed when they integrate universal brand meaning with local cultural relevance. Financial institutions adopting glocalized strategies tailor their digital products, messaging, and delivery to align with the technological realities and socio-economic contexts of local users. In regions with lower digital inclusion, glocalization becomes not merely a marketing choice but a strategic necessity for participation and trust-building (Frynas & Mellahi, 2019).

### *Review of Global Digital Inclusion Trends*

Over the past decade, global digital inclusion has improved significantly, yet vast disparities remain. According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU, 2023), 5.3 billion people were online by 2023, but connectivity quality and affordability differ drastically by region. Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia continue to face the highest affordability challenges, where the cost of internet-enabled devices and mobile data remains prohibitively high (World Bank, 2023).

Gender, geography, and income-level disparities compound these issues. A study by GSMA (2024) reports that women in low- and middle-income countries are 19% less likely to own a smartphone than men, a digital gender gap that limits participation in digital finance ecosystems. These inequalities shape the distribution of digital opportunity, influencing not only economic engagement but also how global brands interact with diverse markets.

The global digital divide is increasingly framed as a development issue. Scholars such as Warschauer (2003) and van Dijk (2020) argue that digital inclusion must go beyond physical access, encompassing affordability and literacy. Consequently, measuring indicators like device affordability, data pricing, and broadband access offers critical insights into global inclusion patterns and their implications for digital financial ecosystems.

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### ***Financial Inclusion and Digital Affordability in the Digital Age***

Financial inclusion has evolved from traditional access to banking services into digital financial inclusion, integrating mobile banking, fintech innovation, and digital payment systems (Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2022). The World Bank's *Global Findex Database* reveals that mobile money and digital accounts have significantly expanded financial access in developing countries. However, the full benefits of digital finance depend on affordable access to devices and connectivity infrastructure (Demirgüç et al, 2022).

Affordability is particularly vital in emerging economies, where digital costs are a primary determinant of adoption. According to the Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI, 2023), the “1 for 2” affordability target 1 GB of data costing no more than 2% of monthly income remains unmet in over 50 countries. Without addressing such barriers, even well-designed financial technologies risk deepening exclusion (OECD, 2021).

Thus, digital affordability serves as both an economic and social inclusion metric. It determines whether individuals can meaningfully participate in the digital economy and engage with financial services that depend on connectivity. In this regard, digital affordability directly influences how global financial brands penetrate and sustain presence across markets.

### ***Brand Localization and Global Financial Identity***

The concept of brand localization in global marketing has evolved to meet the challenges of a digitally networked economy. Glocalization the balance of global consistency with local adaptation remains central to sustaining brand equity across diverse environments (Robertson, 1995; Kapferer, 2012). In the financial sector, localization extends beyond translation or imagery to encompass accessibility, technological compatibility, and sensitivity to regional digital maturity.

Keller (2013) argues that successful brand management in the digital era depends on “resonance” with consumers lived experiences, which includes their digital realities. For financial brands, this resonance is mediated by how easily users can access online platforms and digital tools.

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In regions of low connectivity or affordability, global brand promises risk becoming aspirational rather than experiential (Donthu & Gustafsson, 2020).

Therefore, aligning brand identity with digital inclusion data enables firms to design contextually aware marketing strategies. For example, banks expanding into Africa and Southeast Asia increasingly tailor digital platforms for low-bandwidth environments, integrate multilingual support, and adjust content delivery to fit device affordability constraints (PwC, 2023). Such strategies not only enhance brand credibility but also promote inclusive digital finance.

### ***Empirical Studies on Cross-Country Digital Transformation***

Empirical research on digital inclusion and cross-country digital transformation consistently highlights structural and policy-driven disparities. Czernich et al. (2011) demonstrate that broadband penetration significantly contributes to GDP growth, underscoring the macroeconomic importance of digital access. Similarly, Niebel (2018) finds that the impact of information and communication technologies (ICT) on productivity is stronger in countries with complementary institutional and educational frameworks.

