



QUALITY AWARENESS OF INDONESIAN HIGHER EDUCATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A GOOGLE TREND ANALYSIS

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Article History

Received Nov 19, 2021
Revised Nov 30, 2021
Accepted Dec 11, 2021

Keyword:

google trend, quality awareness, higher education

Abstract

This study aims to determine the trend of society on the quality of higher education and the factors that influence it during COVID-19. Data was collected through the google search engine in the period March 2020 to November 2021. Bibliometric analysis techniques based on Google Trend big data were used. The results of the study found that 1) the community trend regarding the quality of higher education was quite good with a range of information retrieval above 10% and a sharp increase during the July period; 2) two main factors influence the trend of awareness of the quality of higher education, namely the acceptance of new students, and monitoring of accreditation ratings by BAN-PT. Therefore, higher education institutions must continue to improve binding quality services through accreditation instruments, especially on websites or online media owned by universities.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the announcement of COVID-19 as a national epidemic in mid-March 2020, higher education in Indonesia has continued to transform institutional governance. Lectures, seminars, and academic meetings that were originally conducted face-to-face have become virtual (Putri, 2020) (Nugroho, 2020). This includes maintaining and running an education quality assurance system. This is done so that the community remains guaranteed the quality of the services provided, even amid an outbreak. However, the quality of education is still maintained.

Various reports of research results at home and abroad conclude that the quality of education in Indonesia is still far behind compared to developed countries. The lag is mainly in science, technology, and literacy (Mahdiannur, 2020). If examined further, one of the lag's causes is the public's lack of understanding of the importance of quality education. In addition, higher education, an institution that produces scholars, still does not emphasize performance (performance) and more on documents or compliance (Siahaan, 2011). The opinion of Indonesian Philosopher Rocky Gerung is quite interesting to note, that "a diploma is a sign that you have attended school, not a sign that you have ever thought" (MMG, 2018). This is certainly quite interesting as a critique of education and as an illustration of the quality of Indonesian education. Therefore, the participation of the community, government, academics, and various parties is highly expected in contributing ideas on the quality of higher education. In other words, the literacy of the quality of education of the Indonesian people must continue to be encouraged for better education.

The literacy trend for the quality of Indonesian higher education is explored using Google Trends. Google Trends is a website owned by Google.Inc that contains trends in the use of keywords on the Google search engine website and trending news. One of the benefits of Google Trends is for Big Data-based research (Riyanto, 2014). people who access data and information online, the trend can be seen. From this Google Trend, the form of participation in the direction of distribution, period, and keywords people are looking for, especially in the quality of higher education in Indonesia, will be seen in real-time based on the graphic info provided by Google.

Based on the measurements and evaluations of the quality of higher education in Indonesia, the study of quality awareness, significantly higher education by the public, is quite interesting to analyze. Here, this study tries to understand the quality of higher education explored by the people through Google's digital media channel. The indicator is relatively easy; the more people who are searching or want to know the quality of higher education, it can be said that the awareness of the quality is good, and vice versa. Therefore, this paper will focus on public quality awareness and the factors that influence it, especially in higher education during the pandemic.

METHOD

This study uses the Bibliometric Analysis method based on Google Trend big data. Google Trends is used to find Indonesian people's search preferences for "college accreditation" and "study program accreditation". The time range is limited during the COVID-19 pandemic (March 2020 to November 18, 2021), and the search location is limited to the territory of Indonesia. The use of quotation marks in critical phrases is intended to make the search results more specific, and the results meet the validity and reliability (Tran et al., 2017). The results are then described and analyzed using a bibliometric study

procedure (Hudha et al., 2020). The selection of bibliometrics as a method in this study helps provide an overview of academic research in a field or journal, identifying leading trends in publications, thoughts, citations, authors, keywords, and institutions (Martínez-López et al., 2018). There are 5 (five) stages in the bibliometric method, as shown in Figure 1



Figure 1. Five-step method of bibliometric analysis

After the keywords are determined, the next step is to determine the search period. The time range chosen by the researcher is March 2020–November 2021 (when the government announced COVID-19 to date). This stage is an inclusion process. The stages of the inclusion process are carried out using Google Trend, which is Google's software (Riyanto, 2014). The next stage is the exclusion process, adding prerequisites for selecting references. From the distribution of regions (34 provinces in Indonesia), researchers decided to choose the top 5 (five) areas from 24 areas with the highest search rating. This consideration is based on the selection of visit quality, interest, and quality awareness. The last part of the bibliometric research method is data analysis. Data analysis is carried out automatically by the Google Trend search engine, which can see the trend of people's visits on the Google search engine. The output of this Google Trend is the main result of this research.

