

What are the Fundamental Pillars of Contemporary Globalization?

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Abstract

This article describes and explains the five pillars of contemporary globalization. This process is provoked especially by the rapid development of information, communication and transportation technology, especially since the 1980s. There are five fundamental pillars of contemporary globalization, namely internationalization, interdependence, westernization and the rise of world society. These five pillars are connected to each other. However, the globalization process creates two different global impacts, namely prosperity on the one hand, and poverty which is based on global economic inequality on the other hand. Several elaborated strategies to overcome the challenges of contemporary globalization, such as international cooperation and the revised version of Welfare State tradition, are also elaborated.

Key Words: Globalization, Internationalization, Interdependence, Westernization, World Society

Abstrak

Tulisan ini menggambarkan dan menjelaskan lima pilar dari globalisasi kontemporer. Proses ini dimulai terutama oleh perkembangan teknologi informasi, komunikasi dan transportasi yang amat cepat. Ada lima pilar fundamental dari globalisasi kontemporer, yakni internasionalisasi, interdependensi, westernisasi dan lahirnya masyarakat dunia. Kelima pilar ini saling terkait satu sama lain. Akan tetapi, proses globalisasi membawa dua akibat yang berbeda, yakni kemakmuran di satu sisi, dan kemiskinan yang berpijak pada kesenjangan ekonomi global di sisi lain. Beberapa strategi untuk menanggapi tantangan ini, seperti kerja sama internasional dan versi perbaikan dari tradisi Negara kesejahteraan, juga akan dijelaskan.

Kata-kata kunci: Globalisasi, Internasionalisasi, Interdependensi, Westernisasi, Masyarakat Dunia

Contemporary globalization, which started from the 1980s, has a huge impact on various parts of human life and the natural ecosystem. It changes the face of global politics, international economy, even the structure of families and personal identity. Various international corporations and governments rise and fall, because of this process.¹ Various new areas of life and business are created, which cannot be imagined in the previous era. This situation is like a double edged sword: it brings various unthinkable possibilities and almost total confusion at the same time.

It is imperative that the process of contemporary globalization is being understood correctly. There are four fundamental pillars of contemporary globalization, namely the internationalization, interdependence, westernization and the rise of world society. Each aspect is unique and at the same time related to the other pillars. However, several reflections and strategies are also needed to understand and manage the contemporary globalization. The purpose is to increase the positive impact in terms of peace, justice and prosperity in the global level, and at the same time to decrease the negative impacts of globalization itself, such as global social and economic inequality, poverty and various forms of ecological problems.

This article has three parts. The first part explains the meaning and relevancies of four pillars of the contemporary globalization. The second part provides several points of reflections and strategies to manage the contemporary globalization process. This article will end with conclusion in the third part. This article is heavily indebted to the author's previous research and publications, and also from the theoretical framework provide by Kessler, Müller, Priyono and Wibowo.

¹ See the note from Chomsky on this matter (Chomsky, 2016)



1. Four Pillars of Contemporary Globalization

1.1 Globalization as Internationalization

The phenomenon of contemporary globalization can be traced back to at least 30 years ago. Before 1980s, there was practically no mention of globalization in social sciences. However, after that, it became one of the most discussed topics in social sciences, especially political science and international relations.² Various publications in forms of scientific journals and scientific and also popular books came to stage. In English speaking countries, the term globalization become a global trend in social researches. In German speaking countries, the term becomes *Globalisierungsbegriff*, meanwhile in French is *Mondialisation*.

There are at least two basic responds of globalization. On the one hand, it is understood as chance for global cooperation, which leads to global security and prosperity. In this context, globalization is seen as an essential component of world peace. On the other hand, there several critical considerations of globalization. Some experts argue that globalization will corrupt various existing local cultures and values. This corruption of cultures and values will lead to the creation of corrupt governments in various countries, which then will create global economic and political injustice between the rich and the poor. The social problems that are arising from social and economic injustice are too many to count.³ Ironically, these critical considerations of globalization are the majority in the context of social science research on globalization.

