

**GLOBALISATION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC HERITAGE OF THE JUKUN-KONA
PEOPLE IN TARABA STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This study examines the socio-economic heritage of the Jukun-Kona people in Taraba State, Nigeria, through the lens of modernisation theory, which conceptualises development as a transition from traditional socio-economic structures to more complex, market-oriented, and technologically driven systems. Situating the Jukun-Kona within expanding processes of globalisation, the paper analyses how integration into wider markets, state-led development initiatives, formal education, and infrastructural expansion has transformed indigenous livelihood systems, land tenure arrangements, and community authority structures. While modernisation has facilitated new opportunities for mobility, trade, and access to services, it has also disrupted agrarian production patterns, weakened communal institutions, and accelerated cultural dislocation. The shift from subsistence-based and collectively regulated economies toward individualised and monetised relations has reproduced inequalities, marginalised local knowledge systems, and heightened youth precarity. By critically engaging modernisation theory, the study demonstrates that development outcomes are neither linear nor uniformly beneficial, highlighting the uneven and contested consequences of global integration for minority communities. It argues for context-sensitive pathways that reconcile socio-economic transformation with the preservation of indigenous heritage and social cohesion.

Keywords: *Globalisation, socio-economic heritage, modernization, Jukun-Kona people, Taraba State.*

Introduction

Globalisation has reshaped social, economic, political, and cultural systems by intensifying cross border flows of capital, technology, and information and weakening traditional boundaries. While it has generated growth and innovation, it has also disrupted indigenous livelihoods and cultural practices, particularly among small scale communities whose economies are rooted in local traditions (Ahmed & Popova, 2023; Peptan, 2020). The spread of global markets, neoliberal reforms, and digital networks has accelerated the displacement of customary occupations and transformed cultural landscapes (Udoiwang & Akpan, 2023; Coombe, 2016).

Across Africa, this process presents a dual reality of opportunity and erosion. Global integration has expanded markets and mobility but has also introduced foreign consumption patterns, restructured production systems, and weakened indigenous institutions among pastoralists and artisan groups (Prestholdt, 2008; Kinyanjui, 2019). It has frequently commodified culture, intensified land alienation, and undermined local governance structures (Anderson, Honig & Paredo, 2006). In Nigeria, these pressures are especially pronounced

among minority communities whose identities and livelihoods are tied to land and communal ownership (Omotosho, Ihekuna & Fakoya, 2020; Ejiofor, 2023).

The Jukun Kona of Jalingo Local Government Area illustrate these dynamics. Traditionally dependent on subsistence agriculture, crafts, local trade, and communal labour, their socio-economic life is organised around kinship, spiritual beliefs, and customary leadership that regulate land, resources, and conflict resolution (Falola & Heaton, 2008; Dauda, 2017; Rubin, 1967). Recent exposure to urbanisation, formal education, media, and capitalist markets has altered these foundations and reshaped both livelihoods and values.

In Jalingo, infrastructure expansion, migration, and formal market growth have reduced reliance on traditional crafts and communal landholding while reordering local authority structures (Kunga, Abba, & Gatama, 2024). Younger generations increasingly pursue wage labour and global consumer lifestyles, distancing themselves from ancestral practices. This transition has produced socio economic dislocation, weaker family ties, and declining communal cohesion (Nagombe, 2025; Suleimuri, 2018).

Against this backdrop, the study examines how global economic, technological, and cultural forces are transforming the livelihoods, institutions, and values of the Jukun Kona people. It assesses both the opportunities and the risks of globalisation and considers how the community seeks to preserve its socio-economic heritage while adapting to an increasingly interconnected world.

Globalisation, socio-economic heritage, and cultural transformation: An integrated review of the literature

Globalisation denotes the intensifying interconnectedness of economies, societies, and cultures through expanding flows of goods, services, capital, technology, information, and people, extending beyond economic exchange to encompass political, cultural, and environmental change (Demir, Canakci & Egri, 2021). Although rooted in earlier trade and migration systems, its rapid acceleration since the late twentieth century reflects technological innovation, improved transport, financial liberalisation, and neoliberal policy diffusion (Dreher, Gaston & Martens, 2008; Perraton, 2019). The growth of global value chains has integrated production across borders but also produced asymmetrical outcomes, with developing regions largely supplying labour and raw materials while advanced economies control high value segments (Sideri, 1997; Jovanović, 2015; Perraton, 2019).