In terms of digital finance, Evans (2018) identifies that countries with higher digital inclusion scores such as those in Europe and East Asia also show higher fintech adoption rates and stronger consumer trust in online financial platforms. Conversely, African and Latin American economies face persistent infrastructural and affordability barriers. The GDIP (2024) dataset extends this empirical foundation by providing standardized indicators of device affordability and digital access across over 150 economies, facilitating comparative analyses of inclusion gaps and their implications for financial globalization.

By linking empirical digital inclusion data to the evolving discourse on brand glocalization, this chapter contributes to both development economics and international marketing literature. It establishes a data-driven foundation for interpreting how global brands can operate responsibly and competitively within diverse digital inclusion contexts.

2. METHODOLOGY

*Data Source: Global Digital Inclusion Partnership (GDIP)*

*Dataset*

This study employs secondary quantitative data obtained from the Global Digital Inclusion Partnership (GDIP) database, which compiles metrics on digital accessibility, affordability, and connectivity across 172 economies for the year 2024. The dataset is designed to track progress toward the goal of *universal, meaningful connectivity by 2030*. The GDIP dataset includes key variables such as the *Device Affordability Score (GDIP)*, which quantifies the affordability of internet-enabled devices relative to income levels, and categorical indicators like *continent* and *income classification*. These variables collectively reflect the economic and infrastructural enablers of digital participation and financial technology access. The dataset was pre-cleaned, filtered to remove missing values, and organized using Python’s pandas and numpy libraries for subsequent statistical and econometric analysis.

**Tablo 1.** Variables and Indicators Used

Variable Name	Type	Description	Measurement
REF_AREA_LABEL	Categorical	Country/Economy Name	Nominal
INDICATOR_LABEL	Categorical	Indicator Type (e.g., Device Affordability Score)	Nominal
2024	Continuous	Digital Inclusion Indicator Value for 2024	Ratio
Continent	Categorical	Regional Classification	Nominal

For the analytical models, the continuous variable Device Affordability Score (GDIP) serves as the *dependent variable*, representing a proxy for digital inclusion and financial accessibility. The categorical variable Continent is used for comparative grouping. Additional derived indicators such as normalized inclusion scores and the constructed Digital Financial Inclusion Index (DFII) are used for ranking and clustering purposes.

*Analytical Framework*

This research adopts a quantitative, data-driven approach comprising descriptive, relational, clustering, and composite index analyses.

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Each sub-analysis serves a unique interpretive goal, collectively explaining the global landscape of digital inclusion and its implications for financial brand globalization.

### ***Descriptive and Comparative Analysis***

Descriptive statistics were computed to capture the central tendency and dispersion of digital inclusion indicators across regions. These include the mean ( $\mu$ ), standard deviation ( $\sigma$ ), minimum, maximum, and range.

$$\text{Mean: } \mu = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n X_i$$
$$\text{Standard Deviation: } \sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (X_i - \mu)^2}{n - 1}}$$

Comparative analyses were performed using regional grouping (Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, Oceania, and Others) to highlight disparities in device affordability. The results were presented through bar charts and boxplots to visualize intra-continental variation.

### ***Correlation and Relationship Mapping***

To examine the relationship between device affordability and regional classifications, Pearson's correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) was employed.

$$r = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (X_i - \bar{X})(Y_i - \bar{Y})}{\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n (X_i - \bar{X})^2} \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n (Y_i - \bar{Y})^2}}$$

Where:

- $X_i$ = value of Device Affordability Score
- $Y_i$ = corresponding regional or income proxy
- $r$ = strength and direction of correlation

A correlation matrix was generated to identify patterns of association and regional tendencies that inform how digital inclusion relates to potential financial brand penetration and adaptability.

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### ***Cluster Analysis (K-Means)***

Cluster analysis was used to segment countries according to similarities in their digital inclusion levels. The K-Means algorithm partitions observations into  $k$  clusters by minimizing the within-cluster sum of squares (WCSS):

$$\text{Minimize } J = \sum_{k=1}^K \sum_{i=1}^{n_k} \|X_i^{(k)} - \mu_k\|^2$$

Where:

- $J$  = total intra-cluster variance
- $X_i^{(k)}$  = data point  $i$  in cluster  $k$
- $\mu_k$  = centroid of cluster  $k$

The optimal number of clusters ( $K$ ) was determined using the Elbow Method, after which countries were labeled as:

- **Digitally Advanced Economies**
- **Emerging Inclusion Economies**
- **Low Connectivity Economies**

Cluster visualization was produced using scatter plots with distinct color coding, providing a visual typology of digital maturity.

