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Research Article

DYNAMICS OF DEMAND FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN JAMBI PROVINCE: THE ROLE OF PER CAPITA INCOME AND POPULATION IN A PANEL DATA FRAMEWORK 2018–2022

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Abstract

Public interest in improving their quality of life through higher education continues to grow, as evidenced by the rapid growth of private universities. However, access to higher education remains unequal, particularly in rural areas. This study aims to examine the extent to which demand for higher education in Jambi Province is influenced by per capita income and population growth. Using a panel data design, this study analyzes data from 2018–2022 from six districts/cities in Jambi. The data were processed using panel data regression with the help of EViews 12 software. The model selection process (through the Chow, Hausman, and Lagrange Multiplier tests) showed that the Common Effect Model (CEM) was the most appropriate predictor for the data and research objectives. Empirically, the test results show that per capita income has a positive and significant effect on the demand for higher education. This indicates that increased economic capacity drives preference for higher education opportunities. Furthermore, population growth also has a substantial impact on the demand for higher education, confirming that demographic dynamics influence the public's need for access to this level of education. These findings indicate that the public tends to view higher education as an important means of improving living standards, both socially and economically. Therefore, higher education policies need to consider responses to income variations and demographic dynamics to ensure equitable access and improve the quality of human resources in Jambi Province.

Keywords: Demand for higher education; per capita income; population; panel data

INTRODUCTION

Globalization and technological development have an impact on the transformation of the workplace, which requires specific skills and expertise. Higher education is believed to be an institution capable of providing the skills and expertise that align with the demands of the job market (Humburg et al., 2013). Higher education is also seen as an effort to improve living standards both socially and economically (Kromydas, 2017). Thus, the fulfillment of higher education is viewed as a form of long-term investment (Yubilianto, 2020).

On a macro level, higher education plays a very strategic role in supporting development. The output of education produces graduates who contribute to the development of new innovations, as well as the advancement of the knowledge and technology needed for development (Miranda et al., 2021). Thus, higher education is not only a matter of public interest but also a concern for the government and the private sector (Leveille, 2006); (Drezner et al., 2018).

Education is a necessity for all citizens, guaranteed by the government (Shaturaev, 2021). Although higher education is not a mandatory national education program, the fulfillment of the need for higher education is a right for all citizens. Despite this, only a small portion of Indonesian citizens have the opportunity to access higher education due to limitations in academic capabilities and financial resources. Statistical data from 2023 indicates that the gross participation rate in higher education nationwide is only 31.45 percent, meaning only 31.45 percent of the population aged 19 to 23 is enrolled in higher education (BPS RI, 2024), as illustrated in the following figure:

