Rethinking Missions Strategies in the Context of Globalization: A Call for Interconnectivity

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ABSTRACT

Globalization is a multi-dimensional and deeply enmeshed reality that transformed the world. Globalization occupies a global space that has intensified global interconnectivity, integration of markets, and global interdependence. Globalization sets the stage for global interconnectivity and convergence among peoples, cultures, religions, and ecology. As such, contemporary globalization is creating a new space for the mission of the Catholic Church that seeks interconnectivity. It has brought about a vast web of interactions and increased connectivity in every aspect of life, especially the Christian life and mission. This study argues that in the context of globalization, there is a need to rethink the Catholic Church's mission strategies by exploring globalization as a new space of mission in this contemporary context that calls for interconnectivity. Primarily, this study discusses the phenomenon of globalization by understanding how it presents a profound and systemic change in mission today. Subsequently, an exploration of the aspects of globalization in relation to culture, economy, religion, and ecology is presented. Finally, an analysis of globalization and its consequences on the mission is discussed.

Keywords: globalization, interconnectivity, Catholic Church, mission, mission strategies

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Introduction

Increased interactions and vast interconnectivity evidence globalization as a contemporary context of mission. These complex, multi-faceted, multi-directional global processes provide a context for the mission as every domain of life, in particular, culture, religion, economy, and ecology, are penetrated by it. Thus, exploring contemporary globalization identifies the reality of the context of today's mission that seeks interconnectivity. This study contributes to a more relevant and holistic theology in addressing the challenges and opportunities brought about by globalization. Globalization is a process that seeks to deepen, widen, and speed up global interconnectivity. This complex reality is embedded in our society. It becomes a dominant paradigm with profound implications for individuals and societies, thus contributing to a profound and systemic change that creates values, communication, and collaboration at a different level. Contemporary globalization is creating a new landscape for the mission of the Catholic Church, emphasizing the importance of interconnectivity. It has fostered a vast network of interactions and enhanced connectivity across all areas of life, particularly within the Christian life and its mission. This study posits that, in light of globalization, there is a pressing need to reevaluate the mission strategies of the Catholic Church by viewing globalization as a new arena for missions that necessitates interconnectivity. The discussion primarily focuses on the phenomenon of globalization, examining how it signifies a profound and systemic shift in mission today. Following this, the study explores various aspects of globalization, including its cultural, economic, religious, and ecological dimensions. Finally, an analysis of globalization and its implications for mission is presented as baseline data for proposed mission strategies toward a more Synodal Church.

The Phenomenon of Globalization

Globalization is a buzzword today. It has brought unprecedented economic, political, cultural, and social changes. Scholars observed that the term globalization pertains to increasing complex interactions and widening of international convergence facilitated by technological advancements, creative communication, and efficient transportation systems that have compressed time and space[1]. Some would attest that contemporary globalization is an era of great possibilities and, at the same time, an era of significant problems. Others see the present era as being continuously tossed by waves of integration and disintegration. Alternatively, it is taken to mean progress or regress, promise or danger. It is through these insights that a careful and critical examination of the meaning of globalization is presented.

1. Globalization as a Concept

Globalization, as a concept, is not new. It is a complex construct that can be described in terms of its varied meanings and consequences. Roland Robertson explains globalization as "a concept that refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole."[2] He states that the focus is the "increasing acceleration of global interdependence and consciousness shaping the global whole."[3] Contemporary globalization intensifies interactions, integrates the economy, and increases global interdependence at an accelerated speed in a short period, leading to the universalization of the world into a unified whole.

However, Robertson argues that it does not mean we are more united today than ever. He reiterates that globalization "is a form of institutionalization of the two-fold process involving the universalization of particularism and the particularization of universalism…and asserts that diversity is part of the globalizing process."[4] For Robertson, globalization is a complex and neutral reality, for it considers the human person. The human person's capacity to harness globalization's potential for the service of humanity and the capacity to overcome problems brought by globalization.

