International Journal of Business, Management & Economics
e-ISSN: 2746-1351
Vol. 7, No. 4, November 2026

Competitive Strategy of Indonesian Higher Education Institutions amid Commercialisation: Integrating Academic Quality, Financial Resilience, and Equitable Access

Rima Destiani[1], Cepi Triatna[2], Nurdin[3]

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, West Java, Indonesia
Corresponding author: rimadestiani91@upi.edu[1], cepitriatna@upi.edu[2], nurdin_adpen@upi.edu[3]

Article Information:

Received: October 23, 2026; Accepted: November 17, 2026; Published: November 23, 2026

Abstract

Indonesian higher education institutions (HEIs) must simultaneously sustain academic quality, secure financial resilience, and keep access equitable, yet existing studies examine these three demands in isolation. This study aims to (1) describe how recent structural changes bear on each of the three dimensions and (2) develop a conceptual framework for evaluating institutional competitive strategy that integrates them. It combines descriptive analysis of secondary data from *Higher Education Statistics 2025*, the 2025 tertiary gross enrolment ratio (GER), and KIP Kuliah allocations for 2025–2026 with a targeted synthesis of 24 journal articles published between 2021 and 2026, interpreted through Porter's competitive strategy and academic capitalism. Structurally, the number of institutions fell by 2.56%, mostly among private HEIs, and the number of new entrants fell by 2.34%, whereas study programs grew by 2.87%, lowering new entrants per program from 65.51 to 62.19. For academic quality, 23.68% of lecturers in private HEIs held no academic rank, against 14.81% in public HEIs. For financial resilience, private HEIs enrolled an average of 1,782 students per institution, compared with 34,712 in public HEIs, exposing them to falling intake. For equitable access, the dropout rate was 4.42% in private and 1.13% in public HEIs, provincial GER ranged from 13.34% to 74.70%, and the KIP Kuliah beneficiary target rose by only 0.22%. The proposed framework evaluates each strategic decision on three dimensions read side by side: academic advantage (competence attainment, lecturer capacity, persistence), financial resilience (revenue composition, enrolment scale, net contribution of activities), and equitable access (net cost, aid coverage, dropout by student group), subject to minimum quality thresholds and the protection of vulnerable groups. The framework yields three testable propositions for future research.

Keywords: Competitive Strategy, Higher Education Commercialization, Financial Sustainability, Equitable Access, Higher Education Governance

JEL Classification: I23, I22, I24

1. Introduction

Higher education institutions (HEIs) now stand at the intersection of three demands that do not always move in the same direction: delivering high-quality learning, producing graduates who

Published by:

are relevant to societal needs, and sustaining the organisation itself. Curriculum renewal requires investment, service expansion requires additional lecturers and facilities, and institutional revenue fluctuates with prospective students' choices and with funding policy. Under these conditions, competitive strategy cannot be understood merely as an effort to capture student market share; it is a matter of setting educational priorities and allocating resources. Hart and Rodgers (2024) stress that analyses of higher education must carefully distinguish between competition, competitiveness, and competitive advantage, so that institutional success is not reduced to the number of applicants or the size of revenue.

The importance of this distinction is evident in the changing structure of Indonesian higher education. A comparison of the 2024 and 2025 editions reported in *Higher Education Statistics 2025* shows that the number of HEIs fell from 4,416 to 4,303, whereas the number of study programmes rose from 33,741 to 34,711. Over the same period, the number of new entrants declined from 2,210,539 to 2,158,826 (Pusat Data dan Teknologi Informasi Kementerian Pendidikan Tinggi, Sains, dan Teknologi [Pusdatin], 2026). The growth in programmes alongside a shrinking inflow of students raises questions about whether service expansion is aligned with public demand. Nevertheless, a decline in the number of institutions does not necessarily indicate financial failure, as it may stem from mergers, changes in legal status, or differences in reporting coverage.

Financing both widens and constrains institutions' strategic options. HEIs may strengthen programme differentiation, improve efficiency, develop partnerships, or seek revenue beyond tuition fees. Each option entails different investment requirements and organisational consequences. Indeed, a study by Mukhibad et al. (2025) of Indonesian legal-entity state universities (*perguruan tinggi negeri berbadan hukum*, PTN-BH) shows that revenue diversification does not automatically yield financial stability. In the context of commercialisation, the more fundamental question is how decisions to generate revenue shape priorities in teaching, research, and community engagement. The perspective of academic capitalism is useful for examining this relationship without equating every economic activity with a neglect of the educational mission (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

Strategic choices also bear directly on access to education. Statistics Indonesia (Badan Pusat Statistik [BPS], 2025) recorded a tertiary gross enrolment ratio (GER) of 32.89%, while the government allocated IDR 15,323,650,458,000 to the KIP Kuliah scholarship programme in 2026, targeting 1,047,221 students (Kementerian Pendidikan Tinggi, Sains, dan Teknologi [Kemdiktisaintek], 2026). Both indicators provide context on participation and public support, yet neither reveals the net cost borne by households. Quality improvements financed through higher revenue from students should therefore be evaluated together with the opportunities of low-income groups to enrol in and complete their studies. In this study, equitable access is treated as a dimension of strategic evaluation rather than as an add-on activity considered after financial decisions have been made.

Previous studies have approached this issue from various angles. Pangarso et al. (2024) and Setia et al. (2023) examined the internal capabilities that underpin the competitive advantage of Indonesian private HEIs. Sulistiyono et al. (2025) analysed the dynamics of state–market relations in the pursuit of world-class university status. Mukhibad et al. (2025) tested the relationship between revenue diversification and financial sustainability, while LaSota et al. (2025) synthesised evidence on the effects of grant aid on educational outcomes. Meanwhile, Azevedo (2025) and Gupta et al. (2025) demonstrated the diversity of ways in which students

Published by:

interpret their position within marketized systems. Evidence on Indonesian private HEIs further shows that enrolment is the main driver of their economic performance (Sampurna et al., 2025), that income diversification can strengthen their financial sustainability (Handayani et al., 2023), and that mergers intended to consolidate small institutions face lengthy administrative procedures (Chadidjah et al., 2021). These studies tend to address quality, financing, and access separately; consequently, no evaluation framework yet connects all three in the Indonesian context using the most recent structural data. This gap is the focus of the present study.

Accordingly, this study aims to describe changes in the Indonesian higher education landscape and to formulate competitive strategies that preserve the social mission of HEIs. The analysis is guided by four research questions: (1) how do national structural changes shape the competitive context; (2) which strategies are identified in the reviewed literature and policy documents; (3) how do these strategies relate to quality, financial sustainability, and affordability; and (4) how can strategic evaluation be designed to safeguard the educational mission? The novelty of this study lies in integrating a reading of the latest national statistics with two theoretical foundations, namely Porter's competitive strategy and Slaughter and Rhoades's academic capitalism, complemented by equitable access as a criterion for the distribution of benefits and burdens. Theoretically, the study offers a three-dimensional evaluation framework together with testable propositions; practically, its findings may serve as a reference for HEI leaders and policymakers in developing evidence-based strategic plans.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Porter's Competitive Strategy in the Higher Education Context

Porter (1985) views competitive advantage as the outcome of choices about activities that shape an organisation's position relative to its competitors, chiefly through differentiation, cost leadership, and focus. Applying this framework to higher education requires adaptation, since the goals of HEIs are not limited to economic performance but also encompass the advancement of knowledge and the education of society. In this study, competition is the relational context in which several institutions seek scarce resources or recognition; competitiveness is an institution's capacity to operate within that context; and competitive advantage is a relative position sustained by particular activities (Hart & Rodgers, 2024). It follows that no single indicator can capture all three concepts. The number of applicants reflects market response in a given period, whereas accreditation signifies recognition that certain quality criteria have been met; neither reflects an institution's capacity to sustain its services.

