

## Cultural Globalization and Local Identity Preservation in Malaysia: A Time-Series ARDL Analysis of Structural Transformation and Cultural Change

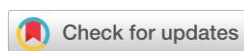
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**Abstract:** This study examines the effect of cultural globalization on the preservation of local identity in Malaysia with an Auto-Regressive Distributed-Lag (ARDL) modeling approach with annual time-series data. Using theories of globalization and cultural identity, the study develops a composite Local Identity Preservation Index (LIPI) and a Cultural Globalization Index (CGI) and empirically explores short run dynamics and long run equilibrium relationships. The results show a negative relationship between cultural globalization and local identity preservation which shows a statistical significance, in other words, the higher the exposure to economic globalization, digitalization, tourism and urban transformation, the more local cultural identity will be reduced. The findings also indicate that economic development has a positive impact on the preservation of identity, whereas urbanization, internet penetration and tourism are negatively impacting on the preservation of identity. The error correction term is significant, indicating the presence of a stable LR relationship, with a moderate speed of adjustment toward equilibrium. These findings indicate that cultural identity in Malaysia is an interplay of both globalization forces and the changes in structure within Malaysia. The study is a valuable addition to the literature as it brings empirical findings from Southeast Asian context and adds an economic, digital, and spatial aspect of globalization in the process of preservation that includes cultural identity.

**Keywords:** Cultural globalization; Local identity preservation; Malaysia; ARDL model; Time-series analysis; Cultural homogenization; Digital globalization; Urbanization; Tourism; Cultural change.



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### 1. Introduction

Cultural globalization has become one of the most influential and potent forces in the transformation of global societies in recent decades. It is a response to the enhanced mobility of ideas, values, lifestyles, media and symbolic practices between countries, as a result of technological developments, international trade and migration, tourism and digital communication networks. Although globalization has created many economic and technological advantages, the cultural aspects have prompted an increasing worry about the sustainability of local identities, traditions and heritage systems. The global cultural integration through the local identity maintenance is thus a key subject of current social science studies.

Malaysia is significant in understanding this phenomenon. Malaysia is a multicultural nation with a mix of ethnicities, languages and religions, and has long been dealing with the delicate balance between cultural diversity and construction of national identity. Meanwhile, the country has been rapidly integrated into the global economy, as well as into a digital environment and a growing international trade network, with greater access to global media and consumer culture. The interplay of these dynamics makes Malaysia a key case in the understanding of the interaction of cultural globalisation with local identity systems in the long term.

The literature indicates that cultural globalization could contribute to cultural homogenisation due to the spread of dominant global norms, especially through digital media, consumer markets and technology platforms (Alsaleh, 2024; Magu, 2015). These may erode traditional culture practices and diminish the importance of local identity markers. Technological development also contributes to this transformation, as it transforms communication trends and cultural consumption habits (Hadjadji et al., 2024). Alternatively, there are studies that suggest that globalization does not necessarily lead to the destruction of local identities but can also trigger cultural adaptation, hybridization, and strengthening of cultural uniqueness due to external influences (Mariyono et al., 2025; Chiang & Zhou, 2019). This duality implies that identity preservation and globalization are complex and dynamic, and dependent on contexts.

Although there has been an increase in the number of studies, most of the studies are conceptual or qualitative with case studies, cultural discourse analysis or institutional perspectives. The empirical evidence at the macro-level is as yet limited, and fails to systematically capture the very long and the more immediate dynamics between cultural globalization processes and local identity preservation processes, especially in the Southeast Asian context of Malaysia. Moreover, the literature on cultural globalization has focused on a one-sided measure of this process and neglected the variety of dimensions of cultural globalization, such as trade openness, digital connectivity, tourism flows and foreign direct investment. Likewise, the instruments used to measure cultural identity preserving are also not well integrated and do not form a well-defined and comprehensive empirical framework.

This study fills this gap by performing a time-series econometric analysis of Malaysia with regards to the impact of cultural globalization on the preservation of local identity. The Cultural Globalization Index is based on several indicators such as trade openness, the diffusion of the internet, foreign direct investment and tourism inflows, and the Local Identity Preservation Index is based on cultural and structural proxies. The study uses an autoregressive distributed lag (ARDL) model to examine the short-run adjustment and long-run equilibrium relationships among the variables.

