

SOCIAL MEDIA CAPTIONING AS A TOOL FOR GLOCALIZATION IN GLOBAL BRAND ADVERTISING AND ITS IMPACT ON CONSUMER PERCEPTION AND LOYALTY IN CHENNAI CITY

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Abstract

In the era of digital connectivity, social media has become a powerful platform for global brands to engage diverse audiences through localized communication. This study examines the role of *social media captioning* as a strategic tool for glocalization and its influence on consumer perception and brand loyalty in Chennai, a culturally rich metropolitan city in India. Using a descriptive and analytical research design, data were collected from 210 respondents aged 18–35 through structured questionnaires. SPSS were used to analyse the data. Techniques like percentage analysis, factor analysis, correlation and cluster analysis were employed. The findings highlight three key dimensions shaping consumer response to localized captioning: *Cultural Connection & Emotional Engagement*, *Customer Perception & Loyalty*, and *Regional Identity & Brand Accessibility*. Further, emotional engagement, cultural relatability, and perceived brand affinity emerged as independent yet significant determinants of consumer attitudes. Cluster analysis revealed that most respondents fall into *moderately engaged* and *highly engaged* groups, reinforcing the effectiveness of culturally adapted messaging. The study concludes that glocalized social media captions enhance brand relatability, trust, and long-term loyalty, making them a vital strategy for global brands seeking resonance in culturally diverse markets.

Keywords: Social Media Captioning, Glocalization, Consumer Perception, Brand Loyalty, Global Brands, Digital Advertising.

Introduction

In the modern digitalized world, the social media is an easy way to connect globally which also helps to attract global brands. Advertising is no longer limited to audio and video; Captions also plays a key role in part of brand communications. The concept of ‘Glocalization’ is making global strategies/products with local adaptations. Through social media, global advertising is using Caption with local languages, cultural preferences and emotional connect which add meaningful connections to local audience. Localization through captioning global brands can influence how consumers perceive the brands whether they feel friendly, trustworthy and approachable which encouraging them to connect with the brand again over again.

Research Problem

In an era where global brands strive to maintain a standardized identity while resonating with local audiences, glocalization has emerged as a critical marketing strategy. Social media platforms, particularly Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, have enabled brands to engage diverse consumers through tailored captioning—incorporating local language, cultural

references and region-specific emotions. However, the extent to which localized captioning influences consumer perception and loyalty remains underexplored, particularly in culturally rich urban markets like Chennai. With a multilingual, socio-economically varied population, Chennai presents a unique context to study how global brands adapt their digital content to local sensibilities. The research problem, therefore, centres on understanding how the localization of social media captions in global brand advertising shapes consumer attitudes, trust and long-term brand loyalty among Chennai consumers, while also examining the role of demographic and socio-economic factors in moderating these effects.

Review of Literature

Simi and Matusitz (2017) conducted a study on “Glocalization of subway in India: How a US giant has adapted in the Asian subcontinent”. The study examines how U.S. fast food product successfully marketed global product fit to Indian Culture. The main aim is to analysis how global brands use captioning as a tool of glocalization on social media in Chennai and also consumer engagement. Descriptive and analytical research design as been used for the study with the sample size of 200 from the age of 18 to 35. The study finds that Captioning with cultural cues, Tamil phrases, or festival references likely strengthens consumer engagement. The study concludes that localized communication techniques are crucial for global brand sustainability in culturally diverse markets is supported.

Tsai and Men (2017) did a study on Consumer engagement with brands on social network sites: A cross-cultural comparison of China and the USA. The study emphasized on the consumer engagement with brands on social media. Study aims to compare cultural differences (China vs. USA) in motivations, trust, and brand engagement. It's a Quantitative study. The study finds that the consumer purchase decisions is highly dependent on cultural values. The study reveals that the both China and USA had cultural difference but have similarities is engagement with brand pages on social network sites.

Vohra et al. (2015) did a study on “Inclusive workplaces: Lessons from theory and practice” The study highlighted that workplace diversity increases employee engagement, trust, and long-term commitment. The study was conceptual and practice-based. The study finds that Comparable to consumer-brand communication, customer perception and loyalty can be enhanced by advertising that is inclusive and uses locally relevant and culturally suitable social media captions and written policies must framed for genuine cultural practice. It concludes that by embracing regional identity, language, and cultural values, brands foster a feeling of community that improves the bond between customers and brands.

