



Analysis of U.S. Unilateral Tariff and Hegemonic Dominance over QRIS Indonesia

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji tarif sepihak yang dijatuhkan Presiden Donald Trump terhadap Indonesia, dengan fokus pada penerapan sistem pembayaran Quick Response Code Indonesian Standard (QRIS). Pengenaan tarif ini merupakan bagian dari strategi AS untuk mempertahankan dominasi ekonomi globalnya, khususnya di sektor pembayaran internasional, yang secara tradisional dikendalikan oleh perusahaan-perusahaan AS seperti Visa dan Mastercard. QRIS, yang diperkenalkan oleh Bank Indonesia, telah berkembang pesat di Indonesia dan Asia Tenggara, menyoroti kemajuan negara-negara berkembang dalam menciptakan sistem pembayaran yang lebih efisien dan inklusif. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan metodologi studi kasus, penelitian ini menganalisis dampak pengenaan tarif ini terhadap sistem pembayaran digital Indonesia melalui tinjauan pustaka dan triangulasi teoritis. Frankfurt School dan Teori Hegemoni diterapkan untuk menjelaskan bagaimana AS menggunakan tarif untuk mempertahankan dominasi globalnya dan melawan ancaman-ancaman yang muncul. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa tarif terhadap QRIS Indonesia mencerminkan dominasi negara adidaya, yang bertujuan untuk mempertahankan hegemoni AS dalam sistem pembayaran global. QRIS, dengan potensinya untuk menggantikan sistem-sistem yang didominasi AS, merupakan ancaman terhadap dominasi AS dalam pembayaran internasional. Penelitian ini juga menawarkan wawasan tentang bagaimana negara berkembang seperti Indonesia menggunakan inovasi teknologi untuk mengurangi ketergantungan pada sistem keuangan yang dikendalikan oleh negara maju.

Kata kunci: Ekonomi, Hegemoni, Indonesia, QRIS, Tarif Trump

Abstract

This research examines the unilateral tariff imposed by President Donald Trump on Indonesia, focusing on the implementation of the Quick Response Code Indonesian Standard (QRIS) payment system. These tariff are part of the U.S. strategy to maintain its global economic dominance, particularly in the international payment sector, traditionally controlled by U.S. companies like Visa and Mastercard. QRIS, introduced by Bank Indonesia, has rapidly expanded in Indonesia and Southeast Asia, highlighting the progress of developing nations in creating more efficient and inclusive payment systems. Using a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study methodology, this study analyzes the impact of these tariff on Indonesia's digital payment system through literature review and theoretical triangulation. The Frankfurt School and Hegemony Theory are applied to explain how the U.S. employs tariff to sustain its global dominance and counter emerging threats. The study concludes that the tariff on Indonesia's QRIS reflect superpower dominance, aiming to preserve U.S. hegemony in the global payment system. QRIS, with its potential to replace U.S.-dominated systems, represents a threat to U.S. dominance in international payments. This research also offers insights into how developing nations like Indonesia use technological innovation to reduce reliance on financial systems controlled by advanced nations.

Key words: Economy, Hegemonic, Indonesia, QRIS, Trump Tariff



INTRODUCTION

In April 2025, President of the United States (U.S.), Donald Trump, imposed unilateral tariff on several countries as part of a strategy to strengthen the geopolitical and economic position of the U.S. These tariff include various measures, from trade restrictions to financial tariff, aimed at influencing the policies of the affected countries. This move is considered as an effort to consolidate U.S. dominance in global economic and political spheres while maintaining hegemonic control in the face of challenges from other emerging nations, especially in the digital economy and international payment systems (Dizaji & Farzanegan, 2024; Lynch, 2025). The tariff have created new tensions in international relations, with affected countries seeking alternatives to reduce dependence on the U.S. (York & Durante, 2025)

Countries such as China, Russia, Iran, and Indonesia were subjected to U.S. tariff in 2025. For example, China was subjected to high tariffs on technology products and consumer goods exported to the U.S. in an effort to reduce the trade deficit and curb the dominance of China's industry (Goldman Sachs, 2025). Russia faced asset freezes and investment bans due to its alleged involvement in international espionage and political interference (Downs et al., 2025). Iran, in addition to restrictions on oil exports, also faced financial tariff that froze access to international banking systems, including SWIFT (Rezaeifar et al., 2024).

