



The Evaluation of the Glocalization Strategy of the Second-Wave Coffee Shops with Respect to the Interior Design

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Abstract

This study examines how Starbucks, as a global brand, employs glocalization strategies in its interior design by incorporating local architectural elements into standardized global formats. The primary objective is to analyze how local and global elements are integrated into the design of the second-wave coffee shops, a globally recognized brand, and to evaluate the balance between these elements from a design perspective. To achieve this, six Starbucks stores, selected as the sample for the current study, located in the EMEA (Europe, Middle East, and Africa), Asia-Pacific, and Japan regions were examined. The research focused on key interior design components, including vertical structural elements, flooring, ceiling features, openings, furniture, and decorative details, assessing them within the framework of local and global characteristics. A qualitative research approach was adopted, employing content analysis to systematically evaluate the selected stores. The originality of this study lies in its structured examination of how glocalization strategies manifest in interior spaces through regional variations. The findings reveal that local elements such as ceiling types, materials, and seating styles were consistently integrated to reflect regional identities, while standardized lighting and furniture layouts preserved the brand's global coherence. Thus, the findings show that integrating local motifs into spatial design enables global brands to establish a meaningful connection with the local cultural context while maintaining their global identity. This balance not only enhances user experience but also reinforces brand identity through culturally resonant spaces. Overall, the research underscores the significance of preserving cultural codes in interior design as a means of fostering commercial success for global brands. By offering a framework for incorporating glocalization strategies in spatial design, this study provides valuable insights for designers and brands aiming to achieve cultural sustainability while maintaining a strong global presence.

Keywords: Cultural code, Global identity, Glocalization, Interior design, Local motifs.

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INTRODUCTION

Globalization has become a phenomenon that permeates all aspects of life, with the advent of new communication technologies and the internet enabling cultures to transcend national borders. In this process, American culture has emerged as a global phenomenon, while local cultures have interacted with this global culture (Serinkaya, 2022: 12). Global brands, to establish a presence in diverse geographies, must balance maintaining global standards with adapting to local dynamics (Kurtuldu, 2016: 37). In this context, the concept of 'glocalization' has emerged, signifying a transformative process in which global and local elements coexist and complement one another (Roudometof, 2016: 392). Glocalization is particularly evident in design, especially in interior spaces. Global brands integrate local cultural motifs and materials into the interior design of stores in different regions, preserving regional identity while maintaining their global brand image (Alaali and, 2019: 894). For instance, modern design principles can be enriched with local artworks, architectural details, and traditional materials to create a unique design language.

This study hypothesizes that the application of glocalization by global brands in interior design enables the creation of spaces that are both compatible with local identities and aligned with global standards. Although existing literature explores the application of glocalization in design, systematic studies focusing on the balance of local and global elements in interior design remain limited. For instance, Torkington (2012) highlights how villas in Portugal's Algarve region combine elements of both English colonial and traditional Algarve architecture. Küçük and Bilgiç (2022) examine how local culture is integrated into hotel designs through glocalization strategies. Shelby et al. (2022) note that while local elements are included in the design, dominant global influences can result in a conflicting identity. These studies underscore that glocalization in spatial design is a dynamic process.

This research distinguishes itself from existing studies by focusing on how the components of global brands' interior designs differ regionally within the framework of glocalization strategies. It systematically examines how these interior elements balance local and global features while also aiming to provide insights into future directions for interior design guided by glocalization strategies.

The study hypothesis is that "The study aims to contribute to the discipline of interior architecture by analyzing in detail how Starbucks applies glocalization strategies in its interior designs and how local and global elements are integrated. The qualitative research method of content analysis was chosen as the methodological approach. According to Saban (2009: 833), "Content analysis involves systematically reviewing printed, visual, and similar materials to analyze them thematically according to specific categories". Accordingly, the analysis in this study focused on six interior design components. These components are vertical structural elements, flooring, ceiling design,

openings, furniture, and decorative details. These components were chosen based on their direct relevance to spatial identity and cultural expression in interior architecture. A thematic coding scheme was developed through an inductive approach following a preliminary review of the selected store images. Initial categories were determined based on recurring spatial features observed in the interior photographs. These included themes such as the use of traditional materials, local construction techniques, cultural decorative motifs, the integration of modern furniture, and branding consistency. The categories were later grouped into two overarching themes: local elements and global elements, aligned with the conceptual framework of glocalization (Roudometof, 2016: 392; Alaali & Pitsaki, 2019: 894). Each selected Starbucks interior was analyzed based on high-resolution visual data sourced from official Starbucks media channels. Data were coded manually by the researcher using a descriptive coding method, marking the presence and interpretation of each identified element across the six cases. Descriptions were supported with visual evidence, and codings were noted in a comparative table (Table 2).

To systematically evaluate interior designs in terms of glocalization, the study focuses on Starbucks stores as the subject of analysis. Globally, Starbucks operates 18,424 stores in North America and 21,775 stores in international markets. The EMEA region has approximately 4,582 stores, the Asia-Pacific region has about 5,626 stores, and Japan has 1,986 stores (Starbucks Corporation, 2024). To explore how the components of global brands' interior designs differ regionally within the context of glocalization strategies, six Starbucks stores were selected for the study, two stores each from the EMEA (Europe, the Middle East, and Africa), Asia-Pacific, and Japan regions (Table 1).

