

**TRAINING QUALITY AT PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES
FROM A MARKETING PERSPECTIVE - FOUNDATION FOR INNOVATION
IN GOVERNANCE OF PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN HO CHI MINH CITY**

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Abstract

Higher education plays a particularly important role in training high-quality human resources as a prerequisite for the rapid and sustainable development of a country. These human resources have a pivotal role in the process of technology transfer, scientific research, in order to promote economic growth and social development. The private universities are established to meet the demand of study for this force as well as to contribute to the supply of high-quality human resources for the development of the nation.

However, the administration and operation of private higher education institutions are still inadequate, and the conditions for ensuring the quality of teaching and learning of these higher education institutions are still inadequate. This has led to the quality of training not meeting the needs of society and the requirements of the knowledge labor market.

The article inherits the definitions of training quality to build the concept of higher education quality from the perspective of marketing definitions. This concept aims to orient the quality of training as a basis for improving the higher education governance for private universities in Ho Chi Minh City.

I. Introduction

Vietnam is facing a mismatch between the training orientations of private universities and the needs of the labor market. It leads to a huge gap between university training and employment in the labor market. This situation is clearly reflected in the high unemployment rate of people with university degrees according to Do Thi Thuy Hien, Nguyen Thanh Long, Pham Ngoc Kim Khanh (2021, pp. 134-148)¹. Besides, there was also a portion of the unemployed knowledge workforce is subsistence workers based on The General Statistics Office² (GSO) (2022 and 2023).

¹ Do Thi Thuy Hien, Nguyen Thanh Long, Pham Ngoc Kim Khanh (2021, pp. 134-148)

² The General Statistics Office, (2022), <https://www.gso.gov.vn/su-kien/2023/04/tong-cuc-thong-ke-hop-bao-cong-bo-tinh-hinh-lao-dong-viec-lam-quy-i-nam-2023/>

We realize that the current model of management and operation of educational institutions cannot satisfy the needs of this labor market segment. Most higher education institutions have implemented many solutions to improve training quality. However, these educational institutions mostly focus on aspects such as updating curricula, changing new textbooks, and innovating teaching methods towards modernity. All these ways, including quality assurance and accreditation of training programs, are just examples of improving training quality, not the core of educational administration as Nguyen Thi Thu (2023)³ published in her research paper.

This is also the driving force that helps us understand the causes and propose a university governance model "*Training quality at private universities from a marketing perspective - foundation for innovation in governance of private universities in Ho Chi Minh City*" to meet the best human resource supply for society. This innovation is in the direction of shortening the gap between training and career, which businesses consider essential for higher education training.

II. Aims, tasks, subjects and scope of study

2.1. Aims of study

The paper aims to develop the concept of training quality at private universities from the perspective of Marketing. Redefining the factors in the concept of training quality to provide an orientation on training quality in private universities from the perspective of Marketing.

The basis for innovating private university governance is from the training quality orientation are mentioned above.

2.2. Tasks of study

Student expectations for teaching and learning subjects are taken from a survey at private universities in Ho Chi Minh City. All the data collected from this survey is used to find the factors of the above student expectations.

The authors based on the definition of Marketing, the definition of training quality and student expectations about teaching and learning in order to: Building the concept of training quality of private universities from the perspective of Marketing.

³ Nguyễn Thị Thu (2023). Giải pháp thúc đẩy cơ hội tiếp cận thị trường lao động cho sinh viên sau tốt nghiệp. *Tạp chí Công Thương*.

The innovative model of private university governance is built from the concept of training quality from the perspective of Marketing.

2.3. Object of study

The object of the study is a model for innovating university governance based on the quality of teaching and learning in private universities.

2.4. Scope of study

Survey on teaching and learning expectations of students majoring in marketing and foreign languages at private universities in Ho Chi Minh City with a sample size of 120 students. 60 students majoring in marketing and 60 students majoring in foreign languages at private universities were surveyed. All of them are students from Hung Vuong University Ho Chi Minh City, Van Hien University, Van Lang University and HCMC University of Economics and Finance.

Every business and enterprises have marketing activities by the content of marketing and the language of expression in which foreign languages has also contributed. Marketing students perceive the quality of training from a marketing perspective as well as students of other majors, but better; Foreign language students have the same perception as marketing students, but through foreign languages in their works.

Most of the students admitted to private universities have the same segment of the spectrum of admission scores, so they are quite similar in terms of training quality, so the sample size is not large.

The quality of education mentioned in this article is understood as the quality of teaching and learning courses in curriculum.

2.5. Method of study

The paper does not use quantitative methods to build and run an innovation model of university governance, nor does it consider based on the viewpoints of training quality assessment organizations to build this model. This paper also does not build the quality of training from the perspective of university administrators, faculty leaders, or lecturers to provide an innovation model of university governance.