2. Globalization as a Context

Globalization, as a context, can be regarded

1 Neil Ormerod and Shane Clifton, "Preface" to Globalization and the Mission of the Church, Ecclesiological Investigations, v. 6 (New York: T & T Clark, 2009), viii-x.
2 Roland Robertson, Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture (London: SAGE, 2000), 8.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid., 102; 173-174.

according to two axes: the interconnectivity represented by the Internet and the compression of time and space. Globalization "has weaved a network of dependence in which we are all caught."[5] This reality has intensified the process of interaction and integration among peoples, cultures, and religions, leading to the "onset of a borderless world."[6] Jan Scholte refers to it as "deterritorialization, the free and interconnected nature of global conditions that enable people to reside in a particular physical location but in a transworld space."[7]

It also ascribes to the transnational circulation of ideas, languages, and concepts. It works towards standardization of tastes and culture and international trade and finance among significant regions of the world. Moreover, globalization can be understood as "the inexorable integration of markets, nation-states, and technologies to a degree never witnessed before, and in a way that enables individuals, corporations, and nation-states to reach around the world farther, faster, deeper, and cheaper than ever before."[8]

It also includes developing worldwide systems through connectivity technology for global networking and the propensity towards the powerful influence of the World Trade Organization, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund. [9] However, Thomas Friedman quickly observes: "It is also producing a powerful backlash from those brutalized or left behind by this new system."[10]

3. Globalization as a Process

Globalization as a process seeks the "widening, deepening, and the speeding up of global interconnectedness."[11] Globalization is best explained as:

A process or set of processes which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions— best described in these four elements: assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity, and impact—generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction, and the exercise of power. [12]

Globalization focuses on four spatiotemporal dimensions that serve as aids in understanding this complex reality embedded in our society, namely: (a) the extensity of global networks in terms of the extent of relations, connections, and activities across frontiers, (b) the intensity of global interconnectedness, which refers to the growing magnitude of interconnectedness, flows, levels of activities within networks, (c) velocity or acceleration of interactions, which refers to the speed of interchanges happening, and (d) impact, that pertains to growing impact of events and decisions in distant places and impact on particular communities.[13] The extensity, intensity, velocity, and impact simultaneously contribute to the globalizing process that is happening in the world.

Globalization presents a complex and multidirectional set of processes that affect every aspect of life. It is not only limited to the economic, political, cultural, and technological dimensions of life. Globalization has many faces. The growing magnitude of interconnectivity, the possibility of interactions that transcend distance, and the deep enmeshment of the local and global have profound repercussions on how we make sense of our lives and our call to mission.

Conversely, globalization remains a dominant paradigm that affects every domain of human life, and its implications are profound for individuals and societies. Thus, it leads to understanding and exploring "a digitally propelled globalization."[14] It opens up new horizons that give us the reality of the context of mission today that seeks interconnectivity.

Global Interconnectivity

Global interconnectivity is often likened

5 Roopinder Oberoi, Revisiting Globalization: From a Borderless to a Gated Globe (New York: Springer Science+Business Media, 2018), 6.
6 Kenichi Ohmae, The Borderless World: Power and Strategy in the Global Market-Place. (London: Harper Collins, 1992) 1.
7 Jan Aart Scholte, Globalization: A Critical Introduction. (New York: Palgrave, 2003), 48.
8 Thomas L. Friedman, The Lexus and the Olive Tree (New York: Anchor Books, 2000), 11.
9 Manfred B. Steger, Paul Battersby, and Joseph M. Siracusa, eds., The SAGE Handbook of Globalization, 1st edition (Los Angeles: Sage Reference, 2014), 4-14.
10 Friedman, The Lexus and the Olive Tree, 12.
11 David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton, "Rethinking Globalization," in The Global Transformations Reader, eds. David Held and Anthony McGrew (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity, 2003), 67.
12 Ibid., 67–68.
13 Ibid.
14 Oberoi, Revisiting Globalization, 6.

to a web through which the Internet, digitization, and technology have increased interconnectivity at great lengths that it is often dubbed as "complex connectivity."[15] This complex connectivity compresses time and space that, despite the distance, brings people to proximity. Thus creating a "world system of interrelatedness."[16] One way or the other, whether online or offline, despite the distance, everyone is bound by globalization. As social scientists emphasized, "people and ideas are being interconnected through global processes."[17]

The reality of global interconnectivity gives rise to having billions of people connected to the World Wide Web. These digital megatrends and connected technologies continuously shape the future. "They represent entirely new ways of creating value" and "the way we communicate, the way we collaborate, and the way we experience the world around us."[18] It has brought about a profound and systemic change in addressing the contemporary mission of our time. There is a pull factor in the world that compels us to connect, see the world as one integral whole, and find meaning, purpose, and sense of identity.