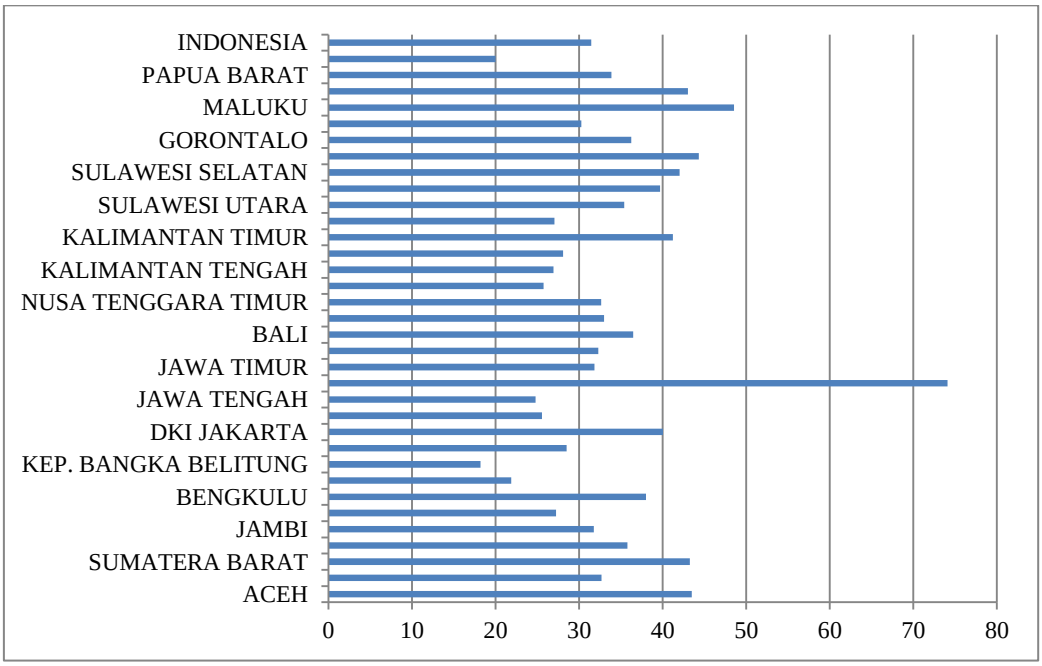

Figure 1. Gross Participation Rate (GPR) of Higher Education by Province in 2023

Based on the BPS data, it also explains that the high enrollment rate (GPR) is found in major cities such as Yogyakarta, Jakarta, Maluku, Padang, and other large cities. This fact indicates that there is still a gap in the demand for higher education among regions in Indonesia. An example is the enrollment rate in Jambi Province, which, although 0.32 higher than the national average, remains lower compared to other regions in Sumatra, such as West Sumatra, Bengkulu, and Aceh. On a regional scale, this issue becomes more complex as each area has different demographic, economic, cultural, and social characteristics.

Higher education is believed to enhance an individual's ability to address various life challenges, whether they occur in the workplace, family, or community. The need for educational advancement is not only a personal interest but also a national concern in improving the quality of human resources as the primary capital for development (Volchik et al., 2018). Education will improve when individuals in society possess the awareness and desire to pursue further education, and when the government provides facilities to support the educational process on a national level.

The demand for higher education is the result of the interaction between social, economic, and policy factors (McArthur, 2011). In this context, demand is driven by the community's need to access quality education that can enhance skills and competitiveness in the job market. Additionally, government policies are needed to facilitate access to education. The demand for higher education is not only determined by individual aspirations but also by broader economic and social conditions (Perkins & Neumayer, 2014). The perception that higher education can improve quality of life and career advancement will increase the community's demand for higher education. The demand for higher education is rooted in the transformation of the labor market, where qualifications and higher education have become essential requirements for obtaining good jobs (Marius, 2012). This demand is a response to the ever-changing needs of the job market, which increasingly prioritizes the skills and knowledge acquired through advanced education.

The study above explains that the demand for higher education is influenced by many factors, including public policy, social and economic conditions, and labor market needs. The perspectives of the experts provide comprehensive insights into how the demand for higher education is formed and its impact on individuals and society as a whole.

There are various factors that determine the tendency of communities to pursue higher education. Family economic conditions are a highly dominant factor influencing the demand for higher education (Grawe, 2018). The high costs of higher education limit the desire of the community to continue their education, especially for those with low incomes (Nixon, 2010). The concentration of study programs in provincial cities leads to significant living expenses for students, thereby increasing the overall education costs. The ability of the community to finance higher education is greatly determined by the level of per capita income (Octarina et al., 2021). The higher the per capita income, the greater the ability to finance higher education. Although the government provides scholarships for higher education to the poor, the additional indirect costs that must be borne by the community reduce their interest in pursuing higher education.

Per capita income reflects the economic condition of a country's society. A country or region with a high per capita income tends to have more resources to invest in higher education. This has implications for increasing the rate of participation in higher education. Facts show that countries with high per capita income are more likely to have stronger higher education systems (Beine et al., 2012). Societies with high income tend to have a greater awareness of the importance of higher education. As people's income increases, they are more likely to understand the long-term benefits of higher education, which in turn drives demand (Liu et al., 2016). High economic development requires a more skilled workforce. The growth of per capita income in developing countries has increased the demand for higher education due to the need for qualifications and skills that match labor market requirements (Donald et al., 2018).

Another factor influencing public demand for higher education is the increase in social status. Higher education is regarded as a symbol of high social status within society (Marginson, 2017). This perception encourages individuals to pursue education at higher levels. An interesting trend today is the shift of attending college as a means of transitioning from unemployment to being a student, which is seen as a better social status. The difficulty of finding a job after graduating from high school drives students to choose college over remaining unemployed (Aronson et al., 2015).