The study theme of this paper is designed on qualitative research based on the logic of scientific theory and statistical processing to show the marketing perspective on training quality. Education quality cooperates with the Western private university

governance model and the private university governance model in Ho Chi Minh City to propose an innovative private university governance model in Ho Chi Minh City. This innovative model of private university governance was formed from the following steps:

Step 1: Survey expectations of students such as understanding course knowledge, applying course knowledge to solving practical problems; Be able to work at the company immediately upon graduation; The company is satisfied with students when employing employees (see Table 2, Appendix).

Step 2: Marketing perspective are marketing definitions and the inheritance of quality definitions from perspective itself.

Step 3: The concept of training quality at private universities are built from the perspective of students majoring in marketing.

Step 4: The factors that shape training quality are identified in order to provide orientations for training quality in private universities.

Step 5: The university governance models should innovate into governance model for sake of life with the aim of serving the expectations of students and the needs of the businesses and enterprises community.

II. Content of the study

2.1. The university governance model of Europe and the United States

Muhammad I. (2015).⁴ express that "Governance" is the process of controlling social and political power by establishing rules for governing communities within the nation. Governance is a theoretical concept of behavioral theories and operating processes according to which activities aimed at stabilizing an organization arise and persist as previously mentioned by Kezar and Eckel (2004)⁵.

According to Lapworth (2004)⁶, the result of the decline in academic and the current governance ways of universities made the concept of enterprise governance along with the decentralized governance. Middlehurst (2013)⁷ complemented the concept of Lapworth and gives a definition of university governance. University

⁴ Muhammad I. (2015) The Concept of Good Governance in Modern World and Governance by Caliphs of Islam – Part I. *Courting the Law*. Online material.

⁵ Kezar A. and Eckel D. P. (2004). Meeting Today's Governance Challenges: A synthesis of the literature and examination of a future agenda for scholarship. *The Journal of Higher Education*.

⁶ Lapworth S. (2004). Arresting Decline in Shared Governance: Towards a Flexible Model for Academic Participation. *Higher Education Quarterly*. 58 (4): 299–314.

⁷ Middlehurst R. (2013). Changing internal governance: Are leadership roles and management structures in United Kingdom Universities fit for future. pp. 275-294

governance is enterprise governance at but at a higher level to ensure the responsibilities and legitimate interests of the organizations involved. Based on the concepts and definitions that ensure the responsibilities and legitimate interests of relevant organizations for university governance, we temporarily offer the following model (picture 1):

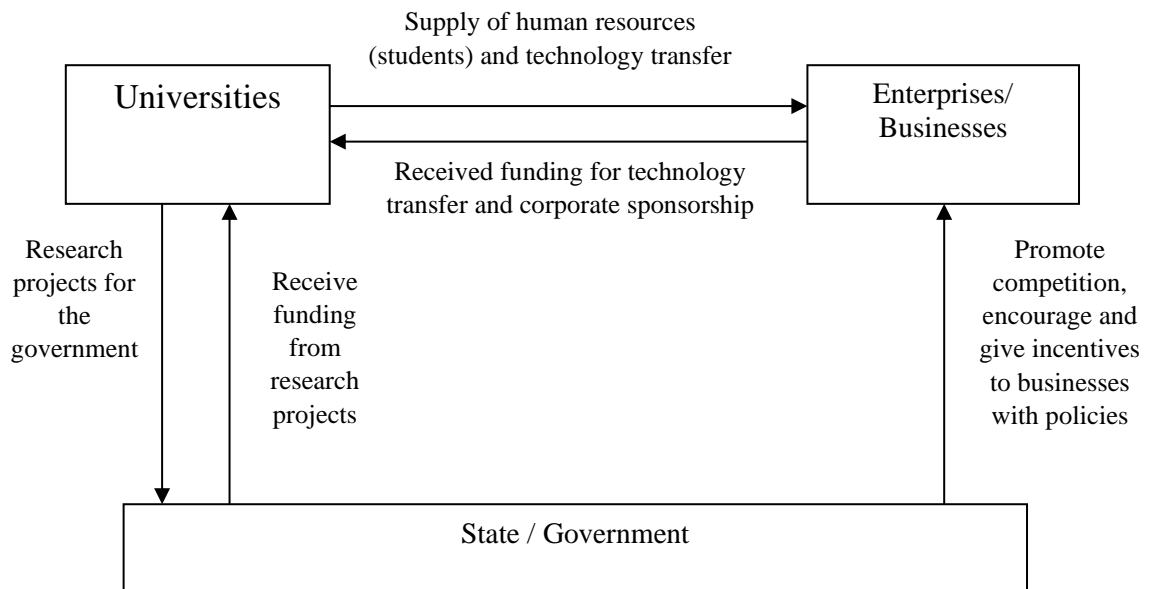


Figure 1: Diagram of the innovative private university governance model

State and Government

The state/ government needs to create conditions for the free market to operate to promote competition. Every business and enterprises that competes in the market must rely on knowledge. Businesses and enterprises attached to universities when they rely on knowledge to compete. The state/ government also needs to develop policies to encourage tax reduction to create more incentives for businesses and enterprises attached to universities.