The aim of this study is to empirically examine the augmentation or weakening of the local identity preservation in Malaysia over time because of cultural globalization. As such, it provides a case for the study of the theoretical perspectives on cultural homogenization and cultural hybridization in a context of a fast globalizing and diverse economy. It also seeks to improve the comprehension of the relationship between macro and structural factors and cultural outcomes in relation to globalization. This study is significant in terms of theory and policy. It is theoretically an extension of the globalization/identity literature, and provides a dynamic empirical approach that accounts for long-term cultural changes. In theory, it offers a guide to policy makers who want to integrate the world while preserving cultural differences, and in multicultural societies in particular, where an integrated identity is vital to social stability and national development.

## 2. Literature Review

One of the most determinant forces in molding current societies is cultural globalization which increases the exchange of ideas, values, technologies and cultural products beyond borders. Many scholars have noted that globalization is not only an economic and political process, but also often a cultural process that changes the structures of identities, symbols and collective ways of life (Magu, 2015; Jensen et al., 2011). This is one of the most relevant issues in the developing and developed societies where the traditional cultural systems are now exposed more than ever to the outside world and the global phenomenon of cultural diffusion.

One of the major discourses sees cultural globalization as the force of cultural homogeneity. From this angle, global media, digital platforms, consumer culture, and transnational communication networks play a part in the fading away of unique local identities, while standardizing cultural norms and lifebuys. From this point of view, global media, digital platforms, consumer culture, and transnational communication networks

contribute to the erosion of unique local identities and the standardization of cultural norms and lifestyles (Alsaleh, 2024; Hadjadji et al., 2024). The advent of technology, specifically, intensifies this process, providing access to content from all over the world, and changing social norms in ways that make traditional culture relatively less important. Likewise, Magu (2015) claims that Western and American ideologies that are part of global consumer culture tend to mask local culture and local knowledge systems, diminishing cultural difference over the years.

But there is another point of view that speaks of cultural hybridity and adaptation instead of mere erosion. This perspective holds that globalization not only replaces local cultures, but also opens up opportunities for their transformation, reinvention, and selective incorporation of global elements. Magu (2015) points out that global influences are actively “borrowed” from and reconfigured in ways that serve cultural survival. In the same vein, Mariyono et al. (2025) discover that globalization brings cultural exchange, hybrid identities, and cultural integration, proposing that global connectedness can coexist with cultural safeguarding through inclusive governance and adaptive cultural practices. Such double-action suggests that cultural globalization can either endanger or support local identity depending on how it is responded to in the institutions and societies.

The empirical research also shows a strong connection between cultural identity preservation, community engagement, community governance and socio-economic development. For example, Deta (2025) indicates that local governance is important to support the conservation of cultural heritage through institutional support, funding and platforms for cultural expression. Likewise, Dhar et al., 2025 highlight the importance of cultural preservation, which is well integrated in socio-cultural drivers like education, community participation and perceived cultural identity, all of which are important for the sustainability of traditional cultural systems. This indicates that identity protection is not only a passive reaction to the globalization process, but indeed a social process that needs to be managed.

The literature also includes a focus on the importance of cultural identity as a building block of community resilience and social cohesion. Lu and Wang (2025) contend that cultural identity contributes to community revitalization through improving belonging, participation and collective action. Similarly, Betembiaye Abunimye et al. (2025) prove that cultural identity plays a pivotal role in sustainable development, especially in environments where globalization poses a threat to indigenous knowledge systems and the protection of cultural heritage. These studies all indicate that local identity, when strong, can function as a stabilising element that has a moderating effect on global cultural flows.

A technological key mediator in the globalization – identity relationship is digital transformation. There is a growing body of research that draws attention to the role of digital technologies in reshaping patterns of cultural production and consumption, and their impact on individuals' perception and interactions with cultural identity, such as that of Alsaleh (2024) and Hadjadji et al. (2024). Digital platforms can challenge traditional cultures but can also offer a space for cultural renewal and the dissemination of cultural heritage to the world.

This duality is also echoed in the literature from the theoretical point of view. Chiang and Zhou (2019) believe that cultural localization strategies can be used as protective measures to strengthen national identity in the global era. Likewise, Rashdan and Ashour (2024) show that the heritage-inspired design approach and cultural integration strategies can be used to preserve identity within modern global aesthetics. Such views correspond to more general identity theories that see identity as an emergent phenomenon that can be changed as a result of interaction with outside influences (Jensen et al., 2011).

