A netnographic study of courses in an undergraduate management program at a leading university

Um estudo netnográfico de cursos em um programa de gestão de graduação em uma universidade líder

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Abstract

Higher education is important for Indonesian society. This research uses a qualitative approach with a virtual netnography method. The purpose of this research is to find out how the implementation of education in the management study program of Universitas Brawijaya and to see which courses need to be developed in the undergraduate management program Universitas Brawijaya. Data collection by browsing the official websites of leading universities that are included in the top 10 QS World rankings domestically and abroad. The initial stage was to select universities according to the top 10 QS rankings. The second stage is to search for courses on the official websites of the selected universities. The third stage is data presentation by coding the search results courses. The next step is to analyze the data with the help of the PIVOT formula in Microsoft Excel. The results of the PIVOT formula are then depicted in graphical form. The results showed that the netnography method can explain the differences in courses applied at leading universities comprehensively. PSSM Universitas Brawijaya has not implemented several courses such as business model, business planning, business analytics, decision making, and innovation management. PSSM Universitas

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Brawijaya has provided courses following technological developments. Therefore, PSSM Universitas Brawijaya is advised to maintain the current courses and develop courses that have not been implemented.

**Keywords:** Netnography. Courses. Undergraduate Management Program.

**Resumo**

O ensino superior é importante para a sociedade indonésia. Esta pesquisa utiliza uma abordagem qualitativa com um método de netnografia virtual. O objetivo desta pesquisa é descobrir como a implementação da educação no programa de estudos de administração da Universitas Brawijaya e verificar quais cursos precisam ser desenvolvidos no programa de graduação em administração da Universitas Brawijaya. A coleta de dados foi feita por meio da pesquisa nos sites oficiais das principais universidades incluídas nas 10 melhores classificações mundiais da QS no país e no exterior. A etapa inicial foi selecionar as universidades de acordo com as 10 melhores classificações da QS. A segunda etapa é a pesquisa de cursos nos sites oficiais das universidades selecionadas. A terceira etapa é a apresentação dos dados por meio da codificação dos cursos dos resultados da pesquisa. A próxima etapa é a análise dos dados com a ajuda da fórmula PIVOT no Microsoft Excel. Os resultados da fórmula PIVOT são então representados em forma de gráfico. Os resultados mostraram que o método de netnografia pode explicar de forma abrangente as diferenças nos cursos aplicados nas principais universidades. A PSSM Universitas Brawijaya não implementou vários cursos, como modelo de negócios, planejamento de negócios, análise de negócios, tomada de decisões e gestão da inovação. A PSSM Universitas Brawijaya oferece cursos que acompanham os desenvolvimentos tecnológicos. Portanto, recomenda-se que a PSSM Universitas Brawijaya mantenha os cursos atuais e desenvolva os cursos que ainda não foram implementados.

**Palavras-chave:** Netnografia. Cursos. Programa de gerenciamento de graduação

**Introduction**

The industrial revolution is a significant technological advance that affects changes in other sectors. The system is geared toward a digital form, helped by a network, in Industrial Revolution 4.0 (Baenanda, 2019). Industry 4.0, as it progresses into Revolution 5.0, is distinguished by the rise of concepts in which technology has become the foundation for social
activity. This advancement is characterized by an automation system in all operational processes in an organization, where the development of internet technology is increasingly becoming not only a means of connecting people all over the world but also a foundation for the process of economic trade transactions (Puspita Yessi; Astuti, Sri; Novianti, Sri, 2020). The information revolution has had a tremendous impact on learning reform. From lecturer-centered learning to technology-based learning. A lecturer can be interpreted as a facilitator of teaching theory who must be more technologically responsive than students.

