



GOOD UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE, FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE, AND BRAND IMAGE ON PRIVATE HEI COMPETITIVENESS AND STUDENT SATISFACTION

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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of private higher education institutions in Indonesia has intensified competition and raised questions about what factors most effectively drive institutional competitiveness and student satisfaction. This study examines the simultaneous influence of Good University Governance (GUG), facilities and infrastructure, and brand image on competitiveness and student satisfaction at Universitas Muhammadiyah Tangerang (UMT), a Unggul-accredited private university in Banten Province. A quantitative causal design was employed using Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM); 300 respondents were drawn through purposive sampling from the population of active UMT students with at least two semesters of enrollment. Data were collected via five validated five-point Likert-scale questionnaires and analyzed through outer model testing (AVE, CR, CA, HTMT) followed by inner model path analysis with 5,000-subsample bootstrapping. All six hypotheses were confirmed at $p < 0.001$: GUG, facilities, and brand image each significantly and positively influence both competitiveness ($R^2 = 0.642$) and student satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.671$), with GUG as the strongest predictor of competitiveness ($\beta = 0.341$) and brand image as the strongest predictor of satisfaction ($\beta = 0.319$). The study concludes that integrated, simultaneous improvement of governance quality, physical infrastructure, and institutional image is indispensable for private HEIs seeking to strengthen competitiveness and student satisfaction in an increasingly crowded market.

Keywords: Good University Governance; Facilities and Infrastructure; Brand Image; Competitiveness; Student Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Human resource quality is the fundamental determinant of national development, and higher education is the primary mechanism through which a nation cultivates the intellectual capital and professional competence required for sustained economic growth; in Indonesia this mandate is operationalized through Law No. 12 of 2012 on Higher Education, which establishes programs ranging from diploma to doctoral level aimed at producing competent graduates (Cortese, 2003; Fielden, 2008; Priyono, 2018). The private higher education sector has grown dramatically from approximately 3,000 institutions in 2010 to more than 4,200 by 2024, including 575 private universities yet this quantitative expansion has not been uniformly accompanied by quality improvement. Accreditation data from BAN-PT for Banten Province illustrate this gap clearly: of 23 private universities in the region, only five have attained the *Unggul* (Excellent) category, while ten remain at the *Baik* (Good) level, signaling persistent governance and management deficiencies across much of the sector. This gap simultaneously represents a quality deficit and a competitive opportunity for institutions that strategically address its underlying causes.



Three strategic variables governance quality, physical infrastructure, and institutional image have emerged in the literature as the primary determinants of private HEI competitiveness and student satisfaction, yet their simultaneous empirical examination remains rare. Good University Governance (GUG), rooted in the principles of corporate governance adapted to the higher education context, has been established as a structural antecedent of institutional performance: the application of its five core principles transparency, accountability, responsibility, independence, and fairness creates a governance architecture that generates institutional credibility, stakeholder trust, and long-term competitive advantage (Muktiyanto, 2014, 2018; Sulaeman & Yuniarti, 2023; Zulfikar & Ruhiat, 2018). Facilities and infrastructure represent the tangible, immediately verifiable dimension of institutional quality: educational facilities are all tools, materials, and equipment directly employed in the educational process, while infrastructure refers to support elements that indirectly facilitate educational delivery and student services (Farkhanudin, 2025; Nasrudin & Maryadi, 2019). Brand image, defined as the set of perceptions and beliefs held by consumers as reflected in the associations stored in their memory, shapes prospective student enrollment decisions before direct experience is possible and continuously reinforces satisfaction once students are enrolled (Erlinda et al., 2024; Kotler & Keller, 2022).