Goodrich & De Mooij (2014) says “How ‘social’ are social media? A cross-cultural comparison of online and offline purchase decision influences” The study is based on whether the social media is Social in terms of influencing consumer purchase decisions. The study aims to analysis how much social media influences decisions to buy in comparison to offline word-of-mouth. It's a cross-cultural comparative study across different countries. The findings are the countries like India and China are mostly influenced by offline like their family and peer group's opinion dominates their purchase decision parallelly online influenced for U.S and Europe countries. It concludes that social media is not universally “social”; instead, its influence on consumer purchase decisions is highly dependent on cultural values.

Research Gap

While existing literature extensively discusses glocalization strategies, consumer engagement on social media and the influence of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) across cultural contexts, there remains a notable gap in understanding the specific role of social media captioning as a micro-level tool for glocalization in shaping consumer behaviour. Prior studies have emphasized broader adaptation strategies and the effectiveness of visual/textual content formats in driving engagement. However, there is limited empirical research focusing on how localized textual elements—such as captions, taglines function as cultural touchpoints in influencing consumer perception, emotional connection and brand loyalty, particularly in Chennai. Furthermore, existing cross-cultural studies, overlooks the intra-national diversity and regional consumer dynamics within India. There is also insufficient exploration into how socio-economic and demographic variables mediate the effectiveness of localized captions in the Indian context. This gap underscores the need for a focused investigation into how culturally adapted social media captioning by global brands impacts consumer attitudes and loyalty in Chennai reflecting both modern global influences and deep-rooted local traditions.

Objectives of the Study

- To analyse the socio-economic and demographic profile of consumers in Chennai who engage with global brands on social media platforms.
- To examine the influence of localized (glocalized) social media caption / taglines on consumer perception towards global brands.
- To investigate how culturally adapted social media texts influence the emotional connection and long-term commitment of consumers towards global brands.
- To evaluate how demographic and socio-economic variables moderate the impact of social media captioning on consumer perception and loyalty.

Research Methodology

The Sample respondents are from Chennai city. The researcher used purposive sampling technique to collect a sample of 210 respondents through questionnaire. The data for the study were collected during August 2025. Data analysis was done with the help of SPSS. To achieve the objective of this research, the researcher has used percentage analysis, factor analysis, Cluster analysis and Correlation.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Demographic Profile of Consumers

Attribute		No.of respondents	% of respondents
Gender	Female	106	51.0
Age	Below 20	89	42.8
Educational Qualification	Graduate	82	39.4
Occupation	Student	110	52.9
Family monthly income per month	Below 10,000	89	42.8
Preferred language for Social media	English	164	78.8

Frequency of using social media	Daily	180	85.7
Social media platforms respondents uses more	Instagram	180	86.5

Interpretation

From the above table shows that, the respondents are almost equally divided between males and females, with a majority belonging to the younger age group, particularly below 20 years, and largely consisting of students pursuing higher secondary or graduate education. Most of them come from lower to middle-income families, indicating modest economic backgrounds. English is the dominant language for social media use, despite the presence of regional languages, showing a preference for a global medium of communication. Instagram emerges as the most widely used social media platform, far ahead of Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, which highlights the youth-centric nature of the responses. Overall, the findings indicate that the sample is primarily young, student-based, middle-income, and digitally active, with a strong inclination towards Instagram and English usage.

Factor Analysis on Consumer perception on Glocalisation

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.908	15

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.876
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1536.116
	df	105
	Sig.	.000

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.671	44.476	44.476	6.671	44.476	44.476	3.852	25.681	25.681
2	1.336	8.905	53.381	1.336	8.905	53.381	3.160	21.065	46.746
3	1.194	7.961	61.342	1.194	7.961	61.342	2.189	14.596	61.342
4	.877	5.845	67.187						
5	.822	5.483	72.670						
6	.661	4.406	77.076						
7	.610	4.069	81.145						
8	.531	3.541	84.685						
9	.449	2.996	87.681						
10	.418	2.784	90.465						
11	.375	2.499	92.964						

12	.344	2.296	95.260					
13	.273	1.818	97.077					
14	.229	1.529	98.606					
15	.209	1.394	100.000					

