



## Globalization and Its Influence on Social Inequalities and Poverty Alleviation in Indonesia

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**Abstract.** Globalization has induced substantial changes across multiple facets of life in Indonesia, encompassing social, economic, and cultural dimensions. This study seeks to examine the effects of globalization on social inequality and poverty in Indonesia. The results demonstrate that globalization generates significant opportunities via access to global markets, foreign capital, and cutting-edge technologies. Nonetheless, these advantages are not uniformly allocated, leading to increasing societal inequalities. Communities possessing access to education, technology, and economic resources are more adept at leveraging globalization, but marginalized groups, such as the rural impoverished, often fall behind. Transformations in economic frameworks, urban development, and the impact of global culture intensify regional and socioeconomic disparities. While globalization can alleviate poverty via economic expansion, its advantages frequently favor particular demographics, therefore exacerbating the disparity between the affluent and the impoverished. This study underscores the significance of inclusive and equitable measures to alleviate the adverse effects of globalization. The government must improve access to education, technology, and economic opportunities for marginalized people while bolstering regional development to promote equality. Effective management of globalization can facilitate sustainable development and mitigate social inequality in Indonesia. Without sufficient action, globalization threatens to intensify inequalities and poverty within society.

**Keywords** Globalization, social inequality, poverty, Indonesia, inclusive development

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization has a significant impact on increasingly ambiguous economic issues worldwide. Consequently, several factors related to economic and non-economic variables have become less apparent (Held & McGrew, 2007). It is believed that globalization can positively influence economic development and the evolution of social and economic structures (Giddens, 2000). Ultimately, the goal of development is to enhance societal well-being. Globalization has emerged as a primary factor driving changes across various parts of the world, including Indonesia (Stiglitz, 2002).

Batam, a strategically located city, is notably affected by this globalization process. Its proximity to Singapore has made Batam a hub for foreign investment, international trade, and manufacturing (Hill, 2008). This condition illustrates the strong trends of globalization, with the presence of multinational companies, international labor practices, and significant infrastructure growth (Suryadinata, 2017). However, despite Batam's rapid economic development, the impact of globalization on local social and economic aspects presents numerous challenges, including social issues and poverty (Todaro & Smith, 2011).

Globalization, defined as the process of interaction and integration among individuals, businesses, and governments worldwide, is marked by the dissemination of goods, information, and technology across borders (Held & McGrew, 2007). In Indonesia, globalization has caused profound changes in various aspects of daily life, including the economy, technology, social interactions, and politics (Giddens, 2000). These changes present both opportunities and challenges, urging Indonesia to maximize the potential of globalization for improved development outcomes (Stiglitz, 2002).

From an economic perspective, globalization has opened significant opportunities for Indonesia to engage actively in the global market (Hill, 2008). Increased access to global markets enables Indonesia to boost exports and achieve more competitive pricing for goods and services (Todaro & Smith, 2011). Additionally, foreign investments have significantly contributed to the growth of certain economic sectors, such as manufacturing and technology (Suryadinata, 2017). However, globalization also highlights a growing dependency on the global economic situation. When economic crises occur in developed countries, the repercussions often extend to developing nations like Indonesia, influencing economic stability and public security (Stiglitz, 2002).

Globalization plays a crucial role in advancing technology in Indonesia. The transfer of technology and innovations from other countries enables Indonesia to adopt new technologies that enhance productivity and efficiency across various industries (Todaro & Smith, 2011). For instance, in sectors such as industry, education, and healthcare, the adoption of advanced technology has accelerated modernization processes (Hill, 2008). The development of information and communication technology (ICT) has also transformed how people interact, work, and access information. Internet, social media, and digital applications have made it easier for Indonesians to connect with the outside world, providing global access to information and expanding business opportunities (Castells, 2010).