The growing population is one demographic factor contributing to the increasing demand for higher education (Grawe, 2018). However, in some regions with large populations, such as Central Java and West Java, there is no positive correlation with the demand for higher education. The Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in Central Java and West Java is only 24.74 and 25.57, respectively (BPS RI, 2024). Therefore, a thorough examination of the population is necessary as a determining factor for the level of demand for higher education in a region.

The increasing population has led to a higher demand for higher education. This reflects the need for skilled and educated labor to support economic growth. Demographically, the rise in the population aged 19 to 24 will boost the demand for higher education services. This situation indicates an increased need for educated workers as a pillar of economic growth. Countries with faster population growth tend to develop more higher education institutions to meet this demand (Altbach et al., 2009). The growing population not only increases the demand for higher education but also influences national education policies to develop better educational capacity (Lester & Crawford–Lee, 2023).

This research utilizes panel data analysis from 2018 to 2022, offering significant contributions through a methodology that allows for monitoring demand dynamics over time, thereby providing more accurate insights. Additionally, this study applies modern economic theories to understand consumer behavior in the context of education, while also considering the geographical and socio-economic aspects that influence demand differences across various regions. By focusing on this period, the study can identify important trends in higher education demand and provide relevant policy recommendations to enhance access and quality of education based on population needs. Thus, this research fills a gap in the existing literature regarding the interaction between economic factors and higher education demand, while also providing a foundation for future research.

This study aims to examine the influence of per capita income and population size on the demand for education in Jambi Province using panel data from 2018 to 2022 across 6 districts and cities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research conducted by (Rifa et al., 2019) entitled "Determinants of Demand for Higher Education in Indonesia: Evidence from Indonesia Family Life Survey" proves at the micro level (household level) that socio-economic factors such as family income and parental education level are essential variables in higher education participation in Indonesia. Research conducted by (Conlon et al., 2017) entitled "The determinants of international demand for UK higher education" shows that external factors such as foreign GDP per capita have a relatively rapid effect on the demand for higher education (global), strengthening the income elasticity argument. Abugamea (2019) In his study entitled "Determinants of demand for higher education in Palestine, the case of Gaza Strip, 1994-2017", he found that economic variables such as GDP per capita and demographic variables have a significant positive influence on the demand for higher education (number of new students). The results of a study conducted by (Hussein et al., 2022) entitled "Modelling the demand for educational tourism: do dynamic effects, university quality, and competitor countries play a role?", concluded that per capita income is a significant and strong determinant of the demand for higher education (in the context of educational tourism).

Wu & Zhu (2021), in their study entitled "Are there demonstration effects of fiscal expenditures on higher education in China? An empirical investigation," analyzed how family income and tuition fees influence household decisions to send children to college. They found a significant positive income elasticity. Kiiashko (2016) thesis, "The Price Elasticity of the Demand for Higher Education: A Meta-Analysis," a comprehensive review confirmed that demand for higher education is highly sensitive to net price and shows a strong positive relationship with income levels.

In a study conducted by (Salihu, 2020) entitled "Demographic Change and Transition in Southeast Asia: Implications for Higher Education", it explains that the growth of the young population in Southeast Asia is driving an increase in demand for university admissions and expanding the capacity of HEIs. The increase in enrollment is driven by a more educated demographic, so countries need to add institutions, improve access, and overhaul policies to absorb the surge in demand. The results of a literature review conducted by (Handel, 2018) entitled "Review of Demographics and Demand for Higher Education", explains that the growth of the young population increases the number of potential graduates ready to continue their studies, while changes in the age structure expand the education market segment. Urbanization and increasing life expectancy are driving demand for a variety of educational programs, from diplomas to doctoral degrees. Ethnicity, gender, and family economic composition also influence program preferences and the ability to pay for tuition, shaping campus admission trends each year.

A study conducted by Flores et al. (2023) entitled "Determinantes de los precios de las colegiaturas de las Universidades privadas: Un análisis con datos panel por Entidad Federativa 2005-2019" used state-level panel data analysis to identify the determinants of education prices/costs. This demonstrates the ability of panel methodology to capture inter-regional dynamics.

