

Exploring the role of international rankings in the development of institutional public relations strategies

Hamzah Ramadhan

BINUS University, Indonesia

Email: hamzah.ramadhan@binus.ac.id

Dian Ayuria Sarwono

BINUS University, Indonesia

Email: dian.sarwono@binus.ac.id

Abstract

The study uncovered that private universities must rely on more than their international ranking achievements to maintain their legitimacy in the competitive market. The institution must utilize its public relations effort to enhance its competitive position in the global education market by emphasizing transparency, the relevance of the message, and demand from the stakeholders. The study employed in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with 37 first-year students attending a private institution. The study revealed that students' decision-making process in selecting a private university was intricate and involved multiple aspects. In addition to rankings, students also considered variables such as parental influence, networking possibilities, availability of information, and the level of facilities and support services provided by the university. The university's public relations team has the responsibility to liaise with other units, such as the school counsellor and marketing, to help develop the most relevant information needed, especially during the student recruitment process. Although university rankings like QS and Times Higher Education may help gauge institutions' perception of quality and prestige, it is advisable to adopt a more balanced approach. Access to information via digital platforms, such as websites and social media, has played a critical role in demonstrating the program's and university's reliability.

Keywords: Public Relations, Private, University, International Rankings, Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's vast higher education landscape comprises over 4,600 universities, with private institutions making up 68% of the sector. These universities, numbering more than 2,800, face unique challenges, including limited public funding (Logli, 2016) and increased tuition fees, contributing to unequal access and varying quality levels. While public universities are traditionally seen as more prestigious, performance issues have eroded student trust, as evidenced by low accreditation grades in some cases (Yahya & Amalia, 2016). The quality of many private universities remains under scrutiny, emphasizing the need for strategic marketing and communication (Welch, 2007), including leveraging rankings (Gunarto et.al., 2016) to enhance their appeal and competitiveness (Casidy & Wymer, 2016). In this competitive environment, private universities, which often

rely heavily on tuition fees for financial sustainability, must attract a diverse and talented student body to thrive (Maady et al., 2019). Initiatives like the Merdeka Campus program, launched in 2021, highlight the proactive steps these institutions are taking to improve student capabilities and remain competitive in the higher education marketplace (Ronald & Emmerich, 2022).

International rankings, such as those published by QS World University Rankings, Times Higher Education (THE), and Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), are frequently consulted by students when making decisions about where to pursue their higher education. These rankings provide a comparative assessment of institutions based on various criteria, including academic reputation, faculty quality, research output, and internationalization efforts (Kusumawati et al., 2019). Welsch highlights that private universities may enhance their appeal and competitive edge by leveraging their ranking positions and showcasing their strengths through effective marketing and communication strategies (2007) to stay competitive amidst the rising demand for higher education in a globalized educational environment where students have access to information about institutions worldwide and can choose to study according to their pursuit. Although, international rankings can serve as a powerful tool for attracting students, they also present the key issue whether these rankings accurately reflect the quality and value of education provided by private universities, or if they merely reinforce existing hierarchies that favor well-established, resource-rich institutions. countries based on their perceived quality and ranking (Welch, 2007). The pursuit of higher rankings often requires a significant financial investment, which can strain the budgets of private universities, especially those without large endowments or public funding. This financial strain can lead to cuts in critical areas such as student support services, scholarships, and community engagement programs, further widening the gap between elite and non-elite institutions (Docampo et al., 2015). While international rankings play an important role in providing benchmarks and driving improvements in higher education, an overreliance on them can lead to significant risks, particularly for private universities. The utilization of public relations strategies that focus on these risks can help universities maintain their unique identities and values while also navigating the competitive landscape of global rankings.

This study will explore on the role of university rankings and public relations help Indonesian private university students when choosing their place of study since there is a growing body of evidence suggesting that students increasingly use rankings as a primary source of information when selecting a university (Hazelkorn, 2015). This trend is particularly pronounced among international students who may not be familiar with the educational landscape of a particular country and rely on rankings to gauge the reputation and quality of institutions (Marginson, 2016).