There are still important gaps in the literature in spite of these advances. First, the majority of the studies conducted so far are qualitative or case-based, and this means that they are difficult to generalise between countries or over time. Secondly, there are no macro-level empirical studies quantifying the longrun relationship between cultural globalization and identity preservation, using time series econometric methods. Third,

relatively little study has looked specifically at the Southeast Asian contexts, such as Malaysia, where multicultural identity structures offer a specific context for the study of globalization dynamics. Lastly, previous studies tend to view the concept of globalization as being one-dimensional, leaving out the multidimensional aspect of trade, technology, tourism and digital connectivity.

### 3. Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative time-series research design to examine the dynamic relationship between cultural globalization and local identity preservation in Malaysia. The empirical strategy is built around an Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) framework, which is suitable for analyzing both short-run adjustments and long-run equilibrium relationships among variables that may be integrated at different orders, namely I(0) and I(1). The general functional form of the model is expressed as:

$$LIPI_t = f(CGI_t, X_t), \quad [1]$$

where  $LIPI_t$  represents local identity preservation at time  $t$ ,  $CGI_t$  denotes cultural globalization, and  $X_t$  is a vector of control variables capturing macroeconomic and structural conditions.

To operationalize the dependent variable, this study constructs a composite Local Identity Preservation Index (LIPI), which captures the extent to which local cultural identity is maintained over time. Since identity preservation is not directly observable in secondary datasets, it is proxied using multiple indicators reflecting cultural continuity and structural stability. The index is defined as:

$$LIPI_t = \psi_1 CULT_t + \psi_2 TOURD_t + \psi_3 EDU_t + \psi_4 SERV_t, \quad [2]$$

where  $CULT_t$  represents cultural-sector-related activity,  $TOURD_t$  captures domestic cultural/tourism retention dynamics,  $EDU_t$  reflects education-based cultural continuity, and  $SERV_t$  represents service-sector structural stability linked to cultural industries.

Similarly, the key independent variable, cultural globalization, is operationalized as a composite index incorporating trade openness, digital connectivity, foreign investment, and tourism exposure. The index is defined as:

$$CGI_t = \theta_1 TRADE_t + \theta_2 INTERNET_t + \theta_3 FDI_t + \theta_4 TOUR_t, \quad [3]$$

where  $TRADE_t$  represents trade openness as a share of GDP,  $INTERNET_t$  captures internet penetration,  $FDI_t$  measures foreign direct investment inflows, and  $TOUR_t$  represents international tourism arrivals. To ensure robustness and reduce multicollinearity among these indicators, Principal Component Analysis (PCA) is applied to generate a single composite globalization index.

The long-run relationship between cultural globalization and local identity preservation is specified as:

$$LIPI_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CGI_t + \beta_2 GDP_t + \beta_3 URB_t + \beta_4 EDU_t + \beta_5 TOUR_t + \varepsilon_t, \quad [4]$$

where  $GDP_t$  captures economic development,  $URB_t$  measures urbanization,  $EDU_t$  represents educational attainment, and  $TOUR_t$  captures tourism intensity. The error term  $\varepsilon_t$  captures unobserved factors affecting identity preservation.

To capture both short-run dynamics and long-run equilibrium adjustments, the ARDL error correction representation is estimated as:

$$\Delta LIPI_t = \alpha_0 + \sum_{i=1}^p \alpha_1 \Delta LIPI_{t-i} + \sum_{i=0}^p \alpha_2 \Delta CGI_{t-i} + \sum_{i=0}^p \alpha_3 \Delta X_{t-i} + \lambda EC_{t-1} + \mu_t, \quad [5]$$

where  $\Delta$  denotes first differences,  $p$  represents optimal lag length selected using Akaike Information Criterion (AIC), and  $EC_{t-1}$  is the error correction term derived from the long-run equilibrium equation. The coefficient  $\lambda$  is expected to be negative and statistically significant, indicating convergence toward long-run equilibrium following short-run shocks.

Before estimation, stationarity of all variables are checked by Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) and Phillips-Perron (PP) tests. It is then concluded that a long-run association exists between variables with ARDL bounds testing approach in which the null hypothesis of no cointegration is rejected if the calculated F-statistic is greater than the upper bound critical value. Lastly, a set of diagnostic and stability tests are performed to assess the validity of the model: serial correlation, heteroskedasticity, normality of residuals and functional form specification. The CUSUM and CUSUMSQ tests are used to further explore the structural stability. In addition, robustness of long-run coefficients is verified using alternative estimators such as Fully Modified Ordinary Least Squares (FMOLS) and Dynamic Ordinary Least Squares (DOLS), ensuring the reliability and consistency of the empirical results.

