

GILMAR Enrollment Acceleration Model and Student Application Intention in Higher Education

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Abstract

Private higher education institutions increasingly compete through institutional values, perceived attractiveness, and digital visibility rather than through promotion alone. Drawing on the stimulus–organism–response (S–O–R) paradigm, this study develops and tests the GILMAR Enrollment Acceleration Model, which positions five value-based institutional marketing dimensions (resilience, adaptability, communicativeness, total commitment, and innovativeness) as antecedents of campus attractiveness, campus attractiveness as the mechanism driving prospective students' behavioral intention to apply, and social media exposure as a moderator of that relationship. A quantitative explanatory design was applied to 300 senior high school students and graduates in Surabaya, Indonesia, who had actively searched for campus information and were selected through purposive sampling. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling in SmartPLS 4 with 5,000 bootstrap subsamples. Adaptability ($\beta = 0.337$), innovativeness ($\beta = 0.306$), total commitment ($\beta = 0.279$), and resilience ($\beta = 0.163$) significantly increase campus attractiveness, whereas communicativeness does not ($\beta = 0.055$; $p = 0.133$). Campus attractiveness strongly increases behavioral intention to apply ($\beta = 0.468$), and social media exposure positively moderates this relationship ($\beta = 0.255$; $p < 0.001$), raising the simple slope from 0.212 at low exposure to 0.723 at high exposure. The model explains 56.3% of the variance in campus attractiveness and 57.0% of the variance in behavioral intention to apply. Enrollment intention is therefore driven by visible institutional substance rather than by communication alone, with social media exposure operating as a boundary condition that amplifies campus attractiveness rather than as a direct driver of enrollment. Universities should prioritize adaptive programs, innovation, and service commitment, supported by consistent and evidence-based social media content.

Keywords:

GILMAR; Campus Attractiveness; Social Media Exposure; Higher Education Marketing; Stimulus–Organism–Response; PLS-SEM.

1. INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions increasingly compete not only through academic quality, accreditation, and facilities, but also through institutional branding, perceived campus attractiveness, and digital communication. In the contemporary recruitment market, prospective students evaluate universities as educational brands whose value is shaped by reputation, identity, service quality, symbolic appeal, and digital visibility. Prior

studies show that university brand image, social media communication, and brand trust are important determinants of enrollment intention, indicating that student recruitment has shifted from an information-based process to an image- and value-based decision process (Rutter et al., 2016; Li et al., 2025).

This shift is particularly relevant for Generation Z, the primary target of undergraduate recruitment. This generation is highly exposed to visual content, peer narratives, short-form videos, institutional storytelling, and interactive social media communication. Their intention to apply to a university is therefore determined not solely by rational considerations such as tuition fees or accreditation, but also by whether the institution appears attractive, credible, adaptive, relatable, and future-oriented. Recent higher education marketing literature confirms that social media has become a strategic instrument for student engagement, university branding, and recruitment communication (Ruangkanjanases et al., 2022; Pawar, 2024).

The competitive pressure is particularly acute in Indonesian private higher education, where a large number of institutions compete for a limited pool of school leavers and where differentiation depends less on physical capacity or price than on intangible institutional assets. Evidence from Indonesian private tertiary institutions indicates that sustained competitive advantage in this sector rests on the capacity to absorb new knowledge, to innovate, and to reconfigure academic programs quickly (Pangarso et al., 2024). Institution-specific value systems that translate into observable organizational behavior are therefore a plausible, but so far largely untested, source of differentiation in the recruitment market.

In this context, GILMAR, an acronym of the Indonesian expression *Gila Marketing*, is positioned as an institutional marketing philosophy developed by Prof. Rachmady Radiany and implemented as part of the strategic identity of STIE Mahardhika Surabaya. GILMAR consists of five core values: resilience, adaptability, communicativeness, total commitment, and innovativeness. These values represent institutional capability in responding to competition, communicating with prospective students, improving service orientation, and developing market-relevant educational strategies. In this study, GILMAR is treated not as a promotional slogan but as a value-based institutional philosophy that may shape campus attractiveness.

Campus attractiveness refers to prospective students' cognitive and affective evaluation of a university as a desirable place to study. It includes perceived academic quality, institutional credibility, campus environment, service experience, symbolic image, and future relevance. Previous research emphasizes that university attractiveness plays an important role in shaping application intentions, particularly when it is formed through digital touchpoints and institutional brand attributes. Applying the stimulus–organism–response (S–O–R) paradigm (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Jacoby, 2002). Kaur et al. (2026) position university attractiveness as the mediating mechanism between prospective students' experience of university websites, university brand attributes, and intention to apply.

However, the existing literature still leaves three important gaps. First, most studies explain enrollment intention through generic determinants such as university reputation, brand image, tuition, promotion, facilities, or family background, whereas limited research has examined institution-specific marketing philosophy as an antecedent of campus attractiveness (Juhaidi, 2024; Juhaidi et al., 2025). Second, campus attractiveness has often been treated as a general perception rather than as a strategic psychological mechanism that translates institutional values into behavioral intention to apply. Third, although social media is widely studied in higher education marketing, empirical findings remain inconsistent regarding its direct impact on enrollment intention, which suggests the need to examine social media exposure as a moderating variable rather than merely as a direct promotional factor (Juhaidi, 2024; Li et al., 2025). Taken together, these gaps indicate that the field still lacks a model in which an institution-specific value system, a clearly specified psychological mechanism, and a digital boundary condition are estimated simultaneously within a single framework.

To address these gaps, this study develops the GILMAR Enrollment Acceleration Model. The model examines whether resilience, adaptability, communicativeness, total commitment, and innovativeness significantly influence campus attractiveness; whether campus attractiveness increases behavioral intention to apply; and whether social media exposure strengthens the effect of campus attractiveness on behavioral intention to apply. The framework integrates value-based marketing philosophy with higher education strategic branding by treating institutional values as strategic resources that can be converted into student attraction and enrollment intention.

The novelty of this study lies in three aspects. First, it introduces GILMAR as a value-based institutional marketing construct in higher education marketing research. Second, it positions campus attractiveness as the central mechanism linking institutional philosophy to prospective students' intention to apply. Third, it conceptualizes social media exposure as a digital amplifier that strengthens the relationship between campus attractiveness and application intention. These contributions respond to recent calls for more contextual and integrated models of higher education marketing in the digital recruitment environment (Yaping et al., 2023; Pawar, 2024).

Accordingly, the objective of this study is to test the GILMAR Enrollment Acceleration Model empirically in the context of private higher education in Surabaya, Indonesia, using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Three research questions guide the investigation: (1) to what extent do resilience, adaptability, communicativeness, total commitment, and innovativeness shape campus attractiveness; (2) does campus attractiveness increase behavioral intention to apply; and (3) does social media exposure change the strength with which campus attractiveness is converted into application intention?

Theoretically, the study extends higher education branding literature through an institution-specific, value-driven enrollment model. Practically, it offers universities a strategic framework for converting internal values into campus attractiveness and for using social media exposure to accelerate prospective students' intention to apply. The following sections develop the hypotheses, describe the method, present and discuss the results, and conclude with limitations and directions for future research.

1.1. Theoretical Foundation

Higher education marketing has moved from a purely promotional activity to a strategic branding process in which universities compete through identity, credibility, digital visibility, and perceived attractiveness. Prior research shows that university brand image, social media interaction, and digital communication affect recruitment performance and enrollment intention (Rutter et al., 2016; Li et al., 2025). Social media interaction is especially relevant because universities can no longer rely on formal reputation alone; they must create visible, engaging, and credible brand experiences for prospective students.