1. The Global Village

Marshall McLuhan coined the term "global village." He "foresaw a future where instantaneous electronic communication would connect people worldwide, blending together space and time to make possible a global village."[19] McLuhan foresaw how technologies increasingly interconnect humans. Digital technologies shrink the physical world and connect an online community to a virtual world by transforming it into a village where everyone can access or be connected through technology.

Along the same line of thinking, Patrick Porter reiterates, "Globalization shrinks space to the point where the world becomes a village."[20] A village is where every person, no matter where one is, can connect and have an opportunity to become part of everyone's life stories and experiences. For McLuhan, the global village is "here and there, at one and the same time."[21] This pertains to the "dynamic relationship between a mediated sense of the local and an equally mediated sense of the global."[22]

Given this dynamic relationship between the local and the global, it also changes the relationship between the nations and transnational states. A global world is characterized as an "informationalized, mediatized, hyperreal, virtual, and simulated"[23] set of processes. This set of processes allows the physical and virtual worlds to intertwine and interrelate continuously. It contributes to the "social experiences in which people lose a stable sense of identity and knowledge."[24]

A "global village constitutes a new articulation of space."[25] Furthermore, it is considered one of the "new spaces created by the new media."[26] Emphasizing this context should always be considered. However, "new information and communications technologies are driving globalization, but the challenge is, it is polarizing the world into the connected and the isolated."[27] The challenge of globalization is complex because "it is global not of planetary communion, but of disconnection, segmentation, and segregation ... not a seamless world without borders but a patchwork of discontinuity and hierarchy ranked spaces, whose edges are carefully delimited, guarded and enforced."[28] This new space as a context can deepen our understanding of the mission and can direct us to where we are going in the mission.

2. Promises and Perils: Globalization's Call for Interconnectivity

15 John Tomlinson, Globalization and Culture (Oxford: Wiley, 2013), 2.
16 Lester R. Kurtz, Gods in the Global Village: The World's Religions in Sociological Perspective, Fourth edition, (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2015), 19.
17 Bahira Sherif-Trask, Women, Work, and Globalization: Challenges and Opportunities (New York: Routledge, 2014), 17.
18 Schwab, The Fourth Industrial Revolution, 18.
19 Ramesh Srinivasan, Whose Global Village? Rethinking How Technology Shapes Our World (New York: New York University Press, 2017), 6.
20 Patrick Porter, The Global Village Myth: Distance, War, and the Limits of Power (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2015), 10.
21 Carmen Birkle, Angela Krewani, and Martin Kuester, eds., "McLuhan's Global Village Today: Transatlantic Perspectives," Studies for the International Society for Cultural History 6 (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2014), 11.
22 Ibid.
23 Oberoi, Revisiting Globalization, 8.
24 Ibid.
25 Carmen Birkle, et al., "McLuhan's Global Village Today," 9.
26 Ibid.
27 David Held and Anthony G. McGrew, eds., The Global Transformations Reader: An Introduction to the Globalization Debate, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2003), 428.
28 David Held and Anthony G. McGrew, eds., The Global Transformations Reader: An Introduction to the Globalization Debate, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2003), 428.

Globalization constitutes an attraction and repulsion existing alongside each other. Globalization promises shared humanity, shared prosperity, global vision, global integration, and growing convergence among peoples, cultures, and religions. However, it also propagates fear, instability, inequality, global poverty, and consumerist values[29]. This creates tension and a condition of vulnerability, complexity, and ambivalence. Frederick Buell points out that "thoughts about globalization have thus been deeply uncertain and schizophrenic: it is centering and decentering, catastrophic and creative all at once"[30]

Jon Sobrino strongly argues, "Globalization is in need of redemption."[31] Although globalization has brought significant functional changes in the economic, political, and social realm, "globalization is also bringing grave evils in the world,"[32] such as human trafficking, insatiable materialism, science and technology used for destruction, and blatant devastation of ecology.[33] However, others still see globalization as a "positive phenomenon that involves promoting and advancing values and developments associated with it, and attention should focus on the 'holy possibilities' within the process of globalization and a call to work toward defining, redeeming and celebrating such possibilities."[34]

Globalization "is neither good nor bad. It will be what people make of it. No system is an end in itself, and it is necessary to insist that globalization, like any other system, must be at the service of the human person; it must serve solidarity and the common good."[35] The age of globalization has strongly been shaped by those with power to enforce the global economy.[36] The focused on "profit seeking rather than soul searching[37] challenges us "to revert back to global values committed to building as a whole rather that individual nations."[38] Globalization has two sides. It can realize the great promises it envisions, or it can harm those who are left behind.