While previous research has confirmed a positive relationship between income/population and demand for higher education, this study presents a unique substantive difference. Most studies (Wu & Zhu, 2021) tend to use national-level data (China, developing countries) or micro-household data. This study focuses on a specific sub-national unit (six regencies/cities in Jambi Province). This allows for capturing the unique dynamics of higher education demand, influenced by regional policies, local

geography, and the specific economic structure of each district/city (e.g., agricultural vs. service economy). Such regional studies are often more relevant for formulating regional education policies.

Studies using panel data often focus on efficiency (Flores et al., 2023) at a large scale (country or institution). This study explicitly uses a panel data framework to analyze demand factors (rather than efficiency or output). The advantage of panel data in this context is controlling for Unobserved Heterogeneity: Your study can control for unique factors that do not change over time within each Regency/City (such as the presence of public universities, educational culture, or accessibility) through a Fixed Effects model. This provides estimates of the effects of Per Capita Income and Population that are free from regional-level omitted variable bias. Older studies may not cover recent periods of volatility. The 2018–2022 period encompasses a significant period, including changes in admissions policies and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Demand for higher education during the pandemic may have experienced significant shifts (e.g., increased demand for online courses or a desire to study in one's hometown). Your study can implicitly analyze whether the dynamics of Per Capita Income and Population have changed amid this global economic and social shock.

In summary, the main contribution of this article lies in an in-depth spatial analysis of the determinants of higher education demand at the regional level, using panel data methods to control for unobserved region-specific characteristics during a turbulent period (2018–2022).

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a quantitative method starting from data collection to analysis. The data was obtained from the Jambi Provincial BPS publication on the official website regarding Jambi in figures for the years 2018 – 2022. To meet the statistical analysis needs, data was collected from cities and regencies that have private higher education institutions, namely Kerinci Regency, Merangin, Batang Hari, Bungo, Jambi City, and Sungai Penuh City. The demand for higher education is calculated based on the number of students enrolled in higher education institutions in a given area. Per capita income data is calculated based on the average income of the community in a region. The population data considered in this study is the population aged 20 – 29 years. Students at private higher education institutions in the area consist of regular and non-regular students. Non-regular students are those who study while working and are generally over 24 years old. To explain the influence of per capita income (PP) and population size (JP) on education demand (Qd), the following equation is formulated:

$$Qd_{it} = \alpha + \beta_1 PP_{it} + \beta_2 JP_{it} + e_{it}$$

Where Qd is the demand for education; PP is per capita income; JP is the total population; i is city/regency; t is year; e is the error term of the model.

Panel data regression has three model forms: common effect (CE), fixed effect (FE), and random effect (RE) (Baltagi, 2015). To determine the best model for prediction, Chow, Hausman, and Lagrange Multiplier tests are conducted. To support the regression test, prerequisite analysis tests are carried out, including Normality Test, Multicollinearity, Heteroskedasticity, and Autocorrelation..

3.1 Research Design

This study uses a quantitative approach with a causality research design to analyze the causal relationships between variables. The data used is panel data (pooled data), which is a combination of time series data for the 2018–2022 period and cross-sectional data covering several districts/cities in Jambi Province.

3.2 Research Target/Subject

The subjects of this study were regions in Jambi Province that have private higher education institutions. The sample regions were determined using a purposive sampling method, including: Kerinci Regency, Merangin Regency, Batang Hari Regency, Bungo Regency, Jambi City, and Sungai Penuh City.

3.3 Research Procedure

The research procedure was carried out through the following stages: (1) Problem Identification: Determining the phenomenon of demand for private higher education in Jambi; (2) Data Collection: Accessing secondary data through the official portal of the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of Jambi Province; (3) Data Tabulation: Organizing data based on the variables of per capita income, population aged 20-29 years, and number of students (regular & non-regular); (4) Model Testing: Estimating the model using the Chow, Hausman, and Lagrange Multiplier tests; (5) Classical Assumption Testing: Ensuring that the data meets econometric requirements; (6) Analysis and Interpretation: Conducting hypothesis tests and drawing conclusions.