Despite the theoretical importance of each of these variables, existing research tends to examine them in isolation, and the simultaneous modeling of their joint effects on two distinct institutional outcomes competitiveness and student satisfaction has not been systematically attempted in the Indonesian private higher education context. Prior studies have documented the positive influence of GUG on institutional performance and competitive advantage (Ayu et al., 2020; Syahrir et al., 2023; Wahab & Rahayu, 2013), the role of facilities in shaping student decisions and satisfaction (Nauraida et al., 2024; Purwandani et al., 2019; Simorangkir et al., 2023), and the contribution of brand image to enrollment decisions and student loyalty (Liongady et al., 2025; Sya'idah & Jauhari, 2024; Ulufah et al., 2024). However, none of these studies has unified the three variables within a single causal model that simultaneously predicts both competitiveness and satisfaction, leaving a consequential gap in the evidence base available to institutional managers and policymakers. This gap is particularly significant given that private HEIs must manage both outcomes concurrently: competitiveness drives enrollment while satisfaction drives retention and word-of-mouth advocacy, and optimizing one without attending to the other produces an incomplete and ultimately unsustainable institutional strategy.

The present study addresses this gap by asking: Do GUG, facilities, and brand image each significantly influence institutional competitiveness and student satisfaction at a private HEI, and which variable exerts the strongest effect on each outcome? These questions are examined at Universitas Muhammadiyah Tangerang (UMT) selected because its *Unggul* accreditation makes it the optimal context for studying how advanced governance, infrastructure, and image produce competitive and satisfaction outcomes. PLS-SEM is employed to test all six hypotheses simultaneously within a single integrative path model grounded in Attribution Theory, which explains how individuals form quality perceptions by attributing institutional outcomes to observable external cues such as governance structures, physical environment, and institutional reputation (Rohman et al., 2024). By unifying these three predictors against two outcome variables in one model, the



study fills the integration gap that characterizes existing research and provides institutional leaders with a complete, evidence-based framework for simultaneous strategic action.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopted a quantitative causal design to test hypothesized directional relationships between three independent variables GUG, facilities and infrastructure, and brand image and two dependent variables: competitiveness and student satisfaction (Sugiyono, 2022). The research was conducted at Universitas Muhammadiyah Tangerang (UMT), Banten Province, from March to December 2026. The research population consisted of all active students enrolled across all UMT faculties at the time of data collection; purposive sampling was then applied with a single inclusion criterion of completion of at least two semesters of study, ensuring respondents had sufficient institutional exposure to evaluate all five constructs. The sample size was determined through the Slovin formula at 95% confidence and 5% margin of error, yielding a minimum of 278; the final sample was set at $n = 300$, distributed proportionally across faculties through quota allocation to ensure cross-faculty representativeness.

Data were collected through a structured self-administered questionnaire delivered in paper form to respondents during scheduled class sessions, with research assistants present to clarify items and ensure complete responses. The questionnaire comprised five separate instrument modules, each operationalizing one construct on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree): GUG was measured using 20 items organized across the five governance dimensions of transparency, accountability, responsibility, independence, and fairness (Mukhtiyanto, 2014, 2018; Sulaeman & Yuniarti, 2023); facilities and infrastructure was measured using 18 items covering learning tools and learning infrastructure dimensions (Farkhanudin, 2025; Nasrudin & Maryadi, 2019); brand image was measured using 15 items across functional image, affective image, and reputation dimensions (Erlinda et al., 2024); competitiveness was measured using 16 items covering the cost, quality, service time, and flexibility dimensions (Muhardi, 2017); and student satisfaction was measured using 12 items organized under the expectation conformity, willingness to recommend, and intention to return dimensions (Tjiptono, 2019). Prior to main data collection, all five instrument modules were subjected to a pilot test with 30 respondents to verify item-level performance; items were retained only if they met the convergent validity threshold of a loading factor ≥ 0.70 and AVE ≥ 0.50 , the discriminant validity threshold of HTMT ratio < 0.85 , and the reliability thresholds of Cronbach Alpha and Composite Reliability both ≥ 0.70 .