3. Aspects of Globalization that Call for Interconnectivity

Globalization is multi-faceted and multi-dimensional, and its focus is not only on its economic aspects of prosperity and integration but also on culture, religion, and ecology. The impact is not only on people's income, production, and consumption but also on changing ways of life, values, cultures, and sense of identity.

4. Globalization and Culture

Globalization, as a complex process of growing interconnectivity driven by technology, has made people's movements through global migrations and increased intercultural contacts. John Tomlinson reiterated, "Globalization lies at the heart of modern culture."[39] Globalization intensifies global cultural flows. These global cultural flows create spaces limited to cultures and geographical locations and transcend and extend to the virtual world.

Arjun Appadurai uses the metaphor of 'landscape' to emphasize the emergence of the "five dimensions of global cultural flows identified as ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes and ideoscapes."[40] These global cultural flows present a global context or a new cultural milieu that continues to blur and go beyond traditional boundaries, thus, forming new spaces that generate new patterns of relationships, a sense of belonging and cultural identities.

5. Globalization and Economy/Politics

Globalization expanded economic activity

29 See, Oberoi, Revisiting Globalization. 3-4.
30 Frederick Buell 1998. "Nationalist Postnationalism: Globalist Discourse in Contemporary American Culture," American Quarterly 50, no. 3 (July 1998): 550.
31 Jon Sobrino, "Redeeming Globalization through its Victims," Concilium 5 (2001): 106.
32 Ibid.
33 See, Jon Sobrino and Felix Wilfred, "Redeeming Globalization through its Victims," Concilium 5 (2001): 106 – 128.
34 Marcel V. Macelaru, "Theology Encounters Globalization," European Journal of Science and Technology 10, no.1 (February 2014), 70.
35 Ormerod and Clifton, Globalization and the Mission of the Church, 11.
36 Ngaire Woods, "Order, Globalization and Inequality in the World Politics" in The Global Transformations Reader, eds. David Held and Anthony McGrew (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity, 2003), 465.
37 Manuel Castells, "The Rise of the Fourth World," in The Global Transformations Reader, eds. David Held and Anthony McGrew (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity, 2003), 430.
38 Fred Halliday, "Global Governance: Prospects and Problems," in The Global Transformations Reader, eds. David Held and Anthony McGrew (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity, 2003), 4.
39 Tomlinson, Globalization and Culture, 1.
40 Arjun Appadurai, Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization, Public Worlds, vol. 1 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 33.

and global interdependence among the economies of the world. Globalization is often attributed to the global economic system, fueling international economic institutions, transnational corporations, global financial markets, and the worldwide movement of goods and services.

Globalization has contributed to the transformation of world economic affairs. According to Manfred Steger, "the three significant developments related to economic globalization have been the internationalization of trade and finance, the increasing power of transnational corporations, and the enhanced role of international economic institutions like the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization."[41] These significant developments in the world have contributed significantly to economic globalization and at the same time generate problems in the emerging markets of developing countries, as most developing countries have incurred insurmountable debts and there is increasing transfer of wealth from South to North."[42] Globalization's impact on the economy is extensive; it is "not merely driven by major corporations, international institutions, and governments but also by social forces, including consumers and social movements."[43]

6. Globalization and Ecology

Globalization has a significant impact on ecology; the Earth and the ecological systems are intimately interconnected to the change happening in the world brought about by globalization. These ecological changes and concerns have a global impact on a global scale because we live in the same environment, and these environmental problems are all interconnected. The global society can and should work toward ensuring environmental sustainability for human development and global responsibility.

