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## Analysis of Research Topics Trends in Indonesian and Global Education (Systematic Literature Review)

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### ABSTRACT

Education in the modern era faces unprecedented challenges and opportunities, driven by rapid technological advances and shifting social paradigms. Trends in educational research, both globally and locally in Indonesia, increasingly point to a shift toward technology integration, personalized learning, and an emphasis on educational inclusivity. This paper's analysis of scientific literature reveals several key themes dominating educational discourse, including the role of artificial intelligence (AI), the use of social media and e-learning, the urgency of inclusive and equitable education, the implementation of an adaptive independent curriculum, vocational education, and various forms of technology integration and contextual learning strategies. This paper will examine these trends by referencing a series of relevant research findings to provide a comprehensive overview of the current direction of educational development and its future opportunities. The study of topics trending in global and local research was conducted using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method to identify, summarize, and interpret all available and relevant research related to current educational trends.

**Keywords:** Artificial Intelligence in Education; E-learning; Inclusive Education; Independent Curriculum; Educational Technology Integration; Systematic Literature Review.

### INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental pillar in the development of human civilization, constantly dynamic and evolving according to the demands of the times. Facing various contemporary challenges, such as technological disruption, the learning crisis, and social inequality, the world of education is required to continuously innovate and adapt. This development is inseparable from the role of educational research, which serves as a compass for understanding phenomena, evaluating policies, and designing applicable solutions (Abdurrohman, 2024). Analyzing educational research trends is a crucial step in mapping the direction of academic studies, identifying priority issues, and understanding the scientific community's response to changes in



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the field of education (Lin et al., 2023). Thus, tracking research trends is not only retrospective but also prospective in framing a future of higher-quality and more relevant education.

Conceptually, research trends in education refer to the patterns and tendencies of topics, methods, and focus of studies that develop over a specific period in response to needs, challenges, and developments in the field of education (Abdurrohman, 2024). These trends reflect paradigm shifts, the collective interests of researchers, and policy priorities that influence the academic landscape. Examining a research trend requires a complex and systematic methodological approach. One methodology frequently used to examine research trends is bibliometric studies and Systematic

Literature Reviews (SLRs). These research methods comprehensively analyze scientific publication data to uncover topic clusters, collaboration networks, and research impact (Lin et al., 2023). This type of analysis allows for the identification of dominant emerging themes. This study employed the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method to identify, screen, and interpret all available and relevant research related to education trends at both local and global scales. SLRs were chosen for their ability to provide a comprehensive, transparent, and replicable synthesis of evidence compared to traditional literature searches. This research protocol adopted the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guidelines to ensure validity and minimize bias in the literature selection process.

The article selection process followed the PRISMA flowchart, which consists of the stages of identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion (Rochmadona et al., 2024). In the identification stage, the author conducted a search in the Scopus database for the period 2023–2025, resulting in 124 potentially relevant documents. The author then conducted a screening stage, where the identified documents were then filtered based on their titles and abstracts to eliminate articles that did not fit the context of school education trends or were duplicated. In the next stage, namely the feasibility test, the author reviewed in-depth articles that passed the screening stage for full-text analysis. This was to ensure a thorough match between the topic,



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objectives, and content of the study. In the final stage, namely inclusion, articles that met all inclusion criteria were then further analyzed for synthesis in the discussion.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The use of bibliometric studies is an effective approach to identifying these trends by systematically analyzing scientific publication data. The bibliometric results are then further examined in a literature review. Based on the results of bibliometrics and a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of several studies, by examining research topic trends in the field of education, the author specifically identified three dominant research trends on a global scale and three research trends on a local scale in Indonesia. A structured literature search was conducted using the Scopus database. Scopus was selected based on its reputation as one of the largest databases covering high-quality peer-reviewed journals across a broad range of disciplines, including education. The search strategy utilized Boolean operators to combine specific keywords to obtain precise results (Rochmadona et al., 2024). The search string used was: "Education" OR "Educational" AND "research" OR "Study" AND "Global" AND "local" OR "Indonesia" AND "School". The "OR" operator expands the search to include synonyms, while "AND" is used to narrow down key concepts to keep search results focused on relevant topics. To maintain state-of-the-art data, this study limited the publication period to the last three years, from 2023 to 2025. This temporal limitation is crucial to capture the dynamics of current post-pandemic educational trends and the latest digital transformations in the global and local education ecosystem.

Research trends in education essentially refer to the patterns and tendencies of topics, methods, and focus of research studies that develop over a specific period in response to needs, challenges, and developments in the field of education. Examining a research trend requires complex methods and approaches (Abdurrohman, 2024). Findings (Lin et al., 2023) explain that the analysis of educational research trends in international journals demonstrate significance. The use of increasingly diverse and innovative research methods. The use of multilevel modeling in



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elearning research demonstrates the increasing complexity of data analysis for a deeper understanding of educational phenomena. This indicates that educational research trends are not only developing in terms of content, but also in increasingly sophisticated methodological approaches.

## RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Global Research Topic Trends

Global educational research trends show diverse research themes with a broader scope of issues and a tendency toward technological advancement. Based on the review of research topic trends, the author narrows down the focus to three main topics: the use of artificial intelligence in education, the integration of social media and e-learning, inclusive education, and educational equity.

### Artificial Intelligence in Education

Several recent studies demonstrate the widespread integration of AI in education, particularly among university students. Research (Hornberger et al., 2023) on AI dialogue systems to improve the interactional competence of English as a foreign language students demonstrates the high relevance of this topic in the global academic community. The topic of artificial intelligence (AI) dominates the global educational research landscape with the highest number of citations. Artificial intelligence (AI) is a field of computer science that focuses on creating intelligent machines capable of performing tasks typically requiring human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and language translation. In the educational context, AI often manifests itself in the form of intelligent tutoring systems, learning analytics, and generative tools like ChatGPT (Hadi et al., 2025).

The use of AI in education offers various significant benefits. One of the most prominent is the ability to personalize the learning experience. AI can analyze student performance data in real time to tailor material and learning pace to individual needs, an approach difficult to achieve in traditional classroom systems. Furthermore, the adoption of AI technologies like ChatGPT by students has been shown to aid in understanding complex material and encourage innovation in



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the learning process (Amin et al., 2024). AI tools allow students to receive instant feedback and explore topics in greater depth.

Although the integration of AI in education is increasingly widespread, with its diverse and complex features, many academics still question the validity of its use. Despite its significant potential, the integration of AI in education is also accompanied by a number of challenges and negative impacts. One of the main concerns is the issue of ethics and trust. The reliability and objectivity of AI algorithms are crucial questions, as their instantaneous nature allows for bias in research data, resulting in invalid or inaccurate output (Hadi et al., 2025). Research (Hornberger et al., 2023), which measured students' understanding of AI, found that it was still limited, necessitating more systematic curriculum interventions. The use of AI among students remains ambiguous for students. (Baek et al., 2024) explored students' perceptions of ChatGPT, with the provocative title "ChatGPT Seems Too Good to Be True." This study revealed students' ambivalence toward generative AI: on the one hand, they acknowledged its benefits in completing academic assignments, but on the other, they were concerned about the ethical implications and the diminished authenticity of learning.

### **Social Media and E-Learning**

A second topic emerging in global research is the integration of social media in professional learning and e-learning. E-learning, or electronic learning, refers to the use of digital technologies and networks to deliver, support, and enhance the teaching and learning process. E-learning can encompass a variety of formats, from online courses and the use of digital open materials to learning management platforms (Lin et al., 2023). The use of elearning in the learning process is also very diverse. For example, blended learning models combine face-to-face and online learning, to fully conduct online models entirely remotely (Bonk et al., 2009). This trend reflects a shift from conventional face-to-face learning to blended and fully online learning (e-learning). This situation has become increasingly relevant following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Currently, large-scale online learning has become a primary focus in the context of implementing the learning process, particularly in ensuring the quality of technologybased



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education to increase its effectiveness (Pannen, 2021). The use of technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT) and Big Data in e-learning platforms also enables the creation of more adaptive and sustainable "smart education" (Marini et al., 2025). One practical form of e-learning that is becoming a trend in the global learning process is the use of social media as a learning tool. Xu et al. (2024) examined the relationship between social media and professional learning from the perspective of prospective teachers. This survey study revealed that social media facilitates formal and informal learning, as well as collaboration between the two, as well as professional development for prospective teachers living in an era of technological advancement.

### **Inclusive Education and Equity in the Learning Process**

The third topic of global significance today is inclusive education and equity in learning. Inclusive education is an approach that ensures that all students, regardless of background, ability, or disability, can participate and learn together in a shared educational environment. The goal is to eliminate barriers and promote positive educational outcomes for every individual (Deroncele-Acosta, 2024). Similarly, educational equity focuses on fairness, providing learning opportunities to each individual according to their abilities. Equity does not require equal treatment for all, but rather provides differentiated support according to each student's needs to achieve equitable outcomes (Jackson et al., 2025).

The issue of equity becomes particularly relevant when addressing disparities in educational access, as is the case in some African regions where women's empowerment and spatial inequality are key challenges (Frola et al., 2024). This is supported by research data (Jackson et al., 2025) that explores equity and inclusivity in work-integrated learning for diverse student groups. This study shows that amidst technological advances and transformations in the educational climate, disparities in participation and quality of education exist due to socioeconomic background, ethnicity, and disability. The demand for inclusive education and equity in learning reflects the global commitment to Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) on quality and inclusive education for all. One form of implementation is through work-integrated learning designed to ensure equitable participation and outcomes for diverse student groups



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(Jackson et al., 2025). Furthermore, inclusive schools also need to actively address existing challenges by promoting a positive learning environment that supports all students (Deroncele-Acosta, 2024).