This study proposes the GILMAR Enrollment Acceleration Model as a value-based higher education marketing framework. Its five values, namely resilience, adaptability, communicativeness, total commitment, and innovativeness, are positioned as strategic antecedents of campus attractiveness because they represent how a university responds to competition, communicates with prospective students, delivers educational service, and projects future relevance. Campus attractiveness then becomes the psychological mechanism that transforms institutional values into behavioral intention to apply, while social media exposure functions as a digital amplifier of this relationship.

The model follows the stimulus–organism–response (S–O–R) logic first formulated in environmental psychology (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) and later reconsidered as a general framework for consumer behavior, in which external cues are processed through an internal evaluative state before they are expressed as a response (Jacoby (2002) and Kaur et al (2026) applied the same logic to explain university application decisions. The GILMAR values act as institutional stimuli, campus attractiveness captures the prospective student's internal appraisal of the institution, and behavioral intention to apply represents the behavioral response. Intention is used as the outcome construct because it is the most proximal and most widely validated antecedent of volitional behavior (Ajzen, 1991), and because prospective students cannot enroll at an institution to which they have not first decided to apply. Modeling attractiveness as an intervening appraisal reflects how prospective students actually process institutional signals: rather than reacting separately to evidence of resilience, adaptability, communication, commitment, or innovation, they combine these signals into an overall sense of whether a campus deserves their application. The S–O–R logic also accommodates a moderator on the organism–response link, because the strength with which an internal appraisal is converted into a behavioral response depends on the informational environment in which that appraisal is repeatedly activated.

1.2. GILMAR Values and Campus Attractiveness

Resilience refers to the institution's ability to remain strong, consistent, and credible when facing competition, market uncertainty, digital disruption, and changing student expectations. In higher education, resilience is not limited to surviving crises; it reflects the capability to maintain service quality, academic continuity, and strategic confidence. Shaya et al. (2023) explain that organizational resilience in higher education involves anticipation, coping, and adaptation, supported by knowledge, resources, social capability, leadership, and an innovative culture. For prospective students, a resilient campus appears more trustworthy and attractive because it signals stability, seriousness, and long-term relevance. In a competitive private higher education market, resilience can therefore strengthen campus attractiveness by showing that the institution can sustain academic quality and student services despite external pressures.

H1: Resilience has a positive effect on campus attractiveness.

Adaptability refers to the university's ability to adjust its programs, communication, services, and learning systems in response to environmental change and student needs. Adaptive universities are better able to respond to digital transformation, labor market shifts, hybrid learning demands, and Generation Z's preference for flexible, technology-supported education. Organizational resilience research conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic identifies adaptation as a core capability of higher education institutions (Shaya et al., 2023), and evidence from Indonesian private tertiary institutions shows that sustained competitive advantage depends on the capacity to absorb new knowledge and innovate (Pangarso et al., 2024). Adaptability is expected to increase campus attractiveness because prospective students tend to prefer institutions that appear responsive, modern, and aligned with future career demands.

H2: Adaptability has a positive effect on campus attractiveness.

Communicativeness refers to the institution's ability to deliver clear, responsive, interactive, and persuasive messages to prospective students. In higher education marketing, communication is not merely the transmission of information; it shapes institutional image, reduces uncertainty, and builds relational closeness. Rutter et al. (2016) found that social media interaction and validation are associated with the university brand and recruitment performance, while Li et al. (2025) confirmed that social media communication and brand

image influence students' enrollment intentions. A communicative campus becomes attractive because prospective students receive clearer information about programs, facilities, career prospects, student life, and institutional values, which is particularly important for Generation Z, whose decisions are strongly influenced by interactive digital content, short-form narratives, testimonials, and peer-visible engagement. Signaling theory nevertheless cautions that messages which are inexpensive to produce and difficult for the receiver to verify carry limited informational value, whereas costly and observable actions function as credible signals of underlying quality (Spence, 1973). Communicativeness may therefore raise awareness without necessarily raising attractiveness, which makes H3 a genuinely open question rather than a foregone conclusion.

H3: Communicativeness has a positive effect on campus attractiveness.

Total commitment refers to the institution's seriousness in delivering educational service, supporting students, maintaining quality, and fulfilling its brand promise. It is reflected in service responsiveness, academic support, administrative reliability, lecturer engagement, career support, and consistency between promotional claims and the actual institutional experience. Prior studies show that service quality and brand equity shape university reputation and students' intention to choose a university (Rizard et al., 2023), and that service quality is critical for student admission, satisfaction, and retention (Abbas, 2020). Total commitment is expected to strengthen campus attractiveness because prospective students value institutions that appear serious, service-oriented, and student-centered.

H4: Total commitment has a positive effect on campus attractiveness.

Innovativeness refers to the university's ability to introduce new ideas, digital systems, academic programs, learning methods, market-relevant curricula, and creative recruitment strategies. Innovative institutions are more likely to be perceived as future-oriented and capable of preparing students for changing labor markets. Recent studies show that creativity and innovation are essential for the competitiveness of higher education institutions (Pangarso et al., 2024; Amoozegar et al., 2025). Innovativeness is expected to increase campus attractiveness because prospective students are drawn to institutions that appear modern, creative, career-relevant, and technologically progressive; for Generation Z, innovation is also a symbolic signal that the institution understands the future.

H5: Innovativeness has a positive effect on campus attractiveness.

1.3. Campus Attractiveness and Behavioral Intention to Apply

Campus attractiveness encompasses perceived academic quality, institutional reputation, campus environment, service experience, digital image, student life, career relevance, and symbolic appeal. Studies of higher education choice indicate that university image, reputation, facilities, program prospects, and digital communication are important determinants of student decisions (Kango et al., 2021; Juhaidi, 2024). Behavioral intention to apply reflects a prospective student's stated willingness and plan to submit an application to an institution. Students are more likely to apply to institutions they perceive as credible, relevant, appealing, and aligned with their aspirations, and Kaur et al. (2026) show that university attractiveness carries the influence of digital and brand attributes to application intention, confirming its role as a psychological bridge between institutional attributes and enrollment behavior.

H6: Campus attractiveness has a positive effect on behavioral intention to apply.

1.4. Moderating Role of Social Media Exposure

Social media exposure refers to the frequency and intensity with which prospective students encounter university-related content on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook. In higher education recruitment, such exposure strengthens institutional visibility through visual storytelling, testimonials, event documentation, student-generated content, alumni narratives, and interactive communication. Social media marketing activities influence prospective students' intention to choose higher education institutions through brand recognition and trust (Sriyanto et al., 2024), and social media marketing has become a major channel of inter-university competition in Indonesia (Juhaidi, 2024).

In this study, social media exposure is positioned as a moderating variable. The effect of campus attractiveness on behavioral intention to apply is expected to become stronger when prospective students are frequently exposed to campus-related social media content. A campus may be attractive, but its attractiveness exerts a stronger behavioral effect when it is repeatedly visible, emotionally presented, and socially validated in digital spaces. Repeated exposure increases the accessibility and the perceived diagnosticity of institutional information, so that a favorable appraisal is more readily retrieved and acted upon at the moment a decision is made (Ruangkanjanases et al., 2022). Social media exposure therefore acts as an amplifier that converts campus attractiveness into stronger application intention, rather than as an independent source of that attractiveness. Figure 1 summarizes the conceptual framework.

