



# Cross-cultural management in leisure and recreation

Globalization and cultural change in leisure



## Learning outcomes

By the end of this lecture, you will be able to:

- Define globalization and cultural change in leisure.
- Identify key theories explaining cultural change.
- Describe processes such as acculturation, hybridization, and glocalization.
- Evaluate positive & negative impacts of globalization.
- Apply theory to real-world hospitality and leisure examples.



# Globalization & leisure

- Globalization = interconnectedness of societies, economies, and cultures.
- Leisure activities increasingly cross borders: festivals, tourism, sports.
- Hospitality services adapt to diverse global clientele.
- **Example:** Kampala restaurants offering both local dishes (matooke, kalo) and continental cuisine (chips, chaps).



# Theoretical perspectives

Why globalization matters and how global forces operate.

- **Modernization theory** – Globalization spreads modern practices (urban leisure, consumer culture).
- **World-systems theory** – Core countries dominate leisure trends; periphery one adapts.
- **Cultural globalization theory** – Cultures mix, overlap, change.
- **Critical perspectives** – Globalization may reproduce inequality & cultural dominance.



# Overview of structural change

- Structural change refers to the evolution of systems that support leisure, tourism, and hospitality.
- May occur slowly (like shifts in societal values) or rapidly (like the sudden rise of digital tourism platforms).
- In sub-Saharan Africa, structural change is evident in how cities like Kampala are hosting large-scale global events and leisure facilities, reshaping both infrastructure and cultural consumption patterns. CHAN, NAM



## Economic drivers of structural change

- Rising disposable income → growth in leisure demand.
- Tourism investment → new hotels, resorts, and entertainment centers.
- Global market integration → exposure to new leisure products.
- **Example:** Investment in luxury safari lodges in Uganda eg Chobe, APoka attracting international tourists.



## Technological & institutional drivers

- Technology: online booking platforms, digital marketing, virtual experiences.
- Policy & regulation: tourism boards, zoning, cultural heritage protection.
- Infrastructure: transport, hospitality facilities, communication networks.
- **Example:** Mobile payment systems in Kenyan hospitality enable tourists to access services easily, influencing both service design and cultural interaction. What about Ug?



## Social & demographic drivers

- Urbanization → concentration of leisure facilities in cities.
- Changing population demographics → youth-oriented leisure offerings.
- Cultural globalization → exposure to global norms.
- **Example:** Nairobi's rooftop bars and fusion restaurants cater to a young, urban, globalized clientele. Anything in Kila? Shisha bars?





## Implications for leisure & hospitality

- Necessity to redesign services to match structural shifts.
- Cultural adaptation needed to balance global expectations and local authenticity.
- Opportunities for innovation in hybrid or glocalized leisure experiences.
- **Reflection question:** How can managers anticipate structural change to preserve cultural integrity in leisure services?



# Cultural imperialism theory

- Cultural imperialism theory argues that globalization is not neutral. It often spreads Western culture at the expense of others.
- E.g. Hollywood movies dominating African cinemas or European football overshadowing local leagues.
- In hospitality, Western service norms may be seen as superior, sidelining indigenous models of hospitality. Any examples of local hospitality practices??



## World culture theory

- World culture theory emphasizes diffusion of global norms.
- For example, wellness culture such as yoga, spas, fitness has spread worldwide, including across sub-Saharan Africa.
- Hotels in Kampala advertise wellness packages similar to those in New York or Tokyo.
- Therefore globalization fosters a sense of “global citizenship” in leisure.



# Glocalization theory

- Glocalization theory stresses that local cultures aren't passive recipients; they adapt global products to fit their contexts.
- Nigerian film (Nollywood) is a prime example: it borrows global film techniques but tells deeply local stories. What about Wakaliwood?
- In hospitality, eco-lodges in Uganda adopt global sustainability trends but root them in local cultural narratives.



## Processes of cultural change (Overview)

- **Acculturation:** adoption of foreign cultural traits.
- **Assimilation:** minority culture absorbed in dominant one.
- **Hybridization:** blending of local and global culture.
- **Homogenization:** global standardization (“McDonaldization”).
- **Glocalization:** local adaptation of global forms.
- **Resistance/preservation:** communities protect cultural identity.



# Acculturation

- Acculturation happens when groups from different cultural backgrounds interact regularly.
- Outcomes differ (Berry, 1997):
  - **Assimilation:** locals fully adopt foreign leisure practices, e.g., traditional dance groups in Kampala switching entirely to hip-hop.
  - **Integration:** blending occurs, e.g., hotels in Tanzania offering both traditional dishes and global fast food.
  - **Separation:** cultural forms are preserved, e.g., some communities refusing to perform sacred dances for tourists.
  - **Marginalization:** where people feel cut off from both original and global cultural anchors.
- **Hospitality Example:** Ndere Centre adapting performances for tourists.
- **Reflection:** What opportunities or risks does acculturation create for leisure experiences?



# Assimilation

- Assimilation is when minority or local groups adopt dominant cultural practices at the expense of their own.
- Seen in leisure, fashion, music, food
- for example urban youth in Kampala preferring Western leisure (clubs, fast food).
- **Implication:** Traditional practices may disappear from public leisure offerings.
- **Question:** How can hospitality providers respect culture while accommodating global preferences?



# Hybridization

- Hybridization occurs when global and local cultures mix to produce somethin new.
- **Example:** Afro-fusion music festivals; resorts blending international service with African storytelling; Music – Asake – Lonely at the top, 'sell' kadodi beat to western producer
- **Implication:** Creates innovative, attractive leisure experiences.
- **Question:** How can hybridization enhance tourism while preserving cultural integrity?





# Homogenization

- Standardization of culture due to globalization – producing a sameness and eroding diversity.
- **Example:** International hotel chains in Kampala looking nearly identical worldwide.
- **Risk:** Cultural uniqueness may be lost.
- **Reflection:** What are the consequences of homogenized leisure for local communities?



# Glocalization

- **Definition:** Adapting global products to local contexts.
- **Example:** KFC in Kampala serving gonja alongside chicken.
- **Implication:** Allows global appeal while preserving local flavor.
- **Question:** How can glocalization balance visitor expectations and cultural authenticity?



# Resistance & cultural preservation

- **Definition:** Communities resist or limit cultural change.
- **Example:** GOU resisting LGBTQ, heritage festivals in Uganda eg among the Bagisu.
- **Implication:** Preserves cultural identity, authenticity, and pride.
- **Question:** How should leisure providers engage with communities practicing cultural resistance?



## Positive impacts of globalization

- Cross-cultural exposure: festivals, sports, cuisine.
- Innovation in leisure service design.
- Economic opportunities: jobs, entrepreneurship, niche markets.
- Cultural visibility: global audiences learn about African traditions.
- Examples: Nyege Nyege festival in Uganda attracts global tourists; Afrobeat music tours generate revenue while promoting local culture.



## Negative impacts of globalization

- Cultural erosion or loss of authenticity.
- Commodification of traditions for tourism.
- Unequal economic benefits: global companies dominate profits.
- Environmental pressures from international tourism.
- Political pressure to adopt foreign cultures and shun local cultures