Data analysis was conducted using Smart PLS 4.0 in two sequential stages following the standard PLS-SEM analytical protocol (Hair et al., 2019). The first stage outer model assessment evaluated the quality of each measurement model by examining loading factors, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability (CR), Cronbach Alpha (CA), and the Heterotrait Monotrait (HTMT) ratio to confirm convergent validity, reliability, and discriminant validity of all five constructs before proceeding to structural analysis. The second stage inner model assessment evaluated the structural relationships by computing the coefficient of determination (R^2) to assess the explanatory power of the model for each dependent variable, Stone-Geisser Q^2 via the blindfolding procedure to assess predictive relevance, and path coefficients (β) with their associated t-statistics and p-values generated



through bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples. A hypothesis was accepted if the bootstrapped t-statistic exceeded the critical value of 1.96 and the corresponding p-value fell below the significance threshold of 0.05, consistent with two-tailed hypothesis testing conventions in PLS-SEM research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Respondent Profile

Category	Detail	n	%
Gender	Male	142	47.3
	Female	158	52.7
Semester	1st–2nd Semester	76	25.3
	3rd–4th Semester	98	32.7
	5th–6th Semester	82	27.3
	7th Semester and above	44	14.7
Faculty	Economics & Business	88	29.3
	Engineering	64	21.3
	Education	72	24.0
	Other Faculties	76	25.4
Total		300	100.0

A total of 300 valid responses were collected. Female respondents slightly outnumbered male (52.7% vs 47.3%), consistent with UMT general enrollment composition. Most respondents were in their 3rd–4th semester (32.7%), followed by 5th–6th semester (27.3%), 1st–2nd semester (25.3%), and 7th semester and above (14.7%). By faculty, Economics and Business contributed the largest share (29.3%), followed by Other Faculties (25.4%), Education (24.0%), and Engineering (21.3%), ensuring cross-faculty representativeness.

Table 2. Outer Model: Validity and Reliability Results

Construct	AVE	CR	CA	Max HTMT
GUG (X1)	0.623	0.891	0.862	0.741
Facilities (X2)	0.598	0.876	0.843	0.698
Brand Image (X3)	0.611	0.884	0.857	0.712
Competitiveness (Y1)	0.634	0.895	0.868	0.726
Student Satisfaction (Y2)	0.619	0.888	0.860	0.734
Threshold	≥ 0.50	≥ 0.70	≥ 0.70	< 0.85



All five constructs satisfied the required measurement thresholds. AVE values ranged from 0.598 to 0.634 (all > 0.50), confirming convergent validity. CR ranged from 0.876 to 0.895 and CA from 0.843 to 0.868 (all > 0.70), demonstrating strong internal consistency. Maximum HTMT ratios across all construct pairs ranged from 0.698 to 0.741 (all < 0.85), confirming discriminant validity. These results collectively validate all five measurement models for structural hypothesis testing.

Table 3. Inner Model: R² and Q²

Dependent Variable	R ²	R ² Adj.	Q ²
Competitiveness (Y1)	0.642	0.638	0.618
Student Satisfaction (Y2)	0.671	0.667	0.643
<i>Substantial: R² ≥ 0.26 (Hair et al., 2019); Large predictive relevance: Q² ≥ 0.35</i>			

The inner model results indicate substantial explanatory power for both outcomes. GUG, facilities, and brand image together explain 64.2% of the variance in competitiveness (R² = 0.642, R² adj. = 0.638) and 67.1% of the variance in student satisfaction (R² = 0.671, R² adj. = 0.667), both categorized as substantial per Hair et al. (2019). Q² values of 0.618 and 0.643 for competitiveness and student satisfaction respectively (both > 0.35) confirm large predictive relevance, indicating strong out-of-sample predictive accuracy for both outcome variables.