H7: Social media exposure positively moderates the relationship between campus attractiveness and behavioral intention to apply, such that the relationship becomes stronger as exposure increases.

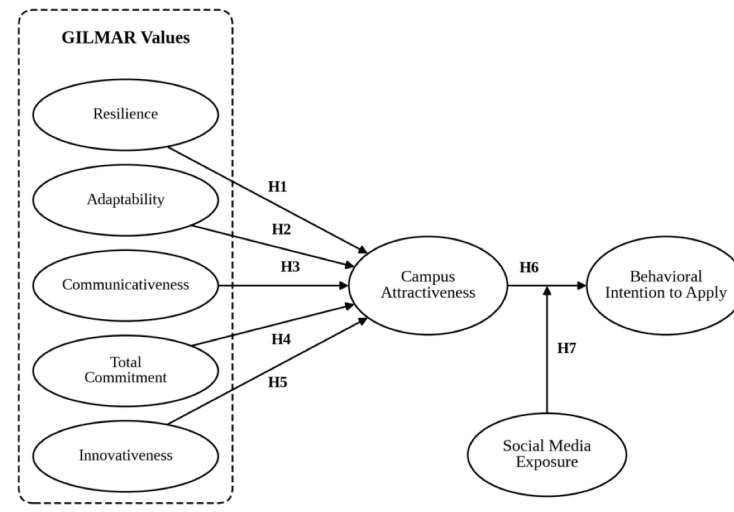


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework and Research Hypotheses (Source: Researchers, 2026)

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Research Design and Setting

This study used a quantitative explanatory design to test the GILMAR Enrollment Acceleration Model in the context of private higher education marketing in Surabaya, Indonesia. The model estimates the effects of the five GILMAR dimensions on campus attractiveness, the effect of campus attractiveness on behavioral intention to apply, and the moderating role of social media exposure in the latter relationship. Surabaya was chosen as the research setting because the GILMAR philosophy is implemented within a private higher education institution in the city, which allows the model to be examined among prospective students in the recruitment market in which the philosophy operates.

2.2. Population, Sample, and Data Collection

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The target population comprised prospective undergraduate students in Surabaya. Purposive sampling was applied with three inclusion criteria: respondents had to (1) be domiciled in Surabaya, (2) be a Grade XI or Grade XII senior high school student or a senior high school graduate, and (3) have actively searched for information about higher education institutions. The final sample consisted of 300 respondents from 15 senior high schools in Surabaya, comprising 11 public and 4 private schools.

The instrument was developed in three stages. First, the items for each construct were adapted from previously validated scales and reworded for the prospective-student context, as summarized in Table 1. Second, the items were administered in Bahasa Indonesia and were back-translated into English by two independent bilingual academics to verify semantic equivalence, while the wording of the GILMAR items was reviewed by 3 experts in marketing and higher education management to establish content validity. Third, the instrument was pilot-tested on 50 prospective students who were not included in the main sample; the pilot confirmed that the items were clear and internally consistent, and minor wording adjustments were made before the main survey was administered.

Data were collected between February and July, 2026 through a self-administered questionnaire distributed with the permission of each participating school. Two screening questions placed at the beginning of the questionnaire verified domicile and prior information-seeking behavior, and only complete responses that satisfied all three inclusion criteria were retained, which produced the final sample of 300 usable responses. To limit common method bias at the design stage, respondents were assured of anonymity, were informed that there were no right or wrong answers, and were presented with the predictor and the criterion items in separate sections of the instrument (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of the Declaration of Helsinki. Participation was voluntary, the purpose of the study and the intended use of the data were explained before the questionnaire was administered, respondents were free to withdraw at any point without consequence, and informed consent was obtained from every participant; for respondents below the age of majority, permission was additionally obtained from the participating school. The research protocol was approved by the school.

2.3. Operational Definitions and Measurement

Eight latent constructs were measured: resilience, adaptability, communicativeness, total commitment, innovativeness, campus attractiveness, social media exposure, and behavioral intention to apply. The five

GILMAR dimensions were specified as value-based institutional antecedents of campus attractiveness, campus attractiveness as the mechanism linking these values to application intention, and social media exposure as the moderating construct. All constructs were modeled reflectively. Table 1 summarizes the operational definition and indicators of each construct.

Table 1. Operational Definitions and Measurement of Constructs

Construct (code)	Operational definition	Indicators
Resilience (TGH)	The institution's ability to remain strong, consistent, and credible when facing competition, market uncertainty, digital disruption, and changing student expectations.	Five items (TGH1–TGH5), adapted from Shaya et al. (2023)
Adaptability (ADP)	The university's ability to adjust its programs, communication, services, and learning systems to environmental change and student needs.	Five items (ADP1–ADP5), adapted from Shaya et al. (2023) and Pangarso et al. (2024)
Communicativeness (KOM)	The institution's ability to deliver clear, responsive, interactive, and persuasive messages to prospective students.	Five items (KOM1–KOM5), adapted from Rutter et al. (2016) and Li et al. (2025)
Total Commitment (TOT)	The institution's seriousness in delivering educational service, supporting students, maintaining quality, and fulfilling its brand promise.	Five items (TOT1–TOT5), adapted from Abbas (2020) and Rizard et al. (2023)
Innovativeness (INV)	The university's ability to introduce new ideas, digital systems, academic programs, learning methods, market-relevant curricula, and creative recruitment strategies.	Five items (INV1–INV5), adapted from Pangarso et al. (2024) and Amoozegar et al. (2025)
Campus Attractiveness (CA)	Prospective students' cognitive and affective evaluation of a university as a desirable place to study, covering academic quality, credibility, campus environment, service experience, symbolic image, and future relevance.	Six items (CA1–CA6), adapted from Kaur et al. (2026)
Social Media Exposure (EMS)	The frequency and intensity with which prospective students encounter university-related content on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook.	Six items (EMS1–EMS6), adapted from Ruangkanjanases et al. (2022) and Sriyanto et al. (2024)
Behavioral Intention to Apply (BIA)	Prospective students' stated willingness and plan to submit an application to the higher education institution.	Six items (BIA1–BIA6), adapted from Kaur et al. (2026) and Juhaidi et al. (2025)

Source: Researchers, 2026.

Note. All indicators were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Indicator codes follow the questionnaire used for data collection. The complete wording of all 43 items.

2.4. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed with PLS-SEM using SmartPLS 4. PLS-SEM suits the aim of this study, which is to develop and predict an integrated enrollment model involving multiple antecedents, an intervening construct, and a moderation mechanism. PLS-SEM is also appropriate for survey data that do not satisfy the assumption of multivariate normality and for studies in which out-of-sample prediction, and not explanation alone, is of interest (Hair et al., 2019). The measurement model was assessed through indicator reliability (outer loadings), internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability), convergent validity (average variance extracted, AVE), and discriminant validity (the Fornell–Larcker criterion; Fornell & Larcker, 1981) and the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT; Henseler et al., 2015). The structural model was assessed through collinearity diagnostics (variance inflation factor, VIF), path coefficients, the coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), out-of-sample predictive power (PLSpredict, Shmueli et al., 2019; and the cross-validated predictive ability test, CVPAT, Liengaard et al., 2021), model fit (SRMR and GoF), and bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples, using two-tailed tests at the 5% significance level and bias-corrected and accelerated confidence intervals.