Culturally and politically, globalisation circulates ideas, media, and lifestyles that may homogenise or hybridise identities, while reshaping state sovereignty through the influence of supranational institutions such as the WTO, IMF, and UN and enabling transnational activism (Perraton, 2019; Dreher, Gaston & Martens, 2008; Faiz, 2024; Pieterse, 2019; Reddy, 2012; Khizar & Siddique, 2024). It also contributes to environmental degradation, climate inequality, and new migration patterns that produce both multiculturalism and exclusionary politics (Van der Heijden, 2006; Peša & Ross, 2021; Sultana, 2022; Triandafyllidou, 2024). While some countries have benefited from growth, globalisation has widened domestic and global inequalities and provoked populist backlash, reinforced world systems hierarchies and exposing systemic vulnerabilities during crises such as COVID-19 (George, 2023; Liu et al., 2023; Zarycki, 2022; Juárez-Ramírez, Théodore & Gómez-Dantés, 2021). Contemporary debates on

digital sovereignty further highlight persistent global power asymmetries (Glasze et al., 2023; Yun, 2025).

Understanding these transformations also requires attention to socio economic heritage, defined as intergenerationally transmitted institutions, values, and resources that shape present opportunities and inequalities (Panzera, 2022; Salazar, 2010; Tanska, 2023). Legacies of colonialism, feudalism, and capitalism continue to structure land tenure, class hierarchies, and access to education and labour, producing enduring disparities across race, gender, and ethnicity (Al Zo'by, 2019; Noor, 2025; Stoliarchuk et al., 2025). Families with historical advantages accumulate wealth and mobility, while marginalised groups face structural barriers, though cultural norms and communal practices can also foster resilience (Kombié, 2025; Qudsia, 2024; Fahrati, 2023). Recognising these legacies is therefore essential for equitable development and the protection of indigenous knowledge (Hariram et al., 2023; Shaltout, Jaskolski & Hoving, 2023).

Economically, globalisation has encouraged market-oriented reforms, liberalisation, and integration into global value chains that create opportunities for industrialisation and learning but often entrench precarity, wage inequality, and technological divides, especially in Africa (Wu & Fang, 2024; Gong et al., 2022; Kaplinsky & Kraemer Mbula, 2022; Heeks, 2022). Financial integration can further constrain state autonomy and expose economies to instability (Eichengreen et al., 2022). Education, media, and youth function as key sites where global norms are adopted and contested, fostering cosmopolitan skills and hybrid identities while sometimes marginalising local epistemologies and deepening digital inequalities (Beck, 2012; Ingram, 2024; Dahane, 2025).

Environmental and land use changes associated with globalisation include intensified extraction, agribusiness expansion, displacement, and ecological degradation, though global cooperation also spreads sustainable technologies and planning innovations (Puig, 2021; Vasiliev, 2022; Sahana et al., 2023). Communities respond through adaptation strategies grounded in social networks and indigenous knowledge, yet their resilience is limited by persistent inequality and weak governance (Lugo Morin, 2021; Hellqvist & Heubaum, 2024).

In Nigeria, these dynamics reshape culture and livelihoods. Global media, language dominance, and consumer practices generate hybrid cultural forms while threatening indigenous languages and traditions (Ayodeji, 2021; Samuel & Akujobi, 2024). At the same time, digital platforms, Nollywood, Afrobeats, and youth initiatives support cultural revival (Ayodele, 2024). Tourism similarly reflects both opportunity and contradiction: festivals, crafts, and heritage sites generate income and global visibility but risk commodification, ritual modification, and unequal benefit distribution (Ajayi & Adediran, 2024; Nana & Daniel, 2023; Aluede & Ikhidero, 2024). When governed inclusively, however, tourism and cultural institutions can support preservation and community development, particularly through participatory management and diaspora engagement (Del Barrio Tellado, Gómez Vega & Herrero Prieto, 2023; Ezeudu & Chukwudubem, 2024). Overall, globalisation simultaneously expands opportunity and reproduces inequality, with outcomes shaped by the interplay between global pressures and local agency.