3.4 Instruments and Data Collection Techniques

This study uses documentation techniques by collecting secondary data from the official publication of the Jambi Province BPS (Jambi in Figures) for 2018 – 2022. Operational Definition of Variables: Demand for Education (Qd): The total number of students (regular and non-regular) enrolled in private universities in a particular area. Per Capita Income (PP): The average income of people in a region in one year. Population (JP): The total population of the productive age group (20 – 29 years) in the relevant region.

3.5 Data analysis technique

Data analysis was carried out using panel data regression with the following equation model:

$$Qd_{it} = \alpha + \beta_1 PP_{it} + \beta_2 JP_{it} + e_{it}$$

Where Qd is the demand for education; PP is per capita income; JP is the total population; i is city/regency; t is year; e is the error term of the model.

Panel data regression has three model forms: common effect (CE), fixed effect (FE), and random effect (RE) (Baltagi, 2015). To determine the best model for prediction, Chow, Hausman, and Lagrange Multiplier tests are conducted. To support the regression test, prerequisite analysis tests are carried out, including Normality Test, Multicollinearity, Heteroskedasticity, and Autocorrelation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

The Jambi Province has both public and private higher education institutions spread across 11 districts and cities. This study only considers the demand for higher education at private universities, specifically in the districts of Kerinci, Merangin, Batang Hari, Bungo, the city of Jambi, and the city of Sungai Penuh. Generally, students attending private universities in the region are local residents, which realistically reflects the number of residents in an area who pursue higher education. In contrast, most students at public universities come from other regions, which does not accurately represent the local population attending those institutions.

This study examines the level of demand for higher education in Jambi Province and the factors influencing it, namely per capita income and population size. Based on the processed data, the variables can be explained as follows:

Higher Education Demand in Jambi Province 2018 – 2022

The demand for higher education is indicated by the number of students seeking education or the number of students enrolled in a higher education institution. According to data from the Jambi Province Statistics Agency, the demand for higher education in Jambi Province is concentrated in Jambi City, as shown in the following figure:

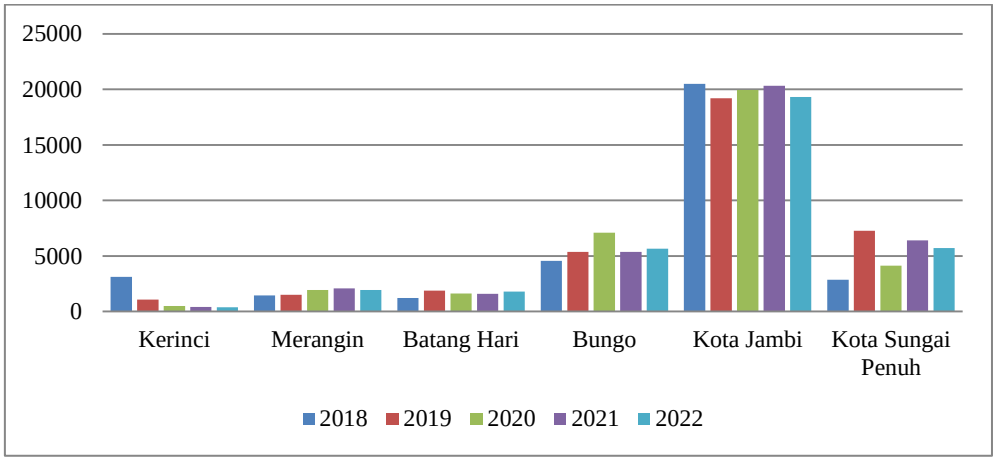

Figure 2. Level of Demand for Higher Education in Jambi Province 2018-2022
Source: BPS Jambi Province (2023), processed

Based on Figure 2, it explains that the demand for higher education from 2018 to 2022 experienced fluctuations in several districts and cities in Jambi Province. There was a significant decline in the demand for higher education year by year in Kerinci District. A significant increase in the demand for higher education occurred in Bungo District, but it decreased in 2021 and 2022.