Several supplementary procedures were applied. Confirmatory tetrad analysis (CTA-PLS; Gudergan et al., 2008) was used to verify the reflective specification of the constructs, and the full collinearity VIF values were compared with the threshold of 3.3 proposed by Kock (2015) as an indication of common method bias. The moderating effect of social media exposure was estimated with the two-stage approach, in which the latent variable scores of campus attractiveness and social media exposure obtained in the first stage are multiplied to form the interaction term that is estimated in the second stage; this approach is recommended when the moderator is measured reflectively and the significance of the interaction is the primary concern (Becker et al., 2023). The interaction was probed through simple slopes at one standard deviation below the mean, at the mean, and at one standard deviation above the mean (Aiken & West, 1991). The indirect effects of the GILMAR dimensions through campus attractiveness were estimated post hoc, and an importance–performance

map analysis (IPMA; Ringle & Sarstedt, 2016) was conducted to derive strategic priorities. PLSpredict was run with ten folds and ten repetitions, and the prediction errors of the PLS-SEM model were compared with those of the indicator average and linear model benchmarks.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

3.1.1. Respondent Characteristics

Table 2 presents the profile of the 300 respondents. All were domiciled in Surabaya and had actively searched for campus-related information, which makes the sample relevant for studying application intention. Male respondents accounted for 62.67% of the sample and female respondents for 37.33%. Most respondents were Grade XII students (56.67%), followed by high school graduates (24.00%) and Grade XI students (19.33%), and three-quarters attended public schools (75.33%). TikTok was the most frequently used source of campus information (37.67%), followed by friends (29.00%) and Instagram (15.67%), showing that prospective students rely heavily on short-form digital content, peer recommendations, and visual social media when searching for information about universities. Accounting was the most preferred study program (58.33%), followed by Engineering (17.00%), Management (14.67%), and Digital Business (10.00%). This profile is appropriate for examining how GILMAR values, campus attractiveness, and social media exposure shape the intention to apply.

Table 2. Respondent Characteristics

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	188	62.67
	Female	112	37.33
Education level	Senior high school	300	100.00
Class status	Grade XI	58	19.33
	Grade XII	170	56.67
	High school graduate	72	24.00
School type	Public school	226	75.33
	Private school	74	24.67
Domicile	Surabaya	300	100.00
Seeking campus information	Yes	300	100.00
Source of information	TikTok	113	37.67
	Friends	87	29.00
	Instagram	47	15.67
	X/Twitter	21	7.00
	Facebook	11	3.67
	YouTube	9	3.00
	WhatsApp	8	2.67
	Family	4	1.33
Study program interest	Accounting	175	58.33
	Engineering	51	17.00
	Management	44	14.67
	Digital Business	30	10.00
School origin	SMAN 1 Surabaya	20	6.67
	SMAN 2 Surabaya	19	6.33
	SMAN 3 Surabaya	21	7.00
	SMAN 4 Surabaya	21	7.00
	SMAN 10 Surabaya	20	6.67
	SMAN 12 Surabaya	20	6.67
	SMAN 15 Surabaya	20	6.67
	SMAN 16 Surabaya	20	6.67
	SMAN 18 Surabaya	20	6.67
	SMAN 19 Surabaya	19	6.33
	SMAN 20 Surabaya	20	6.67
	SMAS Al Falah	20	6.67
	SMAS Al Hikmah	20	6.67
	SMAS Muhammadiyah 2	20	6.67
	SMAS Tri Karya	20	6.67
Total respondents		300	100.00

Source: Processed questionnaire data, 2026

3.1.2. Measurement Model Assessment

Measurement quality was examined in terms of indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. The evaluation criteria follow Hair et al. (2022): outer loadings should exceed 0.70, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability should exceed 0.70, and AVE should exceed 0.50.

Table 3. Validity and Reliability Test

Construct	Indicators	Outer Loading Range	t-statistic Range	p-value	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE ($\sqrt{AVE}$)	Decision
Resilience	TGH1–TGH5	0.767–0.916	22.112–71.290	<0.001	0.897	0.922	0.704 (0.839)	Valid and reliable
Adaptability	ADP1–ADP5	0.745–0.880	21.037–51.119	<0.001	0.858	0.898	0.638 (0.799)	Valid and reliable
Communicativeness	KOM1–KOM5	0.720–0.863	11.034–17.457	<0.001	0.869	0.904	0.655 (0.809)	Valid and reliable
Total Commitment	TOT1–TOT5	0.745–0.917	27.612–115.889	<0.001	0.880	0.913	0.679 (0.824)	Valid and reliable
Innovativeness	INV1–INV5	0.763–0.901	26.277–79.420	<0.001	0.874	0.909	0.668 (0.817)	Valid and reliable
Campus Attractiveness	CA1–CA6	0.722–0.881	23.388–74.884	<0.001	0.885	0.913	0.636 (0.797)	Valid and reliable
Social Media Exposure	EMS1–EMS6	0.744–0.924	20.818–91.380	<0.001	0.906	0.927	0.679 (0.824)	Valid and reliable
Behavioral Intention to Apply	BIA1–BIA6	0.754–0.863	31.583–50.257	<0.001	0.902	0.925	0.672 (0.820)	Valid and reliable
Rule of thumb		≥ 0.70	≥ 1.96	≤ 0.05	≥ 0.70	≥ 0.70	≥ 0.50 ; $\sqrt{AVE} >$ correlations	

Source: Processed SmartPLS output, 2026.

As Table 3 shows, every outer loading exceeds 0.70, with values between 0.720 and 0.924, and the bootstrapping results confirm that all indicators are significant ($t > 1.96$; $p < 0.001$). Each indicator therefore represents its latent construct adequately. Internal consistency is also strong: Cronbach's alpha ranges from 0.858 to 0.906 and composite reliability from 0.898 to 0.927. These values lie above 0.70 and below 0.95, indicating reliable constructs without serious indicator redundancy (Hair et al., 2022). AVE values range from 0.636 to 0.704, above the 0.50 criterion, so all constructs meet the requirement for convergent validity. The square roots of the AVE, reported in parentheses in Table 3, range from 0.797 to 0.839 and are used below to evaluate discriminant validity under the Fornell–Larcker criterion.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity Summary

Criterion	Result	Decision
Fornell–Larcker criterion	For every construct, the square root of the AVE exceeds its correlations with the other constructs.	Accepted
HTMT	All HTMT values range from 0.097 to 0.648, below the conservative threshold of 0.85.	Accepted
Discriminant validity	All eight constructs are empirically distinct.	Accepted

Source: Processed SmartPLS output, 2026.

Table 4 confirms discriminant validity. Under the Fornell–Larcker criterion, each construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with any other construct. The heterotrait–monotrait ratios (Henseler et al., 2015) range from 0.097 to 0.648, well below both the conservative threshold of 0.85 and the liberal threshold of 0.90. The eight constructs are therefore empirically distinct and suitable for structural model analysis.

3.1.3. Common Method Bias

Because all constructs were measured through self-reports in a single questionnaire, common method bias was addressed both procedurally and statistically. At the design stage, respondents were assured of anonymity, were informed that there were no right or wrong answers, and were presented with the predictor and criterion items in separate sections of the instrument (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Statistically, the full collinearity VIF values in the structural model range from 1.044 to 1.288, far below the threshold of 3.3 suggested by Kock (2015) for detecting collinearity caused by common method variance. In addition, the significant interaction effect reported in Section 3.1.7 is difficult to attribute to common method variance, because respondents are unlikely to be able to generate an interaction pattern in their answers and because such variance generally attenuates rather than inflates interaction terms (Siemsen et al., 2010). Common method bias is therefore unlikely to have seriously distorted the estimated relationships.