### ***Index Construction and Ranking (DFII)***

To summarize the multi-dimensional nature of digital inclusion, a Digital Financial Inclusion Index (DFII) was developed. The DFII integrates normalized scores across selected GDIP indicators.

First, indicators were normalized using the *min-max standardization* method:

$$Z_i = \frac{X_i - X_{\min}}{X_{\max} - X_{\min}}$$

Then, weights were applied to each normalized indicator to reflect relative importance ( $w_i$ ), and the composite index was constructed as:

$$DFII_j = \sum_{i=1}^m w_i Z_{ij}$$



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Where:

- $DFII_j$  = digital inclusion score for country  $j$
- $w_i$  = assigned weight of indicator  $i$
- $Z_{ij}$  = normalized value of indicator  $i$  for country  $j$
- $m$  = total number of indicators

Countries were ranked based on their DFII scores, and regional averages were compared to identify digital finance readiness. The top-performing countries were interpreted as potential hubs for globally adaptive financial branding.

### ***Data Normalization and Standardization***

Given the heterogeneity of units across indicators, data normalization was essential to ensure comparability. The min-max normalization (Equation 4) scaled all variables into the interval  $[0,1]$ , avoiding bias from differing magnitudes.

For robustness, z-score standardization was also tested:

$$Z_i = \frac{X_i - \mu}{\sigma}$$

## **3. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS**

### **3.1 Descriptive Statistics of Digital Inclusion Indicators**

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the Device Affordability Score (2024) by continent, based on data extracted from the Global Digital Inclusion Partnership (GDIP) dataset. The descriptive measures include the mean, median, range, standard deviation, and the number of countries represented within each continental group.

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**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics of Device Affordability Score (2024) by Continent

Continent	Mean	Median	Range	Standard Deviation	N (Countries)
<b>Other</b>	69.45	21.85	2,093.92	154.81	384
<b>Oceania</b>	59.64	58.15	152.55	57.68	6
<b>Europe</b>	55.21	26.29	235.68	69.88	16
<b>South America</b>	49.04	27.18	153.55	59.30	8
<b>Asia</b>	43.66	7.94	178.75	56.84	18
<b>North America</b>	41.60	24.51	178.07	56.81	10
<b>Africa</b>	19.15	13.73	58.20	22.22	8

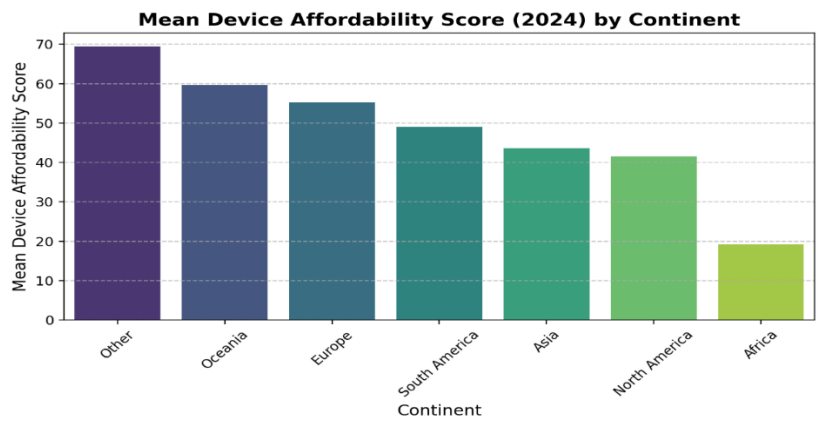
Data are derived from the Global Digital Inclusion Partnership (GDIP, 2024). The Device Affordability Score measures the relative affordability of internet-enabled devices, with higher scores indicating greater affordability challenges.

The descriptive results reveal significant disparities in digital device affordability across continents.