Table 1. Starbucks Stores Selected as Samples from EMEA, Asia-Pacific, and Japan Regions

Region	Country-City	Name
EMEA	England-Sheffield	<i>Sheffield's Carbrook Hall Starbucks</i>
EMEA	France-Paris	<i>Starbucks Boulevard des Capucines</i>
Asia-Pacific	South Korea-Seoul	<i>Starbucks Famille Park</i>
Asia-Pacific	South Korea-Daegu	<i>Starbucks Daegu Jongro Goteak</i>
Japan	Japan-Kyoto	<i>Starbucks Coffee Kyoto Ninenzaka Yasaka Chaya</i>
Japan	Japan-Ise	<i>Ise Naiku-mae Starbucks</i>

By reviewing images from the brand's official website, a purposive sampling method, one of the non-probability sampling techniques, was used to select stores that reflect the local cultural texture of their region and stand out with unique design elements. The interior design of these Starbucks stores will be analyzed to detail the impact of glocalization strategies on the discipline of interior architecture and explore their potential applications.

THE SECOND-WAVE COFFEE SHOPS

Coffee, derived from the seed of the fruit of a tree belonging to the *Coffea* genus in the Rubiaceae family, has transcended its role as a mere

beverage and become an integral part of social interaction and daily life across the globe. Coffee shops, once considered simple points of sale, have gradually transformed into central venues of social life. As Şeker and Özata (2022: 194) emphasize, coffee is not merely a drink but also carries cultural, social, and symbolic meanings. Likewise, coffee shops serve not only as consumption spaces but as environments in which social interaction, cultural exchange, and symbolic experiences are fostered.

According to the International Coffee Organization (ICO), coffee constitutes the second most valuable global commodity market after crude oil. The development of coffee culture has historically been defined in three distinct waves (Baruönü Latif and Örs, 2018: 151). The first wave emerged in the early 20th century and included instant coffee products such as Nescafe, Folgers, and Maxwell House, which were designed for rapid preparation and mass consumption. This period emphasized convenience and accessibility. The second wave began in the 1960s and was characterized by the rise of coffeehouse chains such as Starbucks and Caribou Coffee. This era popularized espresso-based beverages like lattes, cappuccinos, and mochas, transforming coffee from a utilitarian product into a sensorial and cultural experience. Coffee consumption became increasingly associated with pleasure and socialization. The third wave, in contrast, emphasizes the artisanal and cultural value of coffee, treating it as a high-quality product akin to wine, cuisine, or music. This movement values transparency in production, ethical sourcing, and sophisticated brewing techniques.

Although the second wave began in the 1960s, it reached full momentum after the 1980s, particularly through the global expansion of Starbucks, which significantly influenced both the economic and socio-cultural dimensions of coffee consumption (Şeker and Özata, 2022: 194). Second-wave coffee culture sought to enhance the user experience by offering a variety of beverages and fostering a comfortable environment. As consumers encountered new coffee types, such as espresso and latte, coffee chains evolved into a recognizable business model, paving the way for globally known brands. Consequently, coffee shops adhering to the principles of the second wave emerged in numerous countries (Kahya and Zencir Çiftçi, 2022: 1254).

More than just serving beverages, these new-generation establishments aimed to offer experiential spaces rooted in cultural exchange and social interaction. Unlike first-wave coffee shops, which prioritized speed and standardization, second-wave shops emphasize a richer customer experience through specialized drinks, unique atmospheres, and higher service quality. Spatial design became a critical factor in this evolution: materials, seating arrangements, and lighting were all strategically selected to promote prolonged user engagement.

These contemporary coffee shops played a pivotal role in the evolution of global coffee culture and laid the foundation for early examples of glocalization strategies. Notably, brands such as Starbucks -

key representatives of the second wave - began to integrate local architectural and interior elements into their store designs in different regions, aiming to evoke a sense of belonging among users. In this way, interior spaces were shaped by the cultural contexts of their locations through the inclusion of local artistic elements and architectural forms. This practice not only ensured the continuity of global brand identity but also embedded local aesthetic values within the design, fostering a deeper connection with the surrounding cultural environment.

As a result, second-wave coffee shops have emerged not only as consumption spaces but also as hybrid spatial identities situated at the intersection of global and local cultures. They represent a design approach that seeks equilibrium between maintaining global brand coherence and ensuring the visibility and relevance of local cultural codes.

GLOCALIZATION

Local culture refers to the cultural processes and heritage shaped by a society's traditions, beliefs, and practices (Uyan Dur, 2015: 445). In contrast, globalization operates independently of these cultural processes, promoting similar lifestyles and consumption patterns worldwide (Gök, 2014: 9). Although globalization and localization are often seen as opposing concepts, their combination has given rise to the concept of "glocalization" (Öztürk and Çivici, 2018: 72). The Britannica Encyclopedia defines glocalization as "the simultaneous occurrence of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies in contemporary social, political, and economic systems" (Blatter, 2022). This concept was first materialized in the 1970s when Japanese companies adapted their products to meet the needs of various regional markets. By considering local consumer needs, glocalization strategies have made globalization more localized (Dilek et al., 2015: 4). The adaptation of global practices to local contexts allows for the preservation of global identity while offering solutions tailored to local needs (Öztürk and Çivici, 2018: 72). Glocalization also enables global phenomena and objects to adapt to diverse traditions in fields such as fine arts, architecture, and interior design (Bagina, 2021: 24).