3.1.4. Structural Model Evaluation

Before the structural relationships were interpreted, confirmatory tetrad analysis was performed as a robustness check on the measurement specification. The CTA p-values of all constructs range from 0.051 to 0.232, all above 0.05, which supports modeling every construct reflectively. Collinearity among predictors is also not a concern, as all VIF values fall between 1.044 and 1.288, well under the conventional limit of 5.

Table 5. Structural Model Quality

Assessment	Result	Decision
CTA p-value range	0.051–0.232	Reflective specification accepted
VIF range	1.044–1.288	No collinearity problem
R ² of Campus Attractiveness	0.563	Moderate explanatory power
R ² of Behavioral Intention to Apply	0.570	Moderate explanatory power
Strongest f ² effect	Campus Attractiveness → Behavioral Intention to Apply = 0.477	Large effect
PLSpredict	Lower prediction error than IA and mostly lower than LM	Good predictive relevance
SRMR	0.073	Good model fit
GoF	0.614	Reported for completeness; interpreted with caution (Henseler & Sarstedt, 2013)
CVPAT: PLS-SEM versus IA	p < 0.001	PLS-SEM significantly better than IA
CVPAT: PLS-SEM versus LM	p = 0.068	PLS-SEM slightly better; not significant at 5%
Overall decision		Suitable for hypothesis testing

Note. IA = indicator average benchmark; LM = linear model benchmark; CVPAT = cross-validated predictive ability test. Source: Processed SmartPLS output, 2026.

Table 5 indicates that the structural model satisfies the required quality criteria. The five GILMAR dimensions jointly explain 56.3% of the variance in campus attractiveness ($R^2 = 0.563$), while campus attractiveness, social media exposure, and their interaction explain 57.0% of the variance in behavioral intention to apply ($R^2 = 0.570$); both values represent moderate explanatory power.

The effect-size results show that campus attractiveness has a large effect on behavioral intention to apply ($f^2 = 0.477$). Among the GILMAR dimensions, adaptability, total commitment, and innovativeness make the strongest contributions to campus attractiveness, whereas communicativeness has a very weak effect. Prospective students therefore appear to respond more to institutional adaptability, service commitment, and innovation than to communication alone.

The predictive assessment also supports the model. PLSpredict yields lower prediction errors than the indicator average benchmark and mostly lower errors than the linear model benchmark. CVPAT shows that PLS-SEM significantly outperforms the indicator average benchmark ($p < 0.001$); the difference from the linear model benchmark is not significant at the 5% level ($p = 0.068$), although the negative loss difference still points

to slightly better predictive performance for PLS-SEM. Finally, the SRMR of 0.073 is below the 0.08 threshold. The GoF value of 0.614 is reported for completeness, but because the usefulness of GoF as a global measure of fit in PLS-SEM has been questioned (Henseler & Sarstedt, 2013), model assessment in this study relies primarily on SRMR together with the out-of-sample evidence from PLSpredict and CVPAT. On this combined basis, the structural model is suitable for hypothesis testing.

3.1.5. Hypothesis Testing

The hypotheses were tested using path coefficients, standard deviations, t-values, and p-values obtained through bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples in SmartPLS 4. With a two-tailed test at the 5% significance level, a hypothesis is supported when the t-value exceeds 1.96 and the p-value is below 0.05.

Table 6. Structural Model Results (Direct Effects)

Hypothesis	Relationship Between Variables	Path Coefficient	STDEV	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	Resilience → Campus Attractiveness	0.163	0.036	4.521	<0.001	Accepted
H2	Adaptability → Campus Attractiveness	0.337	0.040	8.478	<0.001	Accepted
H3	Communicativeness → Campus Attractiveness	0.055	0.037	1.502	0.133	Rejected
H4	Total Commitment → Campus Attractiveness	0.279	0.042	6.687	<0.001	Accepted
H5	Innovativeness → Campus Attractiveness	0.306	0.044	6.973	<0.001	Accepted
H6	Campus Attractiveness → Behavioral Intention to Apply	0.468	0.035	13.302	<0.001	Accepted
H7	Social Media Exposure × Campus Attractiveness → Behavioral Intention to Apply	0.255	0.035	7.311	<0.001	Accepted

Source: Processed SmartPLS output, 2026.

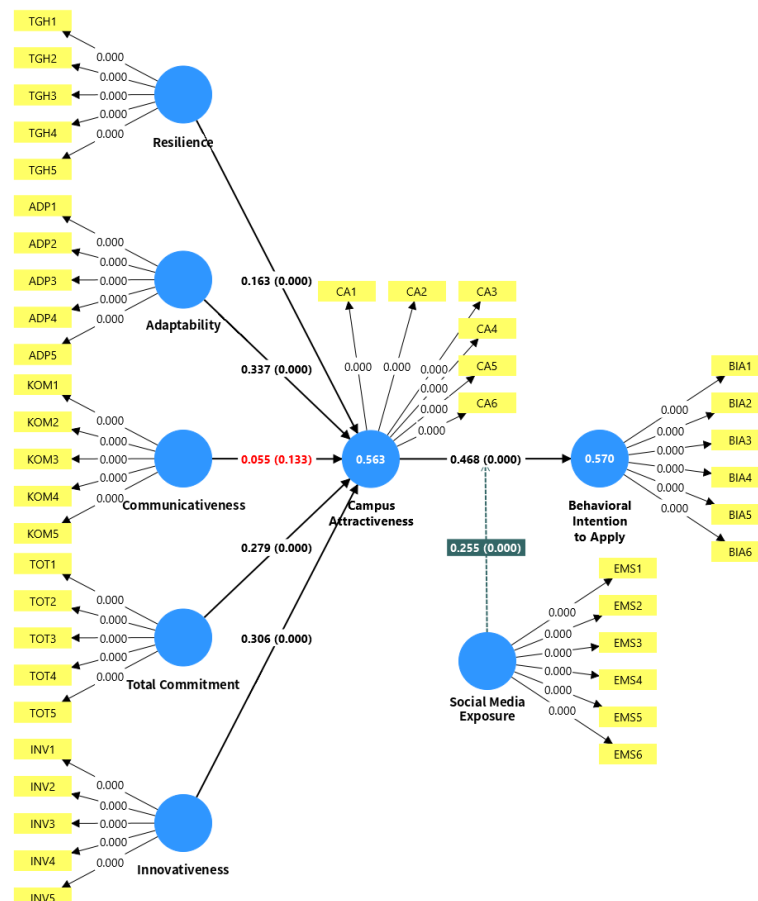


Figure 2. PLS Bootstrapping (Source: Processed SmartPLS output, 2026)

Table 6 and Figure 2 show that resilience, adaptability, total commitment, and innovativeness have positive and significant effects on campus attractiveness, supporting H1, H2, H4, and H5. Adaptability has the strongest effect ($\beta = 0.337$; $t = 8.478$), followed by innovativeness ($\beta = 0.306$; $t = 6.973$), total commitment (β

= 0.279; $t = 6.687$), and resilience ($\beta = 0.163$; $t = 4.521$). Prospective students thus perceive a campus as more attractive when the institution adapts to change, innovates in its academic and service offerings, is fully committed to student development, and remains resilient in the face of competition.

