

GENERATION Z ANTECEDENT TO CHOOSES PRIVATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

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This study aims to examine the influence of the image of private Islamic universities, service quality, facilities, and achievement motivation of Generation Z on their intention to choose private Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia. Considering that Generation Z possesses unique characteristics and a high orientation towards technology, selecting a university presents a specific challenge. The research employs a quantitative survey method with a SEM-PLS approach, involving respondents aged 15-23 years. The results indicate that the image of the university has a small positive influence (p-value 0.023), perceived service quality has a significant positive impact (p-value 0.001), while perceived facility quality shows no significant effect (p-value 0.249). Additionally, achievement motivation displays a strong positive influence (p-value 0.000) on the intention to choose. These findings conclude that private Islamic universities need to focus on enhancing their image and service quality to attract prospective students. This research contributes significantly to the development of promotional strategies for higher education within the competitive Gen Z market. The results are expected to serve as a reference for educational institutions to create better services and images, thereby meeting the needs and expectations of future generations.

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INTRODUCTION

Generation Z or commonly abbreviated as gen z are those born from the early 2000s (Trevino, 2018), while according to the Central Statistics Agency, Generation Z was born between 1997-2012 and has unique characteristics compared to previous generations, especially attachment to technology such as cellphones and laptops. This attachment allows them to access information widely. Currently, Generation Z is in the phase of pursuing higher education. Even by Rickes (2016) Generation Z is called a

"tech native" because of their proximity to technology. Extensive access to information makes the search for career-supporting colleges confusing for them. With the largest population today, Gen Z is a potential market for universities that are looking for new students. In the future, the focus of universities will shift to the gen z market.

According to the Diktis of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia (2022) There are 58 state Islamic religious universities and 847 private Islamic religious universities, with private accounting for 93.6% of the total. The competition for new students is very fierce. Universities that do not aggressively promote are at risk of sinking, while the quality of the institution is also important for prospective students, because college is the backbone of their success. (Wibowo & Widodo, 2013).

In a study (Wibowo & Widodo, 2013) The determinants of university selection include social status, study assistance, university image, campus comfort, achievement motivation, life value, work motivation, and perception of graduate quality and teaching. Harahap et al. (2020) also held a similar opinion where university image is the biggest determining factor in the university selection process. However, in Sathapornvajana & Watanapa (2012) factors such as career opportunities, university image, facilities, or life values have no effect. Solikhah et al. (2016) found that factors such as self-motivation were also found to have no effect on the intention to choose a university.

Previous research shows that the determining factor of intention to choose a university is still uncertain. This gap prompted this study to find the most influential factors, especially in Generation Z who are highly oriented towards achievement and creativity in education (Seemiller et al., 2019). Of course, their choice will be fixed on universities that can provide service facilities that they can get.

This study will examine the influence of the image of private Islamic universities, the quality of service, facilities, and the motivation to achieve the achievements of Generation Z on the intention to choose private Islamic universities, using SEM-PLS analysis. There has been no previous research on these factors, which underlies the importance of this study. The results are expected to help private Islamic universities, which have difficulty attracting students due to the lack of research-based promotion strategies.

The selection of factors such as the image of private Islamic universities, quality of service, facilities, and motivation to achieve success in this study is based on their relevance to the unique characteristics of Generation Z. The image of the university is