Higher education has a very important and strategic role in the development of society and the nation. The role in question is to build the character and civilization of the nation. A civilized nation will be seen by its contribution in order to educate the nation's life, be innovative, responsive, creative, and be globally competitive. One of the levels of progress of a country is measured by the level of progress of its universities (Sedyati, 2022). Various thoughts of academics in higher education are highly correlated and influence the development of economic, social, political, and other aspects of community life. Universities play a role as producers of science and concepts of thought that are useful for the benefit of mankind. In addition, universities also have a responsibility and role in preparing the nation's children to become leaders who are intelligent and critical but have morals and responsibilities and are noble in their service to society and the nation.

Several organizations, like Universitas Brawijaya, have spent significant sums of money to install and develop technology. The function of technology is required in order to deliver high-quality services, both academic and non-academic. As a top institution, Universitas Brawijaya should be thinking about the path of future scientific progress through the use of technology. The future evolution of science must follow the times, which are undoubtedly founded on social values, conventions, and religion. Universities must consider curriculum development, as evidenced by course components and appropriate learning techniques and procedures, in order to generate graduates who are prepared to compete in the world of labor or entrepreneurship.

Furthermore, the learning process must also be research-based. A lecturer must teach something based on research results that are in accordance with the times and are up-to-date (Arnold, 2023). Lecturers should not only rely on "common sense" knowledge because the world now consists of various dimensions (Idris & Ramly, 2016; Thomas, 2016). Students have become hyperconnected. Students who are in fact members of generation Z, all of whom are internet users, and make it easy for them to connect with virtual communities around the world. Therefore, students must be equipped with a number of competencies and an awareness
of global citizenship from the start. These competencies can be in the form of affective, cognitive, and psychomotor competencies obtained in and out of class lectures. The purpose of this study is to forecast the approximate courses that are still being applied and that require improvement in the undergraduate management program at Universitas Brawijaya. Identifying courses that are in line with the advancement of science and the times using network approaches. In general, earlier studies used non-netnographic tools to discuss and evaluate data.

Methods

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method. Taylor et al. (2015) define descriptive qualitative research as a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and behaviors that can be observed. According to them, this approach is directed at the setting and the individual holistically. So, in this case, it is not allowed to isolate individuals or organizations into variables or hypotheses; it is necessary to view them as part of a whole. The approach used is netnography, which focuses on observations that focus the subject on the internet. Kozinets (2018) emphasizes that netnographic studies can utilize a large set of data that originates and manifests through data shared on the Internet. In contrast to ethnographic approaches that emphasize participatory approaches, where the researcher is fully engaged as a member of the online community, netnographic approaches are closer to traditional ethnographic standards of participatory observation, prolonged engagement, and deep immersion.

Netnography is an approach to using ethnography when conducting research on communities and cultures on the internet (Bartl et al., 2016). Kozinets (2018) argues that the distinctive feature of netnography is field studies with computer-based communication, especially through the internet. Data was collected by visiting the QS ranking website, then selecting the top 10 universities both domestically and abroad by conducting participatory observations. The target of the research will be concentrated or directed according to the emphasis of the research under examination. Determining the research focus can provide criteria for narrowing down the material gathered (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018; Arikunto, 2010). The research focus is a critical stage in the research process. The focus of study in this topic is on courses in the Management Undergraduate Program at various prominent institutions. Foreign research universities are gathered from the QS 100 rating list, which
comprises the top ten list universities. Similarly, inside the country, the focus of research is on universities that are ranked in the top ten by QS.

Kozinets (2018) explains the stages of netnography as follows:

1. **Initiation**

Netnography research starts with determining the purpose and focus of the research.

2. **Investigation**

Researchers examine data in the form of social media conversations on a topic. The investigation stage is the stage where researchers search, select, and then store data for research.

3. **Interaction**

Interaction with the subjects and objects under study is also carried out in netnographic research. The form of interaction in netnographic research is different from ethnography because the object of netnographic study is data on the internet.

4. **Immersion**

An important feature of ethnography is immersing yourself in the person or community under study. The goal is for researchers to feel and see from the perspective of the community under study.

5. **Integration**

Integration is the process of data analysis and interpretation. In netnographic research, analysis is basically integrating all the data obtained during the data collection stage. Researchers also combine investigations, interactions, and immersion results.