Communicativeness, in contrast, does not significantly influence campus attractiveness ($\beta = 0.055$; $t = 1.502$; $p = 0.133$), so H3 is rejected. Communication alone does not raise attractiveness unless it is backed by stronger institutional substance such as adaptive programs, innovation, service commitment, and strategic consistency. Attractive messages may create awareness among prospective students, but they do not automatically produce a perception of attractiveness when visible institutional value is absent.

Campus attractiveness has a positive and significant effect on behavioral intention to apply ($\beta = 0.468$; $t = 13.302$; $p < 0.001$), supporting H6 and representing the largest direct effect in the model. Prospective students are more likely to apply when they see the campus as credible, relevant, modern, service-oriented, and aligned with their educational aspirations. The interaction between social media exposure and campus attractiveness is also positive and significant ($\beta = 0.255$; $t = 7.311$; $p < 0.001$), supporting H7; this effect is examined in Section 3.1.7.

3.1.6. Indirect Effects through Campus Attractiveness

Because campus attractiveness is theorized as the mechanism through which GILMAR values reach application intention, the specific indirect effect of each GILMAR dimension on behavioral intention to apply was estimated post hoc. Each indirect effect is the product of the dimension's path to campus attractiveness and the path from campus attractiveness to behavioral intention to apply (Table 6), and its standard error was derived with the delta method from the bootstrap standard errors of the two constituent paths. Because the second path is moderated by social media exposure, the estimates in Table 7 refer to the mean level of exposure.

Table 7. Indirect Effects of GILMAR Dimensions through Campus Attractiveness

Indirect path	Indirect effect	SE	z-value	p-value	95% CI	Decision
Resilience → CA → BIA	0.076	0.018	4.289	<0.001	[0.041; 0.111]	Significant
Adaptability → CA → BIA	0.158	0.022	7.128	<0.001	[0.114; 0.201]	Significant
Communicativeness → CA → BIA	0.026	0.017	1.477	0.140	[-0.008; 0.060]	Not significant
Total Commitment → CA → BIA	0.131	0.022	5.949	<0.001	[0.088; 0.174]	Significant
Innovativeness → CA → BIA	0.143	0.023	6.170	<0.001	[0.098; 0.189]	Significant

Note. CA = Campus Attractiveness; BIA = Behavioral Intention to Apply. Indirect effect = path to CA × path from CA to BIA (0.468), evaluated at the mean of Social Media Exposure; SE = delta-method standard error. Source: Computed from the path coefficients and standard errors in Table 6, 2026.

Table 7 shows that campus attractiveness transmits the effects of adaptability (0.158), innovativeness (0.143), total commitment (0.131), and resilience (0.076) to behavioral intention to apply, as the confidence intervals of these effects exclude zero. The indirect effect of communicativeness (0.026) is not significant because its confidence interval includes zero, which follows from its non-significant path to campus attractiveness. Since no direct paths from the GILMAR dimensions to application intention were specified, institutional values influence application intention only to the extent that they first make the campus more attractive. These indirect effects also correspond to the total effects used as importance values in the IPMA in Section 3.1.8.

3.1.7. Moderation Analysis

The moderating role of social media exposure was examined through the interaction term between campus attractiveness and social media exposure. Moderation is supported when the interaction path has a t -value above 1.96 and a p -value below 0.05.

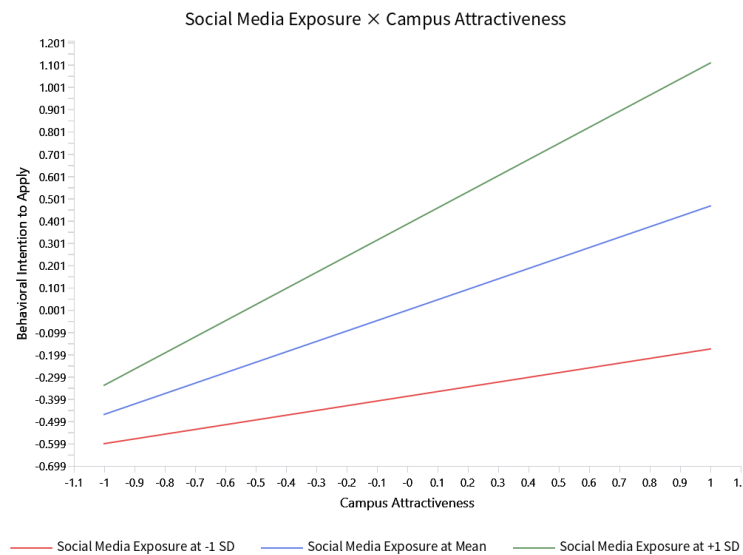


Figure 3. Slope Analysis (Source: Processed SmartPLS output, 2026)

Table 8. Moderation Analysis

Hypothesis	Moderation Path	Interaction Effect	t-value	p-value	Decision
H7	Social Media Exposure × Campus Attractiveness → Behavioral Intention to Apply	0.255	7.311	<0.001	Accepted

Source: Processed SmartPLS output, 2026.

Table 8 shows that social media exposure significantly moderates the relationship between campus attractiveness and behavioral intention to apply (interaction effect = 0.255; $t = 7.311$; $p < 0.001$), so H7 is supported. The simple slope analysis in Figure 3 clarifies the pattern: the effect of campus attractiveness on behavioral intention to apply is 0.212 at one standard deviation below the mean of social media exposure, 0.468 at the mean, and 0.723 at one standard deviation above the mean. The effect of campus attractiveness is therefore more than three times stronger among prospective students with high exposure than among those with low exposure.

This pattern shows that social media exposure works as a digital amplifier in the enrollment decision process. When exposure to campus-related content is low, campus attractiveness has only a limited influence on application intention because prospective students have less information, fewer digital interactions, and weaker psychological familiarity with the institution. When exposure is high, repeated contact with campus content reinforces positive perceptions, increases familiarity with the institution, and builds confidence in choosing the campus. Social media exposure thus intensifies, but does not replace, the effect of campus attractiveness on the intention to apply.

3.1.8. Importance–Performance Map Analysis (IPMA)

An importance–performance map analysis was performed with behavioral intention to apply as the target construct. The IPMA contrasts the total effect of each construct on the target construct (importance) with its average latent variable score rescaled from 0 to 100 (performance), which identifies constructs with strong influence but room for improvement.

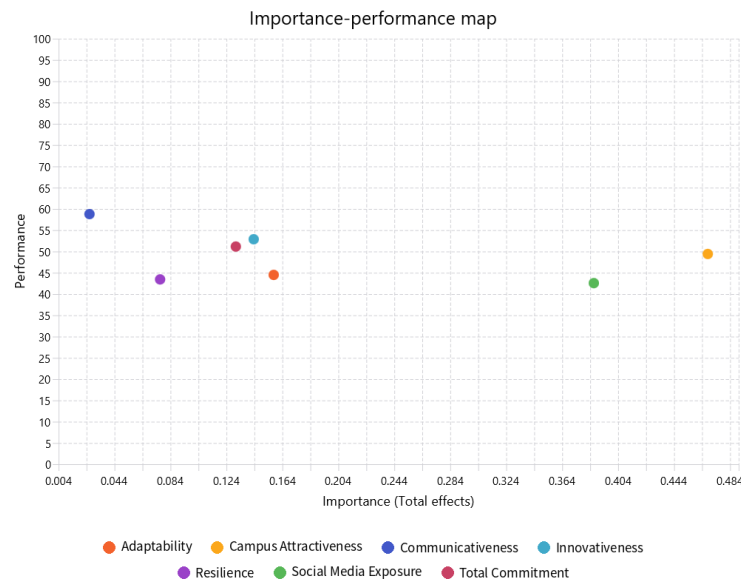


Figure 4. Importance–Performance Map Analysis (Source: Processed SmartPLS output, 2026)

Campus attractiveness has the highest importance for behavioral intention to apply (total effect = 0.468), confirming that application intention depends primarily on how attractive, relevant, credible, and desirable prospective students perceive the campus to be. Its performance, however, is only moderate, leaving considerable room for improvement. Enrollment strategies should therefore first strengthen overall campus attractiveness rather than rely on promotional communication. Social media exposure ranks second in importance but records the lowest performance of all constructs. Although its role in the model is to amplify rather than to form attractiveness, it is clearly a strategic improvement area, because stronger and more consistent exposure to campus-related content would make campus attractiveness more visible, memorable, and persuasive.