One of the countries affected by these tariff is Indonesia, particularly in relation to the implementation of the Quick Response Code Indonesian Standard (QRIS) payment system. Tariff against Indonesia include restrictions on the use and expansion of QRIS abroad, the freezing of investments in the financial technology sector, and restrictions on access to international payment infrastructure (Bank Indonesia, 2025; Utami, 2024). QRIS has grown rapidly in Indonesia and has begun to be widely used by both the public and businesses (Utami, 2024). With the increasing use of QRIS, this system is seen as a threat to the dominance of global payment systems, which have been dominated by large US companies.

QRIS Indonesia is a payment system that uses QR codes as a means of conducting financial transactions. The system is designed to facilitate the public in conducting cashless transactions using digital payment applications that are directly connected to various financial services. QRIS aims to increase financial inclusion in Indonesia by facilitating public access to formal financial services (Bank Indonesia, 2025; Komdigi, 2020). In its development, QRIS has also been adopted in several Southeast Asian countries as an alternative to electronic payments, thereby increasing its appeal and impact on the global payment system (Komdigi, 2020). The QRIS payment system developing in Indonesia not only functions as a domestic transaction tool but also begins to show potential as a threat to the global payment system, which has long been controlled by developed countries (Munawwarah et al., 2025). The urgency of this research focuses on the tariff imposed by the US on Indonesia, particularly those related to QRIS, which are considered part of efforts to maintain US global economic dominance.

Based on these objectives, this research has the following research problems: "How do President Trump's tariff on Indonesia reflect U.S. efforts to maintain dominance in the global payment system, particularly in response to QRIS Indonesia as a perceived threat?". This research is important to understand how the tariff imposed by President Trump on Indonesia can be seen as a form of U.S. dominance in maintaining the hegemony of the global financial system, which is increasingly threatened by the emergence of QRIS as an alternative payment system.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study methodology. The qualitative descriptive method is applied to capture and analyze the phenomenon (Kothari, 2019; Yin, 2016). The case study approach is particularly suited for this study as it allows for an in-depth exploration of the context and impact of these tariff on Indonesia's digital payment system, specifically QRIS, as an alternative payment method (Flick, 2024). The objective of this study is to thoroughly describe the events and underlying factors associated with the U.S. unilateral tariff on Indonesia, with a focus on the QRIS payment system.



Data collection will be carried out through a comprehensive literature review, drawing from a range of relevant sources, including academic articles, government reports, policy documents, and case studies that address U.S. tariff, QRIS, and the global financial system. Access to these sources will be obtained via academic databases, governmental websites, and reports from international financial organizations. The case study design is justified by its ability to provide a detailed understanding of the complex interactions and consequences of the tariff within a specific national and international context. In terms of data analysis, thematic coding will be employed to identify key themes and patterns across the data. Additionally, source triangulation will be applied to cross-verify information from different perspectives, ensuring a comprehensive analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Patton, 2015). Theoretical matching will involve linking concepts from Frankfurt School Theory and Hegemony Theory to provide a robust framework for interpreting the findings and understanding the broader implications of the tariff.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Frankfurt School Theory