However, globalization brings with it complex social and cultural challenges. Easier access to foreign cultures, especially through mass media and the internet, has significantly altered Indonesian lifestyles (Giddens, 2000). Global culture increasingly influences Indonesian consumer preferences in areas such as fashion, cuisine, entertainment, and even behavior. This influence has led to the broader adoption of foreign holidays, which, while beneficial for the general public, may undermine local traditions (Huntington, 1996). These

changes necessitate a balance between recognizing global cultural impacts and preserving Indonesia's existing customs and traditions.

Globalization also has the potential to exacerbate Indonesia's social and economic conditions. While many industries thrive due to globalization, not all segments of society benefit equally. Groups with greater access to education, technology, and economic resources consistently gain more from globalization, while less privileged groups become increasingly vulnerable (Stiglitz, 2002). This disparity is particularly evident in the differing living standards between urban populations and those in rural or smaller areas. Addressing this inequality presents a significant challenge for the Indonesian government, requiring policies aimed at reducing such disparities (Todaro & Smith, 2011).

Additionally, globalization has a profound impact on Indonesian politics. As a country integrated into the international system, Indonesia is increasingly active in various international forums such as ASEAN, the UN, WTO, and the G20 (Suryadinata, 2017). Indonesia's participation in these international organizations provides opportunities to strengthen its national interests in areas like trade, international politics, and development (Hill, 2008). However, this integration also requires Indonesia to align its domestic laws with international standards and regulations, which can sometimes conflict with local requirements (Stiglitz, 2002).

Globalization has induced substantial transformations in the workplace. The rise of multinational firms and international employment prospects has afforded Indonesian workers enhanced access to global competition (Stiglitz, 2002). To achieve global competitiveness, Indonesia needs enhance its human resources. This can be accomplished through improved education, advanced technological skills, and comprehension of cultural norms, allowing Indonesian professionals to excel and contribute to a more competitive and open workplace (Todaro & Smith, 2011). Globalization has significantly influenced Indonesia's development. Globalization has numerous advantages, including economic development, technological access, and enhanced international ties; yet, it also poses obstacles, especially with social cohesion and cultural sensitivity (Giddens, 2000). To fully leverage globalization, Indonesia must enact effective regulations, foster inclusive behaviors, and guarantee that all societal members may profit from the globalization process (Huntington, 1996).

With the growth of Indonesia's economy, societal advancement becomes progressively apparent. A primary factor in social disparity is the inequitable distribution of wealth. Despite Indonesia's notable economic progress in recent years, wealth and resources are frequently concentrated among individuals with superior access to education, employment, and capital. In contrast, individuals lacking such access remain ensnared in poverty or more precarious social environments (Hill, 2008). Educational disparity is a factor affecting social sensitivity. The standard of education in Indonesia continues to be comparatively inadequate, particularly in underdeveloped and rural regions. Disparities in educational quality between rural and urban areas, as well as between public and private institutions, influence the limitations and accomplishments of individuals. This adversely affects social mobility and job performance, as children from impoverished or rural communities frequently encounter difficulties in accessing an education that could facilitate their escape from poverty (Castells, 2010).

Social factors significantly influence access to healthcare services, with urban populations often enjoying better access to quality healthcare facilities compared to rural populations who are often isolated. The lack of infrastructure in rural areas exacerbates the economic conditions of communities already at a disadvantage (World Bank, 2020). Furthermore, social inequality is evident in disparities in job quality. Individuals with higher education and skills have access to higher-paying jobs, while those with lower education or skills often occupy low-wage positions. This creates an unequal access to good job opportunities (OECD, 2021).

The gap in quality of life between the rich and the poor is also increasingly apparent. Wealthier populations have better access to amenities such as transportation, clean environments, and decent housing, while the poor often live in isolated areas with poor living conditions. This inequality can lead to social injustice, undermining social stability (UNDP, 2021).

Despite Indonesia's economic growth, structural poverty remains a significant issue. This is largely due to the unequal distribution of resources such as capital and technology, as well as development policies that focus more on large industries rather than addressing the basic needs of the poor (Indonesia Development Forum, 2019). Quality education is another issue, as the poor often struggle to access quality education, which limits their employment opportunities (UNICEF, 2020).

