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Overcoming the Challenges of National Integration in the Era of Globalization

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Abstract

National integration has an important role in maintaining the unity and stability of a country, especially in Indonesia which is known for its cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity. However, in the era of globalization, challenges in maintaining national integration are increasing due to the rapid flow of information, the influence of foreign cultures, and social and economic inequality. Globalization not only has a positive impact in the form of technological development and economic growth, but can also threaten national values and deepen social divisions. This article aims to examine the impact of globalization on national integration, identify obstacles that arise, and formulate effective strategies to strengthen national unity. This article uses the literature review method and descriptive analysis of various references that discuss national integration and the challenges of globalization. The results of this article show that strengthening national integration can be done by improving multicultural education, developing a creative economy as a means of strengthening social relations, and increasing digital literacy to face the challenges of globalization. In addition, collaboration between the government, society and the private sector is needed in designing inclusive policies to strengthen national unity. By understanding the challenges and strategies that can be implemented, Indonesia can maintain its national identity and strengthen social cohesion amidst the evolving global dynamics.

Keywords: National Integration, Globalization, National Identity, Social Inequality, Strengthening Strategy

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Abstrak

Integrasi nasional memiliki peran penting dalam menjaga persatuan dan stabilitas suatu negara, terutama di Indonesia yang dikenal dengan keberagaman budaya, suku, dan agama. Namun, di era globalisasi, tantangan dalam mempertahankan integrasi nasional semakin meningkat akibat arus informasi yang cepat, pengaruh budaya asing, serta ketimpangan sosial dan ekonomi. Globalisasi tidak hanya memberikan dampak positif berupa perkembangan teknologi dan pertumbuhan ekonomi, tetapi juga dapat mengancam nilai-nilai kebangsaan serta memperdalam perpecahan sosial. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji dampak globalisasi terhadap integrasi nasional, mengidentifikasi hambatan yang muncul, serta merumuskan strategi efektif untuk memperkuat persatuan bangsa. Artikel ini menggunakan metode kajian literatur dan analisis deskriptif terhadap berbagai referensi yang

membahas integrasi nasional dan tantangan globalisasi. Hasil artikel ini menunjukkan bahwa memperkuat integrasi nasional dapat dilakukan dengan meningkatkan pendidikan multikultural, mengembangkan ekonomi kreatif sebagai sarana mempererat hubungan sosial, serta meningkatkan literasi digital untuk menghadapi tantangan globalisasi. Selain itu, diperlukan kolaborasi antara pemerintah, masyarakat, dan sektor swasta dalam merancang kebijakan yang inklusif guna memperkokoh persatuan nasional. Dengan memahami berbagai tantangan serta strategi yang dapat diterapkan, Indonesia dapat mempertahankan identitas nasional dan memperkuat kohesi sosial di tengah dinamika global yang terus berkembang.

Kata Kunci: Integrasi Nasional, Globalisasi, Identitas Kebangsaan, Ketimpangan Sosial, Strategi Penguatan

Introduction

National integration is an important element in maintaining the unity and stability of a country, especially in Indonesia which has rich ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity. In the era of growing globalization, the challenge of maintaining national integration is becoming increasingly complex, with the rapid flow of information, the influence of foreign cultures, and social and economic inequalities that can threaten national values and exacerbate social divisions. There are two main dimensions to this challenge: the horizontal dimension related to ethnic, religious, racial, and geographical differences, and the vertical dimension related to the gap between elites and society.

This gap often causes dissatisfaction that can threaten the unity and unity of the nation. Various previous studies provide relevant perspectives on the issue of national integration. Agus (2016) in his research emphasized the importance of intergroup dialogue as a way to reduce social tension. This research shows that good communication between different ethnic and cultural groups can create deeper understanding and reduce conflict. However, this study does not address how to implement such dialogue in broader public policy.

Mundzir Ahmad (2025) examines the challenges of national integration in the era of globalization and highlights multicultural education as an effective solution. He argues that education that values diversity can build collective awareness among the younger generation. However, this study does not provide a concrete strategy for integrating multicultural education into the national curriculum, so its impact on national integration still needs to be explored further.