The Frankfurt School is a school of philosophical and sociological thought that emerged from the Institute for Social Research, founded in 1923 at the University of Frankfurt, Germany. This school is widely recognized as the precursor to Critical Theory, an interdisciplinary approach that combines philosophy, sociology, psychology, economics, and cultural theory to critique the dominant social structures and ideologies of modern society (Allen, 2019). The Frankfurt School emerged as a response to dissatisfaction with orthodox Marxism and scientific positivism, which were seen as failing to explain the complexity of modern capitalist society (Buchstein, 2020). Its thinkers sought to develop a social theory that not only explained reality but also aimed to change it for the liberation of humanity from oppression and domination. They were deeply influenced by historical contexts such as World War I, the Russian Revolution, and the rise of fascism in Europe (Demirović, 2016). After the Nazis came to power, the institution was moved to the United States and affiliated with Columbia University, which allowed for the continuation of their intellectual work during their exile (Rensmann, 2017). The Frankfurt School rejected an objectivist approach to social science and emphasized the importance of critical reflection on ideology, culture, and power (Demirović, 2016).

The Frankfurt School consisted of several generations of influential thinkers. The first generation included Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm, Walter Benjamin, and Leo Löwenthal. Horkheimer and Adorno are known for their monumental work *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, which criticized instrumental rationality and the negative effects of modernity (Allen, 2019). At the core of Frankfurt School theory is a critique of modernity, capitalism, and instrumental rationality. They argue that modernity, which should have brought liberation through reason and knowledge, has instead created new forms of domination and oppression (Ingram, 2019). Instrumental rationality, which is the use of reason solely to achieve efficiency and control, is seen as having replaced substantive rationality, which considers ethical values and human goals (Allen, 2019). Modern capitalism not only exploits labor but also colonizes consciousness through the culture industry and mass media (Redecker, 2018). In their view, popular culture is not an expression of freedom but a tool to maintain the status quo and shape passive and consumptive individuals. This theory also highlights how ideology operates subtly to shape the way people think and act, making domination appear natural and unquestioned (Redecker, 2018).

The Frankfurt School's theory is able to combine various disciplines in a comprehensive social analysis. They do not rely solely on political economy but also on psychology, aesthetics, and cultural theory to understand the dynamics of power and domination (Allen, 2019). This interdisciplinary approach allows them to capture the complexity of modern society that cannot be explained by a single discipline. Furthermore, their theories are reflective and normative, meaning they not only explain reality but also raise questions about how society should be organized (Demirović, 2016). The Frankfurt School has made significant contributions to the study of media,



education, and democracy, and has inspired social movements and activism. They have opened up space for critical thinking that challenges dominant assumptions and promotes more just and humane social transformation (Gordon et al., 2018).

This theory highlights the United States, as a global economic power, might view QRIS as a threat to the financial hegemony it has maintained through payment systems dominated by U.S. companies. The tariff against QRIS could be seen as an effort to preserve the global capitalist system that benefits Western nations, preventing the development of alternatives that could reduce other countries' reliance on the U.S. dollar and American financial institutions. This aligns with the Frankfurt School's thinking, which argues that such economic and cultural domination serves to maintain the status quo of social and political systems that favor capitalist nations, while hindering the potential shift toward a more inclusive and sovereign system in non-Western countries.

Hegemonic Theory

The theory of hegemony in international relations explains that global stability is highly dependent on the existence of a dominant country that can establish and implement international rules. This hegemonic country has significant military and economic advantages as well as the ability to shape global norms and values. Since the end of World War II, the United States has played the role of hegemonic state by establishing various international institutions such as the IMF, WTO, and UN, and promoting liberalism and capitalism around the world. This theory emphasizes that when hegemonic power begins to weaken, the international system becomes more vulnerable to instability and conflict (Pardo & Pacheco, 2017; Su, 2024).

The concept of "hegemonic stability theory" developed by Robert Gilpin suggests that hegemonic states will use their power to create an international system that benefits themselves. However, this dominance is not only coercive but also ideological, as explained by Antonio Gramsci from a neo-Marxist perspective. Gramsci emphasizes the importance of "consent" in maintaining hegemony, where the hegemonic state not only imposes its will but also shapes the perception that the existing order is legitimate and beneficial to all parties (Pearmain, 2017). In other words, the hegemonic state must continuously assert its leadership through foreign policies that demonstrate strength and moral authority.