Differentiation in higher education means offering academic benefits that the target groups value and that are supported by consistent activities, such as disciplinary depth, the quality of professional practice, mentoring, or responsiveness to regional needs. Distinctive promotional imagery does not in itself demonstrate academic differentiation; the strength of a competitive position lies in the fit among activities, that is, in how curricula, lecturers, facilities, and assessment work together to deliver the promised benefits. Likewise, cost efficiency must distinguish between savings achieved through process improvement, such as better room scheduling and joint procurement, and cost cutting that erodes supervision quality. Low tuition does not necessarily signal efficiency, as it may be subsidized, while high costs do not necessarily reflect quality. Price nonetheless remains a strong signal to prospective students: among private universities in Bandung, institutional image and price significantly shaped students' choice of institution, whereas location did not (Karamang et al., 2024). Differentiation built on image and affordability therefore needs to be matched by delivery capability. A focus

Published by:
Training & Research Institute
JERAMBA ILMU SUKSES

strategy, in turn, is a deliberate choice to serve particular groups or needs, for instance, regional professional education or working students. Empirical studies in Indonesia support this capability-based reading: knowledge and innovation capabilities are associated with sustained competitive advantage in private HEIs (Pangarso et al., 2024), and technology contributes to advantage mainly through knowledge management and organizational culture rather than directly (Setia et al., 2023).

A competitive framework must also recognise that relations among HEIs are not purely a contest for students. Levine and Stevens (2024) introduce the concept of *competitive emulation*, namely relations of imitation and exchange that unfold alongside efforts to secure academic standing. Mitterle and Bloch (2024) add that market competition should be distinguished from competition within the academic field, such as pursuing research reputation and rankings. Cooperation and competition may therefore coexist within the same institution: two HEIs may recruit prospective students from the same region while sharing laboratories or conducting joint research.

2.2 Academic Capitalism, Marketization, and Commercialization

Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) explain academic capitalism as a shift in the relationships among universities, the state, and the market in the production and use of knowledge. This study distinguishes three concepts that are often used interchangeably. Marketization refers to the strengthening of market-like mechanisms such as consumer choice, pricing, competition, and performance measurement. Commercialization refers more specifically to developing economic exchange and generating revenue from services or knowledge. Privatization concerns transferring roles or control to private actors. The three may overlap but do not necessarily occur together: a public university may develop commercial services without becoming a private institution, while a private institution may provide socially oriented services. This distinction prevents judgments based solely on ownership status.

In this study, academic capitalism is operationalized through four analytical questions: where do funds come from, who sets priorities, which activities receive support, and to whom are the benefits distributed? Budgets link revenue sources to academic decisions. If an activity is judged successful solely because it generates revenue, its contribution to learning may be overlooked; conversely, activities without a direct buyer may remain highly valuable to education. Perkmann et al. (2021) broaden the scope of analysis by distinguishing forms of academic engagement, ranging from collaborative research, contract research, and consulting to informal relationships, whose consequences extend beyond direct revenue. Pham et al. (2024) likewise show the growing prominence of university–industry relations in the academic engagement literature. Assessments of commercialization should therefore distinguish between knowledge value, societal benefit, and financial returns, and then examine how these relate to one another.

2.3 Financial Sustainability and Equitable Access

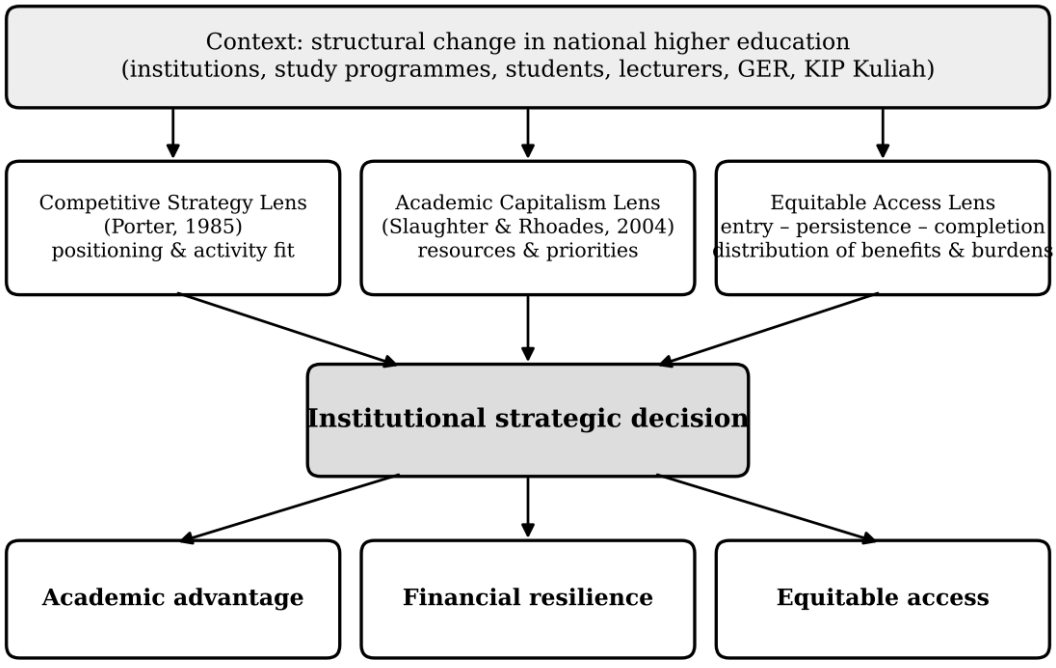
In this study, financial sustainability is defined as an institution's capacity to fund its academic services over time without incurring uncontrolled liabilities. Previous findings on how institutions build this capacity are mixed. Among Indonesian private universities, income diversification has been associated with stronger liquidity, solvency, and growth (Handayani et al., 2023), whereas among legal-entity state universities revenue diversification showed no positive effect on financial stability (Mukhibad et al., 2025). For tuition-dependent private

Published by:

institutions, enrolment explains more than half of the variation in economic performance (Sampurna et al., 2025), which ties financial sustainability directly to student access. Equitable access is operationalised through three stages of the educational journey: the opportunity to enrol, the ability to persist, and the opportunity to complete one's studies with an adequate learning experience. Initial access without support for persistence risks producing fragile expansion of participation, whereas high completion rates do not demonstrate equity if disadvantaged groups have been excluded before applying. A meta-analysis of 86 studies confirms that grant aid has small but meaningful positive effects on enrolment, persistence, and completion (LaSota et al., 2025). Reynolds (2022) shows that students in market-oriented systems can still position themselves as active participants in the educational process rather than as mere consumers. This finding supports quality evaluations that incorporate the learning experience and that link access to academic support.