Per Capita Income of the Community in Jambi Province from 2018 to 2022

Per capita income reflects the purchasing power of the community to meet family needs, including consumption, health, and education. The level of per capita income in the research area from 2018 to 2022 is illustrated in the following graph:

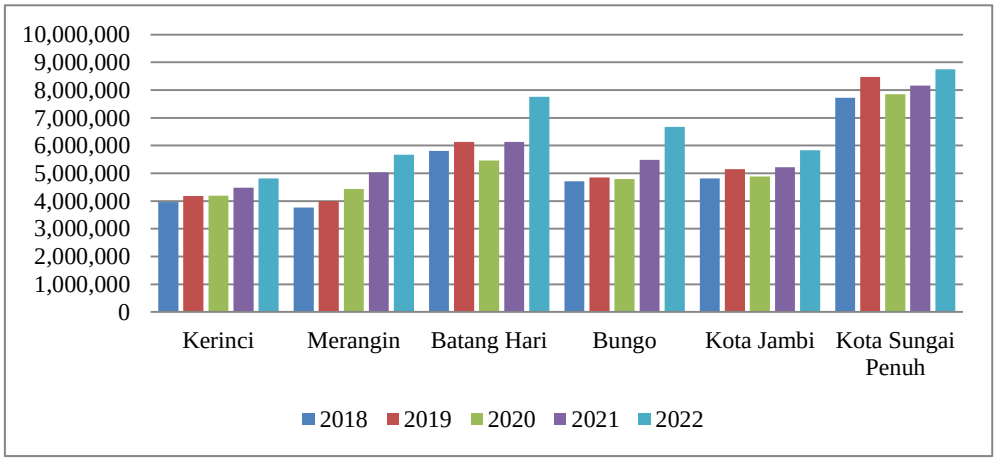

Figure 3. Per Capita Income of Jambi Province Community 2028 - 2022
Source: BPS Jambi Province (2023), processed

Based on Figure 3, the highest per capita income is in the city of Sungai Penuh. Generally, the per capita income of the community has increased from 2018 to 2022, but there was a decline in 2020.

Population of Ages 20 – 29 in Jambi Province from 2018 – 2022

The potential population continuing higher education is aged between 20 and 24 years. The existence of non-regular programs provided by private universities opens opportunities for workers to enhance their education to higher levels. Thus, the demand for higher education in the region comes not only from the population aged 20 – 24 years but also from those aged 25 – 29 years. The number of individuals aged 20 – 29 in the research area from 2018 – 2022 is illustrated in the following graph:

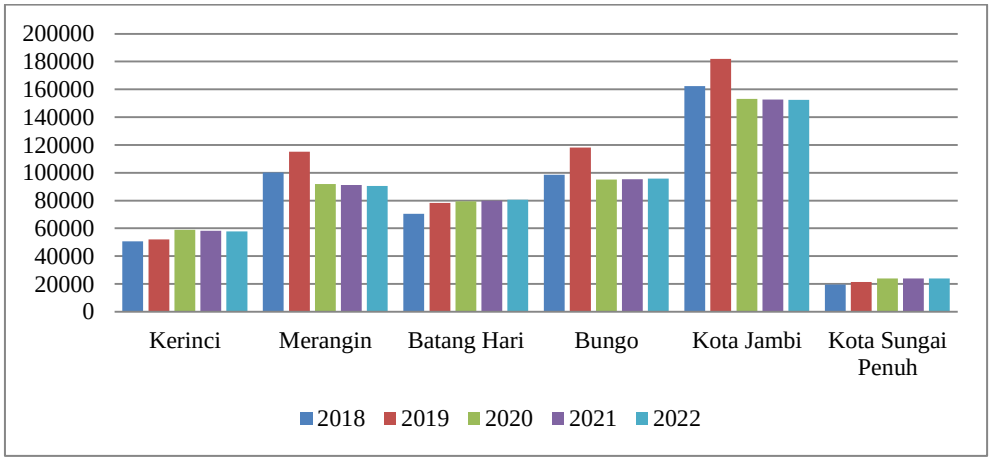

Figure 4. Population aged 20-29 years in Jambi Province in 2028-2022
Source: BPS Jambi Province (2023), processed

Based on Figure 4, the city of Sungai Penuh has the lowest population of individuals aged 20-29 compared to other regions in Jambi Province, while the city of Jambi has the highest population. Statistically, there was an increase in the population in 2019, followed by a decrease in 2020, and stability in the following years.