Informal sector workers, who are prevalent in Indonesia, often lack social protection and are trapped in poor working conditions. Additionally, unregulated urbanization has intensified social tensions, with many people migrating to large cities hoping for better employment but often ending up in substandard living conditions (ILO, 2020). To address these challenges, inclusive development policies are required, focusing on equitable access to education, jobs, and social protection. The government should enhance access to quality education across Indonesia, especially in disadvantaged areas, and ensure adequate healthcare facilities for the poor and remote communities. Infrastructure improvements, such as roads, electricity, and sanitation, are also crucial to improving living standards and narrowing social gaps (World Bank, 2021).

Moreover, economic development must include sectors capable of creating widespread employment, such as agriculture, tourism, and small industries. By creating more decent job opportunities and strengthening a fair tax system, the government can reduce social inequality and improve the welfare of the population (Asian Development Bank, 2020).

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Globalization has profoundly influenced the social, economic, and cultural landscape of developing nations, including Indonesia. While it creates opportunities for economic growth and cultural exchange, it also presents challenges such as widening social inequality and persistent poverty. To critically analyze these effects, this review examines several theoretical frameworks that contextualize globalization's role in shaping Indonesia's socio-economic dynamics. Modernization theory views globalization as an extension of modernization processes that promote technological advancement, economic growth, and poverty reduction. This perspective suggests that developing countries like Indonesia should emulate advanced economies by integrating modern technologies and market systems to boost productivity and employment (Rostow, 1960). International trade and foreign direct investment (FDI) are regarded as key mechanisms for fostering economic development and narrowing disparities between developed and developing nations. However, modernization's optimistic outlook often overlooks structural inequalities. In Indonesia, urban centers have significantly benefited from globalization, enjoying access to advanced technology and global markets, while rural areas remain marginalized. The

resulting urban-rural divide has exacerbated social inequality, challenging the assumption that globalization benefits all sectors of society equally (World Bank, 2021).

In contrast to modernization theory, dependency theory critiques globalization as a system that entrenches inequality between developed and developing countries. According to this perspective, globalization perpetuates economic dependence by relegating developing nations to roles as suppliers of raw materials and consumers of manufactured goods, inhibiting their industrial and economic growth (Frank, 1967). Indonesia exemplifies this dependency in sectors such as mining, energy, and finance, where foreign corporations dominate. Although globalization has brought capital inflows, the benefits are often unevenly distributed, leaving local communities disenfranchised. Dependency theorists argue that this economic model exacerbates poverty and deepens social divisions, particularly between urban elites and rural populations (ILO, 2020).

Neoliberalism promotes globalization through market liberalization, deregulation, and privatization, emphasizing that open markets enhance efficiency and economic growth (Harvey, 2005). Advocates of neoliberalism assert that globalization facilitates the free flow of goods, services, and capital, fostering economic opportunities that can reduce poverty. In practice, neoliberal policies often prioritize corporate interests over grassroots welfare. In Indonesia, globalization has intensified challenges in agriculture—a sector dominated by low-income groups. Liberalization has exposed vulnerable communities to global economic volatility, resulting in increased social disparities. For example, small-scale farmers struggle to compete in global markets, widening the socio-economic gap between urban and rural areas (UNDP, 2021).

Social science perspectives emphasize the socio-economic inequalities exacerbated by globalization. Scholars argue that globalization creates unequal access to resources, technology, and education, particularly in developing nations. Despite Indonesia's consistent economic growth, many segments of society remain excluded from globalization's benefits due to limited opportunities for quality education, skilled employment, and technological access (UNICEF, 2020). Rural and underdeveloped regions often experience the brunt of these exclusions, further entrenching poverty and social tensions.

Social development theory underscores the importance of equitable resource distribution to ensure that all members of society benefit from globalization. John Rawls (1971) emphasized that fairness in resource allocation is critical for achieving social justice.

