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Against all odds: we only see numbers

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The fight to promote the freedom of knowledge has entered a new phase. Plan S has been announced in Europe and AmeliCA in Latin America. So now what happens with Indonesia? Let me give you some figures: according to DOAJ database, in March 2017, there were 500 Indonesian OA journals (ranked 5th globally), 84% of them using the Indonesian language covering over 51,000 articles (ranked 7th). In the two years prior to 13 March 2019, the number of journals hit 1422 journals (ranked 2nd), 81% of them using the Indonesian language with more than 122,000 articles (ranked 1st). More than 70% of the journals draw no APC from authors.

Given these surprising numbers, what are the odds of SE Asia countries, especially Indonesia, in following in the footsteps of their fellow European and Latin American scientists? Zero.

So what do we have instead? We have a promotion system that gives higher scores to papers published in journals listed in Scopus and WoS (40 points) and/or in journals with an Impact Factor. The score decreases if they publish papers in non-accredited Indonesian journals. We have the non-independent SINTA platform which is an extension of the closed Scopus and Google Scholar dataset. This is despite two other promising national database, Garuda (nearly 7000 journals) and Onesearch (>7m entries).

This situation needs to be taken care of by the scientific ecosystem in Indonesia. Pushing awareness of sustainable transparency, accountability, and infrastructure is very important. Solutions include hosting research data and reports, as well as efforts to retain author's rights by posting preprints openly in public/institutional repository. INArxiv (with 6800+ docs on 13 March 2019) is just one of the active nodes in this community effort.

Our proposed ideas are to:

1. Limit the usage of commercial databases for staff and research performance measurement and use a plurality of datasets for the SINTA system, including integrating Garuda, Onesearch and others.
2. Shift the scoring system from a citation-based merit system to a more process-based merit system. Research reproducibility should be a main target.
3. Promote the functionality of repositories to store research data and report (under FAIR principles) from public funded grants.

Theme

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