Moreover, the state / government should give part of the scientific research funding from the state budget to private universities in order to create a driving force for the development of training quality.

Enterprises and businesses

Enterprises and businesses can transfer technology and receive human resources from universities that enterprises order. Contrarily, businesses and businesses sponsor scientific research, student scholarships and technology transfer fees for these universities which they have signed cooperation agreements.

Universities

Universities receive a source of funding such as tuition fees, grants and industrial transfer fees from businesses as well as scientific research funding from government projects. Universities will focus on skilled human resource training for the society and doing scientific research to promote the sustainable development for the community on the basis of this funding.

European and American university governance is a form of governance aimed at developing human potential and capacity; increase the benefits of the associated enterprises; develop the national economy sustainably; and serve the community.

2.2. The university governance model from private universities in HCMC

The establishment of the current university is based on Clause 5, Article 88 of Decree 46/2017/ND-CP⁸ (amended by Clause 34, Article 1 of Decree 135/2018/ND-CP⁹) on regulations on establishment of universities. These Government Decrees assume that the university has both a social function and a service provision function as an enterprise. Thus, the business owner is also the owner of the university (Chairman of the university's Board of Directors) according to these Decrees as picture 2.

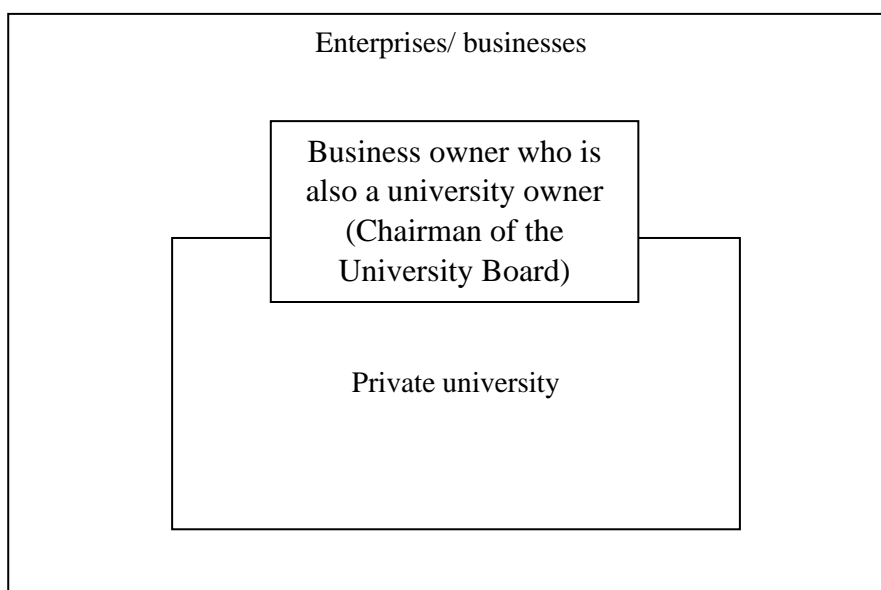


Figure 2: Diagram of the existing private university governance model

Most forms of private university governance in Vietnam today are run by enterprises. The business owner is also the owner of a university such as Van Hien University (under HungHau Holdings, HungHau Education¹⁰ on October 31, 2012), Van

⁸ Decree 46/2017/ND-CP

⁹ Decree 135/2018/ND-CP

¹⁰ HungHau Holdings, HungHau Education. Website: <https://hungchau.vn/about/>

Lang University (under Van Lang Investment and Educational Management Corporation, Van Lang Education Group)¹¹, Hong Bang University (under Nguyen Hoang Group)¹², HCMC University of Economics and Finance (under HUTECH investment development education joint stock company)¹³, Hung Vuong University HCMC (under Kinh Bac city development holding corporation)¹⁴ etc.

All activities of these universities serve the will of business owners rather than serving students and the community with this governance model. This model of university governance by the business owner who is also the university owner makes it difficult to meet the labor demand. University governance run by enterprises only serves the will of the boss rather than students and the community. These ways of university governance led to the role of talent training (student center) and applied scientific research for enterprises of universities are blurred.

2.3. University governance model innovation at private universities in HCMC

2.3.1. Student expectations survey

The student expectations survey about course teaching and learning at private universities in Ho Chi Minh City including private universities such as Hung Vuong University HCMC, Van Hien University, Van Lang University, HCMC University of Economics and Finance... (see Table 2, Appendix).