Many of these literatures' focus did not reflect the situation on the private university in Indonesia, therefore having this understanding how and why students use these rankings in their decision-making process is crucial for private universities that aim to attract top-tier talent from around the world and contributing to the broader discourse on the role of university public relations (Wijaya, 2015) and rankings in shaping brand image and positioning within the global higher education landscape. Moreover, the reliance on rankings raises questions about the equity and fairness of the information provided. Rankings often prioritize research output and internationalization metrics, which may not necessarily align with the educational goals or strengths of all private universities (Vidal & Ferreira, 2020). For instance, some private institutions may focus more on teaching quality, student support services, or specialized programs that are not adequately captured by the common ranking criteria. As a result, students who base their decisions solely on rankings may overlook institutions that could better meet their educational needs and career aspirations.

The result from this paper will not only provide an additional insight towards the stakeholders within the private university to arm their strategies in ensuring a holistic strategies when utilizing their public relations strategies by examining the factors that influence student choice and the broader implications of rankings, this research will contribute to ongoing debates about the role of rankings in higher education and offer practical recommendations for private universities seeking to navigate this complex landscape.

LITERATURE REVIEW

a. Factors for Indonesian Students in Choosing a Private University

The research conducted by Harahap and Amanah (2019) highlights the importance of university reputation in influencing students' decisions about their career prospects. Students anticipate better career prospects and opportunities after graduating with a specific degree. Therefore, considerations include experienced faculty, robust academic resources, extensive alumni networks, industry affiliations, and academic programs aligned with the dynamic job market (Conard & Conard, 2000). Additionally, reasonable tuition fees and accreditation, markers of adherence to educational standards, significantly impact a university's standing and accessibility. Effective marketing communications tailored to students' needs and aspirations also play a crucial role in attracting students (Platz & Holtbrügge, 2016).

Harahap and Amanah could benefit from further depth and critical analysis in certain areas. A more nuanced exploration of the potential conflicts and interactions among these determinants would enhance its comprehensiveness (2019). For example, the review could also benefit from a deeper exploration of conflicting viewpoints or limitations of certain factors, considering their relative importance in different contexts or for diverse student demographics. Studies have consistently shown that social influences, including family and peers, play a significant role in educational choices (Kusumawati et al., 2019) by investigating how students with an A+ demographic who live in the urban area will provide a different nuance to the previous study. Aryani and Umar (2020) state that internal factors like family have a strong influence on Generation Z students, born between the mid-to-late 1990s and the early 2010s (Hinduan et al., 2020) in Indonesia as emerging trends shaping students' decisions would provide a more current understanding of the higher education landscape in Indonesia since these prospective students will need also need to convince their parents to make that financial investment to be able to join the program (Achmad et al., 2021). Although the review addresses the relevance of academic programs in alignment with the job market, stressing the imperative for universities to adapt their offerings continuously. The inclusion of affordability as a determinant impacting accessibility and university standing underscores how reasonable tuition fees significantly influence student choices and contribute to institutional reputation.

Harahap and Amanah's research method has some limitations. Relying solely on secondary sources may constrict the depth of analysis since primary methods like surveys or interviews were not used (2019). By relying on these sources, they missed important insights that could have been obtained through primary data collection methods like surveys or interviews. As a result, the findings may need to accurately represent the actual decision-making processes of students. Therefore, this study uses an interview method to gain more original insights and first-hand perspectives from students.

Furthermore, the methodology needs to focus on the importance of the ranking itself. This will enable researchers to gain first-hand perspectives from students and obtain more original insights. By doing so, researchers will be able to better understand how students perceive rankings and the factors that influence their decision-making.

b. The Relationship Between International Rankings and University Branding

Marginson's report is eye-opening, emphasizing how rankings establish hierarchies within institutions and shape global perceptions. It highlights the significant influence of rankings on institutional strategies and the adjustment of priorities to improve rankings, particularly in research performance and international recognition. In addition, it demonstrates how rankings affect universities, including students and educational priorities. The subsequent discussion explains how rankings can affect or misguide perceptions of quality, influencing students' choices and priorities in university selection (Marginson, 2007). It highlights the role of rankings in measuring global competitiveness in higher education, considering aspects like research, faculty quality, and student satisfaction.

However, the review needs a more detailed understanding of the varied impacts of rankings across different regional and institutional contexts. It must include a comprehensive evaluation of the effects on social mobility, access to education, and socio-economic landscapes (Ordorika & Lloyd, 2015). The review could also explore potential negative consequences of excessive university branding, such as fostering unquestioning loyalty among students (Amsler & Bolsmann, 2012).

