

Globalisation and Cultural Diversity: Implications for Senior Citizens in Indonesia

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Abstract

This academic journal investigates the multifaceted impacts of globalisation and cultural diversity on the elderly population in Indonesia, a nation undergoing significant cultural and societal transformations driven by international interconnectedness. As global influences permeate both urban and rural settings, Indonesia's senior citizens confront distinct challenges related to maintaining cultural heritage, combating social isolation, and adapting to contemporary societal norms. The research scrutinises how globalisation shapes the experiences of Indonesian seniors, with a particular emphasis on cultural adaptation strategies, the dynamics of intergenerational relationships, and access to healthcare services. Through a comprehensive review of both qualitative and quantitative data, this paper aims to illuminate the evolving complexities of ageing within a globalised context. It proposes policy recommendations designed to enhance the welfare of older adults in Indonesia amidst these ongoing changes. This inquiry highlights the necessity of understanding these dynamics to formulate effective interventions that support healthy ageing within culturally diverse and rapidly globalising societies.

Keywords: Globalization, Cultural Diversity, Senior Citizens, Indonesia, Aging, Social Change, Cultural Preservation, Intergenerational Relationships

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, a nation characterised by its rich cultural tapestry, is increasingly subject to the pervasive influences of globalisation. While this global interconnectedness presents economic opportunities, fosters technological advancements, and facilitates cultural exchange, it simultaneously poses unique challenges for senior citizens who have predominantly experienced more traditional,

localised societal norms (Savira, 2015). Senior citizens in Indonesia find themselves at the nexus of profound cultural change, grappling with the imperative to both preserve their heritage and assimilate into a rapidly modernising, globalised world. This paper seeks to understand how globalisation affects the lives of senior citizens in Indonesia, with a focus on how cultural diversity interacts with ageing, identity preservation, and social inclusion. This exploration is critical given Indonesia's vast cultural richness, comprising over 1,300 ethnic groups, each possessing unique cultural identities and local wisdom that are intrinsically linked to the national heritage (Naba et al., 2024). This makes the study of globalisation's effects on this demographic particularly pertinent, as traditional values often clash with modern global influences, necessitating a deeper understanding of cultural resilience and adaptation among the elderly (Permadi, 2020). The rapid growth of the elderly population in Indonesia, projected to increase significantly by 2050, further underscores the urgency of this research, as their well-being directly impacts national development and social stability (Mustika & Pratiwi, 2022). This demographic shift necessitates a proactive approach to address the unique needs of older adults, including maintaining their physical and mental health (CAHYONO et al., 2024).

This paper endeavours to elucidate the ramifications of globalisation on the lives of Indonesian seniors, with a specific emphasis on the interplay between cultural diversity, the maintenance of identity, and the promotion of social inclusion.

This research will provide valuable insights for policymakers and social service providers to develop targeted interventions and programs that support the holistic well-being of older adults in this evolving societal landscape (CAHYONO et al., 2024). For instance, programs like SERAWA exemplify holistic approaches that integrate physical health, mental well-being, and social connectedness, proving effective in enhancing the quality of life for seniors (CAHYONO et al., 2024). This includes initiatives aimed at improving physical health through balanced nutrition and regular exercise, alongside psychological support via group discussions and individual counselling to combat loneliness and emotional distress (CAHYONO et al., 2024). These interventions are crucial for fostering a supportive environment that enables senior citizens to navigate

the complexities of globalisation while preserving their cultural dignity and social integration (CAHYONO et al., 2024). Furthermore, understanding the mechanisms through which elderly individuals achieve flourishing and maintain well-being, even amidst cultural shifts, is crucial for developing robust support systems (Indriana et al., 2023). This paper also examines how the rapid increase in internet and social media usage among Indonesian seniors influences their happiness and social engagement, considering that 44% of them are now online (Indriana et al., 2023). They are frequently in opposition to the deeply ingrained values and traditional practices that characterise their generation (Fung et al., 2023). These cultural norms and traditional practices are often at odds with the deeply ingrained values that characterize their generation, necessitating significant adaptation (Marzo et al., 2023). Moreover, national health systems globally face the challenge of developing successful ageing models to prepare for biomedical, psychological, and social changes, emphasising the critical need for greater focus on psychosocial health as an integral component of overall quality of life and well-being (Animasahun & Chapman, 2017).