This survey expectations of students with a sample survey of 120 students (this sample survey sample is small because students at a private university are homogeneous in many ways, so a large sample is not taken). The student survey expectations such as understanding course knowledge, applying course knowledge to solving practical problems; Being able to work at the company immediately upon graduation; The company is satisfied with students when employing employees. The results of the survey are described in Table 1 below:

Questions	Survey papers	Consented papers	Ratio
1. Understanding course knowledge?	120	115	96%

¹¹ Van Lang Investment and Educational Management Corporation. Van Lang Education Group. <https://www.vlu.edu.vn/en>

¹² Nguyen Hoang Group. <https://nhg.vn/en>

¹³ HUTECH investment development education joint stock company. <https://hosocongy.vn/cong-ty-cp-dau-tu-phan-trien-giao-duc-hutech-com-106686.htm>

¹⁴ Kinh Bac city development holding corporation. <https://www.kinhbaccity.vn/news/vi/kbc-business-fields/education>

Questions	Survey papers	Consented papers	Ratio
2. applying course knowledge to solving practical problems?	120	102	85%
3. Being able to work at the company immediately upon graduation?	120	104	87%
4. The company is satisfied with students when employing employees?	120	102	85%
5. Other opinions			3%

Table 1: Survey results of student expectations for teaching and learning of courses.

The response to the survey questionnaire is more than 88% for the questions: Understanding course knowledge; Applying course knowledge to solving practical problems; Be able to work at the company immediately upon graduation; The company is satisfied with students when employing employees. Among the students who responded, 45% were marketing students and 40% were foreign language students, and the other opinion was 3%.

The remaining 3% of these students stated 2 views: the psychology of students when choosing a university is the desire to have a better learning environment because the facilities of the private school are better invested; Expect to be able to experience activities different from public universities.

2.3.2. Definitions of Marketing

Definition 1: *“Marketing is the process of working with markets to conduct exchanges to satisfy human needs and wants. Marketing can also be understood as a form of human activity (including organizations) aimed at satisfying needs and wants through exchange”* (Tran Minh Bien¹⁵, 2011, pp. 7).

Definition 2: *“Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large”* (American Marketing Association¹⁶, Board of Directors, Approved 2017).

Definition 3: *“The science and art of exploring, creating, and delivering value to satisfy the needs of a target market at a profit. Marketing identifies unfulfilled needs and*

¹⁵ Trần Minh Biên và các tác giả (2011). Giáo trình Marketing căn bản.

¹⁶ American Marketing Association. Retrieved at website: <https://www.ama.org/the-definition-of-marketing-what-is-marketing/#:~:text=Marketing%20is%20the%20activity%2C%20set,Approved%202017>

desires. It defines, measures and quantifies the size of the identified market and the profit potential” (Kotler and Armstrong¹⁷, 2012, pp. 5)

2.4. Definitions of quality

Definition 1:

People often think of a superior product or service that meets or exceeds expectations when we discuss the word "quality". These expectations are based on two factors: the desired level of use by the customer and the selling price set by the manufacturer or service provider. The product or service provided exceeds the expectations from customers then the product is considered to be of quality.

Thus, it can be concluded that “quality” is something that is somewhat ambiguous in terms of perception. "Quality" can be quantified as the formula which Whitten (2004)¹⁸ has cited in Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry (1988) to express it as follows:

$$Q = \frac{P}{E}$$

In which: Q means Quality of perception or Perceived quality, P demonstrates the Perception, and E illustrates Expectations.

P is determined based on perceived performance; E is based on expectations. If the P/E result is ≥ 1 , it means that the product or service is perceived as good or in other words, quality has met the social need when $Q \geq 1$.

The concept of quality of manufacturers or service agents are to make its products as well as services meet the expectations of customers at an acceptable cost. The customer will not accept the value of the product or service if the cost of the production and use of the service does not match the selling price.

This means that the selling price will be higher than the price the customer pays in exchange for the perceived performance of the product or service offered. Thus, the perception of quality between manufacturers, service providers and customers are completely different but they are not independent.

Customers have a different assessment and conception of the quality of products and services than manufacturers or service providers (Bui Nguyen Hung, Nguyen Thuy

¹⁷ Kotler, P. & Armstrong, G. (2012), *Principles of Marketing*, 14th Edition

¹⁸Whitten D. (2004). Information Systems Service Quality Measurement: The Evolution of The SERVQUAL Instrument. *Journal of International Technology and Information Management*. 13(3)-4, pp. 181-191

Quynh Loan¹⁹, 2016, pp. 2). The relationship between the quality assessment methods and the quality concept is demonstrated by the diagram in Figure 3 below.