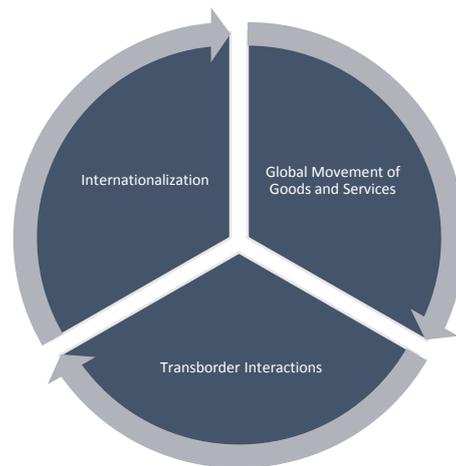
² This article is inspired by the framework from (Kessler, 2016)

³ See (Lakner, 2016)

The intensive scientific discussions on globalization began at the end of twentieth century. One of the experts in this discussion is Anthony Giddens, especially on the relation between globalization and international economy. He understands globalization as a process of intensification of social relations between contexts, which are impossible before. The basic idea is the character of interconnectedness that is deeply embedded in the heart of globalization. From this interconnectedness arises also the fact of interdependence between nations and regions of the world. Behind the fact of globalization is the rapid development of information, communication and transportation technology. This situation creates the possibility of global movement of goods, capitals and information.

In the scientific context, it is important that the concept of globalization is measurable quantitatively. Therefore, globalization can be understood as global social relations, or global interactions. This is possible, once again, because of the rapid development in the sector of information and communication technology. The meaning of space and time is also changing rapidly, because of this development. In this context, globalization can be seen as a process of spatial change in terms of social interactions and transactions, which become more complex in terms of intensity, velocity and social impact. This situation then creates global networks of activity and also the exercise of power in international level.⁴

⁴ Compare (David Held et.al, 1999)



This perspective of globalization has a huge influence not just in academia, but also in politics, economy and culture. One of the most obvious reactions to this phenomenon is the rise of regional international organizations, such as European Union, ASEAN and African Union. Various countries realized that they need to work together with other countries with the same values and cultural backgrounds to benefit from globalization and tackle the challenges of this process. As consequence to the rise of international regional organization, the separation between cultures became quite obvious, especially in the terms of religious identities. Spain, for example, established clear border with North African countries, and establish strong union with European countries, because of the profit motive and the identity similarities. This situation can be understood as a form of globalization paradox, namely the rise of local primordial identities as a reaction to globalization itself.⁵

As a process of internationalization, globalization can also be understood as intensive interactions between various nations across traditional boundaries of time and space, such as national borders, oceans etc. The concepts of related to globalization, such as internationalization and transnasionalization, can be used as synonym. The essence of these

⁵ See (Wattimena, 2013)

concepts are basically the same, namely the intensive interactions of nations beyond various existing borders, as if the borders do not exist at all. This understanding can be found in various literatures on globalization.

1.2 Globalization as Interdependence

The concept of interdependence was not so often being used in social science. However, with the development of research on globalization, scientists start to use this concept to explain one of the main element of globalization. In this context, interdependence can be translated as intensive mutual connection between everything that exists, especially in the global political system. Several authors on globalization emphasize the importance of recognizing the aspect of interdependence in the phenomenon of globalization. The event in one place can have direct and indirect consequences to other parts of the world. This is always the fact with the whole reality. The process of globalization only intensifies it further and deeper.

Interdependence is always one of the main character of factual reality. The whole cosmic ecosystem can be seen as a system of interdependence. Globalization, in this context, increases this interdependence on social and political level in global human ecosystem. Interdependence exists together with the internationalization process, where the quantity and quality of cross border interactions between nations are increased dramatically.

There is a paradox in this definition of globalization as interdependence. The rise of nation states and postcolonial states created independent nations in various regions. These nations have their own political and economic sovereignty. However, with the rise of globalization, this independence is followed by the intensive cross borders interactions between nation, which create new form of global interdependence between nations and regions. One of the examples of this global interdependence is the simple procedure in terms of legal and technical aspect on foreign investments between nations, especially through the possibility of

creating sister corporation from the central corporation that exist in another country.⁶ The intense interactions in terms of quality and quantity between countries establish the new global interdependence, which stands on the sovereignty and independence of each countries.⁷

Even in the era of globalization, there are countries who do not have diplomatic relationships between each other. Is the fact of interdependence still applied to them? The answer is positive. The rise of globalization is accompanied by the development of technology in various areas of life, especially information, communication and transportation technology. The pollution as a result from the creation and use of these technologies can be felt not just by the certain countries, which produce and use the technologies, but also by other countries and global community. The effects of global warming, as a result of lifestyle and economic policies of several highly developed industrial nations, can be seen across the world. It effects also natural ecosystem, for example in the extinction of various type of animals, because of lack of food and drastic change in temperature.