The three dimensions can be framed as a multi-objective decision problem. Academic advantage concerns the educational value offered, financial sustainability concerns the capacity to maintain that value, and equitable access concerns the distribution of opportunities to benefit from it. Improvement in one dimension does not automatically improve the others. Investing in facilities may raise quality while increasing costs, and student aid widens access but requires a consistent funding source. This study therefore proposes a joint evaluation of benefits, costs, and distribution, with minimum quality thresholds and the protection of vulnerable groups as explicit considerations. Figure 1 presents the relationships between the three dimensions and the theoretical lenses employed.

Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study



Source: Developed by the authors based on Porter (1985) and Slaughter and Rhoades (2004).

Published by:

3. Research Method

3.1 Research Design and Data Sources

This study employs a descriptive design based on secondary data, combined with a targeted conceptual synthesis. The unit of numerical analysis is the national aggregate indicator rather than individual institutions. The numerical data comprise three groups, as presented in Table 1. The cut-off date for source retrieval was 22 October 2026. It should be noted that the statistical edition differs from its year of publication: the 2025 edition of *Higher Education Statistics* was released in 2026, with data extracted in December 2025, and several of its components refer to the 2024/2025 academic year (Pusdatin, 2026).

Table 1. Data sources and scope of use

Source	Period or status	Use in the analysis
Higher Education Statistics 2025 (Pusdatin, 2026)	Comparison of the 2024 and 2025 editions; published 2026	Changes in five national structural indicators
Higher Education Statistics 2025, disaggregated tables (Pusdatin, 2026)	2024/2025 academic year; public and private HEIs under Kemdiktisaintek	Dimension-specific indicators: lecturer academic rank, enrolment scale, and dropouts
Tertiary GER by province (BPS, 2025)	2025; provincial values	Regional disparity in participation
Tertiary GER (BPS, 2025)	2025; participation indicator	Context of national participation
KIP Kuliah information (Kemdiktisaintek, 2026)	2025–2026; DIPA allocations and targets	Changes in planned financial support

Source: Compiled by the authors. DIPA = Daftar Isian Pelaksanaan Anggaran *(budget implementation list).*

Documents were selected based on the credibility of the official publisher, the clarity of the reference period, and the relevance of the indicators to the research questions. Paired comparison figures were taken from the same publication to avoid mixing them with dashboard updates or other editions. Financial statements of individual institutions and the breakdown of GER by expenditure quintile was not analysed, because their detailed values were not available in the dataset used. To link the national aggregates to the three analytical dimensions, selected indicators were also disaggregated for public and private HEIs under Kemdiktisaintek, which publishes comparable figures on institutions, lecturers by academic rank, enrolled students, and dropouts.

All data analysed in this study are publicly available aggregate statistics from the sources listed in the References. No personal data were used, and no data were collected directly from respondents.

3.2 Operational Definitions of Indicators

To ensure that each figure is interpreted consistently and linked to the analytical dimensions, the indicators are defined operationally in Table 2, following the conventions of the Higher Education Database (*Pangkalan Data Pendidikan Tinggi*, PDDikti) on which Pusdatin (2026) is based. Two definitions are central to the structural analysis. *New entrants* (*mahasiswa baru*) are students who register for the first time in a study program, at any level from diploma to doctoral, in the reference academic year; they represent an annual inflow and are the closest available proxy for current demand and for the tuition base of incoming cohorts. *Enrolled students* (*mahasiswa terdaftar*) are all students with registered status in the same year, irrespective of their year of entry; they represent a stock that accumulates earlier cohorts.

Published by:
Training & Research Institute JERAMBA ILMU SUKSES

Because flows and stocks respond to different factors, a decline in new entrants can coexist with growth in enrolled students.

Table 2. Operational definitions of indicators and their analytical dimensions

Indicator	Operational definition	Dimension informed
Higher education institutions	Universities, institutes, schools of higher learning, academies, polytechnics, and community academies recorded in PDDikti (public, private, religious, and official HEIs)	Structural context; financial resilience (scale)
Study programmes	Study programmes recorded as active in PDDikti at all levels	Academic advantage (portfolio)
New entrants	Students registering for the first time in a study programme in the reference academic year (flow)	Financial resilience (demand, tuition base); equitable access (entry)
Enrolled students	All students with registered status in the reference year, regardless of entry year (stock)	Scale; equitable access (participation)
Lecturers by academic rank	Lecturers registered in PDDikti; shares without an academic rank and at associate professor (*lektor kepala*) or professor (*guru besar*) rank	Academic advantage (teaching and supervisory capacity)
Students per institution; students per lecturer	Quotients of national or group totals	Financial resilience (scale); academic advantage (load)
Dropouts and dropout rate	Students recorded as having dropped out (*putus kuliah*) in the reference year; rate = dropouts ÷ enrolled students × 100	Equitable access (persistence)
Tertiary GER	Students of any age ÷ population aged 19–23 × 100, national and by province	Equitable access (participation)
KIP Kuliah allocation and target	Planned budget and number of beneficiaries in the DIPA	Equitable access (financial support)

Source: Compiled by the authors based on Pusdatin (2026) and BPS (2025, n.d.).

3.3 Data Analysis Technique

The numerical analysis proceeded in four stages. First, the source figures were organised by indicator, unit, and period. Second, the absolute change (Δ) was calculated using Equation (1). Third, the relative change (g) was calculated using Equation (2), with the initial period as the denominator and values rounded to two decimal places. Fourth, the numerical results were interpreted in light of the literature to derive implications in the form of recommendations.

$$\Delta = X_1 - X_0 \quad (1)$$

$$g = [(X_1 - X_0) / X_0] \times 100\% \quad (2)$$

Here, X_0 denotes the value in the initial period and X_1 the value in the final period. In addition, three aggregate ratios were calculated: new entrants per study programme, study programmes per institution, and enrolled students per lecturer. These ratios are quotients of national totals rather than averages of institution-level ratios; hence, they should not be interpreted as measures of capacity utilisation, market concentration, or teaching load. For KIP Kuliah, the 2025 allocation is available only as a rounded figure (IDR 14.9 trillion), so the change in the budget is reported as an approximation. Significance tests and regression analysis were not performed, because the data contain only two aggregate data points and do not provide a design for causal

Published by:

identification.

For the disaggregated indicators reported in Section 4.4, proportions were computed as the number in a category divided by the group total, multiplied by 100, and the dropout rate as the number of dropouts divided by enrolled students in the same group, multiplied by 100. These cross-sectional comparisons describe differences between groups in 2025; they do not imply that institutional type causes the differences.

3.4 Literature Synthesis

Supporting literature was selected purposively, prioritising journal articles published between 2021 and 2026, supplemented by two books that provide the core theories. The search combined the keywords higher education with competitive advantage, financial sustainability, revenue diversification, marketization, *academic capitalism*, *student as consumer*, *grant aid*, and *collaboration*, together with their Indonesian equivalents. We verified the bibliographic details of each publication through the publisher's website, the DOI, or the authors' institutional repository. We included articles that offered concepts, empirical findings, or syntheses directly related to one of the analytical dimensions. The final corpus comprised 24 journal articles. As this study is not a systematic literature review, it makes no claim to an exhaustive search, a risk-of-bias assessment, or a pooled effect estimate.