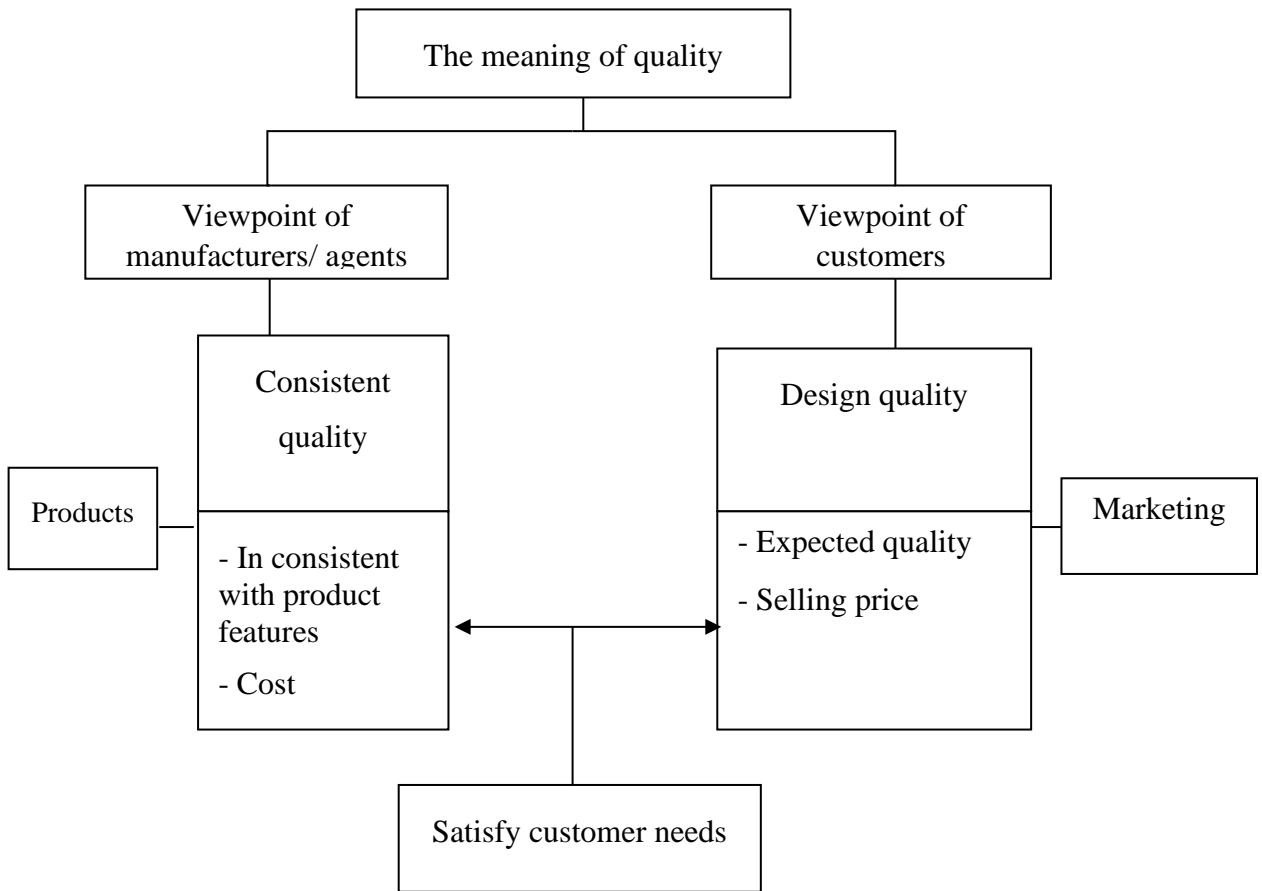


Figure 3: Diagram of the relationship between the two perspectives on quality

Definition 2:

Deming (1986) defines “*Quality is a predictable degree of uniformity and dependability, at low cost and suited to the market*” as cited by Gabriela-Livia (2021, pp. 105-110)²⁰. “Quality” is to continuously meet customer requirements at low cost. “Quality” is the satisfaction of the needs of goods and services used by actual customers through various definitions and concepts of “quality”. In short, quality is consistent with the cost and expectations of the customer to use and serve to other needs.

3. Building the concept of “training quality” of private universities

3.1. Formation theory the concept of “training quality” of private universities

Marketing definitions indicate that: marketing is a social governance process aimed at satisfying the needs and wants of people (consumers) through the creation and exchange of products or services with others.

¹⁹ Bui Nguyen Hung, Nguyen Thuy Quynh Loan (2016). *Quality management*

²⁰ Gabriela-Livia C. (2021). Total Quality Management – An Instrument for Improving Organizational Efficiency. *American Journal of Engineering Research (AJER)*, pp. 105-110

The quality definitions explain that: Meeting expectations from customers including both usage level and low cost is product quality.

Expectations of students through the survey: Understanding subject knowledge; Applying course knowledge to solving practical problems; Being able to work at the company immediately upon graduation; and the company is satisfied with students when employing employees. From the perspective of Marketing definition, the definition of Quality and along with the expectations of students, we can deduce in training that there are three factors: universities/colleges, students and corporates (employer).

Private universities create two types of products including:

The first product includes curriculum, training methods, policy of educational institutions, quality of lecturers, and lecturing quality; the customer using these products (services) are students. The second product of universities and colleges are graduates; This force is a human resource to meet the need of enterprises and society. All of these descriptions are summarized and shown in diagram of figure 4.