Modernisation theory: an analytical framework

This study adapts modernization theory to explain the relationship between globalisation and the socio-cultural heritage of the Jukun Kona people of Jalingo Local Government Area, Taraba State. Emerging in the 1950s and 1960s, modernization theory frames development as a transition from traditional to modern social, economic, and institutional forms, and is associated with scholars such as Rostow (1960), Parsons (1951), and Lerner (1958). These theorists conceptualised modernization as a largely linear process of structural transformation. Rostow proposed stages of growth driven by investment, technology, and mass consumption (Ayeni, Abdullahi & Andeshi, 2021), Parsons highlighted shifts from kinship based and ascriptive systems to rational and achievement oriented social orders (Chotim, 2022; Greve, 2022), and Lerner emphasised the role of media and communication in diffusing modern values (Brooke, 2024).

At its core, modernization theory argues that exposure to global economic and cultural systems through trade, investment, technology, education, and media encourages traditional societies to adopt bureaucratic institutions, secular governance, and market-oriented economies, gradually displacing subsistence livelihoods and customary authority (Vauclair & Rudnev, 2021; Li et al., 2023). Globalisation accelerates these processes by expanding the circulation of ideas, capital, and norms, promoting urbanisation, industrialisation, and cultural shifts toward individualism and meritocracy (Liu et al., 2022; Yan & Cao, 2024).

The theory has, however, been criticised for its ethnocentric and deterministic assumptions, its tendency to treat Western development paths as universal, and its neglect of cultural persistence and global structural inequalities. Development trajectories are often uneven and hybrid rather than linear, as traditional and modern forms coexist and interact (Peet, 2024; Agnoletto, 2023). Despite these limitations, modernization theory remains useful for interpreting change among communities such as the Jukun Kona. In this context, global education, media exposure, and market integration are reshaping traditional authority, livelihoods, and social values. Formal education introduces new knowledge systems and individualistic aspirations, media diffuses external lifestyles and norms, and participation in wage labour and trade monetises previously communal economic relations. Together, these forces weaken some customary practices while producing hybrid arrangements that combine local heritage with modern influences. Thus, while not wholly deterministic, modernization theory provides a practical lens for understanding how global forces catalyse the gradual transformation of Jukun Kona socio cultural life.

Methodology

The study adopted a phenomenological research design to explore the lived experiences and perceptions of the Jukun-Kona people regarding the influence of globalisation on their socio-economic heritage between 2015 and 2024. Phenomenology was appropriate because it captures how individuals interpret transformative processes affecting cultural identity, livelihoods, and social relations (Alhazmi & Kaufmann, 2022). This approach prioritised everyday narratives and context-specific meanings rather than predefined categories, enabling the identification of both visible and subtle changes in occupations, youth values, intergenerational relations, and traditional authority structures.

The target population consisted of approximately 6,400 Jukun-Kona residents in Taraba State, including elders, leaders, farmers, artisans, traders, youth, women, and cultural custodians whose roles are central to cultural continuity and socio-economic change. A purposive sample of ninety participants was drawn across six groups, including leaders/elders, youth, women, farmers, artisans/traders, and cultural practitioners, to ensure balanced representation. Snowball sampling further identified participants with deep community knowledge and experience.

Data were gathered through thirty Key Informant Interviews and six Focus Group Discussions, complemented by secondary sources such as academic literature, policy documents, and archival materials. The interviews and discussions generated insights into cultural and economic shifts, while documentary sources provided contextual grounding. Thematic and content analyses were employed to identify recurring patterns, including declining traditional livelihoods, cultural assimilation, changing communal values, and growing consumerism, thereby offering a concise yet nuanced account of how global forces reshape the socio-economic and cultural landscape of the Jukun-Kona community.

Traditional Socio-Economic Practices and Heritage Systems of the Jukun-Kona People

Field data from KIIs and FGDs revealed that traditional livelihood sustainability formed the backbone of the Jukun-Kona socio-economic heritage. Subsistence farming, particularly of millet, guinea corn, yam, and maize, was complemented by diversified activities such as hunting, fishing, and artisanal crafts, which collectively reinforced food security and social cohesion (KII with a Traditional Leader in Bakin Dutse, Taraba State August 2025). Farming practices were closely tied to seasonal rainfall and soil fertility, with communal rituals and festivals like the Ajei harvest festival integrating economic activity with cultural expression. Division of labour ensured balanced contributions: men undertook physically demanding agricultural tasks, hunting, and blacksmithing, while women managed household gardens, processed grains, brewed local beverages such as Burkutu, and traded in local markets (FGD with an Elder in Nukkai, Jalingo LGA, Taraba State).