The thematic synthesis was organized into three groups: academic positioning and capabilities, funding sources and financial risks, and student access and experience. Each source was placed according to the question it addressed and then compared with others to identify consistencies, differences, and limits to contextual transferability. International studies clarified plausible mechanisms rather than serving as direct estimates of conditions in Indonesia. The validity of interpretation was safeguarded by distinguishing three layers of statements: (1) computational results that can be replicated from the source figures; (2) findings of previous studies, which remain bound to their original context and methods; and (3) recommendations derived by linking the first two layers.

4. Findings and Discussions

4.1 Structural Changes in National Higher Education

Table 3 compares five structural indicators of national higher education between the 2024 and 2025 editions.

Table 3. Comparison of the structure of national higher education

Indicator	2024 edition	2025 edition	Difference	Change
Higher education institutions	4,416	4,303	−113	−2.56%
Study programmes	33,741	34,711	+970	+2.87%
New entrants	2,210,539	2,158,826	−51,713	−2.34%
Enrolled students	9,878,119	10,754,154	+876,035	+8.87%
Lecturers	303,067	328,241	+25,174	+8.31%

Source: Pusdatin (2026); differences and percentages calculated by the authors. New entrants are first-time registrants in the reference academic year (flow); enrolled students are all registered students (stock); see Table 2.

Table 3 reveals changes that do not move in a uniform direction. The number of institutions and new entrants declined, whereas the number of study programs, enrolled students, and lecturers increased. The divergence between the number of institutions and the number of programs

Published by:
Training & Research Institute JERAMBA ILMU SUKSES

indicates that institutional consolidation was not accompanied by a contraction of academic portfolios; on the contrary, the number of recorded programs grew. These aggregate data cannot establish whether the shift resulted from mergers, the opening of new programs, changes in status, or reporting updates; explaining the underlying mechanism would require tracing institutional and program identities over the same period.

The reasons behind the decline differ by indicator. For institutions, disaggregation shows that the net reduction was concentrated in the private sector: private HEIs under Kemdiktisaintek fell from 2,812 to 2,713 (−99, or −3.52%), whereas public HEIs rose from 125 to 127 (Pusdatin, 2026). The net change among Kemdiktisaintek HEIs (−97) therefore accounts for most of the national reduction of 113, with the remaining 16 coming from religious and official HEIs. Three mechanisms documented in regulation and research are consistent with this pattern. First, private HEIs that no longer meet national standards may have their operating licences revoked, while others close voluntarily (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2020). Second, the government and associations of private HEIs have encouraged mergers of small institutions under the same foundation, which reduce the number of institutions without necessarily reducing the number of programs (Chadidjah et al., 2021). Third, tuition-dependent private HEIs face sustained enrolment pressure, because their economic performance depends strongly on student numbers in markets constrained by demographic limits and saturated competition (Sampurna et al., 2025).

The number of study programs, by contrast, did not decline: it rose by 970, which is consistent with programs being retained within merged institutions and with the continued opening of new programs. The decline in new entrants is plausibly explained by a combination of factors identified in the literature, namely competition from public HEIs, affordability constraints faced by households, and saturated competition among small private HEIs in the same region (Sampurna et al., 2025). Because the data are aggregates from two editions, they cannot establish which mechanism dominates; doing so would require tracing institutional identifiers and admissions by program over time.

The decline in new entrants alongside growth in enrolled students can be explained by the difference between flows and stocks. The composition of earlier cohorts, time to degree, changes in academic status, and reporting updates are alternative explanations that cohort data should test. Within Porter's (1985) framework, this pattern signals a competitive environment moving towards an increasingly diverse program supply amid weakening new demand. This is consistent with Hart and Rodgers (2024), who argue that competition intensity cannot be inferred from a single indicator but from the configuration of several indicators considered together.

4.2 Shifts in Aggregate Ratios

To sharpen the reading of the structural changes, Table 4 presents three aggregate ratios derived from Table 3.

Table 4. Aggregate structural ratios of higher education

Ratio	2024 edition	2025 edition	Relative change
New entrants per study program	65.51	62.19	−5.07%
Study programs per institution	7.64	8.07	+5.58%
Enrolled students per lecturer	32.59	32.76	+0.52%

Source: Authors' calculations based on Table 3. Ratios are quotients of national totals, not averages of

Published by:
Training & Research Institute
JERAMBA ILMU SUKSES

institution-level ratios. New entrants per study program = new entrants ÷ study programs (see Table 2 for definitions).

The ratio of new entrants per study program fell by 3.32 points, or 5.07%. Arithmetically, this decline is larger than the decline in new entrants because it combines two movements: a falling numerator and a rising denominator. This finding provides a strong basis for evaluating policies on program expansion and recruitment capacity, but it cannot serve as a threshold of program viability or as a measure of student shortfall at any particular institution, since study programs differ in level, size, and admission patterns. Establishing excess capacity would require data on intake capacity, admissions by level, and the programs that actually admitted students in the same period.

Meanwhile, the ratio of study programs per institution rose by 5.58%, and the ratio of enrolled students per lecturer remained relatively stable (from 32.59 to 32.76). The increase in the former does not necessarily mean that every institution opened new programs, as the national ratio may also rise when certain institutions drop out of the data coverage. The stability of the latter indicates that student and lecturer numbers grew at nearly the same pace, although a national ratio may mask staff shortages in some fields and relative surpluses in others. Aggregate results therefore best set the direction of further inquiry rather than diagnose the condition of individual institutions.

4.3 Student Participation and Financial Support

The 2025 tertiary GER of 32.89% (BPS, 2025) measures national participation. Methodologically, the GER compares the number of students, regardless of age, with the population aged 19–23 years (BPS, n.d.); it therefore cannot be interpreted as the exact proportion of that age group currently enrolled in higher education. A single aggregate value also conceals disparities in participation by income, region, disability, and institution type. Table 5 presents developments in financial support through KIP Kuliah.

Table 5. KIP Kuliah allocations and targets, 2025–2026

Indicator	2025	2026	Change
Budget allocation	approx. IDR 14.9 trillion	IDR 15,323,650,458,000	approx. +2.84%
Beneficiary target (DIPA)	1,044,921 students	1,047,221 students	+2,300 (+0.22%)

Source: Kemdiktisaintek (2026). Targets cover both new and continuing students; figures represent plans, not actual disbursements.

Based on the rounded 2025 figure, the budget allocation increased by approximately IDR 423.65 billion, whereas the beneficiary target grew by only 2,300 students. The nominal budget growth (approx. 2.84%) exceeded the target growth (0.22%), but this gap does not necessarily translate into a proportional increase in benefits per recipient. The financing components, duration of support, composition of beneficiaries, and actual disbursement require separate examination. Compared with the 8.87% growth in enrolled students, the relatively small growth in the KIP Kuliah target is a reasonable starting point for examining the adequacy of aid coverage, even though the two figures are not directly comparable because they cover different periods and populations.

Published by:

4.4 Linking Structural Data to Academic Quality, Financial Resilience, and Equitable Access

The national aggregates in Tables 3–5 describe the competitive context but do not, by themselves, speak to the three dimensions of this study. To bridge this gap, Table 6 disaggregates selected 2025 indicators for public and private HEIs under Kemdiktisaintek, which together account for 2,840 of the 4,303 institutions and for 9,241,945 enrolled students, and assigns each indicator to the dimension it informs.