In architecture and interior design, "local" refers to designs influenced by a region's history, cultural heritage, traditions, and environmental conditions, while "global" reflects design concepts inspired by ideas and experiences from around the world (Al-Qawasmi, 2006: 293). Spatially, glocalization involves aligning global design approaches with local cultural, material, and aesthetic characteristics. This strategy allows for the integration of innovative design approaches with the historical and socio-cultural contexts of the spaces where they are implemented. Thus, in interior design, glocalization fosters a balance between global and local elements, contributing to designs that are more meaningful and contextually relevant.

The Role of Glocalization in Interior Design: The Integration of Local and Global Elements

Like every concept and phenomenon concerning humanity, globalization, which emerged as a result of advancing technology, has influenced architecture and interior design disciplines that create spaces for individuals (Nalçakan and Polatoğlu, 2008: 80). In interior design, globalization has particularly fostered a global culture and spatial understanding dominated by American influence (Gökce and Kaya, 2020: 36). The globalization of culture has led to the direct transplantation of spatial designs from one culture to another, resulting in the degeneration of local cultures, cultural conflicts, and standardization in design (Serinkaya, 2022: 12). Shopping malls, skyscrapers, luxury hotels, and office plazas are prime examples of such spaces (Yavuzçehre, 2013: 201). To mitigate these negative effects, integrating global products or designs with local characteristics presents a sustainable design strategy (Özer, 2018: 124). This approach, known as glocalization, seeks to establish a balance between regional and global elements by blending the two. In this process, some designs emerge spontaneously from the cultural background and experiences of the designer, while others are intentionally created to serve the principles of glocalization. Spaces designed with a familiar and comforting atmosphere for local communities enhance the sense of belonging while offering users from other cultures an opportunity to experience and understand the local culture (Küçük and Bilgiç, 2022: 338). The integration of global elements into local design or vice versa is not merely an aesthetic or cultural concern; it is also a strategic approach aimed at enhancing user and customer loyalty (He and Wang, 2017: 473).

STARBUCKS' GLOCALIZATION STRATEGY: A GENERAL OVERVIEW

Founded in 1971 in Seattle, Starbucks has become one of the world's most recognized coffee chains through its unique business model and innovative approaches (Aiello and Dickinson, 2014: 306). The company operates in two main divisions, North America and International, with a total of 40,199 stores. Starbucks has 18,424 stores in North America, which includes the U.S. and Canada, and 21,775 stores in its international markets, covering China, Japan, Asia-Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. The majority of licensed stores are managed by the Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) division and The Hong Kong Support Center (HKSC), which oversees 15 markets in the Asia-Pacific region. Co-operated stores are located in Austria, China, Italy, Japan, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom, with some countries hosting both licensed and co-operated stores. As of 2024, there are approximately 4,582 stores in the EMEA region, 5,626 in Asia-Pacific, and 1,986 in Japan (Starbucks Corporation, 2024).

A key factor behind Starbucks' success in expanding its store count outside North America lies in its adoption of a glocalization strategy, blending global standards with local tastes and cultural dynamics (Aiello and Dickinson, 2014: 317). With Howard Schultz's involvement in 1981, Starbucks evolved from merely selling coffee beans to becoming a brand offering a full coffee experience. Under Schultz's leadership, the company took its first steps toward international growth in 1987 and went public in 1992. During this rapid expansion, the "Third Place" concept played a significant role, providing customers with a comfortable space to socialize outside their home and workplace (Musonera, 2021: 12). At its core, Starbucks' global strategy embodies the principle of "global consistency with local touches" (Aiello and Dickinson, 2014: 318). The company embraced a localized design approach by revising its design strategy in 2009 (Aiello and Dickinson, 2014: 303). Starbucks incorporates region-specific elements into its interior designs to integrate local identities into its stores worldwide. For example, a store in Hanoi features wall art made from bamboo by local artists (Alaali and Pitsaki, 2019: 896). Starbucks' glocalization strategy has enabled its successful global expansion. By merging local touches with global standards, this strategy serves as a model for other global brands aiming to balance regional adaptation with global consistency.

THE ANALYSIS OF GLOCALIZATION THROUGH STARBUCKS INTERIOR DESIGN EXAMPLES

The Tudor style, which emerged during the Tudor period in England (1485–1603), represents a design approach that evolved during the late medieval architectural era (Harun et al., 2020: 3). Arising from transformations in the later stages of Gothic architecture, this style is considered a significant phase in English architectural history. The walls of interiors designed in the Tudor style were typically covered with a thin layer of plaster, with oak wood panels used to protect the space from moisture (Figure 1) (Reeves-Smyth, 2007: 311). Ceilings and the surroundings of fireplaces were often decorated with plaster embellishments (Reeves-Smyth, 2007: 304).



Figure 1. A view of a Tudor-style interior (Coşkun, 2018: 22).