RESULT

The study results on Indonesian public awareness of the importance of quality accreditation of higher education and study programs can be seen in the following figure.



Figure 2. The trend of Higher Education Accreditation Awareness During 2021

Figure 2 shows the trend of public visits for accreditation of higher education and study programs in the range of November 22, 2020, to November 20, 2021. An exciting thing is shown in the field of July 11 to 17, 2021, where the public awareness of accreditation increased sharply compared to the month before and after. As many as 90% of the community access the study program accreditation search, and 100% of the community search for higher education accreditation.

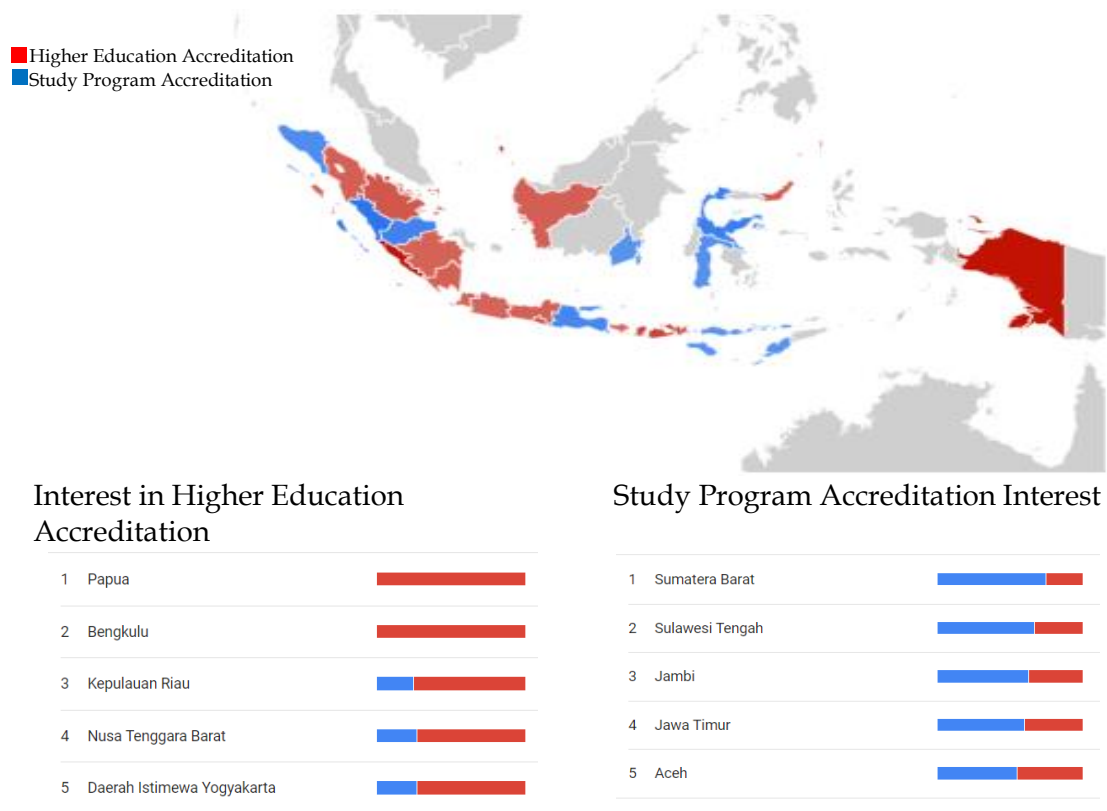


Figure 3. Top 5 Interests in Accreditation by Province in Indonesia

The trend of seeking accreditation based on the top 5 regions in Indonesia, significantly higher education accreditation, is Papua Province and is 100%. Riau Islands Province by 75%, and West Nusa Tenggara and the Special Region of Yogyakarta by 73% and 27%, respectively. Furthermore, for public awareness of quality awareness as reflected in the study program accreditation search, 75% for West Sumatra Province and 63% for Jambi Province. Meanwhile, East Java Province has 60% awareness of the quality of study programs and 55% for Aceh.