Table 6. Dimension-specific indicators for public and private HEIs under Kemdiktisaintek, 2025

Dimension	Indicator	Public HEIs (PTN)	Private HEIs (PTS)
Academic advantage	Lecturers (persons)	98,137	169,638
	Lecturers without academic rank (%)	14.81	23.68
	Lecturers at associate professor or professor rank (%)	26.90	8.68
	Enrolled students per lecturer	44.92	28.49
Financial resilience	Institutions	127	2,713
	Enrolled students	4,408,472	4,833,473
	Enrolled students per institution	34,712	1,782
	Change in number of institutions, 2024–2025	+2	−99
Equitable access	Dropouts (persons)	49,831	213,800
	Dropout rate (%)	1.13	4.42

Source: Authors' calculations based on Pusdatin (2026). Religious (PTA) and official (PTK) HEIs are excluded because comparable disaggregated figures were not available for all indicators. Group ratios are quotients of group totals.

On the academic dimension, 23.68% of lecturers in private HEIs held no academic rank, compared with 14.81% in public HEIs, and only 8.68% held associate professor or professor rank, compared with 26.90%. Academic rank is an imperfect proxy for teaching quality, but it reflects the accumulated capacity for supervision, research, and curriculum development on which capability-based differentiation depends (Pangarso et al., 2024; Setia et al., 2023). The lower student-to-lecturer ratio in private HEIs (28.49 against 44.92) suggests the gap lies less in the number of lecturers than in their academic seniority. This evidence underpins the discussion of program portfolios and delivery capacity in Section 4.6 ?.

On the financial dimension, private HEIs enrolled an average of 1,782 students per institution, compared with 34,712 in public HEIs. Small institutions that depend mainly on tuition fees have limited room to absorb fixed costs when intake falls, so the decline in new entrants (Table 3) and in new entrants per program (Table 4) translates into financial risk chiefly for this group. This reading is consistent with evidence that enrolment explains most of the variation in the economic performance of private HEIs (Sampurna et al., 2025) and with the concentration of the decline in institution numbers in the private sector. This evidence underpins the discussion of financial resilience in Section 4.7.

On the access dimension, 289,670 students dropped out in 2025, equivalent to 2.69% of all enrolled students (Pusdatin, 2026). The dropout rate in private HEIs (4.42%) was nearly four times that in public HEIs (1.13%), and private HEIs accounted for 73.81% of all dropouts nationally. Participation is also unevenly distributed across regions: provincial GER ranged

Published by:
Training & Research Institute
JERAMBA ILMU SUKSES

from 74.70% in DI Yogyakarta to 13.34% in Papua Pegunungan, against a national value of 32.89% (BPS, 2025). Because private HEIs enrol 52.30% of the students under Kemdiktisaintek, their persistence problems are also access problems, and the modest 0.22% growth in the KIP Kuliah target (Table 5) should be read against this background. This evidence underpins the discussion of equitable access in Section 4.8.

Taken together, Table 6 shows that the three dimensions are not independent. The group of institutions that faces the greatest financial exposure also shows weaker indicators of academic seniority and higher dropout. This configuration is precisely what an integrated evaluation framework must address, and Section 4.9 takes it up.

4.5 Strategic Patterns in Previous Research

The synthesis of the literature corpus yielded six strategic patterns, summarised in Table 7. Each pattern is accompanied by the conditions for success identified in previous research.

Table 7. Competitive strategy patterns of HEIs in the selected literature

Strategy pattern	Key references	Conditions for success
Capability-based differentiation	Pangarso et al. (2024); Setia et al. (2023)	Delivery capacity and knowledge management
Institutional marketing and communication	Pérez Lavandera et al. (2026); Wali et al. (2022); Vallente (2026)	Evidence of services that match promotional claims
Revenue diversification	Mukhibad et al. (2025); Safitri et al. (2025); Handayani et al. (2023); Sampurna et al. (2025)	Net contribution and implementation capacity
Partnership and collaboration	Ho et al. (2025); Hidalgo-Bazan et al. (2026); Chadidjah et al. (2021)	Governance, clarity of control, and shared goals
Students as participants	Gupta et al. (2025); Brooks (2022); Azevedo (2025)	Participation in learning and governance
Student financial aid	LaSota et al. (2025)	Support through to programme completion

Source: Authors' synthesis.

The first pattern emphasizes differentiation rooted in internal capabilities. Pangarso et al. (2024) link knowledge and innovation capabilities to sustained competitive advantage in Indonesian non-vocational private HEIs, while Setia et al. (2023) identify the mediating roles of knowledge management and organizational culture in responding to technological change. The second pattern shows that marketing has both organizational and representational dimensions. Pérez Lavandera et al. (2026) map strategies of segmentation, positioning, and branding, whereas Wali et al. (2022) situate marketization within the relations among government, university leadership, and academic staff unions. Vallente (2026) goes further, criticising the dominance of the language of competitiveness and economic utility in the digital representation of universities. Together, these two patterns underline that strategic success cannot be measured by the intensity of promotion, but rather by the capacity to deliver the services promised.

The third and fourth patterns concern external resources. Using the financial statements of 20 PTN-BH from 2012 to 2023, Mukhibad et al. (2025) report a positive association of investment assets and a negative association of debt with financial sustainability, while revenue diversification and investment expenditure have no positive effect on financial stability. In contrast, Handayani et al. (2023) find that income diversification strengthens the liquidity, solvency, and growth of Indonesian private universities, while Sampurna et al. (2025) show that

Published by:
Training & Research Institute
JERAMBA ILMU SUKSES

enrolment remains the dominant driver of private HEIs' economic performance. Safitri et al. (2025) add that academics' motives and intentions to commercialise research outputs cannot be equated with commercial outcomes. Regarding partnerships, Ho et al. (2025) show that different types of partners are associated with different forms of societal contribution, and Hidalgo-Bazan et al. (2026) demonstrate that collaboration itself may be shaped by competitive pressures. Mergers represent a more far-reaching form of consolidation, but they involve multi-step approval procedures and must reconcile differing foundation interests (Chadidjah et al., 2021). These findings shift the focus of evaluation from the mere existence of new revenue streams to implementation capacity, net contribution, and the distribution of control.

The fifth and sixth patterns place students at the centre of strategy. Gupta et al. (2025), Brooks (2022), and Azevedo (2025) consistently reject the reduction of students to passive buyers of services, as the meaning of being a consumer varies across countries, backgrounds, and experiences. Meanwhile, the meta-analysis by LaSota et al. (2025) of 86 studies found small but meaningful positive effects of grant aid on enrolment, credit accumulation, persistence, and completion, but offers a less robust basis for inferring gains in academic achievement or labor-market outcomes. Overall, the corpus does not point to a single strategy package that is superior for all types of HEIs. Instead, a set of conditional relationships emerges: differentiation requires capacity, marketing requires evidence of service quality, diversification requires net contribution, partnership requires governance, and wider access requires support for persistence.