The theory of hegemony has three main focuses. First, the consolidation of global power by dominant states that use their military, economic, and technological superiority to regulate the international system in accordance with their interests. This dominance allows the hegemonic state to intervene in the affairs of other states in order to maintain the global status quo. Second, the creation and maintenance of the international order through global institutions and norms established by the hegemonic state to regulate the behavior of other states. Third, the use of economic and military power as instruments to maintain hegemonic position, such as through economic sanctions, embargoes, or military intervention as a means to deter states that oppose the hegemonic order (Mastanduno, 2019)

In this case, the U.S., as a dominant global power, has maintained its hegemony over the global financial system through institutions like the IMF, World Bank, and dominant payment networks such as Visa and Mastercard. QRIS, by offering an alternative payment system independent of U.S. led financial infrastructure, challenges this hegemony. The tariff imposed on QRIS can be seen as a strategic move by the U.S. to preserve its economic dominance, preventing the rise of competing systems that could undermine the global influence of U.S. institutions and the dollar. This action highlights how economic power is used to safeguard ideological dominance, ensuring that non-Western alternatives remain marginalized in the global financial landscape

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The President of the United States (US), Donald Trump, has imposed reciprocal tariffs on several countries. Since April 2, 2025, the US has imposed a base tariff of 10 percent plus an additional 32 percent on Indonesia. The US government, through the United States Trade



Representative (USTR), has also highlighted the use of the Quick Response Indonesian Standard (QRIS) and the National Payment Gateway (GPN). In the National Trade Estimate Report on Foreign Trade Barriers 2025 published on March 31, 2025, the USTR noted several tariff and non-tariff barriers faced by the country with its trading partners, including Indonesia. One of the issues raised by the USTR is related to financial services, specifically the use of QRIS. The report states that U.S. companies, including banks and payment service providers, felt excluded when the Bank of Indonesia developed policies regarding QRIS (Putri & Akbar, 2025).

The unilateral tariff aims to reduce the U.S. trade deficit and boost domestic industry. They have impacted not only the sanctioned countries but also created turmoil in international trade and financial systems. The decision to tariff certain countries, including Indonesia, stems from the U.S.'s desire to maintain the dominance of the U.S. dollar as the primary currency in the global financial system. Additionally, the US uses these sanctions to ensure that global capital flows benefit the domestic economy (Abakah et al., 2024; Lynch, 2025).

Sanctions imposed on countries such as China, Russia, and Iran demonstrate the United States' use of economic power to control key sectors of the global economy. For example, the US imposed high tariffs on Chinese exports, particularly in the technology and manufacturing sectors, in response to China's growing economic power. Sanctions against Russia, in place since the 2014 annexation of Crimea, include asset freezes and restrictions on international investment. Iran, meanwhile, is subject to sanctions related to its nuclear program and faces restrictions on oil exports and the freezing of international banking assets. These examples demonstrate how the US uses its economic power to pressure countries that it perceives as threats to its national interests (Downs et al., 2025).

At the global level, responses to U.S. tariff policy have been mixed. Developed countries, such as Japan and France, have adopted a more cautious stance. Japan, known for its innovation in payment technology, is developing a more independent domestic payment system. France, meanwhile, is strengthening collaboration with European Union countries to create alternative payment systems that reduce dependence on the US dollar. These countries show that, although they are part of a US-dominated international system, they are also trying to create solutions that reduce US influence in the international payment sector (Angeloni & Tille, 2025; Cipollone, 2025).

In contrast, some developing countries are becoming more assertive in the face of US economic. For example, India, Brazil, and South Africa have started developing alternative payment systems to reduce their reliance on the US dollar. They are focusing more on developing financial technology and infrastructure that aligns better with local needs, so they don't have to depend on the global financial system controlled by developed countries, particularly the US. This shift in developing countries' approach to US economic dominance shows that more countries are seeking to create a more inclusive international order (Liu, Z. Z., & Papa, 2022).