Among the GILMAR dimensions, adaptability has the highest importance (0.158), followed by innovativeness (0.143) and total commitment (0.131). Adaptability, however, performs relatively poorly, which makes it the most urgent GILMAR priority: prospective students value adaptive institutions highly but do not yet perceive this quality strongly. Innovativeness and total commitment show moderate performance and should be strengthened further, while resilience combines low importance with low performance and plays a supporting role. Communicativeness shows the highest performance but the lowest importance (0.026); communication is already perceived favorably, yet further improvement in this area is unlikely to yield the same strategic return as improvements in adaptability, innovation, total commitment, and overall campus attractiveness. Table 9 summarizes the resulting priorities.

Table 9. Importance–Performance Priority Matrix for Behavioral Intention to Apply

Construct	Importance (total effect)	Performance	Strategic priority
Campus Attractiveness	0.468 (highest)	Moderate	Priority 1: strengthen the overall value proposition of the campus
Social Media Exposure	Second highest	Lowest	Priority 2: consistent, targeted, and evidence-based campus content
Adaptability	0.158	Low	Priority 3: adaptive curricula, flexible learning, and digital services
Innovativeness	0.143	Moderate–high	Strengthen: new programs and learning innovation
Total Commitment	0.131	Moderate	Strengthen: responsive services and student support
Resilience	0.076	Low	Support: signal institutional stability and continuity
Communicativeness	0.026 (lowest)	Highest	Maintain: shift from message volume to evidence of quality

Note. The importance values of the GILMAR dimensions equal their total effects through Campus Attractiveness (Table 7). Performance levels are classified from the relative positions of the constructs in Figure 4 (Source: Derived from the IPMA output presented in Figure 4).

3.2. Discussion

This study tested the GILMAR Enrollment Acceleration Model by examining how resilience, adaptability, communicativeness, total commitment, and innovativeness shape campus attractiveness, and how campus attractiveness influences behavioral intention to apply at different levels of social media exposure. Six of the seven hypotheses are supported; only the effect of communicativeness on campus attractiveness is not. Prospective students' application intention is therefore driven less by institutional communication than by perceived institutional substance, particularly adaptability, innovation, service commitment, and overall campus attractiveness.

Resilience has a positive and significant effect on campus attractiveness, supporting H1. Prospective students appear to regard a resilient institution as more stable, credible, and capable of sustaining educational quality in a competitive environment, which is consistent with the view of organizational resilience in higher education as the capability to anticipate, cope, and adapt (Shaya et al., 2023). The coefficient for resilience is nevertheless the smallest among the significant GILMAR dimensions, suggesting that stability alone does not create strong attractiveness. Resilience becomes valuable when it is accompanied by visible adaptability and innovation.

Adaptability has the strongest effect on campus attractiveness, supporting H2 and constituting the most important finding among the GILMAR dimensions. Prospective students are highly responsive to institutions that appear flexible, responsive to change, digitally oriented, and aligned with future career needs. This result is consistent with evidence that Indonesian private tertiary institutions sustain their competitive advantage through knowledge absorption and innovation capabilities (Pangarso et al., 2024). In student recruitment, adaptability signals that a campus understands market change, student expectations, and digital transformation. The IPMA adds a practical nuance: although adaptability is the most important GILMAR dimension, its performance is relatively low, so the attractiveness it could generate has not yet been fully realized.

Communicativeness does not significantly influence campus attractiveness, and H3 is rejected. This result offers an important theoretical refinement: communication is necessary in higher education marketing, but it does not by itself create attractiveness when it is not supported by stronger institutional evidence. The finding aligns with Juhaidi et al. (2025), who found that promotional efforts have limited effects on enrollment intention while brand awareness and brand trust play stronger roles. Prospective students may not be persuaded by communicative messages unless those messages convey credible academic value, institutional relevance, and visible student benefits. The IPMA reinforces this interpretation, as communicativeness combines the highest performance with the lowest importance. Two further readings help to situate the result. From a signaling perspective, messages that are inexpensive to produce and difficult for the receiver to verify operate as cheap talk, whereas adaptive programs, innovation, and service delivery are costly and observable and therefore function as credible signals of institutional quality (Spence, 1973). The result should also be read against studies that report significant effects of promotion on institutional choice (Kango et al., 2021). The divergence is plausibly a matter of the stage of the decision process at which each construct operates: communication creates awareness and consideration, but among respondents who had already been actively searching for campus information, communicativeness was uniformly perceived as high and therefore no longer discriminated between institutions at the attractiveness stage. Communicativeness is thus best interpreted as a necessary but non-differentiating condition rather than as an irrelevant one.

Total commitment and innovativeness have positive and significant effects on campus attractiveness, supporting H4 and H5. Total commitment reflects institutional seriousness in delivering academic services, administrative responsiveness, student support, and career-relevant learning experiences, consistent with evidence that service quality and brand equity shape university reputation and students' choice intentions (Rizard et al., 2023). Innovativeness reflects a campus's ability to introduce new programs, digital services, creative learning methods, and future-oriented positioning, in line with Pangarso et al. (2024), who show that innovation is central to the competitiveness of Indonesian private higher education institutions. Prospective students thus evaluate a campus not only by its reputation or promotion but also by whether it appears committed and ready for the future.

Campus attractiveness has a strong positive effect on behavioral intention to apply, supporting H6. Together with the significant indirect effects in Table 7, this result confirms campus attractiveness as the central mechanism that converts institutional values into application intention. Prospective students are more likely to apply when they perceive the campus as credible, relevant, modern, supportive, and aligned with their aspirations. The finding is consistent with Kaur et al. (2026), who show that university attractiveness shapes application intention and mediates the influence of institutional digital and brand attributes.

Social media exposure significantly moderates the relationship between campus attractiveness and behavioral intention to apply, supporting H7. The simple slope rises from 0.212 at low exposure to 0.723 at high exposure, meaning that campus attractiveness becomes considerably more persuasive when prospective students repeatedly encounter campus-related content on social media. This finding is consistent with Li et al. (2025), who report that social media communication and brand image influence students' enrollment intentions, and with Sriyanto et al. (2024), who show that social media marketing strengthens prospective students' intentions through trust and brand recognition. It also supports treating social media exposure as a boundary condition of the attractiveness–intention relationship, as proposed in this study.

The IPMA results strengthen this strategic interpretation. Campus attractiveness is the most important driver of behavioral intention to apply, social media exposure is an important but under-performing amplifier, and adaptability, innovativeness, and total commitment are the most strategic GILMAR levers. Higher education institutions should therefore not over-rely on communication campaigns; the stronger strategy is to improve the substance behind the message through adaptive programs, innovative learning models, committed student services, and credible institutional positioning.