Carbrook Hall, constructed in Tudor style in England in 1960, now serves as a Starbucks. The interior design approach combines the preservation of historical architectural elements with modern design solutions to meet contemporary user needs. The intricately carved wooden panels and the plaster-embellished ceiling strongly reflect the historical architectural character of the building. Additionally, the fireplace serves as a key element highlighting the space's historical identity (Figure 2).



Figure 2. The vertical and horizontal elements designed in Tudor style within the interior of Carbrook Hall (Carbrook Hall, Attercliffe Common Sheffield, 2019).

The wooden tables, brown leather armchairs, and other seating elements in the space reflect Starbucks' global design language while harmonizing with the oak panels and the fireplace in terms of material and color. These furnishings not only complement the historical texture but also align with Starbucks' global identity tailored to modern user needs (Figure 3). This approach exemplifies the adaptation of the global to the local by blending local historical identity with modern features. While repurposing a historic structure for a commercial brand carries the risk of losing its original context, this risk has been minimized at Carbrook Hall through careful preservation of the space's historical elements. This example demonstrates the tangible contribution of glocalization to design and the preservation of a space's cultural context.



Figure 3. The modern furniture at Starbucks Carbrook Hall reflecting the brand's corporate identity (Carbrook Hall, Attercliffe Common Sheffield, 2019).

In France, the Baroque style represents a significant period in architectural history, characterized by palaces and monumental structures that reflected the power and authority of the monarchy (García, 2020). Key elements of this style include dramatic lighting, dark color palettes, intricate embellishments, mythological frescoes, and grand sculptures (Öztürkoğlu, 2023: 813). Doors and windows were adorned with elaborate forms, and decorative details often featured wreaths, reliefs, goblets, and scrolls (Uçar et al., 2011: 20). Recessed surfaces were used to emphasize contrasts of light and shadow, while marble materials and mirrors enhanced the effect of reflections (Camcı and Şekerci, 2022: 28). Decorative motifs frequently included "C" and "S" shapes, shell patterns, segmented surfaces, gold gilding, and oval medallions (Çetin, 2017: 412). Ceilings were often decorated with trompe l'oeil frescoes depicting images of heaven and the sky. The interior of the Palace of Versailles embodies all these characteristics of the Baroque style (Uçar et al., 2011: 20). For instance, some rooms in the palace feature herringbone-patterned Baroque flooring (Róžańska et al., 2011: 264).

The ceiling of Starbucks Boulevard des Capucines in Paris is adorned with frescoes depicting mythological scenes, intricate botanical motifs in gold leaf, and recurring angel figures. Completed with dark colors, this ceiling design reflects the legacy of French Baroque and diverges from the standard interior design of the coffee chain. Corinthian column capitals gilded with gold, marble-clad columns, and crystal chandeliers evoke the luxurious and opulent spirit of the Baroque period while enhancing the dramatic use of light. The walls feature empty frames created with gold leaf and half-Corinthian pilasters, forming a richly segmented surface design. The diagonally arranged wooden flooring combines French Baroque architectural traditions with modern furniture, creating a balanced atmosphere (Figure 4).

Figure 4. The structural elements in the interior of Starbucks Boulevard des Capucines (Page, 2024).



Large mirrors, similar to those found in Baroque structures like the Hall of Mirrors at the Palace of Versailles, are also present in Starbucks Boulevard des Capucines. These mirrors add depth to the space and enhance the dramatic reflection of light within the interior. The furniture used throughout the space features modern and minimalist lines that reflect Starbucks' global design language. However, despite their modern design, the brass tones on tables and railings, along with the dark hues of the seating elements, harmonize well with the Baroque aesthetic of the space. While crystal chandeliers are predominantly used as lighting elements, functional and minimalist lighting fixtures are also

included in the modern seating areas (Figure 5). This combination allows Starbucks to integrate its global design approach with the traditional architectural character of the local interior, creating harmony between the two. Overall, Starbucks Boulevard des Capucines exemplifies successful glocalization by merging the opulent design principles of the Baroque style with modern design elements. This interior design not only preserves the historical essence of Paris but also seamlessly incorporates Starbucks' global design philosophy with the local architectural heritage.



Figure 5. Furniture and Decorative Elements in the Interior of Starbucks Boulevard des Capucines (Page, 2024).

Traditional Korean architecture is epitomized by the Hanok, a sustainable and nature-integrated type of housing. Hanok features natural materials, passive heating and cooling systems, and spatial arrangements that foster a strong connection between people and nature (Ryoo and Youn, 2019: 6557). Its structural elements, such as wooden columns, are placed on stone foundations without nails or adhesives, ensuring both durability and harmony with the environment (Polat and Çelikel, 2023: 63). The windows of Hanok often utilize changhoji, a translucent paper made from mulberry tree bark, which softens sunlight, provides comfortable lighting, and supports air circulation while maintaining coolness during summer (Park and Fouser, 2015: 106). Additionally, Cheongsachorong, traditional Korean silk lanterns, are both aesthetic and culturally significant lighting elements (Kobayashi, 2013: 226).