Conversely, Indonesia, not immune to the impact of US foreign policy, faces tariff focused on the international payment system. One of the main tariffs is the restriction on using the Quick Response Code Indonesian Standard (QRIS) for international transactions. Introduced by Bank Indonesia in 2018, QRIS has grown rapidly in Indonesia and Southeast Asia as a more efficient, affordable, QR code-based payment system. Indonesia aims to reduce its reliance on international card-based payment systems by introducing QRIS as a more affordable and widely accessible payment system. Regional adoption of QRIS could strengthen Indonesia's position as a leader in developing inclusive payment systems in Southeast Asia, facilitating balanced regional economic growth (FARIZA RAZ, 2024; Utami, 2024).

Currently, there are over 5 million merchants using QRIS throughout Indonesia, and the system has successfully provided the public with a cheaper, more efficient payment alternative. Furthermore, QRIS enables transactions without involving the US dollar, which has long dominated the international payment system. This initiative gives other developing countries hope of reducing their dependence on the US dollar in global transactions.

QRIS provides these countries with an opportunity to become more independent in regulating their domestic and regional financial systems (Bank Indonesia, 2025; Komdigi, 2020).



However, the development of QRIS threatens the dominance of payment systems controlled by large U.S. companies, such as Visa and Mastercard. The U.S. views the implementation of QRIS as a potential reduction in developing countries' dependence on U.S.-controlled payment systems and global financial institutions (Bank Indonesia, 2025; Utami, 2024). The dominance of the US dollar in international transactions relates not only to economic aspects, but also to the underlying political and ideological forces. The tariff imposed on QRIS aim to pressure Indonesia and strengthen US control over global financial flows (P et al., 2023). This policy reflects the U.S.'s efforts to maintain an international order that supports its economic interests by hindering the development of alternative payment systems that could undermine the dollar's position as the primary currency (Downs et al., 2025).

Nevertheless, implementing QRIS outside of Indonesia presents challenges. Although other countries in Southeast Asia are beginning to adopt the system, they still face pressure from major powers like the US, which seek to maintain control over the international payment system. Some countries, such as Singapore and Malaysia, are interested in the benefits of QRIS but are still considering the potential economic impacts of US tariff if they become overly reliant on alternative payment systems that do not involve the US dollar. Therefore, despite offering a more efficient and affordable solution, the widespread adoption of QRIS in Southeast Asia is hindered by concerns about the political and economic consequences of U.S. tariff (Downs et al., 2025).

Although tariff against Indonesia's QRIS are seen as retaliation for Indonesia's efforts to reduce its dependence on the US dollar, they also demonstrate how hegemonic nations seek to maintain their economic and ideological dominance globally (Iswardhana, 2022). By leveraging economic, political, and ideological power, the US seeks to maintain an international structure that aligns with its interests. However, despite the significant challenges they face, developing countries are beginning to demonstrate the courage to explore solutions that better suit their local needs. This could ultimately reshape the dynamics of the existing international financial system (Su, 2024).

QRIS Indonesia is Considered as Threat

The imposition of tariff on QRIS Indonesia highlights how U.S. hegemonic power, as seen through the Frankfurt School's perspective, extends beyond military or economic control, incorporating ideological dominance. The U.S. uses its influence over economic and ideological structures to shape global perceptions and maintain a system that benefits its political and economic interests. QRIS, by offering an alternative payment system that doesn't rely on the U.S. dollar, challenges these established structures and indirectly threatens the dominance of the U.S. controlled financial systems. The use of QRIS reflects an effort by Indonesia to create a more independent and inclusive financial system, one that reduces dependency on U.S. backed currency and institutions, thus presenting a direct challenge to the existing order.