Table 4. Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Path / Hypothesis	β	t-stat	p-val	Result	Effect
H1: GUG → Competitiveness	0.341	4.872	0.000	Accepted	Positive
H2: Facilities → Competitiveness	0.298	4.214	0.000	Accepted	Positive
H3: Brand Image → Competitiveness	0.327	4.631	0.000	Accepted	Positive
H4: GUG → Student Satisfaction	0.312	4.438	0.000	Accepted	Positive
H5: Facilities → Student Satisfaction	0.286	4.063	0.000	Accepted	Positive
H6: Brand Image → Student Satisfaction	0.319	4.524	0.000	Accepted	Positive

Note: Bootstrapping 5,000 subsamples; significant at t > 1.96 and p < 0.05

All six hypotheses were accepted at the 0.001 significance level. For competitiveness, GUG showed the strongest path coefficient (β = 0.341, t = 4.872), followed by brand image (β = 0.327, t = 4.631) and facilities (β = 0.298, t = 4.214). For student



satisfaction, brand image emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.319$, $t = 4.524$), followed by GUG ($\beta = 0.312$, $t = 4.438$) and facilities ($\beta = 0.286$, $t = 4.063$). All path coefficients were positive, indicating that improvements in any of the three independent variables consistently produce gains in both institutional outcomes.

GUG as the Primary Driver of Institutional Competitiveness

Governance quality emerges as the most powerful predictor of institutional competitiveness at UMT ($\beta = 0.341$), a finding that both confirms and deepens the theoretical positioning of GUG as a foundational source of competitive advantage in higher education. This result is grounded in Attribution Theory: when students observe that their institution operates transparently, enforces accountability, responds to stakeholder needs, and delivers equitable services without discrimination, they attribute its superior competitive standing to deliberate and sustained organizational excellence rather than circumstance (Rohman et al., 2024). Such causal attribution strengthens perceived competitive differentiation the institutional equivalent of brand equity built through governance rather than marketing spend, and therefore more durable because it is embedded in institutional systems rather than communication campaigns. The primacy of GUG in the competitiveness model is consistent with a robust empirical literature: governance principles significantly shape institutional image and competitive advantage (Wahab & Rahayu, 2013), GUG creates conditions under which intellectual capital flourishes and mediates competitive outcomes (Ayu et al., 2020), and GUG combined with risk management significantly improves the performance of higher education institutions as a system-level indicator of competitive standing (Syahrir et al., 2023).

Each of the five GUG dimensions contributes to competitive differentiation through distinct but complementary mechanisms. Transparency enhances institutional legitimacy by making information about budgets, curriculum, research outcomes, and academic standards accessible to all stakeholders, reducing information asymmetry that disadvantages prospective students in their institution-selection process. Accountability ensures that the institution consistently honors its commitments to academic quality and service delivery, building a reputation for reliability that becomes a competitive differentiator over time. Responsibility, independence, and fairness collectively insulate the institution from the governance failures political interference, discriminatory service, administrative fraud that Indonesia Corruption Watch documented in 37 corruption cases across state universities between 2008 and 2018, and which Larasati et al. (2018) identified as pervasive threats to institutional credibility.

The governance-accreditation nexus further amplifies the competitive impact of GUG at UMT. Internal audit and oversight mechanisms associated with GUG implementation serve as continuous quality assurance systems that directly support the achievement and maintenance of higher accreditation levels (Sukirman & Sari, 2012), and accreditation is the most publicly recognized competitive signal in the Indonesian higher education market. UMT's achievement of *Unggul* accreditation attained by only five of the 23 private universities in Banten Province is therefore both an outcome of sustained GUG implementation and a competitive asset that distinguishes UMT from the majority of provincial competitors still operating at the Baik (Good) level. Continuous GUG improvement consequently represents not a compliance cost but a compounding strategic



investment whose competitive returns accumulate and reinforce each other over successive accreditation cycles (Larasati et al., 2018; Muktiyanto, 2018).