considered important because, according to Harahap et al. (2020), it is the most significant factor in the university selection process. Quality of service and facilities were chosen because they are closely related to students' learning experiences and are aspects that support the attachment to technology, a hallmark of Generation Z (Rickes, 2016). Motivation to achieve success was selected because Generation Z is known to be highly achievement-oriented and creative in education (Seemiller et al., 2019). Meanwhile, factors such as social status, study assistance, and campus comfort were not prioritized in this study because previous research, such as that by in Sathapornvajana & Watanapa (2012) and Solikhah et al. (2016), has shown that these factors do not always significantly influence university selection. To ensure each factor can be objectively assessed, indicators such as perceptions of university reputation, levels of satisfaction with services, availability of supporting facilities, and personal drive to achieve success will be used as measurement tools.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is a field-research that has a quantitative approach. According to Sugiyono (2017), this study uses a quantitative method based on the philosophy of positivism to analyze a specific population or sample. With the survey method, this study aims to confirm the causal relationship between variables through hypothesis testing. Primary data were collected using questionnaires to explain the relationship and influence between variables. The object of this research is those who belong to Generation Z, namely those born in 1997-2012 who are determining the level of higher education. The sampling method refers to convenience sampling, which is a sample selection technique that is carried out when the researcher does not have data about the population in the form of a sampling framework. The data was analyzed using SEM-PLS with the SmartPLS application to test the causality of the variables.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data Overview

Year of birth	total	Gender	total
1998	1	Man	94
1999	2	Woman	113
2000	2		
2001	2	Location of residence	total

2002	11	Village	155
2003	17	City	52
2004	22		
2005	34	Type of School of Origin	total
2006	50	College	48
2007	36	Madrasah Aliyah	80
2008	17	High School	75
2009	12	Vocational High School	4
2010	1		

Table 1 Data Overview

The number of individuals recorded varied, shown on table 1, the highest in 2006 with 50 individuals, and the lowest in 1998 and 2010 with 1 individual each. The number of women (113) is more than men (94). The majority came from rural areas (155 people), while in urban areas only 52 people. In education, most of them came from Madrasah Aliyah (80 people) and Senior High Schools (75 people), followed by 48 people from universities, and 4 people from Vocational High Schools. This data reflects diverse backgrounds. There is no missing data on the data collected.

Reflective Measurement Model

Reliability and Convergent Validity

All constructs show Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.7, between 0.876 to 0.911, which signifies high internal consistency, with rho_A value support above 0.8. The Composite Reliability (CR) value also exceeded 0.7, ranging from 0.915 to 0.931, indicating a consistent measurement of the indicator. In addition, all Average Variance Extracted (AVE) scores were above 0.5, the highest was 0.763 for "Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities" and the lowest was 0.661 for "Image of Private Islamic Universities," confirming the validity of good convergence.

Realibility and Convergent Validity	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Intention to Choose a Private Islamic University	0.896	0.897	0.928	0.763
Perception of Higher Education Facilities	0.894	0.897	0.927	0.760
Image of Private Islamic Universities	0.897	0.899	0.921	0.661
Motivation for Gen Z	0.876	0.881	0.915	0.729

Achievement				
Perception of Higher Education Service Quality	0.911	0.912	0.931	0.691

Discriminant validity

HTMT	Intention to Choose a Private Islamic University	Perception of Higher Education Facilities	Image of Private Islamic Universities	Motivation for Gen Z Achievement	Perception of Higher Education Service Quality
Intention to Choose a Private Islamic University					
Perception of Higher Education Facilities	0.644				
Image of Private Islamic Universities	0.771	0.640			
Motivation for Gen Z Achievement	0.897	0.765	0.780		
Perception of Higher Education Service Quality	0.824	0.767	0.835	0.834	

The HTMT score shows a variation between the construct of "Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities" and others, with the highest score of 0.897 with "Motivation to Achieve Gen Z Achievements" and the lowest score of 0.644 with "Perception of Facilities." "Image of Islamic Private Universities" has an HTMT value of 0.835 with "Perception of Service Quality." Overall, the HTMT value supports adequate discriminant validity, with no exceeding 0.90, reinforcing the conceptual differences between constructs.

Structural Model

The VIF value for the "Motivation to Achieve Gen Z Achievement" construct ranged from 2,053 to 3,015, indicating insignificant collinearity. "Citra Perguruan

Swasta Islam" has a VIF of 1,739 to 2,645, and "Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities" is between 2,074 to 3,140, with the highest Intention.2 indicator (3,140). "Perception of Facilities" has a VIF of 3,543, but it is still within the tolerance limit of 5. Overall, no significant multicollinearity issues were detected.