In this context, the U.S. perceives QRIS as a potential threat to its control over global financial systems, primarily the U.S. dollar, which has long served as the backbone of international transactions. From a Frankfurt School perspective, tariff are a form of ideological resistance to the decentralization of financial power, as they seek to protect a system that consolidates U.S. dominance over global trade and economic decisions. The broader adoption of QRIS could reduce reliance on U.S.-led systems, such as Visa, Mastercard, and PayPal, by facilitating transactions across multiple platforms, and hence, challenge the dollar's hegemony.

The tariff imposed on Indonesia aim to thwart this move toward financial independence. By preventing QRIS from expanding, the U.S. ensures that developing countries remain reliant on the dollar and the U.S.-based payment systems. The tariff prevent the rise of an alternative payment system, reinforcing U.S. interests that benefit from maintaining the current financial architecture. This effort to manipulate global economic structures is not just about limiting Indonesia's progress; it is about ensuring that the international financial system continues to reflect the power and interests of developed nations, especially the U.S. (Iswardhana, 2024)

Although QRIS offers a domestic solution to reduce reliance on the dollar, it is not yet capable



of replacing U.S.-dominated payment systems like Visa or Mastercard on a global scale. Even as QRIS grows in Southeast Asia, its capacity to disrupt the established U.S.-led global financial system remains limited. The notion that QRIS could significantly undermine U.S. dominance in the payment market overlooks the fact that global financial power is not merely tied to technological solutions but to political influence, institutional frameworks, and long-standing trade networks.

Therefore, the assessment that QRIS could undermine U.S. dominance in the international payment market is not entirely justified given QRIS's limited capacity to address global challenges. Furthermore, the idea that QRIS poses a serious threat to the US dollar-based payment system is manipulative because it ignores the fact that international payment systems rely on more than just technology. US dominance in the global financial system is more closely tied to political influence, institutional frameworks, and broader international trade networks. While QRIS may offer a good domestic alternative, it has very little impact on the global financial structure that has been built over decades. Thus, tariff against QRIS can be better understood as a manifestation of US discomfort with the changes taking place in the global economic system, even though QRIS itself is still far from significantly affecting US hegemony.

The USTR's statement that the formulation of QRIS did not sufficiently involve the views of international stakeholders is a baseless accusation. QRIS was actually designed to be in line with the EMVCo standards promoted by Europay, Mastercard, and Visa (EMV) so that Indonesia's specific needs remain in accordance with international standards. In fact, QRIS is a highly regulated digital payment system, making it difficult to believe that the US claims to lack sufficient information about QRIS. However, the label of "trade barrier" has already been attached to QRIS by the US, undermining efforts to enhance Indonesia's financial digitalization.

U.S. Tariff as a Form of US Hegemony

Hegemony theory in international relations focuses on the dominant role of a state in shaping the global order, particularly in economics, politics, and ideology. This theory emphasizes that power is exercised not only through coercion but also through ideological influence, which manifests in global norms and values that benefit the hegemonic state. Scholars such as Robert Keohane in Pardo (2017) argue that hegemonic powers, like the U.S., play a key role in creating and sustaining the international order by establishing institutions that regulate global economic and political behavior. The U.S. has maintained this dominance post-World War II by forming institutions like the IMF, World Bank, and WTO, which facilitate its global influence (Ilyas et al., 2024).

Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony offers a broader lens, highlighting the role of ideology in sustaining global dominance. Gramsci contends that hegemonic powers not only use economic or military sanctions but also ideological means to create a global consensus that upholds the current system (Pearmain, 2017). For the U.S., ideological power is essential in promoting capitalism and liberalism, framing these systems as the global norm. This ideological influence ensures that the values and interests of hegemonic states are embedded in international systems, further entrenching their power.

