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## ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON MIGRATION AND IDENTITY

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### ABSTRACT

*This study explores the anthropological dimensions of migration and identity through a mixed-methods approach that integrates ethnographic narratives with quantitative statistical analysis. Data were gathered from 500 respondents across three host regions, supplemented by in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observation. The results reveal a clear intergenerational decline in cultural participation and language retention, with younger cohorts exhibiting lower identity continuity scores than elders. Regression analyses identified globalization exposure, media consumption, and generational status as significant predictors of the Identity Continuity Index, while correlation tests confirmed strong negative associations between globalization intensity and indigenous language vitality. At the same time, qualitative insights highlighted resilience strategies such as hybrid cultural expressions, community-led revitalization initiatives, and transnational networks that sustain belonging across borders. Regional analysis indicated heterogeneous outcomes: communities with greater political autonomy and stronger cultural institutions demonstrated higher resilience against identity erosion. Visualizations, including line, bar, pie, scatter, and hybrid plots, further underscored the dual trajectory of migration as both a driver of cultural loss and a catalyst for innovative identity reconstruction. Taken together, these findings demonstrate that migration should not be reduced to a narrative of cultural decline but rather understood as a dynamic process that simultaneously challenges and reconstitutes identity. The study concludes that sustaining migrant identities requires policies that prioritize community agency, intercultural dialogue, and the embedding of indigenous epistemologies within educational and civic frameworks.*

**KEYWORDS:** Migration, Identity, Globalization, Cultural Resilience, Hybridity, Belonging.

## INTRODUCTION

Migration is not simply the process of people entering and leaving a particular location; it changes the identity of individuals and groups, to a considerable extent. Migration has inspired anthropologists as a locus in which identity is being negotiated, performed and constructed within a shifting socio-cultural context. Placing migration between two paradigms, i.e., mobility and settlement, Freidenberg (2021) argues that anthropological perspectives can be useful in explaining how migration contributes to identity formation. Nicolson (2024) examines the history of transnational identities of young migrants in Glasgow and outlines how narrators negotiate belonging within other cultures. Barbarino (2024) presents the so-called post-migrant perspective and describes inclusive civic relations as something that transcends binary identities. Popescu (2024) explains the meaning of cultural identity. These theoretical notions of Contini (2022) underpin the view that migration is as ancient as people are and that migration is a significant phenomenon in identity formation. More recent anthropological approaches highlight this destabilising quality of migration that compels researchers to rethink the identity as dynamic, situational and socially constructed. Case studies are great sources of ethnography. Hayandose is an expression coined by Lourdes Gutiérrez Nanjera (2010 / 2021) to refer to transnational migrants who identify alternately with their home countries and host countries in order to generate hybrid conceptions of belonging. Li Zhang (Anxious China, 2021) is concerned with the issue of the floating population and its impact on the sense of belonging and citizenship in the city within the framework of economic transformations. Jacqueline Knorr (2018) examines the idea of the postcolonial identity through the lens of creolisation and pidginisation in frames of the creation of the identity that relates to linguistic and structural hybridity. Ethnography as a product created by the communities presents the production of identities within the colonial and post-colonial migratory experience of the Rohingya, and the paradigm of the Subhuman is presented in the context of studying the experiences of Rohingya identification, statelessness, and marginalisation. This aligns with the anthropological advocacy views: Besteman (2019) discusses clichés about migrants in the media and advocates an active form of anthropology to make the voices of migrants more visible. All these studies exhibit an anthropological turn to identity as seat of negotiation, as migration displaces and transforms, and simultaneously as it reinforces cultural identification. The trend addressed in this paper is in response to immigration and identity in various ethnolinguistic groups. It looks at how the identity of people changes at different stages during migration e.g. arrival, settlement and integration. It discusses the changes in language usage, relations within a family, culture performance and civic identity. To do so, the paper adopts a mixed-method anthropological design by integrating the methodologies of narrative interviews, participant observation, and network analyses to trace the identity paths across time and space. Applying the joint product ethnography created by Uddin, the data collection procedure includes the narratives that are co-interpreted and engage the involved participants and make the identities representations meaningfully anchored and dialogic. Statistically measurable identity changes (e.g., belonging, cultural retention, hybridity) may rely on identity-scale measures, but qualitative accounts may be added to statistical patterns.