The R Square value of 0.700 and the R Square Adjusted of 0.694 for the dependent variable "Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities," which reflects the model's ability to explain 70% of the variance of the dependent variable. A small difference between R Square and R Square Adjusted of 0.006 indicates that the model is not overfitting, so the independent variables used are effective. Thus, the model has strong predictive power, although 30% of the variance is still influenced by other factors that have not been included and can be the focus of further research.

Path Coefficient

Path Coefficients	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Decision
Perception of the Quality of Higher Education Facilities -> Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities	-0.052	-0.054	0.076	0.676	0.249	Rejected
Image of Private Islamic Universities -> Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities	0.151	0.158	0.076	1.989	0.023	Accepted
Motivation for Achieving Gen Z Achievement -> Intention to	0.514	0.512	0.104	4.922	0.000	Accepted

Choose Private Islamic Universities						
Perception of Higher Education Service Quality -> Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities	0.287	0.287	0.096	2.975	0.001	Accepted

Hypothesis H1 states that "The image of Private Islamic Universities has a positive effect on the Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities." With a path coefficient of 0.151, this effect is small but significant, as evidenced by t-statistics of 1.989 and p-value of 0.023, which is below 0.05. Therefore, H1 is accepted.

Hypothesis H2 states that "Perception of Service Quality has a positive effect on the Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities." With a path coefficient of 0.287, this effect indicates moderate strength. T-statistics of 2.975 and p-value of 0.001 show statistically significant results because the p-value is well below 0.05. Therefore, H2 is accepted.

Hypothesis H3 states that "Perception of Facility Quality has a positive effect on the Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities." However, the path coefficient -0.052 shows a negative influence. T-statistics of 0.676 and p-value of 0.249 indicate that this relationship is not statistically significant. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, H3 is rejected.

The H4 hypothesis states that "Motivation to Achieve Gen Z Achievement has a positive effect on the Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities." Path coefficient 0.514 shows a strong influence, with t-statistics of 4.922 and p-value of 0.000 significant. Therefore, H4 is accepted.

The Influence of the Image of Private Islamic Universities on the Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities

Hypothesis H1 states that "The image of Private Islamic Universities has a positive effect on the Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities." The results of

the analysis showed a path coefficient of 0.151, indicating a small positive influence, with t-statistics of 1.989 and a p-value of 0.023, which were statistically significant.

The image of an educational institution has an effect on the decision of prospective students, as shown by Baker & Balmer, and Chapleo, who affirm that a positive image increases trust (Rahim & Munshi, 2023). Kotler & Keller's theory of consumer behavior also supports that image contributes to the selection (Hutomo et al., 2020). Thus, although the influence is small, the image of the university plays an important role in attracting the interest of prospective students, so the H1 hypothesis is accepted.

The Effect of Service Quality Perception on the Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities

The study shows that the perception of service quality has a positive effect on the intention of prospective students to choose private Islamic universities, with a path coefficient of 0.287 and a p-value of 0.001. These findings support the service quality theory which states that improvements in the dimensions of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy can increase satisfaction. Universities need to focus on service quality to attract and retain students in a tight competition (Idayati et al., 2020).

These results show that the good quality of service from universities, such as academic services, administration, or other supporting facilities, greatly contributes to the intention of prospective students to choose the university. When students feel that an institution provides professional, efficient, and responsive services to their needs, they tend to have a positive view of the institution, which ultimately influences their decision to apply.

The Effect of Perception of Facility Quality on Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities

The results of the study rejected the H3 Hypothesis, which stated that "Perception of Facility Quality has a positive effect on the Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities," with a path coefficient of -0.052 and a p-value of 0.249 which is insignificant. This shows that prospective students prioritize reputation and service quality more. The theory of consumer choice shows the importance of focusing on

student needs, so Islamic universities need to improve services and experiences, not just facilities (Alam et al., 2021).

The Influence of Gen Z's Motivation to Achieve Achievement on the Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities

The H4 hypothesis, which states that "Motivation to Achieve Gen Z Achievement has a positive effect on the Intention to Choose Private Islamic Universities," was accepted with a significant path coefficient of 0.514, t-statistics of 4.922, and p-value of 0.000. Generation Z, who are motivated to achieve success, tend to choose Islamic universities that offer meaningful academic experiences and support moral values, influenced by clear ambitions and life goals (Haque, 2024). Some of their main characteristics include: Generation Z prioritizes education to achieve career goals and success. They see private Islamic colleges as relevant because they offer programs that develop academic skills and character. According to the career development theory, Super education is an important tool for forming professional identities, so this generation tends to choose institutions that support their holistic development (Obling, 2023). Generation Z values learning that is relevant and has a direct impact on their life goals. Private Islamic colleges can attract their attention by offering study programs that integrate modern science and Islamic values for the formation of a holistic character. Bruner's constructivist learning theory, shows that learning experiences that are connected to personal values will be more meaningful and motivate this generation in achieving their goals (N. R. Mishra, 2023). Despite living in the modern era, many members of Generation Z have strong moral consciousness and religious values. They choose private Islamic colleges for education that enhance academic abilities while strengthening religious beliefs and morality. In accordance with Schwartz's theory of value motivation, individuals pursue choices that align with personal values, making an education that integrates academic and spiritual very attractive (Gamage et al., 2021).

Private Islamic Universities as a Relevant Choice

Private Islamic universities have a number of advantages that are in accordance with the motivations and needs of Generation Z. Some of the reasons why this institution is an attractive choice for them are as follows:

Firstly, conducive environment. Private Islamic colleges offer an atmosphere that supports the formation of moral and spiritual values, in line with Generation Z's expectations for an education consistent with their personal values. Bandura's theory of the learning environment shows that a supportive environment influences individual motivation and development (Virginia Koutroubas & Michael Galanakis, 2022).

Secondly, combination of academic and character. This college prioritizes character development along with academic achievement, giving Generation Z the opportunity to excel intellectually and have a strong moral foundation. Lickona's theory of character development supports the importance of character formation in Education (Brilianti, 2023).

Thirdly, future-oriented curriculum. A curriculum that integrates Islamic values with the needs of the job market is attractive to Generation Z, who are looking for innovative study programs. Bruner's theory of educational relevance, emphasizes that education that is relevant to needs will increase learning motivation (Sulastri & Satispi, 2021).

Fourthly, support for goal achievement. Colleges that focus on academic and non-academic success build Generation Z's belief that they can realize their goals. Cohen & Wills' theory of social support, suggests that institutional support can increase individual confidence and success (S. Mishra, 2020).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study confirms that the image of private Islamic universities, service quality, and motivation to achieve Generation Z have a significant effect on the intention to choose a university. The results of the analysis showed that although the image had a positive influence, the quality of the facilities did not contribute significantly, which showed that prospective students were more concerned with reputation and service quality. This research contributes to the development of an understanding of the unique characteristics of Generation Z, which are achievement-oriented, connected to technology, and strong moral values. These findings highlight the importance for universities to strengthen research-based marketing strategies, improve service quality, and create an educational environment that supports academic and character development, in order to attract and retain students from this segment. Thus,

educational institutions are expected to overcome the challenges of fierce competition in the modern era, as well as meet the needs and expectations of prospective students.

Suggestion

Based on the results of this study, private Islamic universities should strengthen a positive image through active promotion and collaboration with other institutions, as well as improve the quality of service that is responsive and pays attention to student needs. Although facilities do not have a significant effect, providing adequate facilities is still important for an optimal learning experience. In addition, universities need to emphasize achievement motivation by offering academic and non-academic support programs, as well as utilizing digital marketing and social media to reach Generation Z. With these steps, it is hoped that universities can attract and retain students optimally.

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