De Gani and Sembiring (2023) examine Indonesia's national identity and integration, emphasizing the role of Pancasila as the basis for integration. They argue that the values of Pancasila must be internalized in every aspect of people's lives to achieve harmonious integration. However, this study does not specifically discuss the influence of technology and

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digital literacy in strengthening national integration, which is an important aspect in the current era of globalization.

This article aims to examine the impact of globalization on national integration, identify emerging obstacles, and formulate effective strategies to strengthen national unity, in the hope of providing new insights and relevant solutions in an ever-evolving global context. This research is very important because it can provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of national integration in the midst of the increasingly strong currents of globalization, as well as offer innovative approaches to maintain national identity and strengthen social cohesion in Indonesia, so that people can live in harmony despite the existing diversity.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. The data used came from primary and secondary sources which included literature reviews and documents relevant to national integration in the era of globalization. Data collection techniques are carried out through literature studies to obtain information from various sources, including journals, books, and scientific articles. Data analysis is carried out qualitatively by identifying patterns, themes, and relationships in the collected data.

Results And Discussion

A. Scope of National Integration

Indonesia's national integration is an effort to create unity and unity in the midst of the diversity of ethnicities, cultures, religions, and languages in the country. The process of national integration in Indonesia is based on the principles of Pancasila, which is the basic ideology of the state. Pancasila consists of five precepts, namely the One Godhead, Fair and Civilized Humanity, Indonesian Unity, Peoples Led by Wisdom in Deliberation/Representation, and Social Justice for All Indonesian People. Pancasila is the foundation for achieving strong national integration.

Various aspects are involved in efforts to achieve national integration, including education, political policy, governance, and equitable economic development across the region. Education plays an important role in building mutual understanding, respecting differences, and fostering a spirit of nationalism among the younger generation. Inclusive political policies and respect for the rights of minorities are also indispensable to achieve harmonious national integration. A government that applies the principle of regional autonomy allows the development of local potential while maintaining national unity and unity.

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Equitable economic development is a key factor in national integration. Efforts to reduce economic disparities between regions and encourage the participation of all groups in economic development can strengthen the relationship between different groups in Indonesia. However, despite various efforts, Indonesia's national integration still faces a number of challenges. Some of these challenges include economic inequality, social conflicts, separatist issues, and complex cultural and religious differences. Addressing these issues requires sustained efforts, such as strengthening inter-group dialogue, respecting human rights, encouraging inclusive political participation, and promoting social and economic equality.

Indonesia's national integration is not an easy process, but it is an important goal to strengthen the unity and unity of the nation. By respecting and celebrating Indonesia's cultural diversity and natural wealth, as well as prioritizing the principles of Pancasila, it is hoped that national integration can continue to be strengthened to achieve a stronger and more sustainable Indonesia.

Definition of national integration according to experts

1. Dr. Nazardin Shamsdin stated that national integration is a process of unifying a nation that covers all aspects of life, including political, social, economic, and cultural.
2. Howard Wriggins defines national integration as the merger of individual parts of society into a more complete unit, or the merger of various small communities into a single state.
3. Myron Weiner explains that national integration is the process by which the various social and cultural groups within a region form a unified national identity.
4. J. Soedjati Djiwandono defines national integration as an effort to achieve peace and sustainability in national unity at large, by granting the right to self-determination.
5. Safari di Bahar stated that national integration means the merger or refinement of various elements of the nation that were previously separate.
6. Alfani explained that national integration is the process of forming a national identity and merging various social groups from various cultures into a single region.
7. According to the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language (KBBI), national integration is a form that combines various cultural and social groups regionally to form a national identity.

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B. The Concept of Globalization

Globalization is a contemporary phenomenon that has an impact on the emergence of various possible changes in the world. The influence of globalization can remove various limitations, so that the world becomes more open and interdependent with each other. Thus, globalization introduced a new view of the concept of the "Infinite World," which has now become a reality and has had a profound impact on cultural development, which in turn brings about new changes. The following is the definition and definition of globalization according to several experts:

Waters provides a different definition of globalization from a different perspective, stating that globalization is a social process in which geographical boundaries are no longer an important factor in socio-cultural conditions, which ultimately shape individual consciousness. This definition is in line with Giddens' view, which states that globalization creates interdependence between countries and individuals through various aspects such as trade, travel, tourism, culture, information, and extensive interactions, so that the borders of countries are narrower.