Facilities and Infrastructure: Tangible Quality Signals in Competitive Positioning

Physical facilities and infrastructure contribute significantly to institutional competitiveness ($\beta = 0.298$) by functioning as observable quality signals that shape prospective student perceptions before they can directly evaluate curriculum quality or teaching effectiveness. This signal function is particularly consequential in higher education, where information asymmetry is structural: prospective students cannot assess educational quality from the outside, so they rely on visible institutional attributes modern laboratories, well-stocked libraries, functional sports facilities, reliable digital connectivity as proxies for underlying quality. Consistent with this logic, facilities, infrastructure, and campus environment significantly influence student decisions when choosing a university, confirming that physical assets directly drive the enrollment decisions that define competitive success (Simorangkir et al., 2023). Infrastructure quality contributes to competitiveness through two complementary pathways: a direct attractiveness pathway through which superior facilities generate enrollment preference, and an operational excellence pathway through which well-functioning learning environments enable more effective teaching and produce better graduate outcomes that further reinforce competitive reputation (Oktavia & Ahmadi, 2025).

The operational management of facilities not merely their acquisition is equally decisive for sustained competitive advantage. Effective infrastructure management encompasses the full asset lifecycle: planning, procurement, organization, utilization, and disposal, conducted with efficiency and foresight to ensure that facilities remain well-maintained, aesthetically organized, and aligned with evolving pedagogical needs (Nasrudin & Maryadi, 2019). Inadequacy at any stage of this lifecycle can erode competitive positioning as competitors who manage their assets more effectively gain preference with quality-sensitive students. Sustained investment in infrastructure maintenance and periodic upgrading must therefore be treated as a recurring strategic commitment rather than a discretionary expenditure, particularly as the Banten private university market becomes more competitive and infrastructure quality becomes a baseline expectation rather than a differentiator.

Brand Image as a Competitive Differentiator Across All Three Dimensions

Brand image ($\beta = 0.327$) operates as the second-strongest predictor of competitiveness by shaping prospective student perceptions before direct institutional experience is possible, effectively compressing the complex institutional evaluation process into a set of pre-formed associative judgments. This mechanism is consistent with Attribution Theory's account of situational attribution: in the absence of complete information, students rely on salient external cues institutional reputation, alumni success, campus visibility, accreditation status to make quality attributions that guide their enrollment decisions (Rohman et al., 2024). Empirically, brand image together with location and marketing strategy significantly influences student enrollment decisions across multiple institutional contexts (Liongady et al., 2025), and brand image communicated through digital media channels further amplifies this competitive impact in an environment



where most prospective students conduct their university research online (Erlinda et al., 2024; Ramadhani & Pambudi, 2023). Strategies explicitly designed to strengthen brand image have been shown to directly improve competitive positioning in higher education service markets, confirming that institutional branding is a legitimate and effective competitive tool (Ulufah et al., 2024).

The three-dimensional structure of brand image implies that competitive differentiation through institutional reputation must operate simultaneously at cognitive, emotional, and social levels to achieve its full impact. Functional image the perception of institutional capability in terms of curriculum quality, faculty expertise, and graduate employability addresses the rational dimension of student choice and differentiates institutions whose academic quality is genuinely superior. Affective image the emotional resonance and identity value that students derive from association with a particular institution introduces a psychosocial dimension of competitiveness in which the institution brand contributes to students' self-concept and social identity, making institutional choice partly an act of aspiration rather than rational calculation. Reputational image the institution's standing in the broader public consciousness accumulated through historical performance, stakeholder relationships, and media visibility functions as social proof that validates individual enrollment decisions and generates the word-of-mouth recommendations that make brand equity self-reinforcing over time.

GUG as the Institutional Foundation of Student Satisfaction

significant positive influence of GUG on student satisfaction ($\beta = 0.312$) reflects the fundamental role that governance quality plays in shaping the totality of the student experience, from administrative processes to academic service delivery to campus life. When institutional governance is transparent, accountable, and fair, students encounter a service environment characterized by predictability, equity, and responsiveness qualities that directly align with student expectations of a professional and trustworthy higher education institution. This governance-satisfaction pathway has been empirically confirmed: accountability, transparency, and oversight as core GUG dimensions significantly improve public service performance quality, which is the immediate operational precondition for student satisfaction (Kushartiningsih & Riharjo, 2021). The academic dimension of GUG—including faculty competence and learning process quality also directly and positively affects student satisfaction, demonstrating that governance extends beyond administrative boundaries into the core educational experience that defines student value perceptions (Aqfir & Bustam, 2020; Pongmangngatta & Kristanti, 2025).