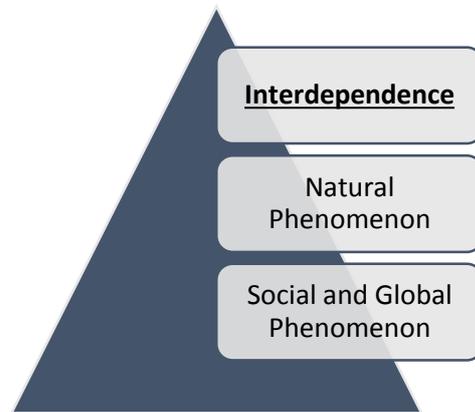
The fact of interdependence does not depend on the interaction or diplomatic relations between nations. It does not depend also on the process of internationalization as one important factors of globalization. Interdependence is a natural fact of reality that everything connects with everything, without exception. The whole universe is an organism based on energy and often invisible networks. This is also the basic understanding of the universe from the cosmopolitan perspective.⁸ However, this approach on globalization is not too often found in various literatures on globalization, especially compared to the approach to see globalization

⁶ Compare (Wibowo, 2001)

⁷ See (Kessler, 2016)

⁸ See (Wattimena, "Wake Up and Live": The Roots of Cosmopolitanism in Oriental Worldview, 2017) and also (Wattimena, Under the Same Sun: The Roots of Cosmopolitanism in Stoic Worldview, 2017)

as internationalization. One of the reason that interdependence is already always part of global ecosystem and not specifically constructed by the contemporary globalization.⁹



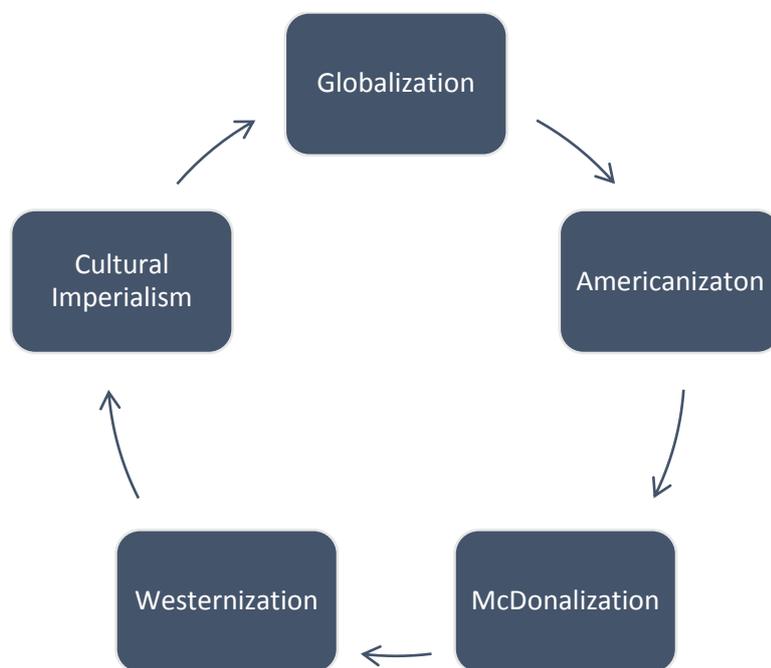
1.3. Globalization as Westernization

This aspect is probably the most controversial aspect of contemporary globalization, namely globalization as westernization. As quoted by Hessler, several authors define globalization as westernization, Americanization or McDonaldlization. This argument is based on the fact of the global influence of American culture through its various cultural products, such as films, music, foods and drinks, electronic products and, of course, various chain restaurants. The other aspect of globalization as westernization is the homogenization of way of life in various parts of the world in terms of the way they dress, think and cultural taste in music, films and food. This means also the extinction of pre-existing diversity in way of life, including language and various cultural products.

The concept of westernization describes not just the core of the process of contemporary globalization. It becomes the synonym for globalization itself, according to some author. In other words, globalization can be seen as a form of new cultural imperialism by the western

⁹ See (Kessler, 2016)

culture, namely European and American culture, to various parts of the world. In the social sciences, the concept of westernization as a form of cultural imperialism is an integral part of various social theories, even before the discourse on contemporary globalization became the one of the main topics in research. This phenomenon is then seen as the continuation of western colonialism in the 21st century with the support of the rapid development of information and communication technology.



1.4. The World Society

The latest pillar of contemporary globalization is the rise of global consciousness of people from various nations as global citizens. The concept of global consciousness is based on the understanding that the humanity is a unity on the earth regardless of various differences in terms of cultures. This definition cannot be separated from the previous definitions of globalization, namely as internationalization, interdependence and westernization. With these

processes, people from various parts of the world begin to aware of the universality of humanity itself. At the same time, because of the development of information, communication and transportation technology, there is also awareness on diversity of way of life and the existence of various global challenges, such as climate change, global warming and the global social inequality between the rich and the poor nations. These two situations, namely the universality of humanity and the rising sensitivity of various global challenges, shape the development of global consciousness of the people as one world society.¹⁰



This global consciousness brings the sense to all human that they are in the same boat, which is called earth. Regardless of their differences in terms of history, politics, culture, religions etc., this feeling of unity, namely being in the same boat, ties them as global citizens of the world. This global consciousness then raised further discussions not just on the unity of humanity, but the unity of life itself that stretches to all living beings, including plants and animals. This is the foundation of various discourses on the relation between globalization and ecological issues. The rise of global consciousness as the foundation of world society touches also naturally the concept of interdependence between all creatures, not just human society. The five pillars of contemporary globalization, namely internationalization, interdependence, westernization and the rise of world society, are closely interconnected.

¹⁰ Compare (J. Wallacher et.al, 2013)

2. Globalization: Further Reflection

2.1 Two Faces of Globalization

Globalization is a global process that has huge influence to the lives of many nations. It becomes also one of the most discussed topics in social science. Various methods from various scientific disciplines are used to measure the size and impact of the contemporary globalization process. The result is scientific and popular publications, which explore the meaning and impact of globalization in the world as a natural and social ecosystem. However, because of many factors that exist within the globalization itself, it is often quite difficult to pinpoint the exact nature of this process.¹¹ For example, on the one hand, globalization is often seen as the main cause of global inequality that leads to poverty in various nations, especially the developing nations. On the other hand, globalization has caused also the intensive cross borders interactions between nations that lead to economic prosperity, global security and political stability in various nations.

These two impacts of globalization can be seen as the secondary character of this process. The primary characters of globalization are defined directly in this writing as the internationalization, interdependence, westernization and the rise of world society based on global consciousness. These four characteristics of contemporary globalization can be used also to pinpoint the exact nature of this process, which are causing the two contradictory impacts, namely global prosperity on the one hand, and global poverty based on global economic inequality on the other hand. These core four aspects of globalization can be measure also by empirical studies based on statistical data, namely as the global movement of goods

¹¹ See (B. Herry Priyono, 2007)

and services around the world with great intensity and velocity, especially with rapid development of information, communication and transportation technology.

The empirical measurement becomes important as the standard to understand the real impact of globalization from quantitative perspective. In this context, the sum of total export-imports in relation to gross domestic brutto, and also total volume of foreign trade foreign investment in relation total population, play an important role in the process of measurement. Globalization can also be measured in quantitative analysis through the international policies related to diplomatic relations, such as cultural and public diplomacy between countries. These factors contribute to understand the intensive cross border interactions between countries, which become the backbone of contemporary globalization.

However, globalization is more than just a phenomenon of global movement of people, goods and services, which create not just prosperity on the one hand, but also social inequality, especially between the rich and poor countries. Various indicators often cannot describe this situation precisely. To clarify the situation, it is important also to measure per person income between countries and in comparison to life expense in related country. This will give more exact picture of the impact of globalization in daily life of ordinary citizens, especially related to the negative impacts of globalization, such as global inequality, poverty and trans borders criminality, which can be interpreted as new form of colonialism.¹²

¹² See (Kessler, 2016)



Because of this negative impacts, globalization can be a threat also to the quality of democracy in various countries. Inequality breeds poverty and then the rise of criminality. This situation is not conducive for democracy, because democracy requires political stability based on well informed and critically engaged citizens, which assume a certain social prosperity in society.¹³ In this context, based on the argument from Kessler, it is fair to assume the globalization will bring prosperity to the developed nations, who have the required infrastructure and culture to compete and prosper in the global politics. However, the same cannot be said for the developing and poor countries, which lost their infrastructure and culture, because of colonialism that happened for more than 400 years in various parts of the world, especially Africa, Australia, Asia and America. In these areas, globalization tends to create more poverty, social inequality and the destruction of democratic culture.¹⁴

2.2 Possible Strategy

¹³ See (Wattimena, *Demokrasi: Dasar Filosofis dan Tantangannya*, 2016)

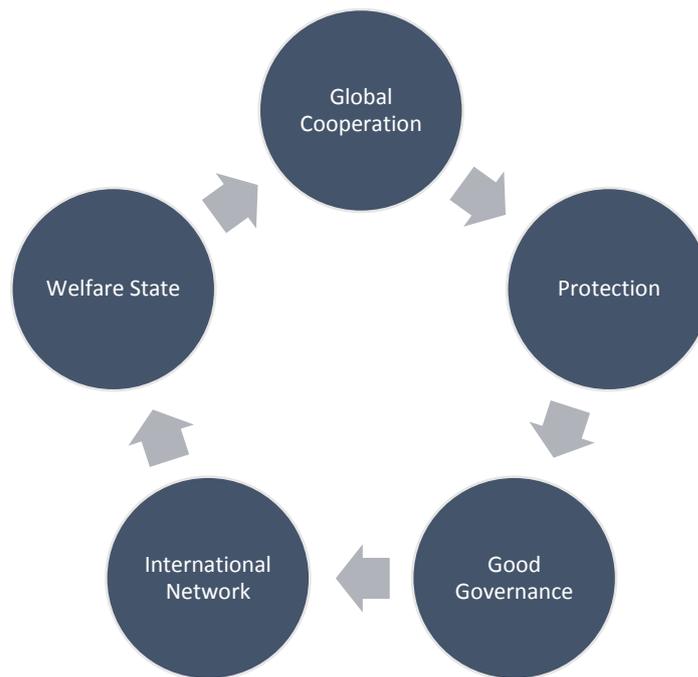
¹⁴ See (Kessler, 2016)

There are some possible important policy recommendations important to create equal prosperity in the age of globalization. *First*, the global cooperation between countries and various international organizations must be developed thoroughly and consistently, especially in the area of peace building, public education and healthcare development.¹⁵ This global cooperation must be established on the principles of equality, respect and fairness between various international actors. The existing policies and contracts for international cooperation must also be evaluated in the light of these principles. The role of regional organizations, such as ASEAN, African Union and European Union, are also very important in this context.

Second, global cooperation must be accompanied by protection mechanism for local business owners, which are the backbone of local economy. The purpose of this principle is to develop economic sovereignty within the country, which in turn will lead to the creation of economic equality and the end of poverty. This protection can be done by tax policies, such as tax cut for local business owners and increased tax for the foreign companies. However, this policy must be organized in such a way, so it does not destroy healthy competition between businesses. The balance between cooperation, competition and protection can be created through the implementation of eco social market economy.¹⁶

¹⁵ Compare (Müller, 1997)

¹⁶ See (Reza A.A Wattimena, 2017)



Third, the balance between global cooperation and local business protection can be created only through the existence of good governance from the national government, including the law enforcement. Good governance, in this context, means that the all government apparatus can exercise their duties to the citizens with a high degree of competence and trustworthiness. To achieve this, a certain system, infrastructure and culture of competence are needed in the society. The role of civil society, through various civil organizations, is very important in this context.¹⁷ International community can also support this effort through various possible cooperation and networks based on fairness and equality.

Fourth, one of the pillars of good governance is the existence of reliable social security in the society, which is already exist in the tradition of Welfare State. It means that all the citizens have the basic security for them during the time of crisis, such as in the time of illness. The state and the government have the responsibility to provide universal education and

¹⁷ Compare (Hardiman, 2010)

healthcare to all the citizens, without sacrificing the economic competitiveness of the country.¹⁸ This factor has to be managed in a certain way, so it will not create a certain social indulgence that will hinder productivity and creativity in society.

3. Conclusion

There four fundamental pillars of contemporary globalization. The first pillar is internationalization, which can be seen and measured empirically through the intensive cross border interactions between nations and the global movement of people, goods and services. The second pillar is interdependence, which actually is the nature of natural and social reality. Interdependence is a principle that explains the inherent relation of everything that exists in reality. The third pillar is westernization, namely the tendency of contemporary globalization to spread American and European values to the various parts of the world at the expense of existing local cultures. The fourth pillar is the rise of global consciousness that create the world society. It brings the feeling of global solidarity through communication, as well as awareness of the existing global challenges, such as environmental problems and global inequality.

The contemporary globalization contains also paradox in terms of global prosperity. On the one hand, it brings prosperity to the developed world, where infrastructure and culture for development and prosperity already exist. On the other hand, globalization increases poverty and socio-economic inequality in the poor and developing countries, especially because the lack of infrastructure and culture for development, which are a direct result of more than five hundred years of European colonization to the rest of the world. However, several strategies can be employed to overcome this challenge, such as international cooperation, revised welfare state and good governance in various levels and aspects of government.

¹⁸ Compare (Wattimena, *Demokrasi: Dasar Filosofis dan Tantangannya*, 2016)

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