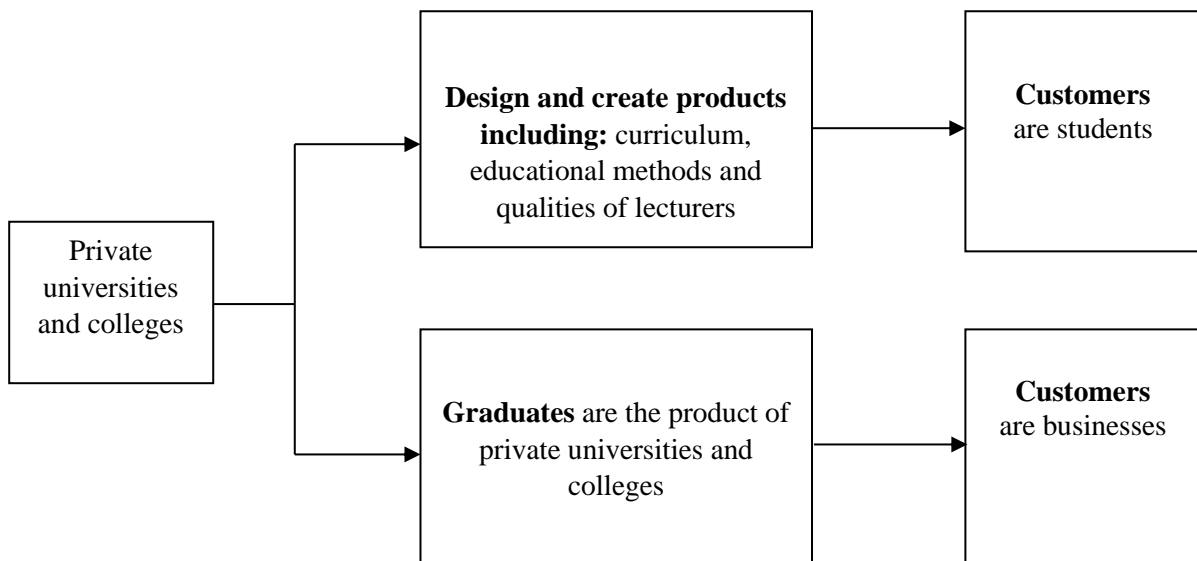


Figure 4: Customers of private universities and colleges

Thus, according to the diagram of Figure 4, customers of private universities and colleges include two objects: students and labor recruitment enterprises and businesses (recruited graduates). Also based on this diagram, inferring the training quality of private universities are that educational institutions have to design and create products including curriculum, educational methods and quality of lecturers.

The quality of education needs to meet the expectations of students; meeting the expectations of enterprises (when they recruiting and employing graduates) is illustrated through the diagram of Figure 5.

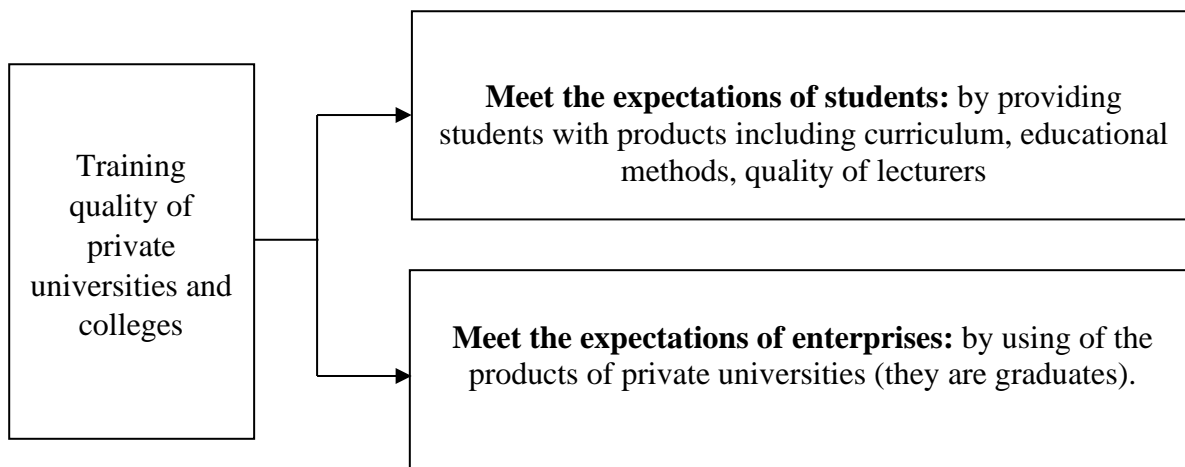


Figure 5: Two core factors create the training quality of private universities and colleges

3.2. Perspectives on the training quality of private universities and colleges

The concept of "quality in higher education" appeared early in the UK and Europe in the 1990s and then spread to other countries around the world as presented by Harvey L. and Askling B. (2003)²¹. Universities and colleges have the perception that students are the main customers and enterprises are the customers who recruit students to work for them as Clare (2004)²² cited from Madu & Kuei (1993).