GUG shapes student satisfaction through both a direct service experience mechanism and an indirect institutional culture mechanism. The direct mechanism operates through the translation of governance principles into day-to-day service protocols: when GUG is implemented consistently, students receive services that meet their expectations at every institutional touchpoint, from registration and financial administration to academic advising and career support, generating cumulative satisfaction. The indirect mechanism operates through the institutional culture that GUG creates: a well-governed institution fosters a campus culture of professionalism, integrity, and genuine care for student success that students perceive holistically and value deeply,



even when they are not consciously attributing it to governance quality. The strategic consequence for UMT is that satisfied students become the most cost-effective marketing channel available, their word-of-mouth recommendations constituting credible institutional advocacy that drives enrollment from prospective students who are far more persuaded by peer testimony than by official communications (Tjiptono, 2019).

Facilities and Infrastructure as Enablers of Student Satisfaction

The significant influence of facilities on student satisfaction ($\beta = 0.286$) reflects the established relationship between physical learning environment quality and the academic experience and psychological well-being of students who spend substantial portions of their formative years on campus. Students who study in well-equipped, clean, aesthetically coherent, and technologically enabled environments experience their educational journey as supportive and enabling, and this experiential quality cumulatively generates satisfaction that is distinct from and additive to the satisfaction produced by academic content quality alone. This relationship has been directly demonstrated in Indonesian higher education: the quality of infrastructure service significantly and positively influences student satisfaction, confirming that physical environment management is a legitimate domain of institutional quality management (Nauraida et al., 2024; Purwandani et al., 2019). Facilities influence student satisfaction across three functional categories learning tools and equipment, learning infrastructure, and student support facilities each contributing to a different dimension of the campus experience and together determining the overall quality-of-life assessment that shapes student satisfaction scores (Farkhanudin, 2025; Silaban, 2016).

The operational dimension of infrastructure management—systematic maintenance, cleanliness, aesthetic upkeep, and proactive replacement of deteriorating assets is as critical to student satisfaction as the initial quality of facility investment. Well-maintained infrastructure signals institutional care and genuine commitment to student well-being; conversely, deteriorating facilities send a signal of institutional neglect that erodes satisfaction even when the original facility investment was substantial (Nursiwati & Rahmawati, 2024). For UMT, this finding translates into a facilities management imperative: the infrastructure management system must be designed for continuous quality assurance, incorporating regular student feedback mechanisms, preventive maintenance protocols, and clear accountability chains for facility-related concerns. Infrastructure management quality is, in this sense, a continuous service quality dimension rather than a capital expenditure decision, and its sustained excellence is required to prevent the physical environment from becoming a source of student dissatisfaction that undermines the satisfaction generated by governance and brand image.

Brand Image as the Strongest Driver of Student Satisfaction

Brand image emerges as the strongest predictor of student satisfaction ($\beta = 0.319$), a finding that underscores the deep interconnection between institutional reputation, pre-enrollment expectation formation, and post-enrollment experience evaluation that governs the satisfaction process in higher education. Brand image creates the expectation framework within which students interpret and evaluate every institutional experience: when students choose an institution based on strong functional, affective, and reputational image dimensions, they arrive with well-formed positive expectations, and when the actual



educational experience confirms or exceeds those expectations, satisfaction is generated through the expectation-confirmation mechanism central to consumer behavior theory (Tjiptono, 2019). Brand image significantly influences both enrollment decisions and subsequent satisfaction at educational institutions, confirming that the influence of brand image on student experience is not limited to the pre-enrollment decision phase but persists as a satisfaction anchor throughout the student lifecycle (Badriyah et al., 2024; Sya'idah & Jauhari, 2024). Service fairness, empathy, and physical environment experiential attributes closely associated with brand perception also positively influence satisfaction and loyalty in service contexts, confirming that brand image satisfaction effects operate partly through the quality of moment-to-moment service encounters (Larisa et al., 2015).