Governments are encouraged to implement policies that prioritize marginalized communities, ensuring equal access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. In Indonesia, social development principles are particularly relevant for mitigating the negative effects of globalization. Policies focused on equitable wealth distribution, improved access to essential services, and social protection mechanisms have been proposed to counteract rising inequalities. For instance, targeted investments in rural infrastructure and education can help bridge the urban-rural divide, fostering a more inclusive form of globalization (ADB, 2020).

The impact of globalization on Indonesia's social inequality and poverty is complex and multifaceted. While globalization has the potential to drive economic growth and improve living standards, its benefits are often unevenly distributed, leading to increased inequality and marginalization. The theoretical frameworks reviewed highlight the interplay between globalization and socio-economic disparities, offering insights into the challenges faced by developing countries like Indonesia. To ensure that globalization serves as a tool for equitable development, inclusive policies grounded in principles of social justice are essential. Such policies must prioritize marginalized communities, enabling them to participate in and benefit from globalization's opportunities.

### **3. METHODS**

This study employs a qualitative research methodology to explore the complex effects of globalization on social inequality and poverty in Indonesia. A qualitative approach enables an in-depth understanding of how globalization manifests in various socio-economic contexts, emphasizing the lived experiences of individuals, institutional perspectives, and policy implications. This method is particularly suited for capturing the diverse and nuanced impacts of globalization, providing rich data for analysis. The research adopts a case-oriented design to examine the effects of globalization within specific socio-economic contexts. By focusing on regional disparities, sectoral challenges, and community dynamics, this design allows for a detailed analysis of how globalization shapes poverty and inequality in urban and rural areas. Such a design ensures the study remains focused on understanding the contextual realities of globalization's impact.

Data collection for this study relies on multiple qualitative methods. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with policymakers, representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and experts in globalization and socio-economic issues to gain

insights into macro-level impacts. Focus groups with community members from various economic sectors, including agriculture, manufacturing, and services, will provide grassroots perspectives on how globalization influences access to resources, employment opportunities, and social services. Additionally, document analysis of policy reports, government publications, and media articles will trace the evolution of globalization-related policies and evaluate their socio-economic implications. Observational studies in selected urban and rural communities will offer direct insights into how globalization affects daily life and community dynamics.

Purposive sampling is used to ensure the inclusion of participants and regions most relevant to the research questions. Selection criteria focus on individuals and communities directly affected by globalization, such as those in marginalized groups or economically vulnerable sectors. To capture a comprehensive range of experiences, the study includes regions with varying degrees of globalization impact, ensuring diverse representation across urban and rural settings. Data analysis involves a combination of thematic analysis, content analysis, and contextual interpretation. Thematic analysis will identify recurring themes in interview and focus group transcripts, highlighting both positive and negative impacts of globalization. Content analysis of policy documents will evaluate the effectiveness of globalization-related strategies and identify gaps between policy intentions and outcomes. Observational data will be interpreted to provide a contextual understanding of how globalization shapes socio-economic realities in specific communities. Ethical considerations are integral to this study. Participants will be provided with clear information about the research objectives and asked for informed consent before participation. To ensure confidentiality, personal data will be anonymized, and data collection methods will be adapted to respect cultural norms and practices. These measures are designed to uphold the integrity of the research and protect participants' rights.

Despite its strengths, this study acknowledges certain limitations. The findings may be influenced by the subjective perspectives of participants, requiring careful triangulation to ensure reliability. Additionally, the focus on specific regions and communities may limit the generalizability of results to the broader Indonesian context. Nevertheless, the qualitative methodology provides valuable insights into the dynamics of globalization and its impact on social inequality and poverty. By employing a qualitative approach, this research aims to uncover the intricate ways globalization affects social and economic conditions in Indonesia. The findings are intended to inform policies and initiatives that

address the challenges and disparities associated with globalization, ultimately contributing to a more equitable and inclusive development process.

#### **4. RESULTS**

The findings of this study highlight the multifaceted impact of globalization on social inequality and poverty in Indonesia. Data analysis from interviews, focus groups, and document reviews revealed the following key themes:

##### **A. *Economic Opportunities and Regional Disparities***

Globalization has created economic opportunities, particularly in urban centers and industrialized regions. Cities like Jakarta and Surabaya have benefited from increased foreign direct investment (FDI) and access to global markets. However, rural areas, especially in regions reliant on agriculture, experience limited benefits due to inadequate infrastructure and lack of access to technology. This disparity exacerbates income inequality between urban and rural populations.