Overall, the study extends prior work that focuses mainly on promotion, brand image, or social media by showing that enrollment intention is formed through a deeper mechanism: institutional values build campus attractiveness, and social media exposure strengthens the conversion of attractiveness into application intention. Enrollment acceleration therefore requires more than visibility; it requires attractive institutional substance amplified through consistent digital exposure.

3.2.1. Theoretical Implications

This study makes three theoretical contributions to higher education marketing and to research on technology-enabled student recruitment. First, it introduces GILMAR as a value-based institutional marketing construct and demonstrates empirically that institution-specific values, rather than generic determinants such as reputation, tuition, or promotion alone, can explain how prospective students evaluate a campus. Four of the five GILMAR dimensions significantly shape campus attractiveness, which supports treating institutional marketing philosophy as a legitimate antecedent in enrollment models.

Second, the study establishes campus attractiveness as the central evaluative mechanism in the enrollment decision process. Consistent with the S–O–R logic, the GILMAR values influence application intention only through campus attractiveness, and the indirect effects of adaptability, innovativeness, total commitment, and resilience are all significant. Campus attractiveness is thus more than a descriptive perception; it explains how institutional substance becomes behavioral intention.

Third, the study refines the role of social media in higher education marketing. By specifying social media exposure as a moderator, the model shows that digital exposure conditions the strength of the attractiveness–intention relationship, with the effect of attractiveness more than tripling from low to high exposure. The non-significant effect of communicativeness further indicates that communication matters theoretically only when it carries evidence of institutional value, which qualifies communication-centered explanations of student recruitment.

Fourth, the study responds to calls for explanatory models in higher education marketing to be validated predictively as well as statistically. Because the model was assessed out of sample through PLSpredict and the cross-validated predictive ability test, and not through R^2 alone, the GILMAR framework can be used as a planning instrument for recruitment decisions rather than only as a retrospective account of student perceptions (Shmueli et al., 2019; Liengard et al., 2021).

3.2.2. Practical Implications

For university leaders and marketing managers, the results suggest a clear order of action. Campus attractiveness should be strengthened as the central enrollment strategy, not only through promotional messages but through visible institutional substance: relevant academic programs, modern learning systems, strong student services, career-oriented support, and a credible institutional image. Among the GILMAR dimensions, adaptability, innovativeness, and total commitment deserve priority. Management should develop adaptive curricula, digital learning innovation, responsive administrative services, student-centered academic support, and programs aligned with labor market needs; adaptability in particular combines high importance with relatively low performance and therefore offers the largest potential gain.

Because communicativeness does not significantly influence campus attractiveness, institutions should not rely excessively on communication volume, slogans, or promotional intensity. Communication strategies should instead present concrete evidence of institutional quality, such as student achievements, alumni outcomes, industry collaboration, learning innovation, and authentic student experiences; in other words, communication must be evidence-based rather than merely persuasive. Finally, the significant moderating role of social media exposure, together with its low performance in the IPMA, indicates that universities should optimize social media as an enrollment acceleration tool. Content should be consistent, visually strong, authentic, and targeted at prospective students, and because TikTok and Instagram were among the main information sources of respondents, student testimonials, campus activity videos, alumni stories, and program-specific content on these platforms should be used strategically to amplify campus attractiveness.

These priorities translate into a concrete sequence of action. In the short term, adaptability can be made visible by publishing curriculum updates, industry certification partnerships, and flexible or hybrid learning options on the channels that prospective students actually use. In the medium term, innovation and commitment can be institutionalized through new study programs, digital student services, and published service standards for admissions and academic support. Throughout, social media should shift from announcement-driven posting to a consistent editorial calendar built on verifiable evidence such as student projects, alumni employment outcomes, and industry collaboration. Because the marginal return on communicativeness is the

lowest in the model, additional recruitment budget is better allocated to generating evidence worth communicating than to increasing the volume of messages.

4. CONCLUSION

This study developed and empirically tested the GILMAR Enrollment Acceleration Model to explain prospective students' behavioral intention to apply to higher education institutions in Surabaya. Resilience, adaptability, total commitment, and innovativeness significantly enhance campus attractiveness, whereas communicativeness does not. Adaptability is the strongest antecedent, followed by innovativeness and total commitment, indicating that prospective students respond more strongly to visible institutional substance than to communication efforts alone.

Campus attractiveness significantly increases behavioral intention to apply and transmits the effects of the four significant GILMAR dimensions, confirming its role as the key mechanism that translates institutional values into enrollment intention. Social media exposure significantly strengthens this relationship, so digital exposure functions as an amplifier that makes campus attractiveness more persuasive. The model explains 56.3% of the variance in campus attractiveness and 57.0% of the variance in behavioral intention to apply. Practically, higher education institutions should prioritize adaptive programs, innovative learning experiences, strong service commitment, and strategic social media exposure to improve campus attractiveness and accelerate enrollment intention among prospective students.

The three research questions can therefore be answered directly. First, four of the five GILMAR dimensions shape campus attractiveness, with adaptability the strongest and communicativeness not significant. Second, campus attractiveness significantly increases behavioral intention to apply and represents the largest single effect in the model. Third, social media exposure changes the strength with which attractiveness is converted into intention, more than tripling the effect of campus attractiveness on application intention between low and high levels of exposure.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design supports conclusions about associations consistent with the proposed model but not about causal ordering over time. Second, all constructs were measured through self-reports from a single respondent group; although the collinearity diagnostics suggest that common method bias is not a serious concern, behavioral data such as actual applications or enrollment records would strengthen the evidence. Third, purposive sampling in a single city limits generalizability, and the sample is concentrated in particular segments, with most respondents being male (62.67%) and interested in accounting (58.33%). Fourth, the GILMAR philosophy originates from one institution, so its dimensions may require contextual adjustment before being applied to institutions with different missions, governance structures, or market positions. Fifth, the indirect effects in Table 7 were derived from the estimated paths using the delta method; bootstrap confidence intervals estimated directly in SmartPLS would provide a more robust test. Sixth, social media exposure was captured through self-reported frequency and intensity rather than through platform analytics, so the moderator reflects perceived rather than recorded exposure. Seventh, no control variables such as gender, school type, or parental education were included in the structural model, so unmodeled heterogeneity may influence the estimates.

Future research can test the GILMAR Enrollment Acceleration Model in other cities, in different types of universities, and among broader student segments to improve generalizability. Future studies may also incorporate variables such as brand trust, perceived tuition value, parental influence, alumni reputation, perceived career outcomes, and institutional credibility to offer a more comprehensive explanation of enrollment decisions. Longitudinal designs that link application intention to actual application and enrollment behavior, as well as multigroup analyses by school type, information source, or study program interest, are also recommended. Complementing PLS-SEM with necessary condition analysis would make it possible to test directly whether communicativeness functions as a necessary but non-differentiating condition, as the present results suggest (Dul, 2016).

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Author contributions. M.A.R. conceptualized the study and developed the model; D.C.N. designed the instrument; A. supervised data collection; Z.N.M. conducted the statistical analysis. All authors contributed to drafting and revising the manuscript and approved the final version.

Conflict of interest. Three of the authors (M.A.R., D.C.N., and Z.N.M.) are affiliated with STIE Mahardhika Surabaya, where the GILMAR philosophy is implemented as part of the institution's strategic identity. The

authors declare no other competing financial or personal interests that could have influenced the work reported in this article.

Data availability. The dataset generated and analyzed during this study is available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Ethics statement. The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and the research protocol was approved by the participants and schools.

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