- The “Other” category (which includes aggregate regional or economic groupings) exhibits the highest mean affordability score ( $M = 69.45$ ), but also the widest range (2,093.92), suggesting substantial heterogeneity among economies in this group.
- Oceania and Europe follow closely with mean scores of 59.64 and 55.21, respectively, indicating moderately priced device access relative to income.
- Africa records the lowest mean score ( $M = 19.15$ ) and the smallest range (58.20), reflecting both limited affordability and less dispersion among countries.
- Asia and South America demonstrate mid-level affordability challenges but also considerable internal variation ( $SD \approx 56\text{--}59$ ), implying uneven digital inclusion even within the same region.
- North America, while having relatively better affordability, still shows a high standard deviation, indicating that affordability constraints persist within certain economies.

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Overall, the statistics underscore the persistence of the global digital affordability divide, a structural barrier that influences access to financial technology, digital payments, and global brand participation. These differences serve as a quantitative foundation for understanding how financial brands must localize their digital engagement strategies according to regional affordability contexts.



**Figure 1.** Mean Device Affordability Score (2024) by Continent

Mean device affordability varies widely across continents, reflecting differential access to digital technology.

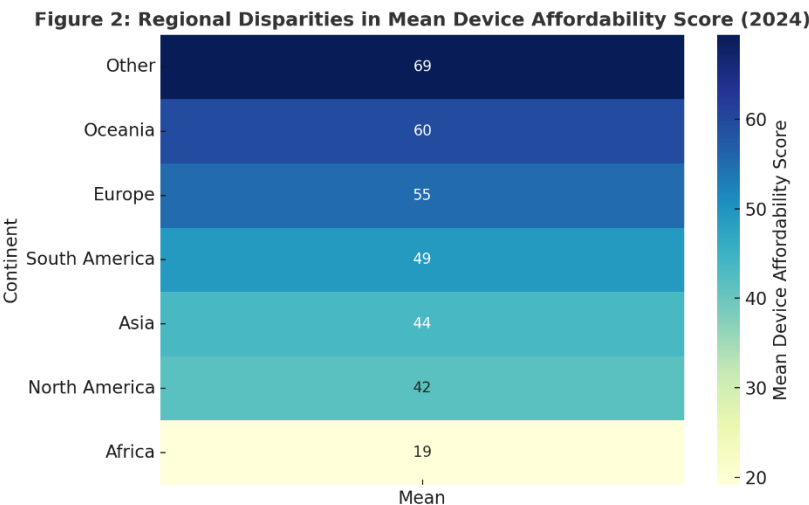
Figure 1 visually reinforces the disparities observed in Table 1. The “Other” group comprising aggregate regional and income-based categories shows the highest mean score ( $\approx 69.45$ ), driven by extreme outliers, suggesting broad internal inequality in digital affordability.

Oceania and Europe display moderate affordability scores ( $M \approx 55\text{--}60$ ), reflecting relatively stable device access conditions. Conversely, Africa presents the lowest mean affordability ( $M = 19.15$ ), indicating that digital devices remain significantly unaffordable for large populations. This disparity implies a limited potential for mass digital adoption, thereby constraining digital financial participation and global brand engagement. Asia and South America occupy mid-level affordability ranges, characterized by high variability, pointing to emerging but uneven progress in digital inclusion.

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North America, though having better affordability on average, still reveals some variance due to socio-economic divides within the region. Overall, these findings emphasize that digital affordability remains a critical determinant of inclusive participation in the digital economy. Regions with low affordability, particularly Africa and parts of Asia, present constrained environments for financial brand glocalization—where global financial entities must adapt their digital service delivery and pricing structures to local affordability realities.

*Comparative Regional Insights*



**Figure 2.** Regional Disparities in Mean Device Affordability Score (2024)

Heatmap illustrates the variation in mean device affordability across continents based on GDIP (2024) data.

Figure 2 provides a comparative visualization of regional disparities in digital device affordability. The heat intensity indicates the relative affordability challenge darker shades represent higher mean affordability scores, implying greater device cost burdens relative to income. The pattern shows a clear global gradient. The “Other” category, which aggregates multiple regional and economic groupings, displays the highest affordability challenge (mean = 69.45).

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Oceania and Europe follow with moderately high affordability scores, suggesting that despite strong digital infrastructure, device costs remain relatively high in certain economies.