Interpretation: Under the Factor Analysis, the 15 variables reduced to

The first factors consist of 8 variables,

- Localized messaging in social media makes a global brand seem more accessible (.772)
- I appreciate when brands adapt their food, clothing, or messaging for Indian tastes (.748)
- I feel proud to support global brands that celebrate Indian regional diversity and festivals (.743)
- I believe glocalization helps global brands build stronger trust among Indian consumers (.711)
- I find global brands more attractive when they personalize their campaigns to suit different regions of India (.650)
- I perceive brands as more customer-friendly when they adapt their content for different Indian regions (.579)
- Social media content that reflects my local culture enhances the brand's image in my mind (.761)
- I recommend brands to others when they show sensitivity to Indian cultural values (.751)

Hence this factor was named **“Cultural Connection & Emotional Engagement.”**

The second factor consists of 3 variables

- Localization of branding and communication enhances my loyalty toward global brands (.838)
- I am more likely to engage with a brand that acknowledges local festivals or customs in its content (.838)
- When a brand tailors its product or message to Indian tastes, I trust it more (.538)

Hence this factor was named **“Customer Perception & Loyalty.”**

The third factor consists of 4 variables

- Brands that reflect regional language or traditions in their social media captions feel more relatable (.838)
- I feel more connected to brands that localize their offerings to my region (.768)
- I prefer to purchase from brands that incorporate local culture in their social media advertisement (.538)
- I feel emotionally connected to brands that acknowledge my regional identity (.768)

Hence this factor was named **“Regional Identity & Brand Accessibility.”**

Factor Analysis on Emotional Connection & Brand Commitment**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.931	18

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.901
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2388.670
	df	153
	Sig.	.000

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.474	47.077	47.077	8.474	47.077	47.077	4.306	23.922	23.922
2	1.896	10.532	57.609	1.896	10.532	57.609	4.216	23.423	47.345
3	1.111	6.174	63.783	1.111	6.174	63.783	2.959	16.438	63.783
4	.994	5.523	69.306						
5	.780	4.335	73.641						
6	.702	3.898	77.539						
7	.670	3.721	81.259						
8	.515	2.861	84.120						
9	.440	2.445	86.566						
10	.419	2.328	88.893						
11	.365	2.029	90.922						
12	.298	1.657	92.579						
13	.284	1.578	94.156						
14	.252	1.399	95.555						
15	.236	1.310	96.865						
16	.220	1.220	98.085						
17	.179	.992	99.078						
18	.166	.922	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Interpretation

Under the factor analysis, 18 variables were reduced to 3 predominant factors:

Localized social media content makes me feel that the brand values my culture and identity (.811)

I trust global brands more when they maintain a consistent emotional tone in their captions (.788)

I am more likely to trust a global brand that uses culturally familiar expressions in their posts (.845)

Captions that reflect local culture make me feel that the brand understands me (.819)

When a brand's social media captions evoke emotions, I tend to develop brand loyalty (.849)

I feel a sense of belonging when a brand uses language and emotions that reflect my cultural background (.841)

Emotional storytelling in captions by global brands builds my trust over time (.793)

I feel emotionally attached to global brands that use culturally adapted language in their social media content (.754)

Hence, this cluster was labelled as the **“Emotional Engagement Factor”** since the items represent emotional attachment, trust, and loyalty developed through culturally resonant communication.

Factor 2: Cultural & Relatable Factor (3 variables)

I would prefer to continue buying from a global brand that makes me feel understood through its communication (.783)

I would recommend a global brand to others if I feel emotionally connected to it (.704)

I feel a personal bond with global brands that consistently communicate in a relatable tone (.702)

This set of items emphasizes relatability, recommendation, and personal bonding, and was therefore labelled as the **“Cultural & Relatable Factor.”**

Factor 3: Perceived Brand Affinity Factor (4 variables)

I feel connected to global brands that consistently use culturally adapted messaging (.724)

I feel loyal to global brands that regularly use culturally adapted messaging (.726)

Brands that make an emotional effort through their captions earn my long-term support (.576)

I am more likely to forgive mistakes of a global brand I emotionally connect with (.629)

This factor reflects sustained loyalty, forgiveness, and affinity towards culturally adaptive brands, hence it was named the **“Perceived Brand Affinity Factor.”**

Cluster analysis: Final Cluster Centres

Cluster 1	5.000
2	87.000
3	118.000
Valid	210.000
Missing	167.000

Interpretation

The cluster analysis revealed three groups of consumers:

Cluster 1 – Disengaged (n=5): Low scores across all factors, showing little emotional connection or loyalty.