Results of the Panel Data Regression Analysis

Panel data regression is used to produce a mathematical model that explains the influence of per capita income and population on the demand for higher education based on data from districts/cities in Jambi Province from 2018 to 2022. To generate a good model, classical assumption tests and model selection were conducted using Chow, Hausman, and Lagrange Multiplier tests.

Table 1. Results of the Classical Assumption Test

No	Classical Assumption Test	Criteria	Value	Conclusion
1	Normality	Probability JB > alpha 5%	0.48	Data is normally distributed
2	Heteroscedasticity	Probability Obs*R-Squared > alpha 5%	1.79	Non heteroscedasticity
3	Multicollinearity	VIF < 10	1.53	Non Multicollinearity
4	Autocorrelation	Probability Obs*R-Squared > alpha 5%	0.46	Non Autocorrelation

Based on Table 1, the model has met the regression assumptions and can be used as a predictive tool for the impact of per capita income and population size on the demand for higher education. To produce the best model, Chow, Hausman, and Lagrange Multiplier tests were conducted as follows:

Table 2. Model Selection Test

No	Model Selection Test	Measurement	Value	Conclusion
1	Chow (FE or CE)	Probability Cross-section Chi-square > alpha (0.05)	0.0027	Fixed Effect
2	Hausman (RE or FE)	Probability Cross-section random > alpha (0.05)	0.1196	Random Effect
3	Lagrange Multiplier (CE or RE)	Probability (Both) Breusch-Pagan > alpha (0.05)	0.2179	Common Effect

Source: Secondary data processed, 2023

Based on the results of the model selection tests in Table 2 using the Chow test, it shows that the Fixed Effect model is better than the Common Effect model. However, the Hausman test concludes that the Random Effect model is better than the Fixed Effect model, while the Lagrange Multiplier test concludes that the Common Effect model is better than the Random Effect model. Therefore, it was decided that the Common Effect model is more suitable as a predictive tool for the influence of per capita income and population size on the demand for higher education (Kuswanto et al., 2023), as indicated by the following results:

Table 3. Panel Data Regression Results of the Common Effect Model

Variable	Coefficient	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	-20.48	-2.44	0.021
Log_ICP?	2.72	2.59	0.015
Log_TP?	1.14	2.82	0.009
R-squared	0.256	F-statistic	4.64
Adjusted R-squared	0.201	Prob(F-statistic)	0.019

Based on the results of the panel data regression analysis using the Common Effect Model, as presented in Table 3, the mathematical equation can be written as follows:

$$Log\_Qde_{it} = -20.48 + 2.72Log\_ICP_{it} + 1.14Log\_TP_{it} + e_{it}$$

or:

$$Qde_{it} = -20.48 ICP_{it}^{2.72} TP_{it}^{1.14} e_{it}$$

Description:

1. The coefficient of the per capita income variable is positive at 2.72, meaning that if per capita income increases by 1 percent, the demand for higher education will increase by 2.72 percent. The effect of per capita income on the demand for higher education is statistically significant, as indicated by a probability value of 0.015 < alpha of 0.05.
2. The coefficient of the population variable is positive at 1.14, meaning that if the population increases by 1 percent, the demand for higher education will increase by 1.14 percent. This effect is significant, supported by a probability value of 0.009 < alpha of 0.05.
3. Collectively, the per capita income and population variables have a significant effect on the demand for higher education, as supported by an F-statistic probability value of 0.019 < alpha of 0.05.
4. The panel data regression model produced has a predictive capability, indicating that the effect of per capita income and population significantly influences the demand for higher education by 25.6 percent, while the remaining 74.4 percent is determined by other variables not included in the model.

4.2 Discussion

Per capita income reflects the financial capability of society to cover all household expenditures, including education. Therefore, the higher the per capita income of the community, the greater its ability to finance higher education (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2016). The results of this study reveal that the higher the per capita income of a community, the greater the demand for higher education. This study explains that communities with high per capita income find it easier to bear the costs of education, both direct costs (tuition fees) and indirect costs (consumption, transportation, communication, and housing rent), thus potentially increasing their demand for higher education. As seen in high-income countries, school participation rates can reach up to 50 percent or more, while in low-income countries like those in Africa, school participation rates only reach about 15 percent (Wit & Altbach, 2021). Other findings also indicate that the potential to pursue higher education is greater among families with high incomes (Grawe, 2018).