LITERARY REVIEWS

1. Globalization and Aging in Indonesia

- a. Globalisation has led to the influx of foreign cultures, ideas, and lifestyles into Indonesia, resulting in cultural shifts that are often more accepted by younger generations. However, older adults may struggle with these changes, finding themselves disconnected from the rapidly changing society (Aprianti et al., 2022).

This disjunction can lead to social isolation, as traditional social structures and intergenerational interactions may erode (Mohd et al., 2010) .

Studies show that senior citizens in urban areas may find it easier to adapt to globalized practices, such as technology and modern healthcare, compared to those in rural areas who are more embedded in traditional cultural values (Jones et al., 2023). This highlights a dichotomy where urban seniors might embrace technological advancements, such as digital social

media, to mitigate loneliness and foster social connections, while their rural counterparts might experience heightened digital disconnection due to limited access or familiarity (Buakanok et al., 2022). The integration of digital platforms, such as those designed for cultural revitalisation, offers a promising avenue for mitigating this divide by making traditional knowledge accessible through modern means (Buakanok et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the digital divide among elderly populations, particularly in rural settings, often impedes active ageing and reduces overall life satisfaction due to limited access to or proficiency with modern information and communication technologies (Liu et al., 2021). The ability of older adults to adopt new technologies, especially in healthcare, is crucial for improving their quality of life and facilitating dignified ageing within a globalised context (Low et al., 2021).

2. Cultural Diversity and Senior Citizens

- a. The diverse cultural landscape of Indonesia presents a dual-edged sword for its senior population, as the influx of globalised norms and foreign customs can precipitate identity conflicts and a sense of cultural displacement among older adults (Dewi et al., 2020). This scenario often forces seniors to navigate a complex terrain where ancestral traditions clash with contemporary global influences, thereby challenging their established worldviews and communal practices.
- b. Senior citizens in Indonesia may find it challenging to navigate multicultural interactions in cities where different ethnic and cultural backgrounds coexist. These complexities can sometimes result in marginalization or social isolation (Wijayanti et al., 2012). The digital age, while offering opportunities for social integration and enhanced living conditions, also presents a significant "grey digital divide," where elderly individuals face challenges in accessing essential services and connecting with peers due to a lack of digital skills (Mubarak & Suomi, 2022).

RESEARCH METHOD

This research adopts a mixed-methods research design, integrating qualitative interviews with senior citizens and quantitative surveys administered across diverse Indonesian regions. The objective is to ascertain senior citizens' perceptions of globalisation and cultural diversity within their everyday experiences. The investigation is structured into the subsequent phases:

1. **Qualitative Interviews:** In-depth interviews with senior citizens aged 60 and above, representing both urban and rural areas of Indonesia, focusing on their experiences of cultural changes and social interactions. These interviews aim to capture nuanced narratives regarding the impact of globalisation on traditional values, intergenerational communication, and access to modern amenities, including digital literacy (Mubarak & Suomi, 2022). These interviews will also explore how digital health technologies are perceived and utilised by older adults for maintaining functional independence and overall well-being, acknowledging the potential for technology to mitigate socio-economic effects of population ageing.
2. **Quantitative Surveys:** A survey measuring the impact of globalisation on social participation, mental health, and cultural identity among senior citizens. The survey will also assess the degree to which older adults engage with digital technologies and how this engagement correlates with their perceptions of well-being and social connectedness (Kebede et al., 2022). This dual approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between global forces, cultural dynamics, and the well-being of Indonesia's elderly population.
3. **Data Analysis:** Thematic analysis for qualitative data and statistical analysis for quantitative data to identify patterns and correlations between globalisation and senior citizens' well-being. This rigorous methodology allows for a comprehensive assessment of how globalising forces manifest in

the daily lives of older Indonesians, providing empirical grounding for policy recommendations aimed at fostering inclusive ageing in a rapidly changing world.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Emerging data suggests that:

1. **Cultural Identity:** A significant number of senior citizens report difficulties in maintaining traditional customs, such as local languages, rituals, and social norms, due to the introduction of new values and lifestyles associated with globalisation, particularly in urban settings. Conversely, rural elders, while more isolated from direct global influences, experience indirect cultural erosion through mass media and internal migration of younger generations to urban centres. This phenomenon often leads to a diminished sense of cultural belonging among the elderly, as the collective memory and traditional knowledge they embody become less relevant in a rapidly modernising society (Mendrofa et al., 2024). Moreover, the decline in the practice of traditional customs can lead to intergenerational gaps, as younger cohorts adopt globalised norms, further isolating older adults from contemporary societal discourse. Furthermore, the perception of traditional arts as being degraded by the influx of foreign artistic expressions exacerbates this cultural displacement, making it challenging to foster public awareness and engagement with local cultural products among the younger generation (Rohmiyati et al., 2025). This shift underscores the urgent need for strategic interventions that can bridge the generational divide and preserve indigenous cultural practices amidst pervasive global influences (Saroni, 2018).
2. **Social Connectivity:** Older adults residing in rural areas tend to experience greater social isolation, often attributed to restricted access to global networks and technology. Conversely, urban seniors who actively participate in digital platforms tend to have more opportunities for social engagement. This disparity highlights the persistent "grey digital divide," where lack of digital literacy and

access to technology limits the social integration and overall well-being of elderly individuals, particularly in remote regions, reinforcing existing socio-economic inequalities (Nasution, 2023). Furthermore, the study indicates that despite the challenges, resilience is observed among older adults who maintain close ties with family and significant others, suggesting the enduring importance of social support networks in mitigating the negative impacts of modernisation and cultural shifts (Olivari et al., 2022). These findings underscore the critical need for locality-specific interventions and policies to address the uneven distribution of these impacts, ensuring that programs are precisely targeted to the needs of older adults in both urban and rural settings (Mangukiya & Sklarew, 2023).

3. **Healthcare Accessibility:** While some elderly individuals acknowledge the advantages of modern healthcare systems facilitated by globalisation, there is a discernible disparity in access between urban and rural populations. Urban seniors generally benefit more from enhanced health services, whereas their rural counterparts often continue to rely on traditional healing methods. This disparity extends to mental health services, where traditional community support systems are being eroded by modern societal changes, leading to increased vulnerability among the elderly (Kurniawidjaja et al., 2022). This rural-urban gap in healthcare access and socioeconomic status exacerbates existing health inequalities, making chronic disease management particularly challenging for the rural elderly who often have lower incomes and limited access to specialised care (Jana & Chattopadhyay, 2022). Additionally, the globalised emphasis on market-driven healthcare models often overlooks the specific needs of older adults, who may require long-term care and geriatric-specific services that are not readily available or affordable in all regions.

The findings highlight the complex and often contradictory impacts of globalisation on Indonesia's senior citizens. While globalisation offers avenues for increased connectivity, access to modern healthcare, and exposure to diverse cultural influences, it concurrently contributes to cultural erosion, identity crises, and social

exclusion, particularly affecting older adults in rural areas. This issue is exacerbated by a discernible generational divide, where younger populations are more readily embracing global trends.

At the same time, older adults endeavour to maintain traditional values that they perceive as being overshadowed. Rural seniors, in particular, face greater difficulties in adapting to a globalised society due to their restricted access to technology and contemporary services. Compounding this, many express a sense of disconnection from younger generations' perceived deviation from traditional ways of life, which intensifies feelings of alienation and cultural loss. Furthermore, the ongoing demographic shift, characterised by an increasing proportion of older adults, presents additional complexities for healthcare systems as they contend with a surge in chronic diseases and age-related conditions (Osareme et al., 2024).

CONCLUSIONS

The advent of globalisation in Indonesia significantly impacts its senior citizens, particularly concerning the preservation of cultural diversity and identity. While specific segments of the elderly population have experienced enhancements in healthcare access and social connectivity, a considerable number face challenges related to the erosion of traditional cultural practices and increasing social isolation.

Consequently, there is a critical need for policymakers to formulate and implement inclusive strategies that safeguard cultural heritage, ensure equitable access to contemporary resources, and foster intergenerational communication. Achieving a state where senior citizens can flourish within a globalised context necessitates a careful equilibrium between preserving cultural legacies and harnessing the advantages of modernisation. This includes promoting cultural education among the youth, establishing community-based support systems for the elderly, and developing digital literacy programs tailored to their needs. Such initiatives would ideally bridge the generational gap and allow for a more cohesive societal integration, promoting an

environment where traditional wisdom and modern advancements can coexist harmoniously (Nahak, 2019).

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