Some experts also posit that globalization is a process in which individuals, groups, societies, and countries interact, connect, depend, and influence each other, across national borders. Tomlinson defines globalization as the reduction of distance and time required to carry out daily activities, both physically (such as air travel) and in a representative manner (such as the transmission of information and images through electronic media).

Lyman assesses that globalization is often interpreted as "the rapid growth of interdependence and connection in the world of trade and finance." However, he argues that globalization is not only limited to the phenomenon of trade and financial flows that are increasingly widespread, but also includes other trends driven by technological advances that facilitate changes in the financial field, such as the globalization of communications.

The concept of globalization requires a deeper explanation so that we can assess its impact on various aspects of life, including political, economic, social, cultural, and religious. The nature and scope of the influence of globalization that can be discussed depends on the meaning given to the term. It is important to understand that the meaning of globalization serves as a "source of influence," while "recipient of influence" encompasses all aspects of life. Previously, Briones and Loy stated that globalization has multiple dimensions, not only limited to business and economics, but also includes globalization in institutions of democracy, social, humanitarian, and women's movements.

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In general, the concept of economic globalization is considered to be the core of a phenomenon called globalization. Osman argues that economic globalization is a process that deepens the interdependence of the global economy in various fields, including markets, by optimizing the distribution of production and resources, as well as encouraging cross-border flows of human resources, capital, commodities, services, technology, and information. Although the picture of globalization can be broadly explained, the attention paid to the concept of globalization itself is still very limited compared to other views that exist in the theory of globalization. According to Ferguson, there is less discussion about the concept of globalization than the expression of capitalist ideology. In fact, Bordieu and Wacquant argue that the concept of globalization has a significant influence, and is inappropriate if it is only considered as a function that drowns imperialism in cultural ecumenism or economic fatalism. On the contrary, this concept is able to create the power of transnational relations that emerge as a normal need.

C. Overcoming the Challenges of National Integration

1. The Challenges of National Integration

In an effort to achieve national integration in Indonesia, there are various challenges that arise from two dimensions, namely horizontal and vertical. On the horizontal dimension, these challenges are rooted in differences in ethnicity, religion, race, and geography. Meanwhile, in the vertical dimension, the challenge faced is the gap between the elite and society, where the higher educational background among the elite often makes them have different views compared to societies that tend to be more traditional.

Problems related to vertical dimensions often arise after interacting with horizontal dimensions, so it appears that horizontal challenges are more dominant in the Indonesian context. One of the problems faced by developing countries, including Indonesia, in realizing national integration is the strong primordialism. Primordial shocks usually revolve around issues such as blood relations (ethnicity), race, region, religion, and customs. Inequality and inequality in development can cause dissatisfaction that leads to SARA (Ethnic, Religious, Racial, and Inter-Group) issues, separatist movements, and demonstrations. This has the potential to threaten horizontal integration in Indonesia. In the vertical dimension, the challenge is the willingness of leaders to keep in touch with the people. Leaders must be willing to listen to people's complaints, go to the field, and be close to groups that feel marginalized.

The challenges of these two dimensions are increasingly visible after the 1998 reform. Horizontal and vertical conflicts often occur in tandem with the weakening of central government

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authority. The freedoms that emerged in the reform era, as part of the democratization process, are often abused by community groups to act arbitrarily. These actions sparked intergroup movements and demonstrations against government policies, which were often accompanied by anarchist actions. The government's desire to realize people's aspirations, policies that are in accordance with the needs of the community, public support for legitimate government, and citizens' obedience to government policies are indicators of vertical integration. On the contrary, policies that do not meet public expectations and rejection of government policies indicate a lack of vertical integration. Although there is no policy that can satisfy all citizens, at least it must be able to meet the expectations of the majority of the community.

Relationships and cooperation between different groups, a willingness to coexist peacefully, and mutual respect between groups are signs of horizontal integration. However, we cannot expect horizontal integration to be fully realized. Conflicts between groups against the background of differences are still possible. It is hoped that the conflict can be managed properly and does not interfere with development efforts and the achievement of national goals.

In the era of globalization, the challenges of integration are increasingly complex with global influences that often ignore national borders. The state is in two pulls, namely from the outside in the form of globalization and from within in the form of strengthening narrow ties such as ethnicity, ethnicity, or region. This makes the challenge to nationalism and the existence of the state even more severe. In addition, integration challenges are also related to political, economic, and socio-cultural aspects.

2. Methods in Overcoming the Challenges of National Integration

In facing the challenges of national integration in the era of globalization, it is important for us to realize that differences are an inseparable part of the nation's identity. Indonesia, with its cultural, religious, and social diversity, has great potential to become an example of harmonious integration. However, to achieve these goals, we need to take concrete steps that can strengthen unity in the midst of differences. The following are some of the ways we can respect differences and build national integration.

1. Respecting Differences to Build Unity

In an effort to achieve national integration in the era of globalization, it is very important for us to respect differences. This can be achieved by building awareness that differences are natural and not something to be feared or opposed.

2. Enhancing Multicultural Education

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Multicultural education can be an effective solution to strengthen national integration in the midst of globalization. Through this education, people can better understand various cultures and religions, as well as appreciate the diversity that exists in Indonesia. By improving multicultural education, it is hoped that the Indonesian people can develop an awareness to respect each other and strengthen unity.

3. Building Tolerance and Openness

Tolerance and openness are also key elements in strengthening national integration in the era of globalization. Tolerance helps Indonesian people to respect each other's differences, while openness can broaden horizons and strengthen a sense of togetherness. By building tolerance and openness, it is hoped that the Indonesian people can more easily interact and understand each other.

4. Developing a Creativity-Based Economy

In addition to cultural and religious differences, economic aspects also play an important role in achieving national integration in the era of globalization. Indonesia has a lot of creative potential that can be used to develop the economy, such as arts, music, and crafts. By developing a creativity-based economy, it is hoped that the Indonesian people can build collective strength and strengthen national integration.

5. Fostering Partnerships Between Sectors

Encouraging partnerships between sectors, both from the government, the private sector, and civil society, can also strengthen national integration in the era of globalization. This partnership can create new jobs and improve people's welfare, while strengthening cooperation between various groups in society. Thus, the Indonesian people can build common strength and strengthen unity.

6. Building Joint Strength in the Midst of Differences

National integration in the era of globalization is indeed a difficult challenge, but it remains an important goal for the Indonesian nation. Differences in culture, religion, and economics must be confronted by respecting differences, building tolerance and openness, improving multicultural education, developing a creativity-based economy, and encouraging inter-sectoral partnerships.

By building common strength in the midst of differences, Indonesian people can strengthen national integration and create a more advanced and prosperous nation. Let's jointly strengthen national integration by respecting differences, building tolerance and openness, and

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developing the potential for creativity and inter-sectoral partnerships. In this way, we can build a common strength in the midst of differences to advance the Indonesian nation.

Conclusion

National integration is very important for countries that have ethnic, religious, cultural, and linguistic diversity, such as Indonesia. The goal of national integration is to achieve unity and unity in the midst of existing differences. However, in the era of globalization, the challenges faced in this integration process are increasingly complex, as the influence of globalization often ignores national borders, which can trigger social tensions and conflicts. Indonesia faces the challenge of integration from two dimensions, namely horizontal, which relates to ethnic, religious, racial, and geographical differences, and vertical, which relates to the gap between elites and society. The problem of primordialism and social dissatisfaction is a significant issue in this context.

To overcome these challenges, various strategies are needed, such as respecting differences to build unity, improving multicultural education, and building tolerance and openness. In addition, creativity-based economic development and fostering partnerships between sectors are also very important. By implementing these measures, it is hoped that the Indonesian people can strengthen national integration and create a more advanced, prosperous, and harmonious nation in the midst of existing diversity.

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