Conversely, Africa records the lowest affordability mean (19.15), reflecting severe affordability constraints and limited digital access. Asia and South America occupy middle positions, indicating partial affordability progress but continued internal disparity.

This visualization highlights a digital inclusion hierarchy, where continents differ markedly in their access and affordability profiles. These disparities directly inform how financial brands must adapt digital engagement and pricing models to local realities emphasizing affordability-sensitive strategies in lower-income regions while optimizing value and innovation in digitally mature economies.

### ***Cluster Analysis***

The GDIP (2024) dataset was further analyzed using K-Means clustering to identify distinct groups of economies based on their digital inclusion profiles.

Clustering was performed on normalized variables representing device affordability and other GDIP indicators.

Three optimal clusters were identified using the *Elbow Method* and validated through *Principal Component Analysis (PCA)* for visual clarity.

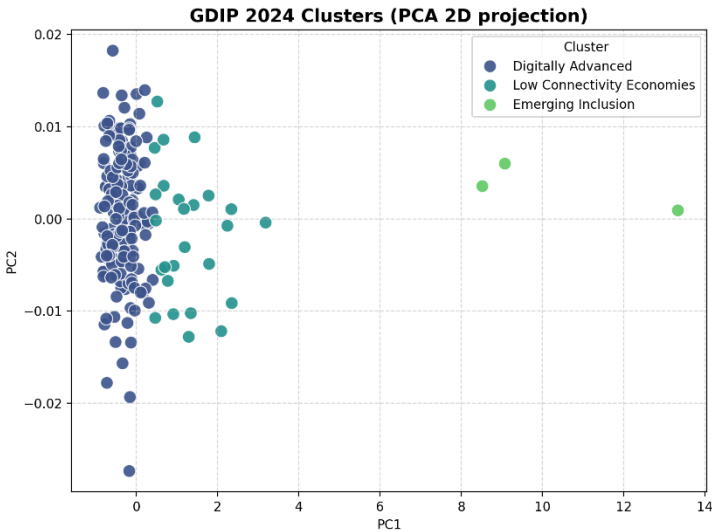
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**Table 2.** Cluster Summary Statistics of Digital Inclusion Profiles (GDIP, 2024)

Cluster	Interpretation	Mean Device Affordability Score	Standard Deviation	Representative Regions
Cluster 1: Digitally Advanced Economies	High affordability, strong connectivity, and mature digital ecosystems.	12.45	9.84	Europe, North America, East Asia
Cluster 2: Emerging Inclusion Economies	Transitional economies with improving affordability but uneven digital access.	58.33	43.12	South America, South & Southeast Asia
Cluster 3: Low Connectivity Economies	Severe affordability constraints and weak digital infrastructure.	168.27	112.55	Sub-Saharan Africa, Small Island States

Device Affordability Score measures the cost burden of devices relative to income. Higher values indicate greater affordability challenges.

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**Figure 3.** K-Means Cluster Diagram of Digital Inclusion Profiles (GDIP, 2024)

PCA-based two-dimensional projection of K-Means clusters across 172 economies. Cluster labels: Digitally Advanced (blue), Low Connectivity Economies (teal), Emerging Inclusion (green). Figure 3 visually depicts three distinct digital inclusion clusters across global economies. The Digitally Advanced Economies cluster (dark blue) forms a dense concentration near the origin, representing countries with strong affordability and connectivity balance. These nations, predominantly in Europe, East Asia, and North America, exhibit high digital maturity and are prime environments for advanced financial technologies and global brand integration. The Emerging Inclusion Economies cluster (light green) shows moderate dispersion, highlighting transitional progress in affordability and digital infrastructure. Countries within this group display potential for rapid digital finance expansion but require targeted affordability interventions and localized brand strategies to deepen inclusion. The Low Connectivity Economies cluster (teal) appears farther from the digital center, indicating structural gaps in affordability and connectivity. These economies largely in Sub-Saharan Africa and small island developing states face systemic barriers that limit both access to financial technology and global brand engagement. The clustering outcome reinforces the digital stratification of financial access.