The Starbucks Famille Park store in South Korea incorporates distinct local design elements inspired by Hanok. Wooden panels, designed with translucent materials, echo the changhoji used in traditional Hanok windows, integrating traditional Korean methods of light control into modern interior design. Nearly unprocessed wooden columns, inspired by Hanok's structural elements, carry cultural significance while also serving aesthetic and functional purposes. Large circular pendant lights in the space draw inspiration from Cheongsachorong, traditional Korean lanterns (Figure 6). These lights, with their warm and soft glow, enhance the ambiance while providing a cultural reference. Together, these elements blend modern design with traditional Korean architectural principles, creating a harmonious and culturally resonant interior.

Figure 6. Structural and Lighting Elements in the Interior of Starbucks Famille Park (Kang, 2020).



The wooden chairs and tables, communal seating areas, and metal lighting fixtures in Starbucks Famille Park reflect the brand's global identity. The choice of wood and leather materials, combined with a brown-green color palette, harmonizes with the wooden structural elements of the space (Figure 7). The modern furniture and functional spatial organization, frequently used in Starbucks stores, create a balance between the global brand identity and local design. Thus, Starbucks Famille Park presents an interior that caters to modern needs while reflecting Korea's cultural codes through a contemporary design approach. This integration effectively combines architectural sustainability with cultural continuity.

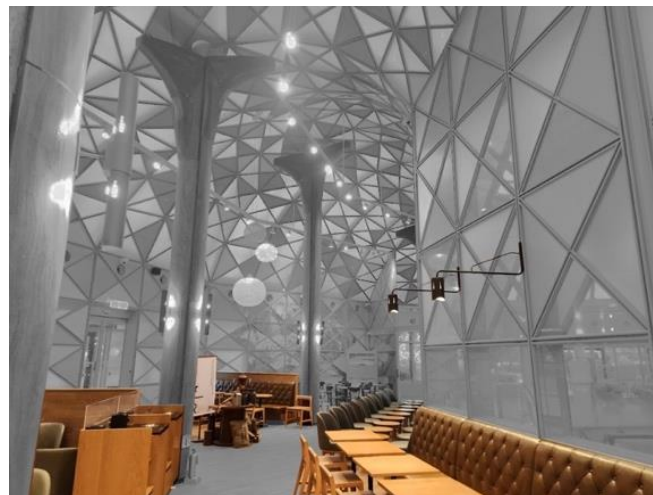


Figure 7. Furniture in the Interior of Starbucks Famille Park (Kang, 2020).

In traditional Korean architecture, wooden roofs are classified into four groups based on the number of beams: three-beam, five-beam, seven-beam, and nine-beam structures. Three-beam roofs are typically used in warehouses and residential buildings, five-beam roofs are common in homes, and seven-beam roofs are often reserved for temples and palaces (Kim et al., 2009: 50).

The roof of Starbucks Daegu Jongro Gotaek reflects the high-columned roof type found in traditional Korean architecture. The minimally processed wooden beams and columns are clearly visible as the building's primary structural system. Additionally, the use of wooden panels and changhoji in sliding doors, as seen in Hanok houses, highlights a design language harmonious with nature while referencing traditional architecture (Figure 8).



Figure 8. Structural Elements in the Interior of Starbucks Daegu Jongro Gotaek (Starbucks Korea Opens New Store in Historic Wooden Building, 2022).

In Korean architecture, small and portable furniture is preferred to allow spaces to adapt to various needs (Lee and Moon, 2010: 444). Cushions and small tables support multifunctional usage, offering a practical design solution (Choi, 2007: 75). The small tables used for dining, known as soban, typically consist of a tabletop, legs, and a base. These tables reflect the flexible and nature-oriented structure of Hanok architecture (Lee and Kim, 2014: 83).

The low wooden tables and cushions in Starbucks Daegu Jongro Gotaek exemplify a modern interpretation of traditional Korean seating arrangements. These furniture pieces preserve cultural codes, emphasizing local identity while addressing users' comfort needs. The natural brown tones of the wooden tables and the light colors of the cushions reference Hanok's focus on wood and nature-based materials. Natural elements such as stones and plants within the space highlight the integration of the natural environment as an extension of the interior. This design aims to balance the preservation of cultural elements with the accommodation of modern user needs. However, the adaptation of traditional elements into modern commercial contexts carries the risk of commodifying local identity. For instance, if the flexible and sustainable nature of Hanok is reduced to an aesthetic element, the cultural heritage could lose its deeper significance. In the case of Daegu Jongro Gotaek, the functionality of local elements has been preserved within their original context, effectively preventing cultural meaning loss and demonstrating the successful application of glocalization strategies in interior design. In another part of the store, a display reflecting Starbucks' corporate identity features modern furniture and lighting elements (Figure 9). This juxtaposition highlights traditional seating and natural lighting in one area while integrating Hanok architecture with modern elements in another, ensuring the brand's corporate identity remains intact.



Figure 9. Traditional and Modern Furniture in the Interior of Starbucks Daegu Jongro Gotaek (Starbucks Korea Opens New Store in Historic Wooden Building, 2022).