6. **Incarnation**

The last stage in netnographic research is communicating the results of the research.

The data for this study was gathered by analyzing and comparing courses at various colleges using online benchmarking. Researchers gathered information from the websites of institutions in the top ten QS World-certified universities, both at home and abroad.

The data gathering approach employs a descriptive method that is carried out in two steps, as follows:

1. **Download**

Researchers acquired data from papers provided on the official website of the QS global ranking and then determined which universities would have documented courses at these institutions.

2. **Documentation**

Data searches can be done using data generated from notes, transcripts, and archives.
(Sugiyono, 2013). The evidence referred to by the researcher is a list of the top ten local and foreign institutions recognized by the QS World Ranking certification agency. There is also a list of courses at each of these universities.

**Results and Discussion**

Descriptive research is based on data obtained from the official website of each QS 10 university. After obtaining data for the study, the next step is to process the collected data by analyzing, describing, and drawing conclusions. To analyze this data, data analysis techniques using Excel with the Pivot formula are used to facilitate the classification of courses and universities. Data analysis in qualitative research is carried out when data collection takes place, after data collection for a certain period is complete. There are several activities involved in analyzing qualitative data, including:

1. **Data reduction:** Data reduction is the process of selecting, separating, simplifying, abstracting, and coding rough data that emerges through internet searches. The results of the report obtained are then presented in clear and complete detail.
2. **Presentation of Data:** Data presentation aims to make it easier for researchers to see the overall picture of the research. Data is presented by describing the results of data obtained from the internet and then formulated with the help of Excel tools, namely the PIVOT formula, to make a conclusion.
3. **Making Inferences:** During the data collection process, inferences are constantly drawn. In this study, conclusions were reached by focusing on the essential issues of the research findings based on the material gathered.

The institutions studied are universities accredited by QS World Rankings, both within the country and abroad. The following is a list of 10 universities:
Figure 1: List of 10 universities ranking world
Source: QS Ranking
After collecting data on the official QS World website (QS, 2023), researchers then looked for courses on each university's official website. Here are some lists of universities and each course in the undergraduate management program.
Figure 3: Course and College Chart
Source: processed data pivot result, 2023
The researcher discovered that the most commonly provided courses in the management study program are as follows, based on the aims and novelties to be achieved:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>QS-Repeated Universities</th>
<th>Count of Mata Kuliah</th>
<th>Courses Universitas Brawijaya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Behavior</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Organizational Behavior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Management</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Financial Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Management</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Strategic Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational Management</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Operational Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources Management</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Human Resources Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Ethics</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Business Ethics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Management</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Introduction to Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication and Negotiation</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Communication and Negotiation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digitalization and Technology</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Digitalization and Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Statistics</td>
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<td>Statistics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Introduction to Business</td>
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<td>Introduction to Economics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction to Accounting</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Introduction to Accounting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Mathematics</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Economic Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akuntansi Manajemen</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Akuntansi Manajemen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Modeling</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>---</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Business</td>
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<td>International Business</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Management</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Investment Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Accounting</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Financial Accounting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Management</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Risk Management</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Planning</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>---</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Law</td>
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<td>Business Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance Management</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Performance Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Management</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Project Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product Development and Brand</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Product Development and Brand</td>
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<td>Management Information System</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Management Information System</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Analytics</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microeconomics</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>---</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consumer Behavior</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Consumer Behavior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation Management</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macroeconomics</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>368</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Comparison of Courses at Universitas Brawijaya with QS-Repeated Universities

Source: the researcher
Table 1 shows the comparison of courses given to undergraduate management students on several campuses and at Universitas Brawijaya. Courses that fall into the functional category of management are still interrelated, as are courses that fall into the category of basic courses such as introduction to management, introduction to business, introduction to economics, and introduction to accounting.

