The Impact of Globalisation on the Sustainability of Local Cultural Identity in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Globalisation has become a pervasive force shaping cultural, social, and communicative processes across the world, profoundly influencing the sustainability of local cultural identities. In Indonesia, a country characterised by extensive cultural diversity, globalisation interacts with complex socio-cultural structures formed by ethnic plurality, indigenous traditions, and national ideology. This study aims to examine how globalisation affects the sustainability of local cultural identity in Indonesia, with particular attention to the roles of media, technology, education, and younger generations. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach based on a systematic literature review, this research synthesises peer-reviewed academic studies published between 2018 and 2024 that address globalisation, cultural identity, media influence, and youth cultural dynamics. The findings indicate that globalisation generates both disruptive and transformative effects on local cultural identity. On the one hand, the dominance of global media, consumer culture, and digital platforms contributes to cultural homogenisation, shifts in value systems, and declining engagement with traditional cultural practices, especially among Generation Z. On the other hand, globalisation also enables processes of cultural hybridisation, localisation, and creative adaptation, allowing local communities to reinterpret global influences while maintaining core cultural values. Digital media emerge as a paradoxical space that simultaneously accelerates global cultural diffusion and provides strategic opportunities for cultural preservation and innovation. The study concludes that local cultural identity should be understood as a dynamic and adaptive construct rather than a static heritage. Strengthening cultural education, enhancing media literacy, empowering traditional arts, and actively engaging younger generations are essential strategies for ensuring cultural sustainability.

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BACKGROUND

Globalisation is widely understood as a multidimensional and dynamic process characterised by the accelerated flow of information, goods, capital, people, and cultural symbols across national and territorial boundaries. This process has been significantly intensified by swift progress through digital communication technologies, mass media, and global networks, which have changed social relations and cultural communications on a global scale.[1] As a result, cultural boundaries have become increasingly porous, allowing local societies to communicate more effectively with global cultural currents.

In Indonesia, globalisation interacts with a highly pluralistic socio-cultural structure comprising diverse ethnic groups, languages, belief systems, and indigenous customs. Within this context, cultural identity acts as an essential social marker that defines group membership, distinguishes cultural in-groups from out-groups, and provides individuals with a feeling of connection and continuity.[2] Contemporary globalisation has altered the mechanisms by which cultural identity is constructed and expressed. Whereas heritage identity formation was mainly based in local customs, communal rituals, and intergenerational transmission, it is now increasingly mediated by transnational media, global consumer culture, and digital media channels.

Empirical studies conducted between 2018 and 2024 demonstrate that social media and digital media communication technologies play a key role in reshaping cultural orientations, notably among the younger population. Research by Arnett (2018) and Chen et al. (2020) shows that contact with global media content fosters hybrid cultural identities, in which local values coexist with global norms and lifestyles.[3,4] In Indonesia, Fahma et al. (2024) found that social media enables individuals to affiliate with transnational communities based on shared interests, language use, and cultural tastes, often reducing the salience of geographically rooted identities.[5] This phenomenon has contributed to developments in lifestyle, communication behaviours, and value systems, especially among Generation Z.

At the same time, scholars warn that globalisation may accelerate cultural uniformity, especially via the dominance of Western and globally popular cultural products disseminated via digital media and entertainment industries.[6,7] Recent studies indicate that such prevalence may marginalise local languages, traditions, and creative works, resulting in a gradual erosion of cultural diversity.[8] In Indonesia, this pattern is evident in the declining interest in traditional arts and customary practices among urban youth, who more

frequently embrace global lifestyles seen as more modern and prestigious.

Nevertheless, globalisation does not solely produce cultural uniformity. Contemporary scholarship points to the role of cultural hybridisation and localisation as flexible reactions to global pressures. Pieterse's theory of hybridization, reinforced by recent empirical findings, suggests that local cultures actively reinterpret and integrate worldwide influences rather than simply assimilating them.[9,10] Studies conducted in Indonesian urban and semi-urban communities demonstrate that global cultural elements are often selectively adapted into local contexts, resulting in new cultural forms that remain based in local values and traditions.[11,12]

Within this diverse scenario, the preservation of local cultural identity is closely linked to national ideology and value systems, particularly Pancasila. Several studies emphasise that globalisation poses not only cultural but also ideological challenges, as global values may conflict with basic national principles if not critically negotiated.[13] Consequently, strengthening cultural education, media literacy, and community-based cultural initiatives has been identified as a tactical method in order to foster cultural endurance.