In traditional Japanese architecture, some homes lack a ceiling, allowing the roof structure to remain visible from the interior. Among homes with ceilings, the Neda-Tenjyo type, where wooden beams support wooden panels, is commonly seen. Another type, the bamboo

lattice ceiling (Sunoko-Tenjyo), features bamboo or wooden strips placed on top of beams (Matsushita, 2004: 82). Ceiling height in traditional Japanese homes is determined by the number of tatami mats in the room. For example, a room with six tatami mats typically has a ceiling height of 182 cm (Matsushita, 2004: 89). Tatami are woven straw mats measuring 182x91 cm that traditionally cover the floors of Japanese homes (Matsushita, 2004: 82). Transitioning from the veranda to a tatami-covered area involves stepping on a kutsunugi, a shoe-removal step, which can be made from either stone or wood (Nagata, 2018: 16; İsmailoğlu and Yetim, 2024: 448).

Another essential feature of traditional Japanese homes is the tokonoma, a wall niche typically elevated slightly above the rest of the room. Decorated with flowers, paintings, or scrolls, the tokonoma is considered the most significant decorative element in a Japanese room (Matsushita, 2004: 26). At Starbucks Coffee Kyoto Ninenzaka Yasaka Chaya, the Sunoko-Tenjyo bamboo lattice ceilinga hallmark of traditional Japanese design is prominently featured. Additionally, the tatami flooring emphasizes the local identity, showcasing a defining characteristic of Japanese architecture. On the right side of the room, a tokonoma serves as a key decorative element (Figure 10). The niche displays a painting and a large ceramic bowl, underscoring its function as a space for exhibiting culturally significant objects. This combination of traditional Japanese elements in the store highlights the integration of cultural heritage with modern commercial design.

Figure 10. Structural Elements in the Interior of Starbucks Coffee Kyoto Ninenzaka Yasaka Chaya (Estiler, 2017).



One of the characteristic features of traditional Japanese architecture is the shoji sliding door. These doors, made of a wooden frame covered with translucent paper, allow natural light to filter into the interior while maintaining a degree of privacy. Shoji embodies the principle of harmonizing the interior with the natural environment, a core aspect of Japanese architecture (Beita and Fujii, 2013: 29). While typically used as doors, shoji can also function as windows or walls facing the exterior (Matsushita, 2004: 19). Another similar element used to separate interior spaces is the fusuma, which is visually and structurally akin to the shoji (Erdemir, 1993: 48).

Additional architectural features include hikae-mado (low-sill windows used for exterior walls), taka-mado (high-sill windows for ventilation), and ranma (ventilation panels located above fusuma or shoji). Another common feature in traditional Japanese houses is the koshi, a wooden lattice that prevents direct visibility into the interior from the outside while allowing occupants to view the exterior (Coaldrake, 1988: 403). Traditional furniture in Japanese homes

includes tansu (chests), hakokaidan (staircase cabinets), zabuton (rectangular cushions with silk, cotton, or linen covers), and chabudai (oval or square low tables). During tea service, circular trays called bon are also used (Koizumi, 1986: 99, 136-137).

In Starbucks Coffee Kyoto Ninenzaka Yasaka Chaya, shoji doors are used to connect the space with its garden. These wooden-framed, paper-covered doors allow sunlight to filter in while partially separating the interior from the exterior. Above the shoji doors, ranma panels are used for ventilation, while hikaie-mado low-sill windows are located on either side. These structural elements, entirely derived from traditional Japanese architecture, resolve lighting and ventilation needs using local methods. The furniture includes traditional Japanese elements like zabuton cushions and chabudai tables. Modernized chabudai tables serve as coffee tables, referencing the traditional function of these pieces. On the left side of the space, a seating element and shoe rack, made of wood, align with local design principles while incorporating modern lines that reflect Starbucks' global identity. Behind the seating element, metal grids inspired by the koshi design offer a modern reinterpretation of traditional Japanese aesthetics, balancing local identity with contemporary materials (Figure 11). The incorporation of koshi reflects the balance between privacy and openness, a hallmark of Japanese design philosophy.

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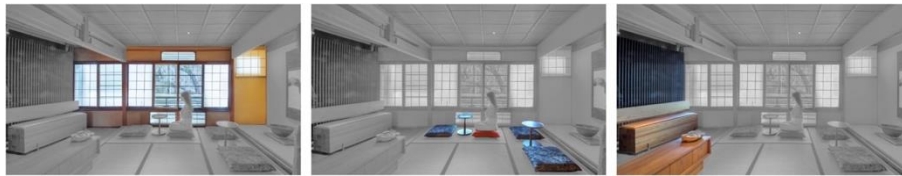


Figure 11. Structural Elements and Furniture in the Interior of Starbucks Coffee Kyoto Ninenzaka Yasaka Chaya (Estiler, 2017).

On the left side of another seating area in Starbucks Coffee Kyoto Ninenzaka Yasaka Chaya, hikaie-mado low-sill windows are present. However, instead of the traditional matte paper used in Japanese architecture, the wooden frames of these windows are covered with durable opaque glass suited to commercial needs. This redesign retains the traditional form while adapting it to modern requirements. The space lacks a ceiling, leaving the roof structure directly visible, an approach commonly seen in traditional Japanese homes. A local design element, the kutsunigi shoe-removal step, is also incorporated. Since zabuton cushions are used for seating in this area, guests are required to enter the space barefoot, making the kutsunigi both a functional and decorative feature. At the center of the zabuton, a circular plate can be seen, inspired by the bon, a traditional tray used in Japanese culture for serving tea. This design element symbolizes the tradition of hospitality and serving guests, reflecting an important aspect of Japanese culture (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Structural Elements and Furniture in the Interior of Starbucks Coffee Kyoto Ninenzaka Yasaka Chaya (Estiler, 2017).