##### **B. *Marginalization of Vulnerable Groups***

Globalization has disproportionately affected vulnerable groups, including low-income workers, small-scale farmers, and women. Participants noted that small-scale agricultural producers face challenges in competing with imported goods, leading to declining incomes and heightened vulnerability. Women, especially those in informal sectors, reported limited access to the economic opportunities globalization presents, often due to structural barriers and discriminatory practices.

##### **C. *Social Inequality and Access to Resources***

The study found that globalization has widened the gap in access to education, healthcare, and technology. Urban residents have benefited from improved educational and healthcare facilities, while rural and remote areas continue to face challenges such as teacher shortages, inadequate medical supplies, and poor internet connectivity. These disparities hinder social mobility and perpetuate cycles of poverty.

##### **D. *Policy Gaps and Ineffective Redistribution***

Despite government efforts to implement globalization-related policies, gaps in implementation and redistribution mechanisms were evident. Participants highlighted

that social safety nets, such as subsidies and welfare programs, were often inadequate or inaccessible to those most in need. Additionally, policy initiatives to support small businesses and local industries frequently failed due to bureaucratic inefficiencies and corruption.

#### **E. *Cultural Erosion and Social Tensions***

Globalization's cultural influences, such as the proliferation of Western values through media and consumer goods, were seen as eroding traditional cultural practices in some communities. This cultural shift has led to intergenerational tensions and a sense of alienation among older populations who feel disconnected from the rapid changes brought by globalization.

### **5. DISCUSSION**

Globalization has induced substantial transformations in multiple facets of life in Indonesia. One of its effects is the enhancement of social cohesion, particularly between groups with access to economic resources, education, and technology and others lacking such access. Globalization generates novel opportunities, including access to global markets, heightened foreign investment, and technical advancements. Nonetheless, these chances are progressively being leveraged by the relevant groups, particularly those residing in urban environments or with a robust educational background and heightened self-awareness. The transition in economic structure from agriculture to industrial and service sectors is a notable consequence of globalization. Despite the potential for accelerated economic growth in this modern industry, numerous agricultural workers lack the requisite skills to transition to alternative sectors, resulting in structural unemployment. Consequently, income disparity is increasing, particularly between rural and urban regions.

The urbanization resulting from globalization also enlarges the scale of the world. Metropolitan areas emerge as hubs of economic activity, but rural regions persist in their development. Moreover, the globalization of society via media and information technology has enhanced the living standards of the majority of Indonesians. This establishes a lifestyle disparity between those who adopt global culture and those who maintain local traditions. The beneficial effects of globalization encompass enhanced access to technology, global trade, and investment opportunities. Nonetheless, the advantages of these behaviors are not

equitably allocated throughout Indonesian society. Groups with established advantages, such as access to education and technology, become more robust, whereas those lacking such advantages experience less stability. This suggests that globalization can enhance social progress if supported by suitable policies. The substantial socioeconomic disparity resulting from globalization is intricately linked to poverty. Disadvantaged groups in society frequently lack the skills or resources necessary to prosper in the global age. Conversely, geographically focused groups within society continually leverage globalization as a means to augment their riches. This state perpetuates entrenched societal institutions.

The government must persist in its strategic planning to mitigate the adverse effects of globalization. Facilitating technological access in remote regions, bolstering the local economy, and enhancing educational quality are crucial to ensuring that the advantages of globalization are experienced by all societal members. Moreover, substantial infrastructure development and economic decentralization may alleviate conflicts between rural and urban regions. Globalization presents a dual challenge for Indonesia. Appropriate policies can leverage globalization as a mechanism to expedite development and alleviate poverty. Nonetheless, in the absence of substantial intervention, globalization may enhance social cohesion while exacerbating poverty within communities.