The tendency of society to send family members to higher education is seen as a form of long-term investment. High-income communities view education financing as an effective way to enhance their capacity as a workforce with skills, expertise, and technological proficiency, thereby increasing

productivity and income in the future (Hall, 2000). Additionally, the return on educational investment will reduce the level of social inequality within society (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2018).

Generally, high-income communities enjoy a better quality of life. By investing their income in the higher education of family members, they hope to maintain a good standard of living in the future (Ma et al., 2016). A phenomenon observed in developing countries is that the rising demand for higher education is not only supported by economic growth but also by families' ambitions to advance or maintain their social position (Marginson, 2016).

The increasing population growth drives a more intense competition in life. Society will strive to enhance its living capacity in terms of social, economic, and educational aspects to be able to face the competition in life. Thus, the rise in population, accompanied by an awareness of improving the quality of life, will increase the demand for higher education (Bloom et al., 2014). The need for higher education is generally faced by the population aged 20 to 29 years, who are required to master and enhance their skills, expertise, and technology needed in the workforce.

The results of this study reveal that an increasing population of individuals aged 20 to 29 in Jambi Province correspondingly boosts the demand for higher education. This demand for higher education arises not only from those aged 20 to 24 or high school graduates but also from workers in both the public and private sectors who seek to enhance their capacities as employees (OECD, 2009). This phenomenon is generally observed in urban areas such as Jambi City and Sungai Penuh City, which serve as population concentration zones and centers for industrial and office development. Urban areas are experiencing a rapid increase in population compared to rural areas, resulting in a gap in the demand for higher education in these regions (Brandley et al., 2024). In several countries experiencing a rise in the number of young people, an increase in the demographic of college-age individuals is anticipated until 2032.

The trend of increasing higher education is also supported by government policies through the provision of scholarships for underprivileged families, the development of educational infrastructure, and ease of access for the entire community, including rural areas. The utilization of technology by higher education institutions in various educational service applications increasingly facilitates public access to higher education (Lee, 2017).

The rising demand for higher education is occurring across all regions in line with the growing population and increasing income levels. Higher education is no longer viewed as an education for the upper class but has become a necessity for the majority of the population who seek to enhance their capacity as human resources. The trend of increasing higher education demands that universities improve the quality of educational services, develop curricula in accordance with labor market needs, and innovate based on technology, both in the form of academic services and learning systems, so that they can be easily accessed by all layers of society (Rachman, 2017).

CONCLUSION

Population growth and improvements in the economy are driving an increase in demand for higher education. The number of potential students in Jambi Province, aged 20 to 29, has declined after 2019 in several districts and cities. Statistical analysis reveals that fluctuations in population significantly affect the demand for higher education. Each 1 percent increase in the population will raise the demand for higher education by 1.14 percent. The growth in population enhances the community's need for higher education. The trend of increasing demand for higher education in Jambi Province is also explained by the rise in per capita income from 2018 to 2022 in several cities and districts. Statistical analysis indicates that each 1 percent increase in per capita income results in a 2.27 percent increase in the demand for higher education. The rise in per capita income reflects an improvement in the community's ability to finance higher education.

The implications of these findings emphasize the need for higher education institutions to enhance both the quantity and quality of higher education management and to develop curricula that align with the needs of graduates who possess life skills, soft skills, and hard skills essential for life and the workforce. Additionally, it is important to develop technology to facilitate access to higher education for all segments of society.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

KK: (Corresponding Author) was responsible for the research concept, primary data analysis, and writing the initial draft of the article. ALP: made significant contributions to data collection, critical literature review, and methodology validation. RR: played an active role in interpreting the results, refining the discussion, and final editing the manuscript before submission.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All authors hereby declare that no known financial, professional, or personal conflicts of interest exist that could have inappropriately influenced the work reported in this paper.

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