Complementary livelihoods were deeply embedded in cultural and spiritual life. Hunting and fishing were not merely economic activities but also markers of bravery, prestige, and spiritual observance (KII with a Cultural Practitioner in Road-Block, Jalingo, Taraba State August 2025). Similarly, pottery, weaving, and blacksmithing carried symbolic meanings, denoting clan identity, marital status, or ritual roles. Market exchanges were predominantly barter-based, fostering reciprocity, trust, and community solidarity (KII with a Traditional Leader in Mallum, Ardo-kola LGA, Taraba State August 2025). Communal labor practices, known as gaya, further strengthened cohesion, ensuring that no household bore the burden alone while reinforcing social bonds (FGD with a Farmer in Mallum, Ardo-kola LGA, Taraba State August 2025).

Traditional governance and leadership structures supported socio-economic order. Chiefs and elders regulated land tenure, mediated disputes, and oversaw market and festival organization (FGD with an Elder in Kasuwan Bera, Ardo-kola LGA, Taraba State August 2025). Storytelling and apprenticeship systems were instrumental in transferring knowledge of farming, hunting, and craft production across generations (FGD with an Elder in Kasuwan Bera, Ardo-kola LGA, Taraba State August 2025). Festivals, marriage systems, and religious rituals further integrated economic life with cultural and spiritual responsibilities, making

livelihood strategies inseparable from the community's identity (KII with a Traditional Leader in Bakin Dutse, Taraba State August 2025).

Impact of Globalisation on the Socio-Economic Life of the Jukun-Kona People

Globalisation has introduced significant technological, economic, and cultural changes that have reshaped the Jukun-Kona socio-economic landscape. Mobile phones, social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook, and motorcycles have improved communication, mobility, and market access, enabling farmers and traders to coordinate sales and reach wider markets (KII with a youth in Jukun-Kona Community, August 2025). At the same time, these innovations have weakened traditional barter systems and face-to-face exchanges that historically reinforced reciprocity and social cohesion. Foreign consumer goods, Western education, and religious influences have also altered production and consumption patterns, as imported clothing and packaged foods increasingly replace local products, while school and church schedules disrupt agricultural and ritual calendars (KII with a young businessman, August 2025; FGD in Jalingo Market, August 2025). Apprenticeship systems in crafts such as pottery, blacksmithing, and weaving are declining, though some youths are adapting by marketing heritage crafts through social media, reflecting hybridisation rather than complete abandonment (KII with a woman in Malum, August 2025; Edeh & Johnson, 2019).

These global influences extend to land tenure and social institutions. Cash-based land transactions are gradually replacing collective and patrilineal ownership, generating disputes and weakening communal controls (KII with a young man in Malum, Ardo-kola LGA, August 2025). Exposure to modern education and media has shifted youth aspirations toward urban employment, reducing participation in farming, fishing, and craft-based livelihoods (FGD with a woman in Nukkai, Jalingo LGA, August 2025). Nevertheless, globalisation has also created opportunities for entrepreneurship, improved mobility, and new market linkages, suggesting a negotiated transformation rather than outright cultural loss (Moses Tau, KII in ATC, August 2025; Smith, 2017).

Despite these pressures, the Jukun-Kona community actively preserves and adapts its socio-economic heritage. Elders and traditional leaders organise festivals, craft exhibitions, and storytelling sessions that transmit farming skills, crafts, and ritual knowledge to younger generations (KII with an elder in Bakin Dutse, August 2025). Schools and community initiatives complement these efforts through heritage clubs and practical workshops, while adaptive strategies such as modifying rituals to fit modern schedules and marketing crafts online retain cultural meaning while accommodating contemporary realities (KII with a woman in ATC, August 2025; UNESCO, 2021; Otu, 2020). Women's local enterprises, markets, and festivals also sustain livelihoods and cultural identity, often incorporating modern tools without undermining symbolic practices (FGD with a woman in Kasuwan-Bera, August 2025; Nwachukwu, 2022; World Bank, 2021).