- In summary, there are 28 courses at Universitas Brawijaya that relate to courses given at universities both nationally and internationally. This can be interpreted to mean that Management Undergraduate program Universitas Brawijaya has followed the guidelines and references according to what is formulated by QS World Ranking and has been running effectively.
- Courses that are not given at Management Undergraduate program Universitas Brawijaya, such as macro and microeconomics, are included in the syllabus of managerial economics courses; this includes the guidelines in the QS World ranking.
- Business modeling courses do not yet exist at Management Undergraduate program Universitas Brawijaya. This course is designed to provide students with provisions for examining business changes from the perspective of the Industrial Revolution 5.0. This course equips students with various concepts and the relevance of business models, the business model canvas, and its application. This course also examines the importance of business models in several aspects, such as helping management or entrepreneurs systematically analyze the success and adaptation factors of the company's business activities, describing the simple and overall form of resources used by a company, helping to identify customers and channels appropriately and efficiently, and describing the operational system of production and services of a company.
- Business planning courses do not yet exist at Management Undergraduate program Universitas Brawijaya. This course provides knowledge, skills, and abilities to students about the understanding and scope of business planning, the selection of new business planning ideas and business development and expansion ideas, business situation analysis, operations and production planning of goods and services, marketing planning of goods and services, human resource planning, business organizational planning, business collaboration planning, financing planning and financial estimation, and business risk forecasting.
- Management Undergraduate program Universitas Brawijaya does not provide any business analytics courses. This course explains how data has a significant impact
on the development of a business. As a byproduct of their operations in the period of the Industrial Revolution 5.0 that is currently sweeping the world, numerous commercial organizations, governments, individuals, and even machines generate massive amounts of data. Similarly, decision-makers and systems are increasingly depending on intelligent technology to systematically examine data in order to enhance the accuracy of their choices. In many circumstances, automating the analysis and decision-making process is becoming increasingly critical as the volume and velocity of fresh data collected from multiple sources rise. This course will go through how fundamental business intelligence and data science ideas may be applied to improve performance.

- Management Undergraduate program Universitas Brawijaya does not currently offer a decision-making course. This course aims to improve students’ ability to observe and interpret information, reason, conclude, evaluate, assess, and solve problems using various logical strategies and critical thinking techniques, allowing them to deal with ambiguous, complex, and/or seemingly unsolvable problem situations. This course introduces the concepts and definitions of decision-making, types of decisions, decision-making models, decision-making procedures, decision-making principles, actors, and decision-making environments in educational organizations, with a focus on planning and setting business policies.

- Management Undergraduate program Universitas Brawijaya does not currently have a decision-making course. This course teaches students how to produce and manage innovation in businesses, particularly in the production of new goods and the management of current ones. This course investigates the notion and significance of innovation in businesses, as well as management methods. The process of technical innovation, innovation in corporations and enterprises, innovation within the framework of research and development (R&D), operationalization of innovation in the manufacturing industry, and strategies for innovation and new company development are all covered in this course. In general, this course intends to provide participants with insights, knowledge, and abilities for managing the innovation process in high-tech manufacturing sectors. Insights and knowledge include: technological innovation processes; innovation in corporations and companies; innovation within the context of business research and development (R&D); operationalization of innovation in the service and manufacturing industries; and innovation strategies and new business development.
Conclusion

The following conclusions are taken from the preceding chapter's research and results:

1. The netnography approach can thoroughly describe the disparities in courses used at major institutions.
2. The courses offered at Universitas Brawijaya are comparable to those offered at premier universities recognized by the QS World Ranking.
3. Management Undergraduate program Universitas Brawijaya has provided courses following technological developments and taking into account the demographics and origins of students.
4. Management Undergraduate program Universitas Brawijaya has not implemented several courses such as business model, business planning, business analytics, decision-making, and innovation management. This must be evaluated and, if feasible, implemented in order to compete with other institutions and produce graduates who are ready for jobs and business.
5. It is recommended that Management Undergraduate program Universitas Brawijaya keep the present curricula.

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