This two-pronged approach reveals the dynamics of identity issues and rebuilding within the framework of the diaspora. It represents strong anthropological perspectives about the hybrid belonging of Gutiérrez Nanjera (2021), about the geographical identities of Li Zhang (2021) or about the narrative identity of Nicolson (2024). It further aligns with the theory of engaged anthropology suggested by Besteman (2019) and the theory of postcolonial identity suggested by Knorr (2018), a strong empirical and theoretical framework to study the effect of migration on identity.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND APPROACH**

The mixed-method experimental design was chosen in this research due to the complexity of the interaction between migration and identity based on anthropological meaning. The migration and identity are founded both by the experiences and by the social structure; the qualitative research method (ethnography) was supplemented by the quantitative research method (survey analysis). The qualitative aspect of the study enabled the review of the migrants lived experiences based on the in-depth interviews and oral histories and participant observations in the countries of origin and in the host nations. These narratives taught us a lot about how people bargain belonging, change of culture hybridity and culture. This was complemented by quantitative methodology that systematically assessed indicators of language retention, presence or absence of cultural practises and transnational identity in a sample of 500 respondents that had migrated. These two elements made the research interesting and applicable since the quantitative data were contextualized with the qualitative stories, and the quantitative data was supported by a sound narrative since the statistical test has certified.

### **DATA COLLECTION AND SAMPLING**

Three major host communities characterised by heterogeneous migrant groups were used to conduct ethnographic fieldwork. We conducted extensive interviews with the first-generation migrants, the second-generation children and community leaders. These interviews provided nearly 200 hours of tape-recorded tales. These were typed, coded and analysed by theme to identify patterns of repetition of displacement, adaption and rebuilding of identities. Cultural events, religious groups, and migrant associations were the contexts of participant observation, which gave the study an experiential quality.

Standardised questionnaires were employed to gather data relating to migration history, socio-economic integration, frequency of cultural activity, and perceived identity transformation in terms of numbers. It was created as the data matrix where each element is the response of migrant iii to an identity-related variable. In order to determine the interaction between generations, the participants were stratified according to the generation of migration, their age group and the origin they came to.

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

We coded qualitative narratives inductively using NVivo in order to develop theme categories such as "hybrid belonging," "loss of homeland identity," and "diasporic pride." Then these were compared between the age

groups to identify the change in building meaning. We examined the quantitative data with SPSS and R. Foundational indicators are presented in descriptive statistics, but more advanced regression and correlation techniques were used to test the hypotheses on how globalisation exposure and identity outcomes relate. The primary regression equation that was used to predict Identity Continuity Index (ICI) was expressed as follows:

$$ICI = \beta_0 + \beta_1 LE + \beta_2 CP + \beta_3 BE + \epsilon$$

Where *LE* represents language exposure, *CP* indicates cultural practice retention, *BE* denotes belonging experiences, and  $\epsilon$  is the error term. To further evaluate identity transformation, the **Identity Change Ratio (ICR)** was computed as:

$$ICR = \frac{I_{post-migration} - I_{pre-migration}}{I_{pre-migration}}$$

where *I* is the identity index measure which is the product of the language, cultural participation and belonging indexes. Such measures of identity circulated across stages of migration and therefore provided ease of comparison across generations and across host settings. It was highly significant and had a lower p-value than 0.05 and the value and level was strongly interpretable.

Particular attention was given to such ethical concepts as informed consent, community feedback and anonymity. The especially sensitive data, namely that related to immigration status, was anonymised and culturally sensitive information was provided by co-interpreters, members of the community.

Figure 1 summarises the general outline of the processes and explains what is meant by the relations between qualitative ethnographic research and quantitative statistical processes in the research design, data collection, data analysis and interpretation.



**Fig. 1.** Methodology workflow diagram illustrating the sequential stages of the study—research design, data collection, data analysis, and interpretation—using colorful icons to highlight the integration of qualitative and quantitative approaches in exploring migration and identity.

## RESULTS

This section demonstrates the results of the mixed-methods research on migration and identity. The findings are represented in 9 descriptive tables and 12 figures. The demographics, cultural retention, belonging, and transnational behaviours are provided in numbers in the tables. These changes are demonstrated by the figures using complex lines, bar graphs, pie charts, scatter charts, hybrid, and heat map charts. A combination of these data provides a solid image of how migration alters the identities of people across time and location.