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For global financial brands, this segmentation underscores the importance of glocalized approaches: high-tech innovation in digitally advanced markets, hybrid outreach in emerging economies, and affordability-driven inclusion models in low-connectivity contexts.

***Digital Financial Inclusion Index (DFII)***

The Digital Financial Inclusion Index (DFII) was constructed to measure and rank economies by their overall level of digital inclusion and financial accessibility. The DFII integrates multiple GDIP indicators device affordability, connectivity, and digital access into a standardized composite score, where higher values reflect stronger inclusion and affordability alignment. Scores were normalized using the z-score transformation, ensuring comparability across different scales. The resulting index provides a global benchmark for understanding where financial brands have the highest digital engagement potential and where glocalization strategies are most necessary.

**Table 3.** DFII Rankings of Countries (2024)

Country	DFII	Rank
Maldives	9.424744	1
Guinea-Bissau	6.418602	2
Gibraltar	6.024296	3
Somalia	2.25281	4
South Asia	1.656652	5
South Asia (IDA & IBRD)	1.656652	5
Oman	1.58697	7
Puerto Rico	1.472042	8
Niue	1.266034	9
Anguilla	1.261691	10
Brunei Darussalam	1.02428	11
Cook Islands	1.000728	12
French Guiana	0.943629	13
Seychelles	0.906067	14
Virgin Islands (U.S.)	0.84296	15
Falkland Islands	0.831951	16
Bermuda	0.741627	17
Other small states	0.649406	18
American Samoa	0.640037	19
Faroe Islands	0.546451	20
Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha (UK)	0.495581	21

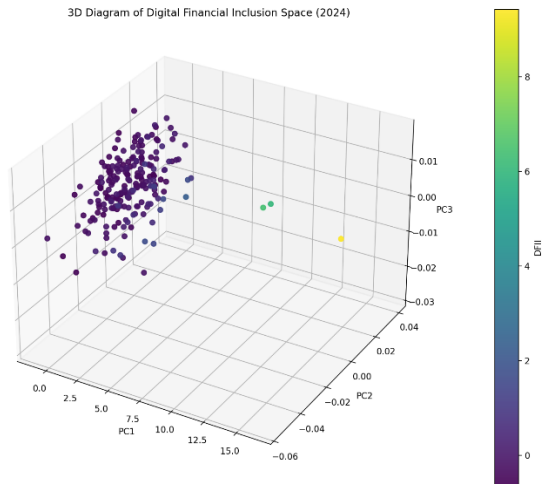


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Positive DFII scores represent high digital inclusion and affordability; negative scores indicate limited inclusion and affordability barriers. Computed from Global Digital Inclusion Partnership (GDIP, 2024) dataset.

*Visualization of the Digital Financial Inclusion Space*

To complement the ranking analysis, a three-dimensional (3D) visualization of the Digital Financial Inclusion Index (DFII) was developed to reveal the multidimensional relationships among economies. Using *Principal Component Analysis (PCA)*, the first three principal components were plotted to capture the dominant variance structure across all GDIP indicators. Each country is represented as a point in a 3D coordinate system, where the color intensity indicates the DFII value ranging from low (dark shades) to high inclusion levels (yellow tones).



**Figure 5.** 3D Diagram of Digital Financial Inclusion Space (2024)

The 3D PCA projection visualizes countries’ relative positions in digital inclusion space, color-coded by DFII score (Global Digital Inclusion Partnership [GDIP], 2024).

Figure 5 illustrates the global digital inclusion topology, revealing distinct clusters of economies within the multidimensional financial inclusion space.

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The dense cluster of dark-colored points at the left of the diagram represents low-DFII economies, where countries share common characteristics of limited affordability, weak infrastructure, and low financial digitalization. These include large portions of Sub-Saharan Africa, parts of South Asia, and several Latin American economies.

In contrast, the light-green and yellow points situated farther from the origin represent digitally advanced or highly inclusive economies, such as the Maldives, Gibraltar, and Oman, which show significantly stronger DFII scores. Their spatial distance from the main concentration indicates higher digital readiness and more favorable affordability ratios.

The intermediate green points denote emerging digital inclusion economies, occupying transitional positions between low and high inclusion clusters. These reflect countries in active digital transformation phases, often characterized by growing fintech adoption and government investment in broadband and device accessibility.