The review is based on academic studies that assess the impact of brand identification theory on student behavior. It advocates for a more transparent and equitable global ranking system that showcases the diversity and individuality of educational institutions (Balaji et al., 2016). However, it could delve deeper into how universities can balance promoting their brand while maintaining the quality of education. The study involved surveying students who attended a private university consistently ranked among the top 1,000 QS World University Ranking will help to understand whether practical public relations theory on amplifying the university's strengths, such as research excellence, faculty quality, or unique academic programs and effectively communicate can help to convince the advantages to prospective students and other stakeholders.

Furthermore, the review recommends universities incorporate rankings into their public relations strategies to enhance brand positioning. It encourages universities to use the strengths identified in rankings for strategic communication and engagement with ranking organizations to strengthen their reputation and attract students. However, the findings raise questions about policy and ethical considerations in higher education marketing. Students who participated in the research were allowed to express their views on how these rankings made them feel when first introduced during the initial process.

The literature review comprehensively covers international rankings' impact on university branding. However, it could be improved by exploring the potential negative consequences of having a solid brand identity in diverse contexts and discussing the balancing act between brand development and providing quality education more nuancedly. Ultimately, universities need to find the right balance between promoting their brand and maintaining the quality and integrity of their educational programs.

c. The Role of Public Relations in Shaping and Enhancing a University's Image in International Rankings

Public relations within the higher education environment, particularly concerning university league tables, is central to shaping institutional reputation and competitiveness (Lee et.al., 2015). Safon showcased the pivotal understanding of how universities involved in rankings use these as strategies for building reputation and pooling academic talent. The study highlights the significant influence of rankings on the perception of educational quality and competitiveness in the global market. One highlight indicated that these universities actively adapted their strategies in response to ranking criteria, improving their positions in international rankings. In addition, universities have incorporated global rankings into their strategic planning for over fifteen years (2013).

However, this research overemphasis on rankings could lead to adjustments in academic standards and research outputs, compromising educational quality. Moreover, such a focus might affect curriculum design and research priorities, potentially pushing aside critical thinking and innovative practices in favor of metrics designed to improve rankings. The research will be more beneficial if they ask the respondent how these rankings will affect their institution gaining new attraction. Therefore, they can have a better position to focus on improving their overall quality instead of focusing solely on the ranking.

Another study showcased how public relations activities can lead to significant improvements in university rankings (Dewi et al., 2019), but the relationship between public relations and ranking could be more straightforward (Erkkilä, 2013). The authors argue rankings are based on research output, teaching quality, internationalization, and public relations activities. Therefore, universities should focus on improving their overall performance rather than solely investing in public relations efforts to improve their rankings. Prioritizing this to attract students by using relatable content in the digital sphere can help them to set them part. Investing in this effort to be part of the research can provide a deeper understanding of the contribution of public relations.

Both of those studies did not focus on how the students find information related to the program or the university. The information will help the students give an idea of what to expect from the program offered at the university. Universities must thoughtfully navigate these complexities, ensuring their pursuit of higher rankings aligns with their commitment to providing a sound academic environment.

The study addressed the risks associated with an excessive focus on rankings in utilizing public relations strategies. Prioritizing rankings might diminish the value of a holistic educational experience and critical thinking (Lee et al., 2015). Moreover, the relationship between public relations and ranking is susceptible to manipulation. Some universities have been accused of unethical practices, such as falsifying data or inflating their research output to improve their rankings. This can have a detrimental effect on the credibility of both the university and the ranking system (Barron, 2017).

The reviewed studies collectively suggest the crucial role of PR in influencing university rankings. They emphasize the strategic value of managing external perceptions and the tangible benefits of improved rankings in attracting talent and enhancing institutional reputation. However, these benefits must be weighed against the potential downsides of an over-reliance on rankings. Universities have a role in maintaining the integrity of their educational and research missions, ensuring that pursuing higher rankings upholds their core values and objectives. While public relations strategies are integral to positioning universities competitively in global rankings, it is essential to consider the long-term implications of these strategies on academic culture and educational quality (Thomas et al., 2014).

METHOD

This study used in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGD) to investigate how university rankings and public relations strategies affect the choice of private universities among students in Indonesia. The study took three months to complete, with one month for sample identification and recruitment, one month for data collection, and one month for analysis. The researcher used secondary data from the marketing communication team to understand students' awareness of international rankings when they enroll in a university. They also conducted interviews to gain qualitative insights into the factors influencing students' decision-making processes when choosing a university.

Researchers identified key themes and characteristics pertinent to the research question in the preliminary analysis process. These included demographic factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, academic discipline, socioeconomic background, and attitudes and experiences as suggested with purposive sampling (Walliman, 2006) related to university rankings and public relations strategies (Guest et al., 2006). The researcher invited 100 students via E-mail obtained with permission from the faculty, and 37 of them responded. This sample size is sufficient to achieve saturation, allowing for a thorough exploration of participants' experiences, perspectives, and motivations (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The respondents gathered information related to the research in the information session and shared their availability. They chose either to physically present or through an online session facilitated through Zoom. In each session, five to six students first-year students gathered as one group were involved in each to ensure that participants were provided with the chance to articulate their perspectives and participate in discussions and the dynamic exchanges during discussions can uncover fresh viewpoints and insights that were not foreseen in advance (Duggleby, 2005). The FGD aims to assess the relationship between university rankings, public relations strategies, and students' decision-making processes regarding their educational choices and include participants with contrasting perspectives to facilitate in-depth exploration of differing viewpoints (Babbie, 2016). The in-depth interviews conducted in English and Indonesian will offer qualitative insights into participants' experiences and perspectives (Bryman, 2006) to improve the lack of methods performed by Harahap and Amanah (2019).

The researcher implemented the thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022) to organize the data and gain a profound understanding of qualitative data, paying heed to contextual factors, participants' quotations, and the implications of identified themes (Khokhar et al., 2020) from the FGD. Connections and patterns within themes will be explored to address research questions, and pertinent participant quotations will be selectively incorporated to substantiate qualitative findings before conducting 10 in-depth interviews to follow up some of their response gathered from the focus group discussion. Drawing on the recommendations of Bryman (2006) and Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005), this methodological approach aims to capture the richness of qualitative data, uncovering the nuanced relationships between university rankings, public relations strategies, and students' decision-making processes of private universities in Indonesia. Furthermore, variables will be systematically coded and labeled to facilitate subsequent analysis. This approach will provide a comprehensive overview of response prevalence, including the percentage of students who attribute importance to university rankings (Richards & Hemphill, 2017).

The analysis of qualitative data derived from the FGD and in-depth interviews was transcribed in verbatim form, ensuring the creation of a comprehensive textual record of participants' responses (Basit, 2003). Thematic coding was applied to identify recurring themes, concepts, and patterns within the qualitative data (Vaughn & Turner, 2016). Deductive coding, guided by the focus of the research, and inductive coding, were employed that identify emerging themes. A consistent coding scheme will be rigorously maintained across all interview transcripts. Related codes were grouped into themes or categories reflecting participants' prominent ideas, experiences, or perspectives (Braun & Clarke, 2006).



Figure 1. Process in Coding and Analysing the Result of the Research (Braun & Clarke, 2022)

The qualitative insights were integrated to complement the explanations for statistical trends or variations (Weston et al., 2001). The subsequent synthesis and integration of both findings yield a comprehensive understanding of how university rankings and public relations strategies influence students' choices. This integrated understanding was examined to derive implications and insights for the research questions. The discussion addressed any contradictions or discrepancies in qualitative datasets. The researcher ensured attention, transparency, and meticulously documented interpretations throughout the data analysis. We carefully used data evidence to support research claims, thereby increasing the reliability and validity of the research findings. Ultimately, the integrated findings were utilized to draw well-founded conclusions and offer recommendations underpinned by the comprehensive research data analysis.

Lastly, the researcher took great care to uphold ethical principles to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants and obtained consent from each participant, which included an explanation of the study's purpose, procedures, and rights, with a guarantee of confidentiality and anonymity - including the option to withdraw at any time without any negative repercussions. To avoid any potential conflicts of interest, the researcher disclosed everything to the participants, and at the end of the study, the participants had debriefed them to address any questions or concerns they may have had.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Public relations strategies play a role in shaping student perceptions of university rankings. These strategies aim to contextualize rankings within a broader narrative of the institution's offerings and values. By strategically highlighting positive aspects of rankings and addressing potential concerns, universities can enhance their appeal to prospective students since this sentiment underscores a critical perspective that rankings, while helpful, do not encompass all aspects of the educational experience and should not be viewed in isolation.

The way students view a university is influenced by several factors when considering a university's ranking as they evaluate the academic quality, faculty qualifications, and research output objectively. Research by Marginson (2007) and Amsler & Bolsmann (2012) suggests that an overemphasis on rankings can lead universities to prioritize metrics over substantive educational outcomes, potentially skewing educational priorities and resources toward activities that enhance these metrics rather than broader educational objectives. Although the university might think that its ranking is a good arsenal to showcase its reputation to its stakeholders, this isn't the case, as shown by Informant 1 where "...it doesn't matter the position of the university" however the public relations efforts ensure that rankings are viewed within a broader, more holistic framework that considers the institution's overall educational value and contributions since "...I'm more familiar with QS" as mentioned by Informant 3 but "...haven't heard of Times Higher Education" expressed from Informant 5 that help mitigate the risk of rankings being misconstrued as the sole determinant of educational quality or institutional prestige.

Using a university's rankings as a public relations strategy can help to showcase credibility and trust to prospective students and stakeholders. However, they must treat this carefully since they must be able to consider other factors such as "...whether they have the major" as expressed by Informant 5, "...recommendation from my parents..." from Informant 9 as a financial supporter, alumni network, "...how the lectures can determine how we can be better.." as expressed by Informant 8, and ability to create meaningful follow up after their graduation all of which contribute to an institution's ranking.

The public relations team not only has the most updated across various channels but understanding where the prospective students find their information will ensure that they create compelling content to ensure they understand the physical and non-physical aspects of the institution that will help not to overemphasize rankings but maintains a balanced perspective, as discussed by Lee et al. (2015) on the role of public relations in mitigating the limitations of rankings (Dewi et al., 2019) and shaping public perception as stated in the findings of Marginson (2007) and Amsler & Bolsmann (2012) on the potential pitfalls of an overemphasis on rankings that might not reflect the reality.

Ensuring transparency in communicating the significance of university rankings to various stakeholders with public relations can provide clear and accurate information about rankings and their implications through multiple channels such as university websites, social media platforms, press releases, and informational sessions. It aims to foster trust and credibility in the institution by ensuring stakeholders have a nuanced understanding of the methodologies, criteria, and limitations of rankings. The research also found that other sources such as the school counselors and marketing staff, also play a role in assisting individuals choose the institution or program they wish to enroll in to ensure. Their insight will enrich on what the public relations have to offer beyond rankings. Areas such as internship opportunities and extracurricular activities were also mentioned by the respondent. By showcasing these additional dimensions of the university experience, public relations activities help to enrich the narrative surrounding the institution and provide a more holistic understanding of its educational mission and impact since rankings are merely informational tools and do not substantially impact their final decision, especially if the university in question does not occupy a top-tier position in the ranking's hierarchy. In addition, this understanding can also elicit emotions of pride or security associated with attending a highly-ranked university. This can lead to students believing that attending such a university will improve their future job opportunities and social status. Therefore, the university must treat this cautiously, as they do not want to overpromise themselves as a guarantee.

Devising public relations efforts for an institution to showcase its unique strengths and attributes may not be fully captured by rankings alone. This significantly creates a comprehensive and compelling narrative about the institution's identity and offerings. This strategic positioning helps the institution stand out in a competitive market and reinforces its value proposition to prospective students. By highlighting what makes an institution unique, public relations efforts contribute to shaping a strong and distinctive image and reputation, which is crucial in attracting and retaining students.

CONCLUSION

Private universities have the responsibility of creating a narrative that is both compelling and credible to attract Indonesian students. This requires a strong public relations effort, as students' decisions to enroll in a program at a private university are influenced by the assessments of university quality, such as faculty expertise, academic resources, and affiliations, while subjective factors include emotional responses and personal aspirations.

Public relations efforts can help put rankings into perspective by emphasizing the qualitative aspects of education offered. Communicating universities' strengths and unique attributes beyond their numerical rankings is also essential, as public relations play a crucial role in shaping perceptions. This provides a more holistic view of the institutions and helps students make informed choices. The research identifies the role of public relations as crucial in mediating the impact of rankings on student choices. Information must be regularly updated but verified to ensure that students know what to expect when they sign up for their major. Universities can utilize reputational capital and competitive standing in the global education market by effectively managing external perceptions and engaging with prospective students and other stakeholders through transparent and meaningful communication to stay unique amidst the fierce competition.

Furthermore, the study cautions against overemphasizing rankings in university strategies. Such an approach can lead to skewed institutional priorities toward metrics improvement at the expense of educational quality and student experience. Thus, there is a need for balance, where universities aim to improve their rankings and maintain the integrity of their educational mission.