4.6 Programme Portfolio Evaluation and Academic Differentiation

The evidence in Tables 3, 4, and 6 is the starting point for this dimension: programmes grew while new entrants fell, and academic seniority is markedly thinner in private HEIs. The growth of study programmes amid a decline in new entrants provides a strong managerial rationale for reviewing the viability of academic portfolios. Such reviews should start from programme-level data rather than from the assumption that all institutions face the same problems. Institutional leaders can compare the number of unique applicants, registered students, delivery costs, and lecturer availability to determine whether the problem lies in service information, curriculum relevance, cost, or demographic factors. The portfolio can then be read through a matrix of academic need and delivery capacity: programs with high demand but limited lecturer support require capacity building before expansion; programs with few students but an important social function require dedicated funding arrangements; and programs with weak demand and unclear benefits should have their curricula, service models, or networks reviewed.

Within Porter's (1985) framework, sustainable differentiation requires a fit between service promises and delivery capability. Adding program labels without adequate teaching resources risks creating promises that are difficult to keep. Differentiation should therefore be translated into verifiable claims. For example, an institution offering practice-based learning should be able to demonstrate access to placement sites, the quality of supervision, and mechanisms for assessing competence. The tendency to imitate programs that appear successful elsewhere also warrants scrutiny, since such success may depend on reputation, location, partner networks, or funding sources that the imitating institution lacks. This observation is consistent with the concept of competitive emulation (Levine & Stevens, 2024): inter-institutional learning should focus on management principles and conditions for success rather than on the outward form of programs.

Investment in technology forms part of these activity choices. The findings of Setia et al. (2023)

Published by:
Training & Research Institute JERAMBA ILMU SUKSES

indicate that technology contributes to competitive advantage through knowledge management and organisational culture rather than directly. Digital investment should therefore be linked to changes in academic work, such as faster feedback from lecturers, better mentoring, and the availability of information that helps students complete their studies. Digital efficiency should not be assumed solely from a reduction in manual work, because licensing, training, integration, and technical support costs remain, while students may bear additional costs for devices and connectivity.

Digital marketing also has academic limits. Following Vallente's (2026) critique, admissions information should include the full cost of study, available forms of aid, practicum requirements, and the nature of the learning experience. Claims about career prospects should include the period and coverage of graduate tracer data, since percentages without denominators or selected testimonials are insufficient for judging the benefits of education. From this perspective, transparency can become a source of differentiation, as it helps prospective students understand the consequences of their choices before committing.

4.7 Financial Resilience and the Risk of Revenue Dependence

Table 6 locates this risk: private HEIs, which on average enrol about one-twentieth as many students as public HEIs and accounted for most of the decline in institution numbers, are the group most exposed to falling intake. A decline in new entrants may create financial pressure for institutions that depend heavily on tuition fees. The extent of this pressure depends on revenue structure, fixed costs, student retention, and cash reserves; the risk is thus conditional and cannot be generalised into a financial crisis across all HEIs. The proposed financing strategy is to assess the degree of revenue dependence together with the feasibility of alternative sources. Developing training services, research collaboration, and consultancy requires estimates of costs, staffing, and risks, because the gross revenue of an activity is not equivalent to its net contribution to academic funding.

The findings of Mukhibad et al. (2025) provide an empirical basis for caution towards generic recommendations to diversify. The contrast with Handayani et al. (2023), who report positive effects of income diversification among private universities, suggests that the effect depends on institutional type and on the activities through which new revenue is generated. Diversification should be evaluated through two distinct questions: whether revenue sources have become more varied, and whether that variety genuinely strengthens resilience. The second question calls for evidence on volatility, management costs, liquidity, and correlations among revenue sources. Paid training and regular degree programmes, for instance, may both depend on the purchasing power of the same social groups and thus fail to reduce risk. Furthermore, the evaluation framework should separate recurrent revenue from one-off receipts, and unrestricted from restricted funds, so that routine obligations are not financed by uncertain sources.

New activities should be assessed on the basis of their net contribution after accounting for direct costs and a reasonable share of overheads, including the use of space, equipment, administrative staff, and lecturers' time. Without consistent cost allocation, commercial activities may appear profitable simply because part of their costs is absorbed by regular teaching. The finding of Safitri et al. (2025) that intentions to commercialise research do not always translate into licences or start-ups points to the need for realistic projections of research income, supported by intellectual property management and risk governance. Research commercialisation must also be clearly distinguished from raising tuition fees, as the two differ in their object, beneficiaries, and consequences for access.

Published by:
Training & Research Institute JERAMBA ILMU SUKSES

The academic capitalism perspective reminds us that changes in revenue sources may shift who determines priorities (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). As a governance proposal, every investment decision should be accompanied by an explanation of its academic benefits and opportunity costs. High-revenue programs are not necessarily the most aligned with an institution's mandate, while programs that serve particular public needs may require transparent cross-subsidization. Before expansion, scenario testing can compare the consequences of planned enrolment, lower enrolment, and delayed payments against the costs that can actually be adjusted. If a plan is viable only under the most optimistic assumptions, revise its scale or investment phasing.

4.8 Equitable Access as a Dimension of Institutional Strategy

This dimension rests on three pieces of evidence from this study: a provincial GER gap of more than 60 percentage points, a dropout rate in private HEIs nearly four times that in public HEIs, and almost stagnant growth in the KIP Kuliah target (Tables 5 and 6). The national GER and the KIP Kuliah plan underscore the importance of incorporating participation and financial support into strategic deliberations, yet neither identifies the groups facing the greatest barriers. HEIs therefore need to develop data on net costs after aid, fee-relief applications, dropout rates, and completion, disaggregated by student characteristics. Affordability should be assessed in terms of the net cost that students actually face, namely fees after aid plus expenses for practicums, materials, transport, accommodation, and digital needs. Policies that compare only official tuition rates risk overlooking the costs of study beyond tuition, which may be considerably higher.

Hasbana and Fadhilah (2024) report differences in mean grade point average (GPA) across categories of the single tuition fee (*uang kuliah tunggal*, UKT), but found no effect of UKT on academic achievement in their regression model. This single-institution finding cannot be extended to the conclusion that costs do not affect access. Rather, it underlines the importance of separating indicators of learning outcomes from indicators of affordability, since cost evaluations based solely on GPA would ignore prospective students who never enrolled and students who left before completing their studies. This is consistent with the finding of LaSota et al. (2025) that the effects of grant aid are most evident in enrolment and persistence rather than in academic achievement.

The design of student aid should also distinguish between the goals of equity, merit recognition, and emergency response. Need-based aid targets barriers related to ability to pay, whereas merit scholarships follow a different selection logic. If institutions combine the two without clear objectives, they will struggle to determine whether aid spending widens access or merely attracts prospective students who could have continued their studies anyway. Procedures, moreover, are part of access: eligible applicants may still be deterred by complex requirements, deadlines, and registration sequences. Indicators to monitor include incomplete applications, reasons for rejection, decision times, and status changes after review.

Within the learning process, wider access requires support that upholds academic standards, such as academic literacy induction and advisory services. Such support does not mean lowering competence requirements; rather, it makes those requirements explicit and provides a feasible path towards meeting them. Sulistiyono et al. (2025) link the pursuit of world-class university status to tensions between funding and affordability, while Reynolds (2022) shows that students can resist being passive consumers. Both findings support the argument that reputation should be read together with educational benefit and student experience, and that

Published by:

student participation in governance can enrich decision-making without subordinating all educational decisions to customer preference.