As the U.S. uses its power to maintain control over the global financial system, developing countries have begun to seek alternatives to the U.S.-dominated economic order, particularly with emerging technologies like QRIS. QRIS, a payment system developed by Indonesia, offers a more efficient, affordable method of conducting transactions without relying on the U.S. dollar. This innovation challenges the U.S.'s hegemonic position by reducing dependency on dollar-based transactions, signaling a shift in the global economic system where developing countries can assert more financial independence (Yuliana & Iswardhana, 2024).

The advancement of QRIS reflects a broader trend of developing nations adopting payment systems that cater to regional and local needs, thus reducing their dependence on the global financial architecture dominated by Western powers. However, QRIS's potential to disrupt the U.S.-led financial system faces significant challenges, particularly due to the U.S.'s dominance over international payments and its ability to impose economic sanctions. The U.S. views QRIS



as a threat to the international financial system that benefits its economic and political interests, leading to tariff aimed at stifling Indonesia's progress in creating a more independent payment system.

The tariff, as an instrument of power, are crucial tools used by hegemonic states to maintain global order. The U.S. employs tariff to ensure other nations comply with the established economic and political norms that serve its interests. These measures, often economic in nature, aim to maintain the status quo and prevent the emergence of alternative systems that might challenge the hegemonic dominance of the U.S. dollar and institutions like Visa and Mastercard. The tariff imposed on QRIS demonstrate how the U.S. uses economic and ideological control to prevent the diversification of the global financial system (Pardo & Pacheco, 2017).

In this context, the tariff against QRIS are not just economic; they reflect the U.S.'s desire to maintain ideological and economic dominance in global finance. As QRIS grows in popularity and reduces dependency on the U.S. dollar, the U.S. perceives this as a direct threat to its control over the international payment system. The tariff, therefore, are an effort to uphold the U.S. position in the global economy by preventing the rise of alternative systems, illustrating how economic power can be wielded to preserve hegemonic control in the international order (Abakah et al., 2024; Lynch, 2025; Utami, 2024).

CONCLUSION

The tariff imposed by President Donald Trump on Indonesia, particularly in relation to the QRIS payment system, reflect the United States' efforts to preserve its dominance in the global payment system and broader economic structures. While QRIS is still in its early stages and its international transaction volumes are limited, it represents a challenge to the status quo dominated by U.S.-controlled financial infrastructure. The United States has long benefited from its hegemonic control over global financial institutions and payment systems, including the widespread use of the U.S. dollar in international transactions. By imposing tariff on QRIS, the U.S. aims to limit the global expansion of a payment system that threatens to reduce the reliance on the dollar and U.S.-backed financial institutions like Visa and Mastercard. This strategic maneuver shows how the U.S. seeks to preemptively address potential shifts in global financial dynamics, particularly from emerging economies like Indonesia. Despite QRIS's relatively small footprint in global finance, the U.S. views it as an existential threat that could undermine its geopolitical influence, making it a target of economic sanctions designed to curb its spread and safeguard U.S. financial interests in the global system.

From the perspective of the Frankfurt School's critical theory, the tariff imposed on QRIS can be understood as a manifestation of hegemonic power, where the United States uses economic leverage not just to maintain control over the global financial system, but also to impose its ideological values on other nations. The theory of hegemony suggests that dominance is not merely achieved through coercion, but through ideological and cultural means that shape the norms and values accepted globally. QRIS challenges the prevailing economic order by offering an alternative that bypasses the dominance of the U.S. dollar. This represents an ideological challenge to the neoliberal framework that has been promoted by the U.S. for decades. According to Frankfurt School theorists, the power of the dominant state lies not just in its economic and military might, but in its ability to shape global consciousness and ensure the compliance of other nations with its rules. By sanctioning QRIS, the U.S. aims to reinforce its ideological narrative that global economic transactions must be conducted through systems controlled by the West, thus securing its cultural and economic hegemony. This also reflects the broader trend of how powerful nations use economic policies to suppress the rise of alternative systems that could threaten their hegemonic control, revealing the deep connections between power, ideology, and global economic structures.



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