### **Trends in Indonesian Education Research Topics**

Indonesia, as a country with multidimensional richness in social, religious, cultural, and other fields, offers a diverse range of knowledge in research studies. In the field of education, the publication of various articles showcases the richness of research topics. Based on a literature review, the author identified three topics that are trending in Indonesian education research.

#### **Independent Curriculum and Vocational Education**

The Independent Curriculum was developed as part of the post-pandemic learning recovery policy and to address the long-term learning crisis, such as low reading literacy and basic numeracy skills (Kemdikbudristek, 2021). The Independent Curriculum provides a medium for secondary schools and universities to be more contextualized in responding to the demands of the industrial world. (Suyetno et al., 2024) examine the connectivity between industry and vocational schools through an applied learning system in accordance with the basic guidelines of the Independent Curriculum. This research also emphasizes the importance of partnerships between vocational schools and industry to ensure the curriculum's relevance to job market needs. The Independent Curriculum in vocational schools aligns learning materials with the dynamic needs of industry. The role of industry is crucial in unlocking the full potential of this curriculum (Suyetno et al., 2024).

#### **Technology Integration in Learning**

Technology integration in learning in Indonesia takes various forms. One of the most fundamental is the development and use of information technology-based teaching materials to meet the increasingly diverse learning needs of students (Trinaldi et al., 2022). Research trends also show an increasing focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), indicating an awareness of the importance of early technology mastery (Ardwiyanti et al., 2021).



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Furthermore, the broader digital transformation in educational institutions is driven by effective digital leadership (Alawiah & Tukiran, 2024).

The primary benefits of implementing technology are increased access to learning resources and a contextualized learning process. Technology enables learning that transcends traditional classroom boundaries and simultaneously enhances digital competencies closely related to the subject matter being studied (Yuvita, 2025). However, the challenges are significant. Quality assurance systems face disparities in access to technological advancements between regions. This reality is evident in comparisons of educational progress between urban and underdeveloped (3T) areas. This issue is a key focus of research on technology integration in the Indonesian educational context (Pannen, 2021). Furthermore, challenges in classroom implementation, such as literacy and STEAM learning in early childhood and elementary schools, demonstrate a gap between the potential of technology and actual practices in the field (Kuning et al., 2025). Meanwhile, in the context of teachers as educators, it was found that the post-COVID-19 pandemic technological era appears to be forcing conventional teaching patterns into technology-based learning (Brown et al., 2023).

### **Self-Directed Learning and Learning Strategies**

Self-directed learning is a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the assistance of others, to diagnose their learning needs, plan learning objectives, identify human and material resources for learning, and select and implement appropriate learning strategies to achieve the desired outcomes and quality. In the context of future education, self-directed learning is a crucial competency. Research (Nurjariah et al., 2022) emphasizes that new trends in future education demand the ability to adapt and learn continuously, with independence being the primary foundation. This concept extends beyond studying alone at home but also encompasses students' metacognitive abilities to self-regulate and take responsibility for their academic achievement.

Self-directed learning is becoming increasingly important in the context of Indonesian higher education, particularly with the rise of project-based learning (PjBL) models. PjBL models provide students with autonomy to explore real-world problems. (Yuvita, 2025) states that PjBL



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can bridge pedagogy and technology, particularly in building digital competencies. Through projects, students are required to plan, implement, and evaluate their own performance, which is the core of self-directed learning. Furthermore, research (Kuning et al., 2025) also found that the challenges and importance of implementing literacy and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics), which often use a project-based approach, are a new medium for increasing student initiative and creativity from an early age.

Meanwhile, in the context of higher education, self-directed learning is often associated with digital literacy and the ability to utilize technology. For example, students' readiness to face new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), which reflects their level of independence in seeking information and validating knowledge objectively (Hornberger et al., 2023).

## DISCUSSION

A comparative analysis of research topic trends in Indonesian and global education, based on a bibliometric study, revealed both overlaps and differences between studies on global and local education research trends. Therefore, a comparative analysis of research trends at these two scales is explained in the following points.