The ceiling of Starbucks Ise Naiku-mae features the Neda-Tenjyo style, where exposed wooden beams convey the cultural essence of the region through this structural element. Below the service counter, koshi-like wooden details evoke the wooden lattices commonly found in traditional Japanese homes, although in this context, the koshi serves purely decorative purposes. In contrast, the ceiling above the service counter, the wall behind it, and the counter itself are constructed entirely of modern materials. The clean lines of these elements align with the minimalist design principles of Japanese aesthetics while simultaneously reflecting Starbucks' global identity. LED lighting fixtures in the ceiling further contribute to the modern identity of this section (Figure 13). This combination of local elements, such as Neda-Tenjyo and koshi, preserves the cultural codes of Japanese architecture, while modern lighting and technological features reinforce the brand's global identity. As a result, the space successfully balances its connection to Japanese culture with the consistent corporate identity of Starbucks, creating a harmonious blend of tradition and modernity.

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Figure 13. Structural Elements and Service Counter in the Interior of Starbucks Ise Naiku-mae (Beautiful New Store Features Traditional Japanese Design, 2021).



FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The current study aimed to examine how Starbucks, as a global brand, implements glocalization strategies in its interior designs, balancing local and global elements, and to reveal the impact of these strategies on the discipline of design. The six Starbucks stores analyzed in the study demonstrate that glocalization can be an effective tool in design processes.

The findings of this study reveal that glocalization, as a spatial design strategy, enables a nuanced balance between global brand consistency and local cultural expression. As previously outlined (Table 2), each of the six Starbucks stores analyzed incorporates region-specific architectural and decorative elements while simultaneously preserving the brand's standardized visual identity. These design decisions resonate with the principle of "global consistency with local touches," a strategy Starbucks has systematically implemented since the revision of its design approach in 2009 (Aiello & Dickinson, 2014: 318). These findings align with Roudometof's (2016) assertion that glocalization

enables brands to preserve cultural identities while fulfilling the functional demands of globalization, particularly in interior spatial configurations.

Table 2. Identified Local and Global Elements in the Stores

<i>Store</i>	<i>Local Elements</i>	<i>Global Elements</i>
<i>Carbrook Hall Starbucks, Sheffield, England</i>	Tudor Style Wooden Panels, Plaster Ceiling Decorations, and Fireplace	Modern Furniture, Corporate Color Palette, Standardized Seating Layout, and Modern Lighting Fixtures
<i>Boulevard des Capucines, Paris, France</i>	Baroque Style Mythological Frescoes on Ceilings, Gold-Gilded Column Capitals, Marble-Clad Columns, Segmented Walls, Herringbone Flooring, Crystal Chandeliers, and Baroque Decorations	Minimalist Modern Furniture, Functional Modern Lighting, Modern Fixtures (Handrails), and Standardized Service Layout
<i>Famille Park Starbucks, Seul, South Korea</i>	Hanok-Inspired Wooden Panels and Columns, Lighting Inspired by Korean Lanterns	Modern and Communal Seating Areas, Modern Lighting Fixtures, and Standardized Service Layout
<i>Daegu Jongro Gotaek Starbucks, South Korea</i>	Hanok-Inspired Traditional Wooden Ceiling, Use of Changhoji, Wooden Beams and Columns, Low Wooden Tables and Cushions, and Natural Stone and Plant Elements Connecting Nature to the Interior	Durable Modern Materials, Modern Furniture, Modern Lighting Fixtures, and Modern Decorative Elements
<i>Kyoto Ninenzaka Yasaka Chaya Starbucks</i>	Bamboo Lattice Ceiling, Shoji Doors, Ranma and Hikae-Mado Windows, Wall Niche (Tokonoma), Tatami Flooring, Traditional Japanese Furniture (Zabuton, Chabudai, Bon), and Kutsunigi	Modern Minimalist Designs and Durable Modern Materials
<i>Ise Naiku-mae Starbucks</i>	Neda-Tenryo Ceiling, Koshi Wooden Details, Wooden Drawers, and Japanese Garden Elements	Modern Materials, Clean Lines, Modern LED Lighting, Modern Ventilation, and Standardized Service Layout

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Across all case studies, local materials, forms, and motifs have been carefully integrated into Starbucks interiors. This supports Dilek et al.'s (2015: 4) argument that glocalization strategies function by adapting global practices to local socio-cultural and environmental needs. For instance, the Carbrook Hall Starbucks in Sheffield exemplifies the adaptation of historical Tudor architectural elements—plaster ceilings,

wood paneling, and a central fireplace—into a modern commercial context. While some scholars (e.g., Shelby et al., 2022) have critiqued such approaches for potentially producing conflicting spatial identities, this example demonstrates a harmonious blend in which the global and local coexist without mutual dilution.