4.9 An Integrated Evaluation Framework and Research Propositions

The synthesis of the results and discussion yields an evaluation framework that connects academic advantage, financial resilience, and equitable access (Table 8). This framework is a conceptual proposal that has not yet been empirically validated. Each dimension requires indicators with clear definitions, denominators, sources, and reference periods, and targets should be set according to each institution's baseline and its capacity to collect reliable data. The baseline evidence for each dimension is reported in Table 6 and Section 4.4: lecturer academic rank and students per lecturer for academic advantage, enrolment scale and intake trends for financial resilience, and dropout rates, provincial GER, and KIP Kuliah coverage for equitable access. Institutions can replace these national figures with their own programme-level data.

Table 8. Proposed framework for evaluating strategy at the institutional level

Dimension	Proposed indicators	Required evidence
Academic advantage	Competence attainment; quality of supervision; student persistence; lecturer academic rank	Learning assessment; service evaluation; cohort data
Financial resilience	Revenue composition; cash flow; net contribution of activities; enrolment scale and intake trend	Financial statements; programme costs; contract records
Equitable access	Net cost; aid coverage; retention by student group; dropout rate	Unique aid recipient data; student costs; economic characteristics

Source: Developed by the authors.

To illustrate its application, a decision to open a new programme could require three simultaneous assessments: teaching readiness, realistic cost projections, and a student support plan. If financial projections depend on high enrolment targets, a lower-enrolment scenario should be tested; if service differentiation raises costs, the decision must explain the source of aid or the basis for affordability. The framework deliberately avoids a composite score with arbitrary weights. The three dimensions are read side by side to avoid perverse incentives, such as enrolment growth targets that exceed supervisory capacity, non-tuition revenue targets that divert lecturers' time, or fast-completion targets that compromise the rigour of assessment. Decisions with adverse effects on access should be accompanied by a justification, the alternatives considered, and mitigation measures.

Implementation priorities depend on institutional context. Public HEIs with substantial research capacity may prioritise the management of contracts, assets, and research utilisation; private HEIs that rely on tuition fees may prioritise service continuity, retention, and well-targeted programme investment; and institutions serving regions with limited educational options need to weigh the social consequences of any programme change. Inter-institutional cooperation, such as shared facilities and joint development of teaching materials, can help overcome capacity constraints, provided that coordination costs and the division of responsibilities are accounted for from the outset (Hidalgo-Bazan et al., 2026). Mergers can address the small scale of many private HEIs shown in Table 6, but their benefits depend on timely procedures and on aligning the interests of the foundations involved (Chadidjah et al., 2021). Implementation

Published by:
Training & Research Institute JERAMBA ILMU SUKSES

should be phased, beginning with a single, clearly defined type of decision and expanding once definitions and procedures have stabilised.

Theoretically, integrating Porter's framework with academic capitalism produces two mutually corrective questions. The strategy lens examines how institutions create value that can be sustained, while the academic capitalism lens examines how the pursuit of resources shapes the value that is prioritized. The equitable access lens then asks who has the opportunity to benefit from that value. Based on this synthesis, three propositions are put forward for future research:

P1: Differentiation is more likely to yield sustained advantage when its benefits are underpinned by the fit of academic activities rather than by promotion alone.

P2: Revenue diversification is more likely to strengthen financial sustainability when new activities generate a net contribution and do not increase exposure to the same sources of risk.

P3: Growth strategies are more likely to preserve the social mission when net costs, student aid, and persistence are evaluated from the planning stage onwards.

Testing these propositions requires appropriate research designs. Institutional panel data can track changes in revenue and services over time, case studies can explain how actors choose among strategic alternatives, and student cohort data can separate barriers to entry from barriers to completion. Measurement should also take timing into account, since investment in staff development or curriculum renewal may show results only after several semesters, whereas the effect of promotion on applications may appear much sooner.

This study has four limitations. First, two statistical editions do not constitute a time series long enough to explain long-term trends. Second, although public and private HEIs under Kemdiktisaintek are compared for 2025, the data do not distinguish regions (except for GER), fields of study, and student groups, and academic rank and dropout capture only part of academic quality and equitable access. Third, the available financial data concern national aid allocations rather than institutional revenues and costs. Fourth, the literature synthesis is targeted and thus does not guarantee the inclusion of all relevant studies. The conclusions of this study are therefore descriptive and conceptual, and are not intended to measure the national level of commercialization, the effectiveness of particular institutional strategies, or causal relationships among the dimensions.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that the structure of Indonesian higher education has undergone divergent changes: the numbers of institutions and new entrants have declined, whereas the numbers of study programs, enrolled students, and lecturers have increased, reducing the ratio of new entrants per program by 5.07%. Disaggregation further shows that these pressures are concentrated in private HEIs, which combine the smallest enrolment scale per institution, the lowest share of senior lecturers, and the highest dropout rate, thereby linking the structural trends directly to the academic, financial, and access dimensions. This pattern underscores the urgency of evaluating program portfolios and the alignment of service capacity, although it does not demonstrate strategic failure or increasing commercialization at every institution. The GER of 32.89% and the mere 0.22% growth in the KIP Kuliah target provide context on participation and public support, but do not directly measure inequality or the effectiveness of aid.

The literature synthesis identifies academic differentiation, process efficiency, communication

Published by:

of educational value, revenue diversification, partnerships, and student financial aid as relevant strategic options. The relationships between these options and sustainability and access are conditional: academic benefits require delivery capacity, new revenue requires a net contribution, and wider participation requires support through to completion. This study's main contribution is an evaluation framework that integrates academic advantage, financial resilience, and equitable access through the lenses of Porter's competitive strategy and academic capitalism, along with three testable propositions.

In practical terms, HEI leaders are advised to link program planning simultaneously to academic capacity, financial risk, and students' net costs. Policymakers should improve the availability of data disaggregated by institution type and social group so that strategic evaluation can be conducted with greater precision. Future research should use institutional panel data, case studies of strategic decisions, and student cohort data to test the proposed propositions and examine the causal relationships among the dimensions.

References

Azevedo, C. (2025). Students as (more than) consumers? An exploration of undergraduates' discourses and practices in marketised higher education. *Higher Education Quarterly, 79*(4), e70060. https://doi.org/10.1111/hequ.70060

Badan Pusat Statistik. (2025). *Angka partisipasi kasar (APK) perguruan tinggi (PT) menurut provinsi, 2025* [Tertiary gross enrolment ratio by province, 2025] [Statistical table]. https://www.bps.go.id/id/statistics-table/2/MTQ0MyMy/angka-partisipasi-kasar-apk-perguruan-tinggi-pt-menurut-provinsi.html

Badan Pusat Statistik. (n.d.). *Angka partisipasi kasar (APK) tingkat perguruan tinggi (PT)* [Tertiary gross enrolment ratio] [Indicator metadata]. https://sirusa.bps.go.id/metadata/indikator/0611ca91-2ca4-de46-b32d-799f425953f6

Brooks, R. (2022). Students as consumers? The perspectives of students' union leaders across Europe. *Higher Education Quarterly, 76*(3), 626–637. https://doi.org/10.1111/hequ.12332

Chadidjah, S., Nugraha, M. T., Zaqiah, Q. Y., & Supiana. (2021). Merger of private universities: Empirical study STAI become FAI of Muhammadiyah University Bandung. *Nidhomul Haq: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam, 6*(3), 587–598. https://doi.org/10.31538/ndh.v6i3.1573