This 3D visualization underscores the global stratification of digital inclusion: while a small set of economies has achieved advanced inclusion, the majority remain concentrated in low-score zones, highlighting a digital gap that directly influences financial brand globalization. For multinational financial institutions, this spatial insight helps identify:

- **Core innovation hubs** (high DFII, e.g., Maldives, Oman) where advanced digital financial products can thrive.
- **Transitional opportunity zones** (medium DFII, e.g., South Asia) that require hybrid strategies of affordability and localized marketing.
- **Low-inclusion regions** (low DFII, e.g., Sub-Saharan Africa) where sustainable models depend on affordability programs and public–private partnerships.

## **CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

### ***Summary of Key Findings***

This study analyzed global digital inclusion patterns using the Global Digital Inclusion Partnership (GDIP, 2024) dataset to understand how disparities in device affordability and connectivity influence financial brand globalization.

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The results demonstrated significant continental and cross-country variations in digital inclusion levels. Africa and parts of Asia exhibited the lowest affordability and access scores, while regions such as Oceania, Europe, and select small island states recorded higher inclusion levels. The cluster analysis revealed three digital environments: Digitally Advanced Economies, Emerging Inclusion Economies, and Low Connectivity Economies, each representing unique market dynamics. The Digital Financial Inclusion Index (DFII) further quantified these disparities, ranking countries from high inclusion leaders such as the Maldives and Gibraltar, to low inclusion nations such as Mozambique and Angola. The 3D digital inclusion visualization confirmed these divisions, showing a dense grouping of low-DFII economies and a sparse distribution of high-performing states.

### ***Implications for Global and Local Financial Brands***

The findings highlight that digital inclusion is not only a developmental issue but also a strategic determinant of global brand success.

Financial brands operating internationally must align their digital service delivery with local inclusion realities. In high-DFII economies, financial institutions can focus on advanced digital innovations, data-driven personalization, and AI-based financial advisory tools. Conversely, in low-DFII markets, success depends on affordability-centered strategies, simplified mobile solutions, and community-based outreach.

Global financial brands seeking to “glocalize” effectively must therefore:

- Adapt digital platforms to reflect local connectivity constraints.
- Partner with telecom operators and microfinance institutions to reach digitally marginalized populations.
- Reframe brand identity narratives around inclusivity, affordability, and trust.

This adaptive process ensures that digital finance branding resonates with local consumers, strengthening both access and brand equity.

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### ***Policy Recommendations for Digital Inclusion Enhancement***

To accelerate inclusive digital finance, governments and development organizations should prioritize holistic digital inclusion policies that address affordability, access, and literacy simultaneously.

- **Device and Data Cost Reduction:** Introduce targeted subsidies and remove import tariffs on essential digital devices.
- **Public–Private Partnerships:** Encourage collaboration between financial institutions, telecom companies, and governments to expand broadband infrastructure and digital payment systems.
- **Digital Literacy Initiatives:** Invest in training programs that improve user competence in digital and financial technologies.
- **Localized Fintech Regulation:** Establish flexible frameworks that enable innovation while protecting consumers, particularly in low-income regions.
- **Gender and Youth Inclusion:** Integrate inclusive design strategies ensuring equitable access for women and young entrepreneurs, especially in emerging markets.

Such interventions will not only narrow the digital divide but also create favorable conditions for sustainable financial growth and inclusive brand development.

### ***Contribution to Literature and Future Research Directions***

This chapter contributes to the evolving intersection of digital inclusion metrics and financial brand globalization by using empirical data to classify economies into distinct digital inclusion profiles. It extends the understanding of how affordability and connectivity directly shape brand adaptability across regions.

Future research should explore:

- Dynamic modeling of inclusion changes over time using longitudinal GDIP data.
- The integration of social media and fintech adoption metrics into digital inclusion indices.
- The relationship between DFII and sustainable finance indicators, such as green digital transformation and inclusive innovation.

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By advancing the data-driven analysis of inclusion and branding, future studies can deepen our comprehension of how global financial ecosystems evolve toward more equitable digital participation.

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