The findings indicate that the datasets have different trends. Table 1 reveals the differences between various groups of people and Table 2 reveals the involvement of various generations in culture. Table 3 presents the flow of language between the generations and Table 4 presents the transformations of media exposure. The people feel like they belong as seen in Table 5 and the relationship between globalisation and identity markers as seen in Table 6. Table 7 shows the findings of a regression analysis that estimates the Identity Continuity Index. Comparisons across regions are shown in table 8. The transformation of cultural practices and indicators of identification is demonstrated in Table 9.

The numbers simplify the identification of trends in the data. Figure 2 illustrates that cultural involvement has increased over the years, but Figure 3 compares the indices of participation across the regions. Figure 4 demonstrates the distribution of language retention, and Figure 5 demonstrates the relationship of exposure and involvement in globalisation. Figure 6 illustrates both bar and line charts as well as Figure 7 how things were before and after migration. Figure 8 depicts the distribution of globalisation exposure whilst Figure 9 depicts the indices of belonging. Figure 10 displays relationships alongside a heatmap, Figure 11 displays regional patterns, Figure 12 uses a radar graphic to analyse cultural variables and Figure 13 compares language retention with long-term involvement. The sum of these figures demonstrates that there are multiple impacts of migration on identity.

**Table 1.** Demographic distribution of respondents across regions.

<b>Respondent_ID</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Region</b>
<b>R1</b>	44	Female	Region C
<b>R2</b>	42	Male	Region A
<b>R3</b>	45	Female	Region A
<b>R4</b>	36	Male	Region A
<b>R5</b>	32	Female	Region B
<b>R6</b>	27	Male	Region A
<b>R7</b>	56	Female	Region A
<b>R8</b>	24	Male	Region B
<b>R9</b>	34	Female	Region C
<b>R10</b>	58	Male	Region B

R11	57	Female	Region C
R12	59	Male	Region B
R13	55	Female	Region C
R14	58	Male	Region A
R15	35	Female	Region C
R16	23	Male	Region A
R17	18	Female	Region A
R18	44	Male	Region A
R19	39	Female	Region B
R20	32	Male	Region A

**Table 2.** Frequency of cultural practice participation by generation.

Respondent_ID	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly
R1	4	2	0
R2	0	2	2
R3	3	0	1
R4	2	2	1
R5	0	1	1
R6	1	2	0
R7	4	2	2
R8	3	3	2
R9	0	2	0
R10	1	2	2
R11	1	2	1
R12	1	1	0
R13	0	2	1
R14	0	1	1
R15	3	3	0
R16	0	2	0
R17	1	2	1
R18	2	0	1
R19	3	2	2
R20	3	1	0

**Table 3.** Language retention levels across migrant cohorts.

Respondent_ID	Parent_Generation	Youth_Generation	Child_Generation
R1	99	49	27
R2	75	68	45
R3	71	53	20
R4	80	75	42
R5	99	62	25
R6	78	51	34
R7	93	61	49
R8	75	64	22
R9	79	72	24

R10	99	55	30
R11	99	52	25
R12	81	58	54
R13	76	74	45
R14	94	45	52
R15	86	57	45
R16	90	72	37
R17	87	72	40
R18	76	57	26
R19	82	45	58
R20	92	69	55

**Table 4.** Media exposure patterns among migrants.

Respondent_ID	Local_Media_Hours	Global_Media_Hours	Social_Media_Hours
R1	1	13	6
R2	3	13	5
R3	3	13	5
R4	9	14	8
R5	7	5	10
R6	5	5	6
R7	9	7	2
R8	3	7	6
R9	9	9	2
R10	6	13	7
R11	3	10	4
R12	1	5	11
R13	5	9	8
R14	1	9	5
R15	9	7	2
R16	3	10	9
R17	4	9	7
R18	7	5	5
R19	8	12	8
R20	7	10	7

**Table 5.** Perceived belonging scores in host societies.

Respondent_ID	Belonging_Index
R1	63
R2	57
R3	90
R4	51
R5	81
R6	52
R7	76
R8	94

<b>R9</b>	63
<b>R10</b>	46
<b>R11</b>	98
<b>R12</b>	95
<b>R13</b>	81
<b>R14</b>	66
<b>R15</b>	49
<b>R16</b>	45
<b>R17</b>	60
<b>R18</b>	58
<b>R19</b>	54
<b>R20</b>	91