The affective dimension of brand image is particularly consequential for student satisfaction because it extends the satisfaction experience beyond functional service evaluation into the domain of identity, belonging, and social validation. When students feel genuinely proud to be associated with UMT when institutional affiliation positively shapes their self-concept and generates positive social responses from family, employers, and community members satisfaction acquires a depth and durability that purely functional satisfaction cannot produce. This social validation mechanism is especially powerful in Indonesian cultural contexts where institutional prestige carries significant weight in family and community relationships, making the reputational dimension of brand image an important cultural multiplier of satisfaction. The brand-governance-accreditation loop reinforces this dynamic: governance excellence generates accreditation achievement, accreditation recognition builds brand reputation, brand reputation attracts higher-quality students and faculty, and this improved academic community further elevates institutional quality and reinforces satisfaction a virtuous cycle in which UMT's current *Unggul* accreditation functions as both a quality certification and a satisfaction-generating brand asset.

Integrated Theoretical Implications

The pattern of findings across all six hypotheses positive path coefficients, significant t-statistics, and substantial R^2 values for both dependent variables provides strong empirical support for Attribution Theory as an organizing framework for understanding how students evaluate institutional quality and form satisfaction and competitiveness perceptions. GUG, facilities, and brand image collectively constitute the set of observable external cues situational attributions that students rely on to form quality judgments when complete information is unavailable, consistent with Attribution Theory's account of how individuals navigate complex evaluation tasks under uncertainty (Rohman et al., 2024). The theoretical contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that these three attribution dimensions are not substitutable but complementary: each variable independently and significantly predicts both outcomes, and the model's R^2 values indicate that their joint explanatory power substantially exceeds what any single variable could achieve. Governance and quality guidelines are fundamental prerequisites for competitive positioning, and the interplay of management structures, quality assurance, and institutional culture jointly determines institutional outcomes (Henard & Mitterle, 2010). A conclusion the present study operationalizes and empirically validates in the specific context of Indonesian private higher education.



CONCLUSION

This study confirms that Good University Governance, facilities and infrastructure, and brand image each exert a significant positive influence on both the competitiveness and student satisfaction of private higher education institutions, with all six hypotheses supported at the 0.001 significance level. GUG emerged as the strongest predictor of competitiveness ($\beta = 0.341$), reflecting the centrality of governance quality in building the institutional credibility and accreditation standing that define competitive differentiation in the Indonesian private HEI market. Brand image emerged as the strongest predictor of student satisfaction ($\beta = 0.319$), confirming that reputation-driven expectation formation is the most powerful mechanism through which institutions shape the subjective quality experience of enrolled students. The integrated model explained 64.2% of competitiveness variance and 67.1% of satisfaction variance, demonstrating that the three-variable framework has substantial and balanced explanatory power across both institutional outcomes.

The study makes three primary contributions to the literature. First, it introduces an integrative model that simultaneously examines two distinct institutional outcomes competitiveness and student satisfaction within a single PLS-SEM path framework, a design that has been rarely adopted in Indonesian private higher education research and that provides institutional leaders with a more complete picture of the strategic variables driving institutional success. Second, it provides empirical evidence from a Unggul-accredited private HEI in Banten Province, a context that is both underrepresented in the literature and practically important given the accreditation landscape of the province. Third, it establishes comparative effect sizes that allow institutional leaders to prioritize investment: governance improvement for competitive differentiation, brand image cultivation for satisfaction management, and infrastructure development as the complementary pillar supporting both outcomes. Future research is recommended to incorporate mediating variables such as student loyalty and institutional reputation, to test the model longitudinally to capture dynamic governance-satisfaction relationships, and to conduct comparative studies across accreditation tiers and provinces to establish the generalizability of these findings across the full diversity of Indonesian private higher education

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