Cluster 2 – Highly Engaged (n=87): Very high scores, indicating strong emotional engagement, cultural relatability, and brand affinity.

Cluster 3 – Moderately Engaged (n=118): Moderate scores across factors, representing the mainstream segment with average but positive engagement.

This shows that the majority of consumers fall into the Moderately Engaged and Highly Engaged groups, reinforcing the impact of glocalized branding.

Correlation Analysis on Factor variables

H₀: There is no significant relationship among the factor variables (Emotional Engagement, Cultural & Relatable and Perceived Brand Affinity).

H_a: There is a significant relationship among the factor variables (Emotional Engagement, Cultural & Relatable and Perceived Brand Affinity).

Correlations

		Emotional Engagement factor	Cultural & Relatable factor	Perceived Brand Affinity factor
Emotional Engagement factor	Pearson Correlation	1	.000	.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)		1.000	1.000
	N	210	210	210
Cultural & Relatable factor	Pearson Correlation	.000	1	.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000		1.000
	N	210	210	210
Perceived Brand Affinity factor	Pearson Correlation	.000	.000	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000	1.000	
	N	210	210	210

The correlation table shows that the Pearson Correlation values among the three factors (Emotional Engagement, Cultural & Relatable, and Perceived Brand Affinity) are 0.000 with a p-value of 1.000.

This means there is no statistically significant relationship among the three extracted factors.

In other words, each factor is independent and measures a unique dimension of consumer perception.

Since the correlation values are 0.000 and not significant ($p > 0.05$), we accept the null hypothesis (H_0) — there is no relationship between the factor variables.

Findings

➤ Finding based on **Demographic profiles**

- The Majority of the respondents are Female
- The Majority of the respondents are from the age category below 20

- The Majority of the respondents are Graduates
- The Majority of the respondents are students
- The Majority of the respondents are from the income category below Rs.10000
- The Majority of the respondents prefer English language for social media
- The Majority of the respondents using Instagram as social media platform.
- By applying **factor analysis** 15 variables were reduced to 3 predominant factors with cumulative variance 25.681, 46.746, 61.342
The first factors consist of 8 variables known as “**Cultural Connection & Emotional Engagement**”
The second factor consists of 3 variables known as “**Customer Perception & Loyalty**”
The third factor consists of 4 variables known as “**Regional Identity & Brand Accessibility**”
- By applying **factor analysis** 18 variables were reduced to 3 predominant factors with cumulative variance 23.922, 47.345, 63.783
The first factors consist of 8 variables known as “**Emotional Engagement Factor**”
The second factor consists of 3 variables known as “**Cultural & Relatable Factor.**”
The third factor consists of 4 variables known as “**Perceived Brand Affinity Factor.**”
- In **Cluster analysis**, 3 cluster are formed, the majority of consumers fall into the Moderately Engaged and Highly Engaged groups, reinforcing the impact of glocalized branding.
- The **correlation analysis** revealed that there is no significant relationship among the three extracted factors — Emotional Engagement, Cultural & Relatable, and Perceived Brand Affinity. The Pearson correlation values were 0.000 with $p = 1.000 (> 0.05)$, indicating that each factor functions as an independent dimension of consumer perception toward glocalized branding.

Suggestions:

- To increase emotional involvement, international brands could employ culturally relevant captions that are localised.
- To increase relatability, social media marketing should incorporate regional languages and customs.
- Long-term brand affinity and loyalty can be developed through consistent, culturally sensitive communication.
- Targeting highly and moderately engaged customer segments should be the focus of distinct initiatives.
- Since emotional, cultural, and affinity variables all influence consumer perception in different ways, brands should balance them.

Conclusion:

The study reveals that the social media 'captioning' plays a major role in the Glocalization of global brands by making their communication more effectively through culturally relevant and emotionally engaging for Indian consumers. The key three dimensions through factor analysis is emotional engagement, cultural relatability and perceived Brand Affinity which significantly

influence how consumers connect with brands. The study highlights that the effectiveness of localized messaging is strengthening consumer loyalty. To have better impacts, the brands should balance the three dimensions. Overall, glocalised social media captioning enhance trust, relatability and long term loyalty which making it an effective strategy for global brands in Chennai.

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