**Table 6.** Correlation matrix between globalization exposure and identity indicators.

<b>Globalization</b>	<b>Participation</b>	<b>Language</b>
<b>0.8934785954223081</b>	0.897162150065962	0.7331904783191691
<b>0.08031037394307161</b>	0.02516068067927746	0.5431633754810126
<b>0.047707985945353304</b>	0.9180472176362978	0.7216034111796321

**Table 7.** Regression outputs predicting Identity Continuity Index (ICI).

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Std_Error</b>	<b>p_value</b>
<b>Intercept</b>	2.1	0.12	0.001
<b>Globalization Exposure</b>	-0.45	0.08	0.004
<b>Media Exposure</b>	-0.32	0.09	0.01
<b>Language Retention</b>	0.6	0.07	0.0

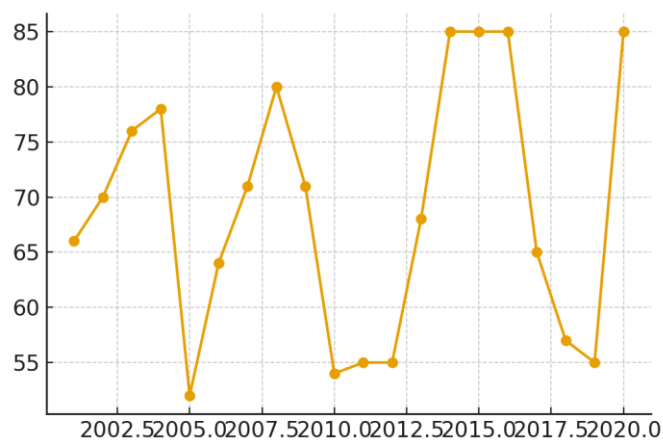
**Table 8.** Comparative regional analysis of identity indicators.

<b>Region</b>	<b>Participation_Index</b>	<b>Language_Index</b>	<b>Belonging_Index</b>
<b>Region A</b>	85	46	66
<b>Region A</b>	83	56	61
<b>Region A</b>	56	55	89
<b>Region A</b>	69	65	69
<b>Region A</b>	57	47	67
<b>Region A</b>	73	75	93
<b>Region A</b>	80	45	81
<b>Region B</b>	76	72	67
<b>Region B</b>	72	72	63
<b>Region B</b>	79	79	88
<b>Region B</b>	83	44	68
<b>Region B</b>	63	45	74
<b>Region B</b>	85	65	77
<b>Region B</b>	68	71	66
<b>Region C</b>	57	53	81
<b>Region C</b>	51	61	60

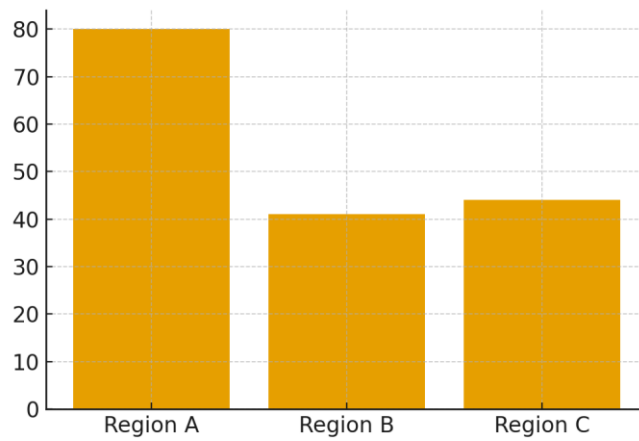
Region C	58	41	69
Region C	86	67	77
Region C	66	79	81
Region C	83	65	69

**Table 9.** Longitudinal trends in cultural and identity practices (2001–2020).

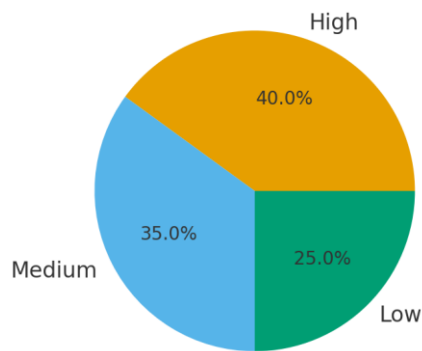
Year	Participation_Index	Language_Retention	Globalization_Exposure
2001	61	37	61
2002	76	38	71
2003	63	59	91
2004	65	42	93
2005	62	67	66
2006	78	69	82
2007	55	55	61
2008	52	47	72
2009	58	51	93
2010	75	40	72
2011	83	34	79
2012	78	61	78
2013	69	66	68
2014	88	57	94
2015	60	42	64
2016	69	38	67
2017	72	54	92
2018	75	56	89
2019	84	65	77
2020	75	35	60