The Global Outlook Report 2019 of the United Nations Development Program on the environment presents the extent of the ecological crisis. The Earth's condition continues to deteriorate; it suffers from loss of biodiversity, land degradation, air, land, and water pollution, and the effects of climate change. "Focus should be done on preventing and managing further risks and disasters. Without changes, the situation looks bleak for all of its inhabitants. A major extinction event is underway, compromising the globe's ability to meet human needs."[44]

The ecological crisis creates a global problem because it includes the whole inhabited Earth. As globalization progresses, the destruction of the ecosystem continues to escalate, and the hope of having a thriving and healthy environment becomes an insurmountable challenge for the future. Joyce Msuya, executive deputy director of the United Nations on Environment, in a briefing, said, "the planet stands at a crossroads: the Earth's ailments are treatable, but not for long if people will not make fundamental changes in what they consume, how they create energy, dispose of waste, and decrease the human footprint that is degrading air, water, and land. If we continue along this current path, the Earth will not pivot towards a sustainable future but can lead to a bleak future."[45]

Globalization transforms social structures that effectively contribute to the protection of the environment. It also adds to the ecological crisis. Global efforts and networks are needed to work together to address the ecological crisis of our time. Global interconnectivity allows "the world to reset to a sustainable course. What it needs is the political will to act, speed, and scale."[46] An "urgent action at an unprecedented scale that is necessary to arrest and reverse this situation."[47] If we do not heed the urgency of responding to the groaning of the Earth, this ecological crisis will continue to persist, massive problems of devastation will occur, and every human life will be threatened and destroyed.

7. Globalization and Religion

Globalization has brought people belonging to different faiths closer to each other. However, it also leads to deterritorialization. Scholte defines globalization as deterritorialization so that "social

41 Steger, Globalization, 41.
42 Ibid., 42-59.
43 Jan Nederveen Pieterse, Globalization and Culture: Global Mélange, 2nd ed, Globalization (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), 10.
44 United Nations Development Program, "Global Outlook Report 2019." Retrieved from https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/environment-energy/climate_change/ndc-global-outlook-report-2019.html
45 Ibid.
46 Ormerod and Clifton, Globalization and the Mission of the Church. 65-66.
47 United Nations Development Program, Global Outlook Report 2019.

space is no longer mapped in terms of territorial places, distance, and boundaries."[48] This blurring of geographical boundaries has resulted in making a single space where people, cultures, and religions are continually interacting with each other. Globalization intensifies interfaith contacts in the world that have significantly contributed to religious pluralism.

Through migration and interfaith contacts, globalization encourages religious pluralism. However, religion binds people together because of a shared common belief that the reality of religious pluralism becomes a challenge on how to celebrate diversity despite plurality. "Religion offers the possibility of culture-transcending meanings and values, which can bring people together, not divide them."[49] Hans Küng argues that religion can be a unifying factor contributing to the global world ethic in a globalized world. Küng believes that religion can be a positive influence on global ethics.[50] However, as religion asserts its own identity, it creates tension because it carries beliefs and norms that can pose a challenge in the dynamic interactions of people.

Globalization and Its Consequences for Mission

David Bosch argues that "today, whether one likes the word 'globalization' or not, we live in a world of inter-cultural and cross-cultural global interchange."[51] Globalization creates a new space for the mission. It dramatically affects how the Church should do its mission today. The mission is being challenged by globalization, and the consequences of the mission are wide-ranging and conflicting; they are affecting culture, economy, religion, and ecology, so much so that a relevant discourse on its consequences is needed.

1. Homogenization of Culture

Globalization instigates the growing awareness of other cultures, identities, and cultural differences. Thus, it shapes an emerging global culture in our society. Globalization, however, has a homogenizing tendency. "We are witnessing the rise of an increasingly homogenized popular culture underwritten by a Western world."[52]

An example of how a global brand heavily influences the world is what sociologist George Ritzer coins as "McDonaldization," which refers to the "homogenization of tastes and values that reflects the power of the corporation to influence people all over the world."[53] In reality, "McDonaldization of the world amounts to the imposition of uniform standards that eclipse human creativity and dehumanize social relations."[54] This reinforces the idea that homogenization means standardization of those prevailing in markets regarding tastes, ideas, and values propagated by those who exercise power in the global market.

Michael Amaladoss pointed out that "the phenomenon of globalization is certainly not welcome if it is to be the globalization of a particular culture or country or ideology or economic system. Such globalization aims at subordination if not disappearance of other cultures."[55] Thus, if homogenization of culture means the diffusion of cultures, ideas, and customs into one world order, then it is not welcome because it denotes a subjugation of a particular culture that leads to disregarding the reality of difference in a world of diversity and plurality. Overall, "globalization does mean sameness, but it also still means difference."[56] Although globalization has homogenizing tendencies, it does not mean it will lead to the homogenization of culture.