Figure 4. Top 1 Quality Sites visited

Figure 4 above shows that the keyword “national higher education accreditation body” has become a trending topic during COVID-19 when talking about the accreditation of higher education and study programs. The average search with this keyword is consistently above 25% nationwide and increased sharply on 11-17 July 2021.

DISCUSSION

Public awareness of the quality of higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic is quite good, which is still above 10% nationally. Especially in July 2021, there was a very sharp increase with 95% for higher education and 100% for study programs. This happens due to several factors, including the possibility of new student admissions and the monitoring of higher education accreditation ratings by BAN-PT.

1. Community Trends due to the New Student Admission Period

It has become a general concern of the Indonesian people that all universities always accept new students every mid-year (July period). Although the selection was made before July, the announcement of recent student graduations was made this month. This is a moment for prospective students, parents, and the public to access the search engine on the campus website (of course affiliated with Google search). In addition, the new student orientation period in the midst of a pandemic will also be conducted online (Putri, 2020; Nugroho, 2020), allowing new students to access the campus' leading portals, including its accreditation. This is in accordance with the target of the Ministry of Education and Culture that all schools and face-to-face lectures can be opened in July 2021 or the beginning of the second semester of the 2020/2021 academic year (Azanella, 2021).

Thus, it can be concluded that information on the quality of higher education during the announcement or orientation of new students is significant to look for. This is done to ensure that students are not wrong in choosing a study program or higher education for their future. Therefore, university administrators can provide comprehensive information on the accreditation of study programs and universities. During this period, the awareness of the quality of students, community, and managers increased significantly.

2. *Community Trends due to PEPA (Accreditation Rating Monitoring)*

The National Accreditation Board for Higher Education (BAN-PT) policy related to monitoring the accreditation rating requirements (Rozuna, 2021) has a significant impact on the trend of higher education quality. The certificates issued are continuously monitored using machine to machine (SAPTO to PDDikti) (Basaruddin, 2020). If the study program management database is not good, then monitoring will be carried out (stages 1, 2, 3), and even closure can be done (Basaruddin, 2020). This monitoring is intensively carried out until its peak in July 2021. This is what makes students, lecturers, and study program managers look for information to ensure their study programs are quality safe. Study program managers work hard to understand, apply and improve their data on the PDDikti portal. Various references are intensively sought through digital media channels, YouTube tutorials, and the Google search engine. The BAN-PT website page is trending. This is evidenced by 99% of public visits using the keyword "college accreditation body".

In addition to the two factors above, the proliferation of quality assurance activities carried out online is sufficient to provide accessible information. In addition to being uploaded (the recording of the Zoom meeting) on Google's YouTube media channel, it is also listed on social media channels and written on mainstream digital media channels. It also includes research results from academics and students as academic requirements that must be published in journals and indexed by Google Scholar (SCI, 2021; Publishing, 2021). This makes information on the quality of higher education, including accreditation, effortless to find on Google. In this way, it will be easier for the public to access information. In other words, once you type in the keyword's "quality" or "accreditation", all information can be immediately known. In other words, Google provides convenience in the transformation of knowledge and, in turn, can improve the quality culture of the Indonesian people.

Some of the analysis results above can be concluded that the quality awareness of the Indonesian people during the COVID-19 pandemic is quite good. Society still pays attention to the quality of higher education. Collaboration between the government, administrators, and the community continues to be pursued to maximize the quality of higher education. Thus, higher education which is a place to produce scientists and experts, including career determinants for alumni in the future, becomes more qualified. Therefore, higher education must continue to provide knowledge and scientific innovation so that the quality of the nation's children becomes more productive and competitive.

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