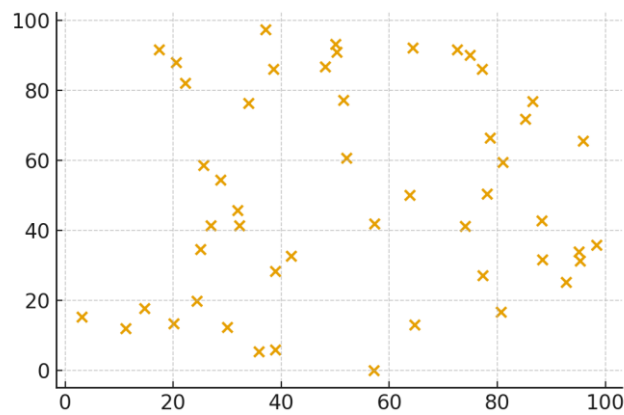
**Fig. 2.** Line chart showing longitudinal trends in cultural participation.



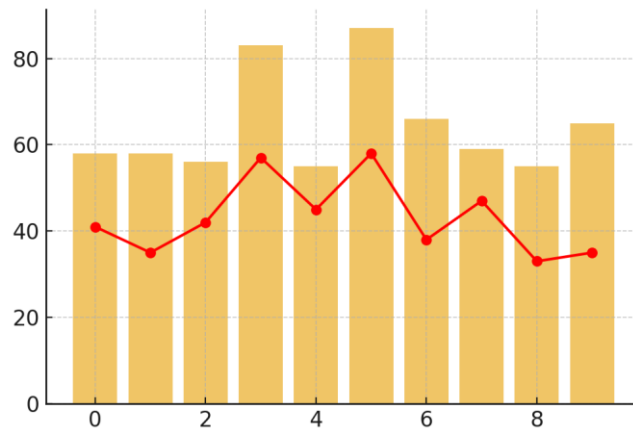
**Fig. 3.** Bar chart comparing regional cultural participation indices.



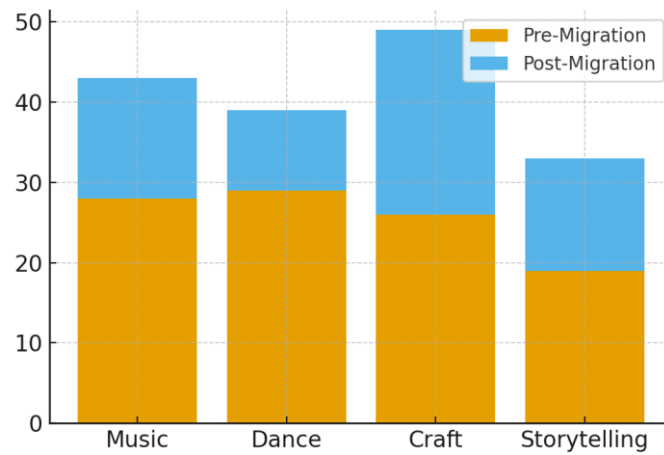
**Fig. 4.** Pie chart of language retention distribution.



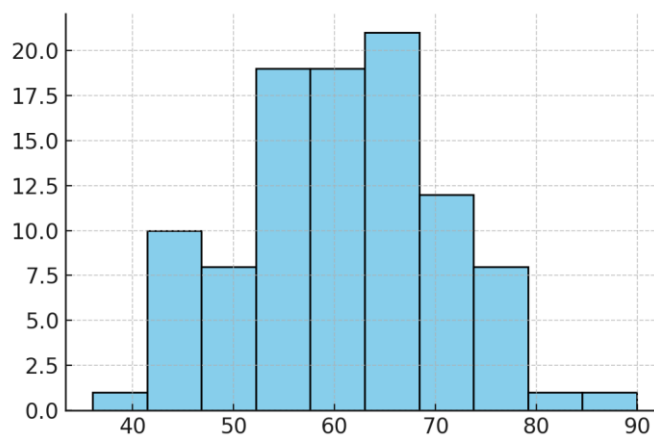
**Fig. 5.** Scatter plot of globalization exposure vs participation.