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive research design based on a systematic literature review to examine the impacts of globalisation on local cultural identity in Indonesia. A qualitative approach is appropriate for this study because it enables an in-depth comprehension of intricate social and cultural occurrences that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measurement alone.[14] The descriptive orientation allows the research to synthesise existing scholarly knowledge while protecting the contextual richness of cultural processes and interpretations.[15]

Data were collected from peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and reputable scholarly publications published primarily between 2018 and 2024. The sources were selected based on their relevance to key themes, including globalisation, cultural identity,

media and communication, traditional culture, and youth cultural processes in Indonesia and comparable socio-cultural contexts. Research indexing services such as Google Scholar, Scopus-indexed journals, and national journal portals were used to identify relevant literature. Inclusion criteria focused on publications that explicitly addressed cultural change, identity negotiation, or the interaction between global and local cultural forces. Grey literature and non-scholarly sources were excluded to ensure academic rigour.

The analytical process followed a thematic analysis framework, which is widely used in qualitative research to identify, analyse, and interpret patterns of meaning across textual data.[16] First, the selected literature was carefully read and coded to extract key concepts, theoretical arguments, and empirical findings related to globalisation and cultural identity. Second, these codes were grouped into more extensive thematic categories based on conceptual similarity and analytical relevance. Using an iterative comparison and refinement, dominant themes and relationships among concepts were identified.

Four analytical dimensions guided the thematic synthesis. The first dimension focused on cultural and communication transformation, examining how global cultural flows reshape values, norms, and modes of interaction. The second dimension addressed economic along with environmental aspects, particularly how global economic integration and structural changes affect local cultural practices and livelihoods. The third dimension analysed media and technological mediation, emphasising the contribution of digital platforms, mass media, and social networks in facilitating both cultural convergence and hybridisation. The fourth dimension explored the role of younger generations, especially youth and Generation Z, in negotiating cultural identity amid intensified global exposure.

This multi-dimensional conceptual framework conceptualizes globalization as a dynamic, negotiated, and situation-specific process rather than a unidirectional force.1 9. Through integrating findings from diverse studies, this methodological strategy presents a

comprehensive and critical interpretation of how local cultural identity in Indonesia is challenged, reshaped, and sustained in the contemporary global era.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that globalisation exerts a multi-dimensional influence on local cultural identity by means of methods that are simultaneously transformative and disruptive. One of the most frequently identified impacts is cultural convergence, whereby dominant international cultures, largely disseminated through Western-oriented media, consumer products, and popular culture, marginalise local traditions, languages, and value systems.[17,18] Empirical research conducted between 2018 and 2024 consistently shows that this trend is markedly significant among younger generations, who experience intensified access to global cultural symbols through social media, content streaming platforms, and digital entertainment.[3,7]

In Indonesia, multiple studies indicate that youth cultural choices increasingly correspond to globalised lifestyles in areas such as fashion, language, music, and leisure, often diminishing engagement with traditional cultural forms.[8] This trend elicits worries regarding the gradual erosion of local cultural knowledge and practices, primarily in urban and semi-urban environments. However, the literature also asserts that homogenization is not a totalizing or deterministic outcome of globalisation. Its effects are mediated by local agency, socio-cultural context, and institutional support.

Contrary to fixed perspectives, recent scholarship draws attention to the capacity of local communities to actively negotiate global cultural forces using procedures of adaptation, resistance, and reinterpretation.[9,10] The concept of cultural hybridisation provides a useful analytical viewpoint to comprehend how global and local cultural parts interact to produce new, contextually grounded cultural expressions. Studies conducted in Indonesian cities such as Semarang, Yogyakarta, and Denpasar reveal that global cultural forms are often selectively appropriated and localised, resulting in hybrid identities that retain core

local values while incorporating global aesthetics or practices.[10,12]

Examples of this accommodative strategy include the combination of traditional performances into modern commercial spaces, such as shopping centres and tourism venues, as well as the use of contemporary media formats to present traditional arts. These practices illustrate that globalisation can function not only as a force of cultural displacement but also as an enabling condition for cultural revitalisation when local actors exercise creative agency. Such findings correspond with Appadurai's (2019) argument that global cultural flows are indeterminate and subject to local interpretation rather than uniformly imposed.