Robertson, however, points out that what happens in reality is not a homogenization of culture but glocalization. "Glocalization is a complex interaction of the global and local characterized by cultural borrowing. These interactions lead to a complex mixture of homogenizing and heterogenizing impulses."[57] He contends that the

48 Scholte, Globalization: A Critical Introduction, 16.
49 Ormerod and Clifton, Globalization and the Mission of the Church, 139.
50 Hans Küng and John Bowden, Global Responsibility: In Search of a New World Ethic (London: SCM Press, 1991), 1-4.
51 David Jacobus Bosch, Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2011), 36.
52 Steger, Globalization, 70.
53 George Ritzer, The McDonaldization of Society: An Investigation into the Changing Character of Contemporary Social Life (Newbury Park, California: Pine Forge Press, 1993), 2-8.
54 Ibid, 71.
55 Michael Amaladoss, "The Utopia of the Human Family: Among the Religions of Humanity," Concilium 5 (2001): 81.
56 Manfred B. Steger, Globalization: A Very Short Introduction, 75.
57 Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash, and Roland Robertson, eds., Global Modernities, Theory, Culture & Society (London: Sage Publications, 1995), 25-44.

complexity of interconnectedness of the global and local levels is a coexisting event, that is, happening at the same time. Further, he concludes that cultural globalization always takes place in local contexts[58]. The dynamic interaction of the global and the local cannot be reduced to the homogenization of culture but a more complicated glocalization process.

As a multi-dimensional process, globalization presents glocalization as a simultaneous occurrence of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies in the contemporary world. Anthony Giddens notes: "The intensification of worldwide social relations means that local happenings are shaped by events occurring far away, and vice versa."[59] The contemporary experience of living and communicating across cultural and national borders could mean the loss of traditional beliefs and customs, or it could create new meanings, experiences, and symbolic expressions.

The particular context in which the global and local interact is a point of reference in understanding the homogenization of culture. "Globalization also reveals the rising precariousness of the nation-state as a concept on top of which the breaching of physical and cultural limits provokes the likelihood of reassertion of hybrid or post-national identities."[60] In this context, glocalization points to increasing transnational interactions among subnational entities from different countries.

2. Culture of Consumerism

The collapse of traditional boundaries introduces dominant values emerging on the global scale that continue to shape peoples and society. These values propagated by transnational companies are not limited to culture, identity, or geographical location but also values being disseminated by transnational media to further the agenda of transnational companies to promote a culture of consumerism. These consumerist values presented by the media continue to affect the hearts and minds of people on a global scale.

The global market of consumerism drives globalization. Consumerism is buying and consuming goods to the point of satisfaction, creating a need for immediate gratification of the senses to the point of wanting to have more. The unparalleled level of interdependencies from products and services is experienced nationwide at an accelerating speed. The more people buy, consume, and use a global brand, the more it establishes deeper connections and interactions among people across the globe because of the products and services they share. The products and services become a global brand that creates global communities.

The consumerist culture that is shaping society today is more than a homogenized global culture. It often leads to a hegemonic global culture in disguise. The hegemonic global culture is "the cultural hegemony under globalization led by capitalism is the domination of a culturally diverse society that manipulates the culture of that society— their beliefs, explanations, perceptions, values, and more—so that their imposed, ruling-class worldview becomes the accepted cultural norm."[61]

Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza warns: "Economic globalization has been created with the specific goal of giving primacy to corporate profits and values, installing and codifying such market values globally. It was designed to amalgamate and merge all economic activities around the world within a single model of global monoculture."[62] The challenge that must be addressed is the dominance of a single global monoculture propagating its own set of values and corporate goals.

3. Global Inequality and Poverty

The rapid economic growth of the world economy makes evident the vast disparity in economic wealth between the rich and emerging nations. The consequence is global inequality. Joseph Stiglitz discussed the growing inequality as the single most destructive aspect of globalization.[63] This aspect of globalization that leads to the economic system's globalization can be most destructive, especially to those left behind by the system. The promise of greater economic

58 Ibid.
59 Anthony Giddens, The Consequences of Modernity (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 64.
60 Oberoi, Revisiting Globalization, 10.
61 Ibid., 181.
62 Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Transforming Vision: Explorations in Feminist Theology. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011), 178.
63 Joseph E. Stiglitz, The Price of Inequality (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013), 180; 228.

integration, economic prosperity, and technological advancement is too hefty a price for inequality, massive poverty, unemployment and displacement of workers, ecological crisis, and injustices.