To sum up, this study contributes to the broader discourse on higher education in Indonesia by providing insights into the strategic use of rankings and public relations. It emphasizes the need for an integrated approach where public relations not only support the pursuit of higher rankings but also emphasize universities' overall educational value and social contributions. Moving forward, it is recommended that higher education institutions balance their competitive strategies with commitments to academic excellence and social responsibility to truly benefit their stakeholders and society at large.

REFERENCES

- Achmad, W., Talib, W., & Basri, M. (2021). Multicultural education-based instruction for mental revolution in teaching Intercultural Communication: Indonesian university students' Perspectives. *ELT Worldwide: Journal of English Language Teaching*. <https://doi.org/10.26858/eltww.v8i1.22299>.
- Amsler, S., & Bolsmann, C. (2012). University ranking as social exclusion. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 33, 283 - 301. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2011.649835>
- Aryani, F., & Umar, N. (2020). Factors Affecting Z Generation on Selecting Majors in The University: an Indonesian Case. *Journal of Social Studies Education Research*, 11, 109-133.
- Balaji, M., Roy, S., & Sadeque, S. (2016). Antecedents and consequences of university brand identification. *Journal of Business Research*, 69, 3023-3032. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JBUSRES.2016.01.017>.
- Barron, G. (2017). The Berlin Principles on Ranking Higher Education Institutions: limitations, legitimacy,

- and value conflict. *Higher Education*, 73, 317-333. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S10734-016-0022-Z>.
- Basit, T. (2003). Manual or electronic? The role of coding in qualitative data analysis. *Educational Research*, 45, 143 - 154. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0013188032000133548>.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022, February). Conceptual and design thinking for thematic analysis. *Qualitative Psychology*, 9(1), 3–26. <https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000196>
- Bryman, A. (2006). Integrating quantitative and qualitative research: how is it done?. *Qualitative Research*, 6, 113 - 97. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794106058877>.
- Casidy, R., & Wymer, W. (2016). Linking prestige perception with consumption experience, loyalty, and WOM. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 34, 540-558. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MIP-06-2015-0113>.
- Conard, M., & Conard, M. (2000). An Analysis of Academic Reputation as Perceived by Consumers of Higher Education. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 9, 69 - 80. https://doi.org/10.1300/J050v09n04_05.
- Dewi, M., Tanjung, S., & Nadira, S. (2019). Optimization of Cyber PR at Private Universities in Yogyakarta. *Asian Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 4, 125-129.
- Docampo, D., Egret, D., & Cram, L. (2015). The effect of university mergers on the Shanghai ranking. *Scientometrics*, 104(1), 175-191. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-015-1587-5>
- Emerson, R. (2017). Likert Scales. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 111, 488 - 488. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0145482x1711100511>.
- Erkkilä, T. (2013). Introduction: University Rankings and European Higher Education. *Global University Rankings*, 3-19. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137296870_1
- Gunarto, M., Nugraha, D., & Gaffar, V. (2016). Analysis of Perception and Public Preference on Reputation of Higher-Education Ranking Agencies. , 364-370. <https://doi.org/10.2991/GCBME-16.2016.65>.
- Harahap, D., & Amanah, D. (2019). Assessment in Choosing Higher Education: A Case of Indonesia. *Journal of International Business, Economics and Entrepreneurship*. <https://doi.org/10.24191/jibe.v4i1.14413>.
- Hinduan, Z. R., Anggraeni, A., & Agia, M. I. (2020). Generation Z in Indonesia: The self-driven digital. *The New Generation Z in Asia: Dynamics, Differences, Digitalisation*, 121-134. <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-80043-220-820201012>
- Khokhar, S., Pathan, H., Raheem, A., & Abbasi, A. (2020). Theory Development in Thematic Analysis: Procedure and Practice.3, 423-433. <https://doi.org/10.47067/RAMSS.V3I3.79>.
- Kusumawati, A., Perera, N., & Yanamandram, V. (2019). Modelling trade-offs in students' choice set when determining universities. *International Journal of Educational Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-01-2018-0007>.
- Lee, Y., Wanta, W., & Lee, H. (2015). Resource-Based Public Relations Efforts for University Reputation from an Agenda-Building and Agenda-Setting Perspective. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 18, 195-209. <https://doi.org/10.1057/CRR.2015.6>.
- Logli, C. (2016). *The Palgrave Handbook of Asia Pacific Higher Education* (p. 561–581). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-48739-1_37
- Maady, M., Yuwita, P., Ardianti, A., Anggraini, F., & Lestari, I. (2019). Exploring Open Government Partnership as a Strategy for Promoting Transparency in Private University: An Initial Study. *Proceedings of the 5th UPI International Conference on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (ICTVET 2018)*. <https://doi.org/10.2991/ICTVET-18.2019.13>.