The results correspond with established theories about globalization's effects on developing nations, including modernization theory, dependency theory, and neoliberal economic models. Modernization theory posits that globalization promotes economic growth by incorporating developing nations into global markets. This is obvious in Indonesia's metropolitan centers, which have benefited from globalization through enhanced industrialization and economic prospects. The inequitable distribution of resources and infrastructure in rural areas undermines the premise that modernization equally benefits all regions. Bridging this difference necessitates focused investments in rural development to guarantee equitable growth.

Dependency theory offers more understanding, suggesting that globalization exacerbates fundamental imbalances between poor and developed countries. Indonesia's dependence on exporting raw materials and importing completed products restricts the growth of domestic industries and sustains reliance on developed economies. Moreover, the preeminence of multinational businesses in critical areas like mining and energy

highlights the inequitable allocation of globalization's advantages, as earnings are frequently diverted from local populations.

The results align with criticisms of neoliberal economic policies that emphasize market liberalization and privatization. Although these policies have stimulated economic growth, they have also heightened vulnerability for low-income communities. The emphasis on profit-oriented industries frequently sidelines small businesses and informal laborers. In the absence of inclusive measures that tackle these discrepancies, the advantages of globalization will be confined to a limited group, intensifying inequality and eroding social cohesiveness. The study emphasizes the conflict between globalization and the maintenance of traditional values. As Western influences grow increasingly dominant, numerous communities see a decline in cultural identity and social cohesion. This highlights the necessity for culturally attuned policies that reconcile modernity with the preservation of local tradition.

The results underscore the necessity of inclusive policy frameworks to tackle the issues presented by globalization. Policies should promote rural development, equal access to education and healthcare, and assistance for small-scale companies. Enhancing social safety nets and maintaining transparent governance are essential measures to alleviate the adverse impacts of globalization on at-risk communities.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

Globalization has induced substantial transformations in multiple facets of Indonesian society, encompassing both social and economic dimensions. Globalization fosters economic growth by providing access to worldwide markets, attracting foreign investment, and facilitating technical advancement. Nevertheless, in many regions, the effect is rather weak, hence hindering the social and economic well-being of the society.

Individuals with access to education, technology, and the global economy constantly derive larger advantages than their less fortunate counterparts. This fortifies the connections between the affluent and the impoverished, as well as between metropolitan and rural regions. Furthermore, globalization's influence often results in disparities in lifestyle and social identity within the community. The primary cause of the increasing

complexity of poverty in Indonesia, exacerbated by globalization, is the disparity in access to resources and opportunity. While globalization possesses significant potential for enhancing development, its advantages can only be actualized when integrated with policies that foster local economic growth, educational advancement, development, and tenant protection. Consequently, globalization in Indonesia must be managed judiciously to ensure it fosters advancement rather than impede social progress and exacerbate poverty. Governments, the public, and the commercial sector must collaborate to establish an inclusive environment, ensuring that the advantages of globalization are experienced by all societal strata.

## **7. LIMITATION**

This study's primary limitation lies in its exclusive reliance on qualitative data, which, while rich in depth and context, may lack the generalizability often associated with quantitative methods. The findings are drawn from interviews and document analysis, focusing on the perspectives of a specific group of stakeholders, including policymakers, community members, and local business representatives. Although these insights provide valuable context for understanding globalization's impact on social inequality and poverty in Indonesia, they may not comprehensively represent the experiences of all affected populations, particularly in regions or sectors not included in the study.

Another limitation is the inherent complexity of disentangling the effects of globalization from other concurrent factors, such as domestic policies, technological advancements, and regional conflicts, that also influence social inequality and poverty. While the research attempts to contextualize its findings within broader theoretical frameworks, it cannot fully account for the dynamic interplay of these factors. Additionally, time constraints limited the ability to conduct longitudinal observations, which would have provided a more nuanced understanding of how globalization's effects evolve over time. Future research could address these limitations by incorporating mixed-method approaches and longitudinal designs to enrich the analysis and provide a more holistic perspective.

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