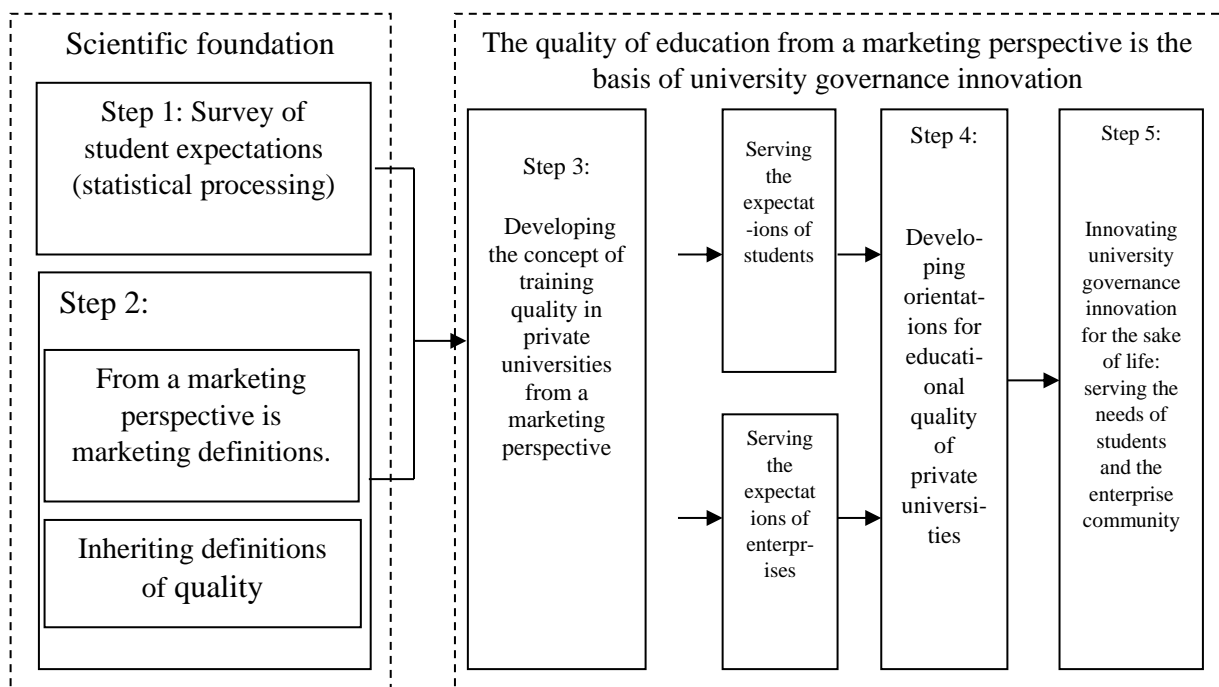
The authors of this paper also complete and interpret the concept of the quality of private universities as previous authors. The quality of private higher education through education includes curricula, educational methods and the quality of lecturers. Private universities and colleges meet both the expectations of students and enterprises. Graduates of private universities were recruited and worked in enterprises and businesses.

3.3. The innovative model of private university governance in Ho Chi Minh City

The innovative model of private university governance in Ho Chi Minh City

²¹ Harvey L. and Askling B. (2003). Chapter Quality in higher education. in Begg R. (eds) The dialogue between higher education research and practice. *Kluwer Academic publishers*. pp. 69-83.

²² Clare C. (2004). Perception of Quality in Higher Education. Proceedings of the Australian Universities Quality Forum. AUQA Occasional Publication.



After constructing the concept of training quality for private universities from a marketing perspective from the survey to understand expectations of students as well as enterprises. After knowing the expectations of students and the needs of businesses from the survey. From that, it is inferred that the quality of education is to serve the expectations of students and the needs of businesses. This is the basis for building the training quality orientations of private universities.

The form of university governance from serving the will of the owner to the governing form for sake of life so that all the activities of private universities to revolve around these orientations. This innovative form of university governance will aim to serve the expectations of students and enterprises.

4. Orientation and conclusion

4.1. Orientation of the training quality of private universities in Ho Chi Minh City base on the expectations of students

The concept of quality of education at private universities and colleges has pointed out three factors to guide the quality of education at private higher institutes.

The first factor is the training program, training methods and quality of teachers. The second factor is graduates whose expectations are met by the first factor. Graduates, social human resources, meeting business expectations is the third factor. The quality of education for a private university is oriented from these three factors.

Orientation 1: Private universities research the expectations of enterprises to know which training and teaching majors meet the expectations of enterprises.

Orientation 2: Curricula and educational methods are designed from the first orientation towards the target of meeting the expectations of enterprises.

Orientation 3: Constructing a force of qualified lecturers corresponding to the curricula; Educational methods are designed from the second orientation with attractively teaching quality and meeting expectations of students.\

Thus, the expectations of the students are satisfied by educational methods and curricula from qualified lecturers. Students acquire knowledge from curricula that are surveyed and evaluated by experts; Educational methods are researched and deployed aim to meet the social requirements and enterprise expectation. Reorienting the quality of education for private universities and colleges is a flexible combination of the three orientations above.

4.2. Conclusion

If private universities and colleges nowadays want to survive and develop, they must rebuild and architecture their brands. Private universities need to create educational products that meet the expectations of students and businesses if they want to rebuild and architecture their own brands. The educational products from universities and colleges such as training programs, educational methods, and quality of lecturers have to meet and match the labor market.