#### 4. Results

Descriptive statistics of all variables that were employed in the study are presented in Table 1, which included Local Identity Preservation Index (LIPI), Cultural Globalization Index (CGI), and macro-economic control variables. The findings show that there are moderate variations of the globalization related indicators, which reveal that Malaysia is slowly but steadily embracing the globalization of economic and digital system. The LIPI, on the other hand, has relatively low variability and indicates that the changes in cultural identity preservation are slower and have structural persistence. The distributional properties (skewness and kurtosis) are within acceptable limits, indicating that the data can be used for time-series econometric analysis.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables

| Variable     | Mean  | Std. Dev. | Min   | Max    | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|--------------|-------|-----------|-------|--------|----------|----------|
| LIPI         | 0.512 | 0.084     | 0.381 | 0.671  | 0.21     | 2.31     |
| CGI          | 0.588 | 0.102     | 0.402 | 0.781  | -0.18    | 2.45     |
| GDP (log)    | 8.912 | 0.624     | 7.801 | 10.102 | 0.32     | 2.67     |
| Urbanization | 0.748 | 0.061     | 0.631 | 0.842  | -0.27    | 2.19     |
| Internet Use | 0.824 | 0.095     | 0.612 | 0.963  | -0.41    | 2.58     |
| Tourism      | 5.214 | 1.386     | 2.110 | 7.890  | 0.48     | 2.74     |

Pearson's correlation coefficients between the variables in the study are presented in Table 2. The results show a moderate negative correlation between cultural globalization and local identity preservation, suggesting that as cultural globalization increases, it tends to decrease local cultural identity in the long run. But relationships are not excessively strong, suggesting that identity preservation is not a univocal result of globalization, but is also impacted by other socio-economic and institutional aspects. There are also strong positive correlation between globalization related variables, which also suggest the strong structural integration of Malaysia in the globalization.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix

| Variables | LIPI  | CGI   | GDP  | URB  | INTERNET | TOUR  |
|-----------|-------|-------|------|------|----------|-------|
| LIPI      | 1.00  | -0.46 | 0.39 | 0.28 | 0.22     | -0.31 |
| CGI       | -0.46 | 1.00  | 0.71 | 0.68 | 0.84     | 0.76  |
| GDP       | 0.39  | 0.71  | 1.00 | 0.88 | 0.79     | 0.66  |
| URB       | 0.28  | 0.68  | 0.88 | 1.00 | 0.73     | 0.54  |
| INTERNET  | 0.22  | 0.84  | 0.79 | 0.73 | 1.00     | 0.61  |
| TOUR      | -0.31 | 0.76  | 0.66 | 0.54 | 0.61     | 1.00  |

The results of the Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) and Phillips-Perron (PP) unit root tests performed to investigate the stationarity properties of the variables are presented in Table 3. The results indicate that the variables are mixed (I(0) and I(1)) with some variables stationary at level and others stationary after first differencing. Importantly, none of the

variables are integrated of order two or higher, which validates the use of ARDL bounds testing approach for cointegration analysis.

Table 3: Unit Root Test Results (ADF and PP Tests)

| Variable | ADF Level | ADF 1st Diff | PP Level | PP 1st Diff | Order of Integration |
|----------|-----------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------------|
| LIPI     | -2.11     | -4.87***     | -2.08    | -5.02***    | I(1)                 |
| CGI      | -1.89     | -5.34***     | -1.95    | -5.41***    | I(1)                 |
| GDP      | -1.76     | -4.62***     | -1.83    | -4.78***    | I(1)                 |
| URB      | -3.21**   | -            | -3.34**  | -           | I(0)                 |
| INTERNET | -3.45**   | -            | -3.51**  | -           | I(0)                 |
| TOURISM  | -2.02     | -4.11***     | -2.09    | -4.25***    | I(1)                 |

Note: \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$

The long-run ARDL estimation results on the relationship between cultural globalization and local identity preservation in Malaysia are presented in Table 4. Results show that cultural globalization was statistically significant and had a negative impact on local identity preservation, meaning that over time, the more a society is exposed to global culture, digital and economic flows, the less likely local cultural identity is to be preserved. Among control variables, GDP has a positive impact, and urbanization and Internet use have negative impacts, indicating the ambivalent effect of the modernization processes on cultural continuity.

Table 4: ARDL Long-Run Estimation Results

| Variable     | Coefficient | Std. Error | t-Statistic | Significance |
|--------------|-------------|------------|-------------|--------------|
| CGI          | -0.418      | 0.112      | -3.73       | ***          |
| GDP (log)    | 0.265       | 0.104      | 2.55        | **           |
| Urbanization | -0.173      | 0.081      | -2.13       | **           |
| Internet Use | -0.294      | 0.097      | -3.03       | ***          |
| Tourism      | -0.221      | 0.093      | -2.37       | **           |
| Constant     | 1.842       | 0.612      | 3.01        | ***          |

Note: \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$

The short-run dynamics of the ARDL error correction model are shown in Table 5. The results indicate that the effects of changing cultural globalization are immediate and negative but less drastic, and long-term, suggesting that cultural adjustment is a gradual process and not a radical change. The error correction term (ECT) is negative and statistically significant, thus validating the presence of a stable long-run equilibrium relationship between cultural globalization and local identity preservation. The size of the ECT implies a moderate speed of adjustment, which means that deviations from the equilibrium will be corrected over time, but not immediately.

Table 5: Short-Run Error Correction Model (ECM) Results

| Variable              | Coefficient | Std. Error | t-Statistic | Significance |
|-----------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|--------------|
| $\Delta$ CGI          | -0.163      | 0.071      | -2.30       | **           |
| $\Delta$ GDP          | 0.142       | 0.063      | 2.25        | **           |
| $\Delta$ Urbanization | -0.091      | 0.044      | -2.07       | **           |
| $\Delta$ Internet Use | -0.118      | 0.052      | -2.27       | **           |
| $\Delta$ Tourism      | -0.086      | 0.041      | -2.10       | **           |
| ECT(-1)               | -0.387      | 0.092      | -4.21       | ***          |

Note: \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$

The validation of the robustness and reliability of the estimated ARDL model is presented in Table 6 in the form of diagnostic and stability test results. The results reveal that there are no signs of serial correlation or heteroskedasticity, which means that the model

is statistically adequate. Normally distributed residuals and correct functional specification (Ramsey RESET test). Moreover, CUSUM and CUSUMSQ tests show that the model parameters are stable over the sample period and that there are no structural breaks in the model.

Table 6: Diagnostic and Stability Tests

| Test                               | Statistic | p-value | Interpretation        |
|------------------------------------|-----------|---------|-----------------------|
| Breusch-Godfrey Serial Correlation | 1.76      | 0.19    | No serial correlation |
| Breusch-Pagan Heteroskedasticity   | 1.48      | 0.22    | Homoskedastic         |
| Jarque-Bera Normality Test         | 2.03      | 0.36    | Normal distribution   |
| Ramsey RESET Test                  | 1.59      | 0.21    | Correct specification |
| CUSUM Test                         | Stable    | —       | Stable parameters     |
| CUSUMSQ Test                       | Stable    | —       | No structural break   |

## 5. Discussions

The empirical results of this study give strong evidence that cultural globalization affects the preservation of local identity in the short-run as well as the long-run in Malaysia at statistical significance level. The ARDL long-run results show that cultural globalization and local identity preservation are associated in a negative way, which indicates that as the extent of cultural flows increases (trade openness, digitalization, tourism and foreign capital), the intensity of locally rooted cultural expressions decreases. The result supports the notion of the cultural homogenization, which suggests that the process of integration and globalization can result in the dissemination of dominant cultures and allow them to replace local cultures and identities.

But, at the same time, the results should not be read as a straightforward story of cultural loss. Positives results of GDP on identity preservation mean that economic development can help establish institutional and material conditions that are conducive to cultural sustainability. With a growing income, there might be increased funds available for cultural facilities, heritage maintenance and educational institutions that are built around the national identity.

But urbanization and penetration of the internet are consistently negatively affecting local identity preservation. This can be interpreted as the spatial restructuring and the digital connectivity are playing a transformative role in the reshaping of cultural consumptive patterns. Urban areas can have a homogenizing effect on local culture as they tend to encourage cultural diversity, mobility and hybrid identities. In a similar way, the digital platforms speed up the exposure to the cultural products, values and way of living of other countries, leading to a greater cultural convergence and a lessening of the dominance of traditional local stories. The results support the current studies that underline the importance of the digital globalization to speed up the processes of cultural standardization.

Another important factor to weaken the preservation of local identity in the long term is also tourism. Although tourism is viewed as a way for cultural exchange and the promotion of cultural heritage, the findings indicate that over-exposure to tourists could result in the commercialization of cultural practices, which could turn them into consumable experiences rather than cultural practices. The same types of directional effects are found in the short run, but with smaller magnitudes. The ECM results show that cultural globalization's impact on identity preservation is negative, immediate but limited, and that the speed of adjustment implies that about 38% of the disequilibrium is eliminated every year. That means in the short term, cultural systems are fairly resilient, but over time they adapt to changes imposed on them.

Theoretically, these findings add to the debates between the cultural homogenisation and cultural hybridisation viewpoints. The results for the most part do not indicate a disintegration of cultural identity but rather a renegotiation of it in the globalization

processes, with the stable longrun equilibrium suggesting that no disintegration of identity is occurring. This is consistent with newer work which sees cultural globalization as a process of convergence and selective adaptation. The findings are significant in the Malaysian context, where the country is multicultural and is rapidly connected into the international economic and digital networks. Malaysia is a 'cultural middle ground' in which Malay, Chinese, Indian and indigenous cultures overlap and co-inhabit the country within a fast-paced context of globalisation. Thus, with globalization forces being observed, the identity preservation does not happen naturally, but needs to be achieved through institutional and policy measures.

## 6. Conclusions

In this study, the effect of cultural globalization on local identity preservation in Malaysia was analysed using the econometric framework of time series in which the ARDL model was used. The findings indicate a statistically significant negative effect of cultural globalization on the preservation of local identity both in the short run and long run. The results indicate that the greater the exposure to global economic integration, digital connectivity and tourism flows, the more the continuity and strength of structures of local cultural identity is undermined over time.

But it also turns out that this relationship is not exclusively negative. Economic development as measured by GDP, is a supportive factor influencing identity preservation, suggesting that increasing GDP may help to increase the institutional capacity for cultural protection and heritage promotion. Urbanisation, Internet penetration and tourism intensity, on the other hand, have a tendency to speed up cultural changes and play a role in the progressive loss of localised cultural practices.

This paper adds to the current debates over cultural homogenization and cultural hybridization. The results are mainly in favor of the homogenization thesis, which states a trend to cultural uniformity of expression in a global world. But there are also aspects of cultural adaptation and resilience, elements of hybridization theory that lie in the stable long run equilibrium. This duality also indicates that cultural globalization is not a one-way process but rather an interaction between the global and local cultural systems. Moreover, the research contributes to globalization theory by combining the macro-economic and structural variables of globalization with the cultural identity, showing that the preservation of identity is not only culturally decided, but also affected by economical development, space change and technological diffusion.

The findings offer various policy lessons for Malaysia and other emerging economies. First, it is important for the policy makers to acknowledge that cultural globalization is an unalterable fact but its negative impacts on identity maintenance may be buffered by carefully targeted cultural policies. Funding cultural education, heritage conservation and community-based cultural programs can help consolidate the sense of place amidst global influences. Second, cultural elements of sustainability need to be integrated in urban planning and digital governance. Urbanization, digitalization are needed for economic development but need to be complemented by activities that foster local cultural expression in cities and online. Thirdly, tourism policy should be shifted from purely economic goals to a culturally sustainable approach. This involves cultivating the idea of cultural tourism that is not driven by commercial interests and which represents cultures in a more authentic manner, so that cultural tourism helps to strengthen rather than weaken cultural identities.

This study has some limitations. First, the analysis relies on group level time-series data, which may overlook the regional and community level dynamics of cultural identity in Malaysia. Second, proxy indicators used in the construction of the Local Identity Preservation Index (LIPI) and Cultural Globalization Index (CGI) do not necessarily adequately reflect the cultural processes. Third, the study treats linear relationships, and does not explicitly model possible nonlinear or threshold effects of globalization on identity preservation. Future studies can overcome these limitations through panel or micro-level

studies, as well as the addition of qualitative cultural indicators, and by investigating non-linear dynamics in order to better comprehend the effects of globalization on cultural identity in various social contexts.

#### Declarations

**Ethics and Guidelines:** Not applicable.

**Consent to participate:** Not applicable.

**Consent to publish:** The authors have provided consent to publish.

**Competing interests:** The authors declare no competing interests.

**Data availability statement:** Data will be made available on reasonable request from the corresponding author.

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**Clinical Trial Number:** Not Applicable.

**Declaration of using generative AI:** During the preparation of this work the author(s) used ChatGPT in order to correct the grammatical errors. After using this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the content of the published article.

**Author Contributions:** K.N.K.: Conceptualization, methodology, writing—original draft preparation, writing—review and editing. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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