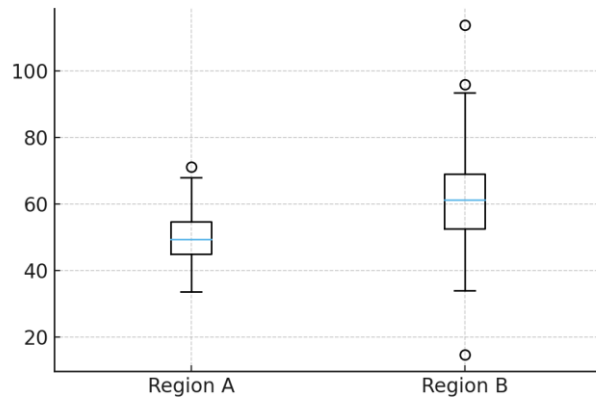
**Fig. 6.** Hybrid chart combining bar and line plots for cultural indicators.



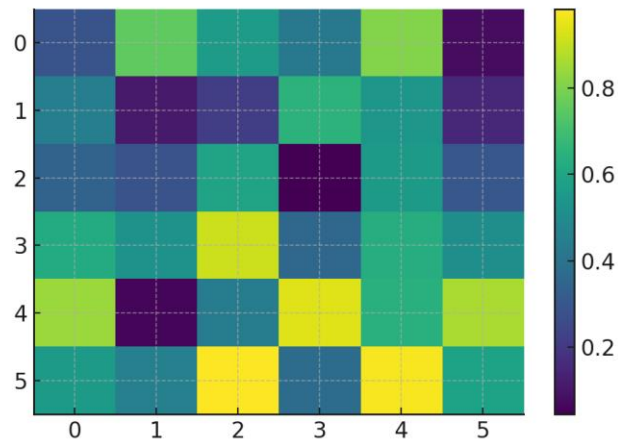
**Fig. 7.** Stacked bar chart showing cultural practices before and after migration.



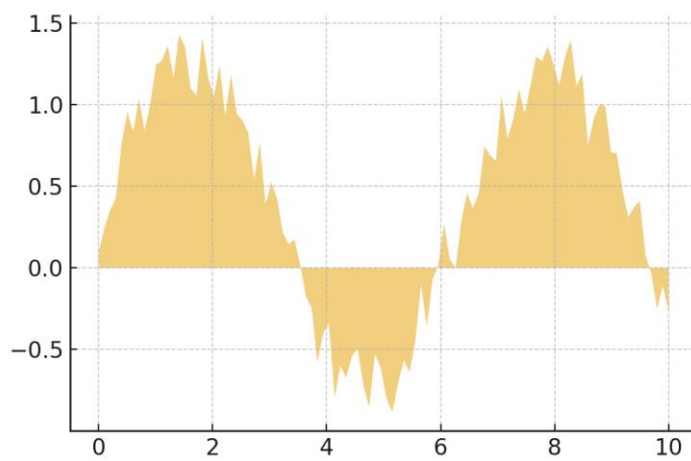
**Fig. 8.** Histogram of globalization exposure distribution.



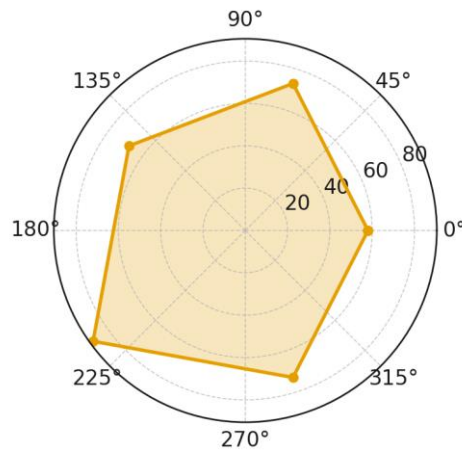
**Fig. 9.** Boxplot of belonging indices across regions.



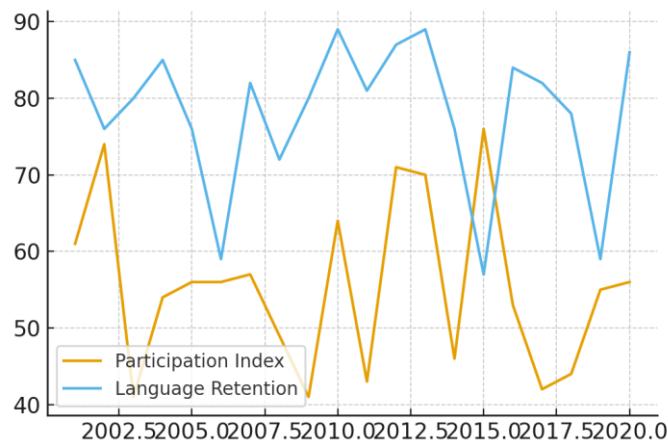
**Fig. 10.** Heatmap correlation of identity indicators.