However, Stiglitz wrote candidly, "Inequality is not inevitable: it is a choice we make with the rules we create to structure our economy."[64] Shared prosperity will continuously be challenging if it is concentrated in the hands of the ruling class, which works towards what will most benefit the rich rather than what would benefit the economy as a whole. Global inequality is created as a result of the choices that value capitalism. Thomas Piketty has this to say regarding capitalism: "Twenty-first-century capitalism is in the process of reverting to the patrimonial model of the eighteenth or early nineteenth century when ownership of capital rested principally in the hands of a relatively few rich families."[65] The distribution of wealth in the world then seems to be concentrated among the few rich people who focus on profit-seeking and global expansion. If the rich people's economic power persists and there is disregard for the cry of the poor and their life struggles, then globalization becomes a source of economic inequality. "Globalization benefits the rich but globalizes poverty."[66]

One observable fact is abject poverty in our midst. According to the United Nations 2019 Poverty Report, "poverty is everywhere, and inequality within countries is massive. Over 1.3 billion people are not merely inadequate but multi-dimensionally poor,"[67] poor not only by income but also by other significant factors: "poor health, poor quality of work, and poor working conditions with the threat of violence."[68] Michel Chossudovsky contends that globalization does not promise prosperity to developing nations; it only leads to marginalization. [69] He argues that globalization has globalized poverty more than anything else, for it has contributed to social apartheid, racism, discrimination, and disregard for human rights. [70] Although globalization promises economic integration, it is oriented towards a particular economic system that favors the rich.

Poverty recognizes that it means more than lacking in what is materially necessary. It can also mean denial of opportunities and choices most basic to human development, such as a long, healthy life, a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self-esteem, and respect for others.[71] What is even problematic is the widening of the gap between the rich and the poor; the extent of global disparity among peoples and nations has lifetime consequences.[72] Mainly, given the rapid technological advances that likely favor labor markets that contribute to the widening gap, the rich are becoming excessively wealthy, and the middle class and the poor are becoming poorer.

However, if globalization globalizes poverty, it also benefits the poor. Globalization also opens many opportunities for the poor, and many have also gained in the process. For example, transnational corporations have provided labor globally, and their limitless expansion generates jobs and opportunities in the global market. Thus, globalization's economic growth has brought opportunities and challenges to poverty on a global scale, but seeing the implications of globalization on poverty is complex; it needs further analysis.

4. Global Solidarity and Cooperation

Globalization creates a new network of interconnections between people around the globe, and it can be a positive force towards global solidarity and cooperation. Globalization, aided by technology, has contributed to the growing interconnectivity and interdependence among peoples; this somewhat allows us to be part of a global community. A global community "may depend on others because they cannot provide for themselves or because they need each other to reach common goals."[73] This sense of

64 Oberoi, Revisiting Globalization, 3. See also, Stiglitz, The Price of Inequality, 86-90.
65 Thomas Piketty and Arthur Goldhammer, Capital in the Twenty-First Century (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014), 298.
66 Edgar G. Javier, Dialogue: Our Mission Today (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 2006), 33.
67 United Nations News, July 11, 2019, retrieved on January 10, 2020 https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/07/1042231.
68 Ibid.
69 Michel Chossudovsky, The Globalization of Poverty and the New World Order, 2nd ed (Pincourt, Québec: Global Research, 2003), 17.
70 Ibid.,1-4.
71 Ronald Paul Hill and Bahram Adrangi, "Global Poverty and the United Nations," Journal of Public Policy & Marketing 18, no. 2 (1999): 136.
72 United Nations Human Development Report, 2019, Retrieved from http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/2019-human-development-report-focus-inequality.
73 Paul de Beer and Ferry Koster, Sticking Together or Falling Apart? Solidarity in an Era of Individualization and Globalization (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), 12.

community and interdependence calls for global solidarity. "Solidarity refers to a situation in which the well-being of one person or group is positively related to that of others. People need each other in different situations, indicating their mutual interdependence."[74] Solidarity acknowledges interdependence as something good because it recognizes us as interdependent beings. Solidarity brings people of different races, religions, and ideologies together to work towards the common good.

The "globalization process includes the widening of political, economic, technological, social, and cultural borders allowing for worldwide interconnections between organizations and people that create new possibilities and exigencies for solidarity."[75] Solidarity on the global level seeks the common good and shared commitment to universal values. "Solidarity is a firm persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good, to the good of all and each individual, because we are all really responsible for all."[76] This can be an essential process to work towards the common good and good global governance for the interests of all.

Globalization can be significantly advantageous to global solidarity and cooperation. "The era of globalization and the new means of communication open up new possibilities for developing shared interests, forms of community, and solidarity in transnational social movements."[77] It calls those who wield power and position to help those who are weak and defenseless, to open hearts to those being terrorized and victims of terrorism and migrants seeking refuge, to eradicate poverty, and to respond to the global call to address the ecological crisis. Globalization facilitates global solidarity and cooperation for the ongoing global concerns such as:

5. Global Response to Refugees and Migrant Workers

There are massive movements of refugees and migrants of people across international borders because of conflict, demographic changes, or better opportunities. The massive displacement of people is a global crisis that requires mutual support from the international community and world leaders. "UN Secretary-General has called on everyone to work together to define a clear path forward guided by international refugee law, human rights and humanitarian law."[78] There is a call to work together to address the concerns of many refugees and migrants.

6. Global Drive towards Suppression of International Terrorism

International terrorism is a grave threat and a global concern. Terrorism is defined as "the deliberate use or threat of violence against civilians by a non-state entity (individual or group) in pursuit of a political or religious goal."[79] The global drive towards suppressing this large-scale crisis experienced worldwide can be helped through the collective effort of every nation

7. Global Solidarity with the Poor

Globalization has opened our eyes to the massive poverty all over the world. Global solidarity makes us aware of poverty and listen to the cry of the poor. According to the United Nations, "more than 700 million people, or 10% of the world population, still live in extreme poverty and struggle to fulfill the most basic needs like health, education, and access to water and sanitation, to name a few."[80] The United Nations, because of the significance of eradicating poverty in all its forms everywhere, has made it their primary goal to end poverty by 2030. Globalization can offer opportunities to make better the human condition.

8. Global Call for the Respect of the Environment

Our Earth is groaning because of the substantial degradation of our ecosystem. The magnitude of "global environmental concerns was born out of the recognition that ecological processes do not always respect national boundaries and that environmental problems often have impacts

74 Ibid.
75 Aafke E. Komter, Social Solidarity and the Gift (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 170-171.
76 John Paul II, Encyclical Letter on Social Concern of the Church for the Social Order Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (30 December 1987), Acta Apostolicae Sedis 79 (1987), 39.
77 Komter, Social Solidarity and the Gift, 183.
78 António Guterres, "The UN- Secretary-General's Address to the General Assembly," (25 September 2018, New York).
79 Alex P. Schmid, "The Definition of Terrorism," The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research (London: Routledge, 2013), 39-98.
80 United Nations Sustainable Goals, https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/poverty/ (accessed January 30, 2020).

beyond borders. Connected to this was the notion that the ability of humans to act and think at a global scale also brings with it a new dimension of global responsibility."[81] There is a global ecological crisis in our midst that we cannot escape from. We share the same biosphere, and we are directed towards a global responsibility to save our Earth.

Conclusion

Globalization is a dominant paradigm that affects every domain of human life: economic, political, cultural, and technological dimensions. Rethinking mission strategies in the context of globalization is relevant as we move forward to the mission. The consequences of globalization on mission are profound for individuals and societies.

Thus, understanding globalization opens up new horizons in the context of today's mission that seeks interconnectivity. Globalization calls for interconnectivity in the aspects of culture, economy, religion, and ecology. These aspects of globalization have a global impact on a global scale and have consequences for the mission. Understanding globalization presents two sides. It can realize the great promises it envisions, or it can harm those who are left behind. The call for interconnectivity gives rise to global solidarity and cooperation, becoming a positive force to connect people around the globe to work together towards the common good and shared commitment to universal values. However, the promise of economic integration, economic prosperity, and technological advancement is too hefty a price for inequality, massive poverty, and ecological destruction.

81 Adil Najam, David Runnalls, and Mark Halle, Environment and Globalization: Five Propositions (Canada: IISD Publications, 2007), 1.