Similarly, the Boulevard des Capucines store in Paris presents a Baroque-inspired spatial narrative through frescoed ceilings, gilded column capitals, and marble finishes. These elements recall the grandeur of Versailles and align with Öztürkoğlu's (2023: 813) observation that Baroque interiors rely on visual richness, mythological themes, and dramatic spatial compositions. Nevertheless, the integration of minimalist furniture and functional lighting elements reflects the global identity of Starbucks, reinforcing the concept of glocalization as a strategy not of compromise, but of contextual negotiation. Similar to the observations made by Alaali and Pitsaki (2019: 894), the integration of regional architectural motifs in Starbucks stores reaffirms the role of glocalization in creating culturally resonant yet globally recognizable brand spaces.

In the East Asian contexts examined - South Korea and Japan - the design strategies reflect a deeper engagement with traditional architecture and philosophy. The use of changhoji, wooden beams, and Cheongsachorong-inspired lighting at Famille Park in Seoul exemplifies what Bagina (2021: 24) describes as the recontextualization of vernacular forms within contemporary global aesthetics. Here, glocalization not only sustains brand familiarity but also celebrates material and cultural sustainability.

Moreover, the Daegu Jongro Gotaek store further underscores this synthesis by incorporating natural materials, low tables (soban), and garden elements, which align with Hanok traditions. This case reveals how glocalization transcends decorative use, functioning instead as a spatial ideology that honors cultural heritage while meeting modern consumer expectations. As noted by Lee and Kim (2014: 83), furniture in Hanok is multifunctional and mobile - qualities that align with contemporary design priorities in global retail environments.

In Japanese examples, such as the Kyoto Ninenzaka Yasaka Chaya and Ise Naiku-mae stores, glocalization becomes an act of cultural embedding. The inclusion of shoji, ranma, tatami, and tokonoma reveals a thoughtful engagement with the spatial codes of traditional Japanese homes. Matsushita (2004) explains that such features are not merely decorative but serve to regulate light, privacy, and spatial hierarchy. The presence of kutsunugi and bon trays in seating areas further demonstrates a ritualistic approach to spatial organization, where global café culture adopts the rhythm of local customs.

From a functional standpoint, the global elements—such as lighting systems, furniture ergonomics, and service layouts—fulfill brand expectations and operational needs. However, their placement and material selection adapt to the regional context, aligning with Özer's

(2018: 124) assertion that sustainable design can emerge from the convergence of global systems and local sensitivities.

Across all case studies, spatial configurations support user engagement, reflecting the second-wave coffee culture's emphasis on experience, comfort, and belonging (Kahya and Zencir Çiftçi, 2022: 1254). Starbucks' adoption of culturally specific interiors not only enhances aesthetic diversity but fosters a deeper psychological connection between space and user. As noted by Şeker and Özata (2022: 194), coffee shops have evolved into spaces of symbolic exchange and social interaction - an identity that is reinforced when local cultural codes are visibly present and meaningfully embedded.

In sum, the study affirms that glocalization in interior design operates at the intersection of cultural preservation, experiential branding, and spatial identity. The Starbucks case studies analyzed here illustrate that when global and local elements are balanced in both aesthetic and functional dimensions, spaces can offer inclusive and context-aware user experiences without compromising brand cohesion. This supports the argument by Alaali and Pitsaki (2019: 894) that global brands can maintain architectural continuity while enhancing cultural relevance by embedding local materiality and symbolism into their store designs.

Nonetheless, it is important to approach glocalization critically. As discussed by Shelby et al. (2022), there remains a risk of cultural commodification, particularly when local elements are reduced to visual motifs devoid of their original meaning. However, the examples in this study demonstrate that with intentional design and cultural literacy, glocalization can serve not merely as a marketing tool but as a methodological approach in interior architecture that supports cultural continuity and spatial authenticity.

Despite the compelling insights offered by the cross-cultural analysis of Starbucks stores, this study is not without limitations. First, the research focused exclusively on six case studies, all of which were analyzed through qualitative visual interpretation and secondary sources. As such, the generalizability of the findings may be limited. The content analysis did not incorporate direct user experience data, interviews, or ethnographic fieldwork, which could have enriched the understanding of how these spaces are perceived and used in real contexts. Future research may benefit from incorporating mixed methods, combining content analysis with user-centered approaches or stakeholder interviews, to deepen the analysis and validate the interpretation.

CONCLUSIONS

In general, the vertical and horizontal structural elements in Starbucks' interiors lend a local identity to the space, whereas modern furniture choices, seating arrangements, and lighting elements preserve the global identity. Global elements such as standardized service layouts

and lighting fixtures are seamlessly integrated alongside local features to optimize the user experience. This approach underscores the effectiveness of glocalization as a design strategy that balances cultural preservation with modern functionality. The study has contributed to the literature on the application of glocalization strategies in interior design and provided concrete examples where local and global elements are effectively balanced. It offers a guiding model for global brands on integrating local elements into spatial design. The findings can serve as a reference for other brands in developing their design strategies. While emphasizing the importance of glocalization in design, the study also highlights potential risks associated with this strategy. Issues such as the commodification of cultural heritage in commercial contexts and the loss of meaning in local identity require careful consideration. As demonstrated in the Starbucks example, the preservation of cultural elements not only for aesthetic purposes but also for functional and contextual integration forms the foundation of successful glocalization practices. Future research could focus on examining glocalization strategies employed by global brands across different sectors, further broadening the understanding of how local and global elements can be harmonized in interior design.

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