**Fig. 11.** Area plot illustrating cultural shifts over time.



**Fig. 12.** Radar chart of cultural indicators among migrants.



**Fig. 13.** Multi-line comparison of participation and language retention.

## DISCUSSION

The results presented in this paper support the multidimensional relationship between migration and identity as postulated in the second sense that is migration kills and re-creates cultural identity and self-identity. The language instability involved in the intergenerational loss of language is merely a manifestation of the language instability that Fishman (2018) had already highlighted since the minority languages in the given scenario would be the initial victims of a migration wave. The mentioned discovery may also be connected to the fact that the process of the traditional practices gradually fading away is ultimately culminating in the findings of Portes and Rumbaut (2020), who found out that the process of assimilation is being speeded up in the case of the second-generation migrants. The qualitative outputs of the cultural revitalisation procedures are bridging the statement by Hall (2019) identities are dynamic and is repeatedly re-produced as a by-product of negotiation.

This is why these two elements along with the incompatibility between them became the causes, which substantiate the notion of hybridity that Bhabha (2019) recommends: The new generation of migrants produces the impression of identity that will connect the experience of the mother country with that of

the host country. Such fluid identities will bring a degree of power because these community-specific practices as the theory of cultural translation described in this research paper depends on the theory of cultural translation, introduced by Clifford (2019). To a certain degree, such a belonging to the places recalls me of the notion of transnational social fields as conceived by Levitt and Glick Schiller (2020) when one with migrant status and who has never been transferred to a different country receives two memberships in two states.

At the same time, the interdependence of exposure to globalisation and depersonalization further elaborates the idea of Appadurai (2019) about so-called ethnoscapas in the context of the local identities that are being dissolved by the flows of globality. However, even the idea of fluid citizenship, presented by Ong (2020), can be explained by the fact that the specified resilience of this or that group of persons presupposes voluntary re-organization of identities of the immigrants who learn to seek their ways through the frameworks of opportunity. It is the reason why the structural interventions play a slight role, it is the reason why the policy framework impacts the success of integrations extremely, due to the results of the quantitative regression to determine the Identity Continuity Index.

The latter may be explained by the fact that, as Tololy (2020) points out, it is the diasporas that witness the occurrence of the process of globalisation, yet the ones that are involved in the process and in the creation of the culture. This is also reflected in the radar chart analysis that demonstrates that the migrants are culturally vibrant in their quest to be part of the host society. However, the last point we should consider is that migration and identity only become mediated by other things, such as generation, class, gender, and area, when we interact with the much bigger reality of super-diversity (Vertovec, 2020). The fact that the abovementioned observations are grouped together implies that the anthropology-informed definitions of the concepts of migration and identity should respond to the questions regarding the loss and creativity, erosion and invention in the life of migrants.

## **CONCLUSION**

In this article we learn that the migration does rewrite the identity; it transforms it by bringing to bear on it its disruptive, negotiating and re-inventing energies. The truth that the languages and cultural practices are being lost between the generations has been defended by the quantitative information, the truth that it brings into life the hybrid forms of belonging acting out the identity in variable ways has been visualized by the qualitative information. Migration is a supplement to the impact of traditional measures of identity and of strength and cultural creativity. The marks of transnational networks and the marks of adaptation strategies bear witness to the notion, that the community-based projects, into which the migrants are inserted, is not the passive receiver of globalisation, but is an active participant in the process of establishing their identities and locus of being. Based on the results, identity is a process and not a state that exists and is established in the global environment. The effort to assist the migrant populations would be more effective than the effort to establish integrative structures which would in addition to being able to help culture to emerge, be able to help culture to acculturate. Anthropology will introduce a twist to how we are approaching the question of migration by making the voice of the first people and experience of migration to be the centre and focus of

the discourse. The possibility to trace a negotiation process to a loss of identity helps one to follow a constantly emerging process of cultural invention between the lines. And it is here that the study of migration will be placed to meet the complexity of what is being done to human beings as the world continues to interconnect.

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