Gupta, A., Brooks, R., & Abrahams, J. (2025). Higher education students as consumers: A cross-country comparative analysis of students' views. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education, 55*(2), 174–191. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2023.2234283

Handayani, E., Sholihin, M., Pratolo, S., & Rahmawati, A. (2023). Distribution of income diversification on financial sustainability of Indonesian private universities: Empirical studies. *Journal of Distribution Science, 21*(3), 71–82. https://doi.org/10.15722/jds.21.03.202303.71

Published by:
Training & Research Institute JERAMBA ILMU SUKSES

Hart, P. F., & Rodgers, W. (2024). Competition, competitiveness, and competitive advantage in higher education institutions: A systematic literature review. *Studies in Higher Education, 49*(11), 2153–2177. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2023.2293926

Hasbana, A., & Fadhilah, E. (2024). Does the single tuition fee affect students' academic performance? Evidence from Indonesia. *Journal of Educational Management and Instruction, 4*(1), 83–100. https://doi.org/10.22515/jemin.v4i1.9154

Hidalgo-Bazan, G., Xu, X., & Robson, J. (2026). Collaboration and competition in England's tertiary education: An integrative review of three decades of research. *Policy Reviews in Higher Education*. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1080/23322969.2026.2730226

Ho, S. S.-H., Chen, R. J.-C., & Cheng, I. H.-H. (2025). Higher education competitiveness in East Asia: The role of partnerships and funding in different societal contributions. *Studies in Higher Education, 50*(10), 2196–2212. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2025.2541897

Karamang, E., Septiarini, E., Rahmi, P. P., & Wijaya, F. (2024). Pengaruh citra institusi, harga dan lokasi terhadap keputusan memilih universitas swasta di Bandung [The effect of institutional image, price, and location on the decision to choose a private university in Bandung]. Oikos: Jurnal Kajian Pendidikan Ekonomi dan Ilmu Ekonomi, 9(1), 285–295. https://doi.org/10.23969/oikos.v9i1.16870

Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan. (2020). *Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Nomor 7 Tahun 2020 tentang pendirian, perubahan, pembubaran perguruan tinggi negeri, dan pendirian, perubahan, pencabutan izin perguruan tinggi swasta* [Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 7 of 2020 on the establishment, change, and dissolution of public HEIs and the establishment, change, and licence revocation of private HEIs].

Kementerian Pendidikan Tinggi, Sains, dan Teknologi. (2026, February 23). *Anggaran KIP Kuliah terus meningkat, pemerintah pastikan akses pendidikan tinggi tetap terjaga* [KIP Kuliah budget continues to rise as the government ensures access to higher education is maintained]. https://kemdiktisaintek.go.id/news/article/anggaran-kip-kuliah-terus-meningkat-pemerintah-pastikan-akses-pendidikan-tinggi-tetap-terjaga

LaSota, R. R., Polanin, J. R., Perna, L. W., Rodgers, M. A., & Austin, M. J. (2025). Does aid matter? A systematic review and meta-analysis of the effects of grant aid on college student outcomes. *Review of Educational Research, 95*(3), 464–504. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543241239955

Levine, E. J., & Stevens, M. L. (2024). Neither state nor market: Competitive emulation in higher education. *Studies in Higher Education, 49*(10), 1733–1742. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2024.2394559

Mitterle, A., & Bloch, R. (2024). Beyond markets. On field competition in higher education. *Studies in Higher Education, 49*(10), 1720–1732. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2024.2399724

Published by:
Training & Research Institute JERAMBA ILMU SUKSES

Mukhibad, H., Anisykurlillah, I., Sugiyat, J., Firmansyah, R., & Fauziah, R. I. (2025). Revenue diversification and financial sustainability – focus on higher education in Indonesia. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1108/JARHE-11-2024-0678

Pangarso, A., Astuti, E. S., Raharjo, K., & Afrianty, T. W. (2024). Enhancing sustained competitive advantage in Indonesian non-vocation private tertiary education institutions. *SAGE Open, 14*(2), Article 21582440241256316. https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440241256316

Pérez Lavandera, R., Constantin, C. P., & Ramos-Giral, G. V. (2026). Marketing strategies in higher education institutions: A systematic literature review. *Cogent Business & Management, 13*(1), 2656064. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2026.2656064

Perkmann, M., Salandra, R., Tartari, V., McKelvey, M., & Hughes, A. (2021). Academic engagement: A review of the literature 2011–2019. *Research Policy, 50*(1), 104114. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2020.104114

Pham, H.-H., Ta, T. N., Luong, D.-H., Nguyen, T. T., & Vu, H. M. (2024). A bibliometric review of research on academic engagement, 1978–2021. *Industry and Higher Education, 38*(3), 205–217. https://doi.org/10.1177/09504222231189717

Porter, M. E. (1985). *Competitive advantage: Creating and sustaining superior performance*. Free Press.

Pusat Data dan Teknologi Informasi Kementerian Pendidikan Tinggi, Sains, dan Teknologi. (2026). *Statistik pendidikan tinggi 2025* [Higher education statistics 2025]. https://www.dikti.go.id/library/book/statistik-pendidikan-tinggi-2025

Reynolds, A. (2022). 'Where does my £9000 go?' Student identities in a marketised British higher education sector. *SN Social Sciences, 2*, Article 125. https://doi.org/10.1007/s43545-022-00432-6

Safitri, N., Huseini, M., & Kusumastuti, R. (2025). Proself or prosocial? The Indonesian academics motive to commercializing university research. *International Journal of Technology, 16*(3), 1030–1041. https://doi.org/10.14716/ijtech.v16i3.6104

Sampurna, R. H., Sulaeman, S., & Anwar, Z. L. (2025). Policy neutralisation and market constraints: A political economy analysis of how liberalisation fails private universities in Indonesia. *Society, 13*(3), 1118–1132. https://doi.org/10.33019/society.v13i3.763

Setia, B. I., Yuniarsih, T., Sojanah, J., Kusnendi, Ahman, E., & Pangestu, E. S. R. (2023). University sustainability competitive advantage in facing technological changes. *Trikonomika, 22*(1), 10–18. https://doi.org/10.23969/trikonomika.v22i1.8811

Slaughter, S., & Rhoades, G. (2004). *Academic capitalism and the new economy: Markets, state, and higher education*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Sulistiyono, S. T., Hattori, M., Rochwulaningsih, Y., Matsumoto, A., Masruroh, N. N., & Widisuseno, I. (2025). The dynamics of state-market relations in the quest for world-class universities in Indonesia. *Discover Sustainability, 6*, Article 864. https://doi.org/10.1007/s43621-025-01635-6

Published by:
Training & Research Institute JERAMBA ILMU SUKSES

Vallente, J. P. (2026). Neoliberal clickbait: University websites and the digital marketization of Philippine higher education. *Policy Futures in Education*. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1177/14782103261457212

Wali, A. F., Atswenbuma, A., Amangala, E. A., & Nkpurukwe, O. I. (2022). Marketization of public universities: Lessons from a developing economy. *Business Perspectives and Research, 10*(3), 316–326. https://doi.org/10.1177/22785337211021562

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Published by:
Training & Research Institute
JERAMBA ILMU SUKSES