- Marginson, S. (2007). Global University Rankings: Implications in general and for Australia. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 29, 131 - 142.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13600800701351660>.
- Ordorika, I., & Lloyd, M. (2015). International rankings and the contest for university hegemony. *Journal of Education Policy*, 30, 385 - 405.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2014.979247>
- Peppercorn, J., Buss, W., Fost, N., & Godley, P. (2008). The dilemma of data-safety monitoring: provision of significant new data to research participants. *The Lancet*, 371, 527-529.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(08\)60239-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(08)60239-1).
- Platz, S., & Holtbrügge, D. (2016). Student Expectations and Experiences in Higher Education: A Comparison of State and Private Universities in Germany. , 171-190. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-54291-5_8.
- Richards, K., & Hemphill, M. (2017). A Practical Guide to Collaborative Qualitative Data Analysis. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 37, 225-231. <https://doi.org/10.1123/JTPE.2017-0084>.
- Ronald, R., & Emmerich, S. (2022). Strategi Meningkatkan Partisipasi Interest Mahasiswa terhadap Program Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka. *Jurnal Nusantara Aplikasi Manajemen Bisnis*.
<https://doi.org/10.29407/nusamba.v7i2.17026>.
- Safón, V. (2013). What do global university rankings measure? The search for the X factor and the X entity. *Scientometrics*, 97, 223–244. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-013-0986-8>
- Smith, M. (2010). Ethics and Research Governance, 41-58. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446268346.N4>.
- Su, B., Hu, J., Chen, W., Shen, W., & Lin, C. (2005). Factors Affecting Medical Students' Choice of Residency: A Preliminary Study. *Mid-Taiwan Journal of Medicine*, 10, 181-188.
[https://doi.org/10.6558/MTJM.2005.10\(4\).3](https://doi.org/10.6558/MTJM.2005.10(4).3).
- Thomas, S., Chie, Q., Abraham, M., Raj, S., & Beh, L. (2014). A Qualitative Review of Literature on Peer Review of Teaching in Higher Education. *Review of Educational Research*, 84, 112 - 159.
<https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654313499617>.
- Vaughn, P., & Turner, C. (2016). Decoding via Coding: Analyzing Qualitative Text Data Through Thematic Coding and Survey Methodologies. *Journal of Library Administration*, 56, 41 - 51.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01930826.2015.1105035>.
- Vidal, J., & Ferreira, C. (2020). Universities under pressure: The impact of international University rankings. *Journal of New Approaches in Educational Research*, 9(2), 181-193.
<https://doi.org/10.7821/naer.2020.7.475>
- Walliman, N. (2017). Collecting Primary Data. In *Research Methods: The Basics* (2nd ed., p. 26). Taylor & Francis Group . <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315529011>
- Welch, A. (2007). Blurred Vision?: Public and Private Higher Education in Indonesia. *Higher Education*, 54, 665-687. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S10734-006-9017-5>.
- Weston, C., Gandell, T., Beauchamp, J., McAlpine, L., Wiseman, C., & Beauchamp, C. (2001). Analyzing Interview Data: The Development and Evolution of a Coding System. *Qualitative Sociology*, 24, 381-400. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1010690908200>.
- Wijaya, L. (2015). Public Relations in Private Universities in Central Java: Creating Innovation to Attract Students' Interest, 5, 46-51. <https://doi.org/10.9744/SCRIPTURA.5.2.46-51>.
- Woolley, C. (2009). Meeting the Mixed Methods Challenge of Integration in a Sociological Study of Structure and Agency. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 3, 25 - 7.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689808325774>.

Yahya, A., & Amalia, R. (2016). Pengaruh Sistem Kerja Terhadap Kinerja Perguruan Tinggi dan Implikasinya Terhadap Kepercayaan Mahasiswa Universitas Syiah Kuala Banda Aceh, 10. <https://doi.org/10.13170/JP.10.1.3020>