The Jukun-Kona socio-economic life historically integrated agriculture, crafts, trade, and ritual in mutually reinforcing ways that promoted cohesion and identity (Olanrewaju, 2018; Adegbite, 2019; Okonkwo, 2021; Nwankwo, 2020; Anyanwu, 2016; Adediran, 2017). While globalisation has disrupted these systems through technological change, foreign goods, and shifting aspirations (Adeola & Evans, 2018; Moses Tau, KII in ATC, August 2025), the

community has responded through selective adaptation and hybridisation (Smith, 2017; Edeh & Johnson, 2019). Preservation therefore combines elder-led initiatives, educational integration, and economic innovation, demonstrating resilience amid resource and market pressures (Adeyemi, 2021; Olayemi & Abubakar, 2022; Otu, 2020; Edeh, 2021). The Jukun-Kona experience ultimately shows that heritage functions both as cultural identity and economic resource, enabling continuity and sustainability under globalising conditions (Adeola, 2023; UNESCO, 2021).

Discussion of Findings

The findings show that Jukun-Kona traditional socio-economic life was highly integrated, linking subsistence farming, craft production, trade, and ritual practices into a cohesive system that sustained both livelihoods and cultural identity (Olanrewaju, 2018; Adegbite, 2019). Land tenure arrangements, apprenticeship, and festivals promoted social cohesion and intergenerational knowledge transfer, while crafts and trade carried symbolic as well as economic value, reinforcing communal norms and hierarchy (Okonkwo, 2021; Nwankwo, 2020; Anyanwu, 2016; Adediran, 2017).

Globalisation has simultaneously disrupted and created opportunities. Technology, foreign goods, Western education, and religion have weakened traditional livelihoods and apprenticeship structures and reshaped socio-cultural rhythms (Adeola & Evans, 2018; Moses Tau). Yet the community has responded through hybrid strategies, such as digitally marketing crafts and adapting rituals demonstrating negotiated change rather than cultural erosion (Smith, 2017; Edeh & Johnson, 2019). Preservation efforts led by elders, schools, and local markets sustain resilience by linking heritage with identity and income generation, suggesting that continuity depends on balancing tradition with pragmatic innovation (Adeyemi, 2021; Olayemi & Abubakar, 2022; Otu, 2020; Edeh, 2021). Overall, the Jukun-Kona case highlights how heritage can function both as a cultural anchor and an economic resource amid global pressures (Adeola, 2023; UNESCO, 2021).

Conclusions

This study examined the traditional socio-economic practices of the Jukun-Kona people, the effects of globalisation on these systems, and the community's strategies for safeguarding its heritage. The findings show that Jukun-Kona livelihoods are deeply rooted in farming, hunting, fishing, weaving, pottery, blacksmithing, and communal festivals, which function not only as means of subsistence but also as pillars of identity, cohesion, and cultural continuity. Elders, cultural associations, and rituals such as the Ajei harvest festival remain central to sustaining social order and transmitting knowledge across generations.

Globalisation has nonetheless reshaped these systems. Modern education, mass-produced goods, new technologies, and urban lifestyles have altered consumption patterns, weakened traditional crafts, and shifted youth aspirations away from indigenous occupations. Rituals and festivals have been compressed, and local production increasingly competes with imported alternatives. At the same time, global linkages have created new possibilities, including the digital marketing of crafts and the promotion of festivals as tourism assets, connecting cultural preservation with income generation.

Community responses reflect resilience and selective adaptation. Elders and heritage committees continue to organise festivals, exhibitions, and storytelling sessions, while schools and informal spaces promote heritage clubs and skill-based training to support intergenerational transfer. Practical adjustments, such as shortening ceremonies, modernising packaging, and using digital platforms, illustrate how global influences are integrated without abandoning core values. Despite constraints such as limited funding, ageing artisans, and import competition, collaborations with NGOs, churches, and tourism actors provide additional support. Overall, the Jukun-Kona case underscores the need to document and archive traditional practices, harness global tools for local benefit, and strengthen structured intergenerational and institutional partnerships to sustain socio-economic heritage in a changing world.

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