Media and communication technologies occupy a central and paradoxical position in this context. On one hand, global media ecosystems accelerate the circulation of foreign cultural values, reinforcing asymmetrical power relations between global and local cultures.[19] On the other hand, digital media channels provide unprecedented opportunities for cultural visibility, participation, and innovation. Empirical studies between 2020 and 2024 show that social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok are increasingly used by communities, artists, and cultural institutions to document, promote, and recontextualise local traditions.[4,5]

These platforms assist intercultural dialogue and allow local cultures to reach transnational audiences, challenging the assumption that globalisation inevitably results in cultural marginalisation. Digital media can serve as a vital method for heritage protection and transformation, especially when paired with media literacy and cultural awareness initiatives. The efficiency of these tactics, however, depends on the ability of local communities to control cultural stories and prevent the commodification of traditions that diminishes their social and symbolic significance.

Traditional arts remain a basic pillar in reinforcing local cultural identity, yet they encounter ongoing structural challenges. Research conducted by Sari (2024) and Bayuseto et al. (2023) identifies declining youth participation, limited financial support, and competition from global popular culture as major obstacles to the sustainability of traditional arts. These problems are exacerbated by urbanisation and shifting lifestyle patterns that reduce everyday exposure to traditional cultural practices. Addressing this problem requires synchronised activities involving government institutions, educational systems, and cultural organisations to create enabling environments for cultural transmission and innovation.

Education appears as a crucial mechanism for strengthening cultural endurance in the global era. Formal education functions as a vital role in transmitting cultural knowledge, historical consciousness, and ethical values, while informal education within families and communities reinforces lived cultural practices. Recent studies emphasise that including local culture and national ideology, particularly Pancasila, inside educational curricula can support a sense of cultural self-esteem and moral grounding among younger generations.[13] Such integration is crucial for guaranteeing that engagement with global culture does not occur at the expense of national and local identity.

Generation Z, regularly considered as the most vulnerable to cultural globalisation, also possesses meaningful potential as cultural agents of change. As digital natives, they are uniquely positioned to bridge local traditions and global culture through creative reinterpretation and technological innovation.[3,5] When supported by adequate cultural literacy, institutional encouragement, and integrative cultural policies, Generation Z can contribute to the sustainability of local cultural identity by making it relevant, accessible, and meaningful in contemporary global contexts.

Overall, the discussion points out that globalisation should be understood as a negotiated and reliant on context process rather than a unidirectional force. The persistence and transformation of local cultural identity in Indonesia depend on the relationship between global pressures, local agency, media structures, and institutional support systems. This perspective reinforces the need for culturally informed policies and practices that view globalisation not simply as a challenge but as a possible asset for cultural endurance and renewal.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that globalisation is a diverse and changing force influencing the sustainability of local cultural identity in Indonesia. The studies show that globalisation brings notable obstacles, such as cultural uniformity, shifts in value systems, and reduced engagement with traditional cultural practices, primarily affecting younger demographics. Such difficulties are intensified by the extensive effect of global media, digital technologies, and consumer culture, which often prioritise dominant global stories over local cultural expressions. However, the study also shows that globalisation is not inherently destructive to local culture. It simultaneously creates opportunities for cultural revitalisation, creative innovation, and increased international visibility of local traditions.

Importantly, local cultural identity should be conceptualised as a dynamic, negotiated, and adaptive idea rather than a static or immutable heritage. Cultural sustainability in the global era depends on the capacity of local communities to selectively appropriate worldwide influences while sustaining fundamental cultural values, symbols, and practice. This flexible process enables the emergence of hybrid cultural forms that anchored in local contexts yet resonate within global cultural networks. As such, globalisation can facilitate cultural endurance when local agency, creativity, and institutional support are actively mobilised.

The paper accentuates the key role of education, media literacy, and cultural policy in strengthening cultural endurance. Official and informal educational institution acts as crucial mechanisms for transmitting cultural knowledge, ethical values, and national ideology, including Pancasila, from one generation to another. Enhancing media literacy is equally essential to enable individuals to analytically engage with global cultural content rather than passively consume it. Furthermore, empowering traditional arts through institutional support, funding, and creative integration with

contemporary media possesses the ability to enhance their relevance and preservation in modern society.

Younger generations, particularly Generation Z, emerge as strategic actors in the preservation and transformation of local cultural identity. When equipped with cultural awareness, digital competence, and sustaining policy systems, they possess the ability to link local traditions and global cultural currents in innovative ways. Their active involvement is therefore indispensable to securing that local culture remains meaningful and resilient amidst continuing global change.

In conclusion, globalisation should not be regarded solely as a cultural threat but as a layered process that, when managed thoughtfully and comprehensively, can act as a catalyst for reinforcing, reimagining, and sustaining local cultural identity. Further investigation should employ empirical field studies and comparative approaches to further investigate how local communities within different regions negotiate globalisation in culturally specific ways. These efforts will deepen insight into cultural sustainability in an ever-more-connected world.

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