### **Similarities between Local and Global Scale Studies**

First, research topic trends at both local and global scales share the study of technology as a crucial element in educational transformation. Globally, research topics based on educational technology focus on cutting-edge technology. Numerous studies on this topic demonstrate that artificial intelligence (AI) and the Internet of Things (IoT) can create smart education, providing many new insights into learning models, knowledge sources, and various other aspects that advance the world of education (Brown et al., 2023; Marini et al., 2025). This also applies to academic research studies in the Indonesian education context. However, national-scale research focuses more on the integration of information technology in learning and the development of digital teaching materials (Trinaldi et al., 2022; Yuvita, 2025). This similarity demonstrates a collective awareness that technology is no longer merely a tool, but rather a *conditio sine qua non*



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(an absolute requirement) for designing relevant learning experiences in the 21st century (Pannen, 2021).

Second, topical trends in local and global research demonstrate a commonality in the new paradigm of student-centered learning. In this topic, global trends focus on inclusive and equity education, emphasizing the need for each individual to actively participate in the learning process. Furthermore, the diversity of personalities requires secondary schools and universities to guarantee meaningful learning outcomes for all students (Deronceleacosta, 2024; Jackson et al., 2025). Meanwhile, in discussing the topic of students as the subject and center of education in the local Indonesian context, academics see its concrete reality in SelfDirected Learning (SDL) and the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Several studies have found that the implementation of both aspects addresses the demands of autonomy, needs, and unique context of each student in Indonesia (Kemdikbudristek, 2021; Nurjariah et al., 2022).

Third, research findings at both local and global scales demonstrate the interaction and openness of education with the world outside of school, which is closely connected to students. Globally, this is reflected in research on e-learning and social media, which connect learning with professional networks and global knowledge (Shahzad et al., 2024). In Indonesia, similar concerns are strongly reflected in research on the Independent Curriculum in vocational education, which emphasizes connectivity and alignment of the curriculum with industry needs (Suyetno et al., 2024).

### **Differences Between Local and Global Scale Studies**

The fundamental differences between local and global research trends are due to differences in socio-cultural contexts, levels of infrastructure development, and educational policy priorities. First, there are differences in the depth of research on technological advancements. Global trend studies have moved to the exploration and critique of generative technologies such as AI, including the ethical and pedagogical implications and validity of their use (Baek et al., 2024; Hadi et al., 2025; Hornberger et al., 2023). In contrast, research trends in Indonesia are still largely focused on the basic integration of technology into learning, the development of digital



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teaching materials, and efforts to address the digital divide between regions (Ardwiyanti et al., 2021; Pannen, 2021; Trinaldi et al., 2022). This difference reflects a significant gap in technological progress. The global academic world is already discussing the continued impact of advanced technology, while Indonesia still struggles with the challenges of access and equitable distribution of basic technological infrastructure, particularly in the 3T (Frontier, Outermost, and Disadvantaged) regions.

Second, there are differences in the context of research backgrounds. Each research study has its own background and objectives, depending on the context of its study. This is one of the fundamental differences between local and global research studies. Local research trends in Indonesia are strongly influenced by a specific national education policy, the Independent Curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka). This topic has become a dominant trend because it is a direct response to government policies aimed at resolving the learning crisis and improving the quality and relevance of vocational education (Kemdikbudristek, 2021; Suyetno et al., 2024). Meanwhile, global trends tend to be more generic and driven by universal agendas such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in realizing inclusive education and equity in the learning process (Frola et al., 2024; Jackson et al., 2025).

Third, differences in the methodological approaches used in studies. Discussions of global trends explicitly demonstrate the increasing diversity and complexity of qualitative research methods, such as multilevel modeling in e-learning research and systematic bibliometric studies (Abdurrohman, 2024; Lin et al., 2023). This indicates methodological sophistication in analyzing educational phenomena. Meanwhile, discussions of local trends, which focus more on practical issues, such as curriculum implementation and learning strategies, focus more on qualitative and quantitative methodologies. This difference can be analyzed as a form of research capacity gap, where the global research community has moved to a more complex stage of analysis, while local research still concentrates on evaluating policies and practices in the field.



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## CONCLUSION

Based on a systematic literature review of recent educational research publications, it can be concluded that trends in Indonesian, global, and local educational research reflect the dynamic responses of academics to technological disruption, social challenges, and 21st-century pedagogical imperatives. This study reveals a complex pattern, with significant convergence as well as fundamental differences resulting from variations in context, capacity, and priorities.

Broadly speaking, there are similarities in three main aspects of research trends, both global and local. These three include the recognition of technology as a driver of educational transformation, a paradigm shift toward learner-centered learning, and efforts to increase the relevance of education to the outside world, both through global digital networks and partnerships with industry. However, behind these similarities lie fundamental differences, primarily driven by gaps in infrastructure and capacity. The global discourse has entered a stage of critical evaluation of the ethical and pedagogical implications of generative technologies such as artificial intelligence, while research in Indonesia remains focused on the integration of basic technologies and equitable access. Moreover, local trends are heavily influenced by specific national policies, such as the Independent Curriculum, while global trends are driven more by universal agendas such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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