Therefore, private universities use the concept of training quality as a basis to guide surveys of stakeholder expectations in the labor market. From the survey of expectations of students about training needs and enterprises about the quality of graduates, private universities will provide solutions for quality education. From the needs of society and the actual labor market, the author proposes an improved private university governance model. The authors of the paper propose an innovative private university governance model based on the needs of society and the reality of the labor market obtained from actual surveys as mentioned above.

This is a model of private university governance that is improved from a university governance model serving the boss and owner to a university governance model for the sake of life; This model aims to serve students, enterprise community, and social life. Universities and colleges replace the existing university governance mechanism to reconstruct the value and renew image of the private higher education

institution as a branding solution by new governance model. This innovative private university governance model is operated according to the diagram below.

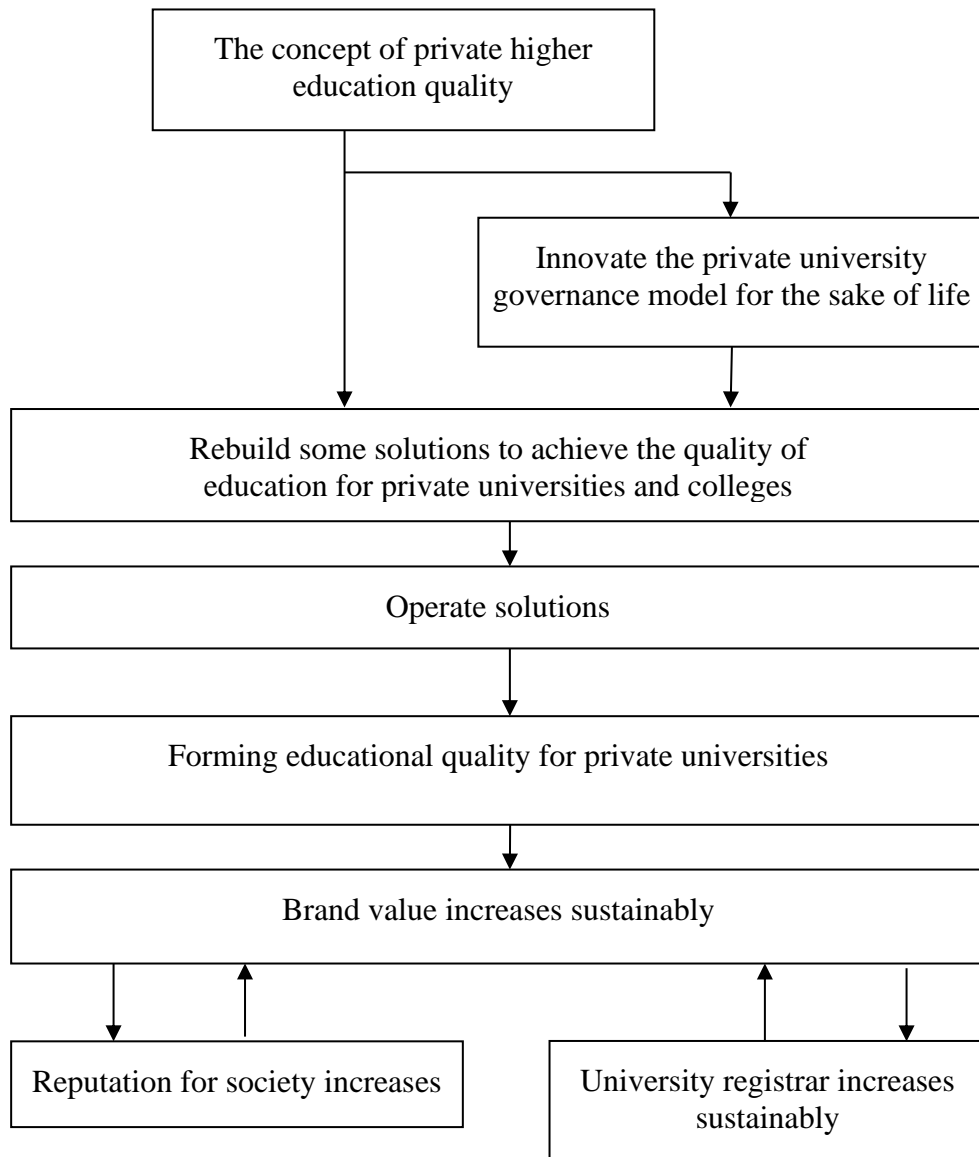


Figure 5: Diagram of the relationship between the concept of training quality and brand values

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Appendix

Table 2 Questionnaire to expectation of students for teaching and studying courses.

Question: What do you expect about teaching and studying courses at private universities in HCMC? Tick the box below to express your wish to answer the above question, please.

- ❖ Understand subject knowledge
- ❖ Apply subject knowledge to solve practical problems
- ❖ Get a job after graduation
- ❖ The company is satisfied with the ability of students
- ❖ Another idea: