The impact of student engagement on brand sustainability in higher education: A study at the University of Economics and Finance (UEF) in Vietnam

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Abstract

In the context of growing competition within higher education, brand sustainability has emerged as a key factor for fostering institutional loyalty and enhancing the reputation of universities. Despite this importance, the role of student engagement in sustaining a university's brand remains underexplored. This study investigates the relationship between various dimensions of student engagement—behavioral, emotional, cognitive, social, and motivational—and brand sustainability, focusing on the University of Economics and Finance (UEF) in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Utilizing a quantitative approach, data were gathered from a sample of 384 UEF students through a structured questionnaire. The study applies descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis to assess the influence of each engagement dimension on the university's brand sustainability. This research aims to provide insights that can guide higher education institutions in Vietnam and similar contexts in strategically enhancing student engagement to support long-term brand loyalty and institutional growth.

Keywords: student engagement, brand sustainability, higher education, Vietnam

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1. Introduction

In the context of a rapidly transforming global educational landscape, brand sustainability has emerged as a cornerstone of strategic priorities for higher education institutions. Brand sustainability encompasses the ability of a university to maintain its reputation and relevance over time by aligning with social, environmental, and economic values. This approach fosters long-term institutional loyalty, competitiveness, and growth (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2022). For universities in Vietnam, where higher education has witnessed remarkable expansion and heightened competition, achieving brand sustainability is increasingly essential. The rising competition in Vietnam's higher education sector is driven by a growing demand for quality education that aligns with market needs. As universities strive to differentiate themselves, challenges such as curricular alignment, faculty qualifications, and graduate employability persist, highlighting the critical need for sustainable branding strategies (CVDVN, 2018). Within this framework, student engagement plays a pivotal role in shaping and sustaining a university's brand identity. Defined as the level of active participation by students in their educational journey, student engagement influences loyalty, advocacy, and a sense of connection to the institution. Its multidimensional nature includes behavioral, emotional, cognitive, social, and motivational aspects, each contributing uniquely to students' overall experience and their relationship with the university (Fredricks et al., 2004; Kahu, 2013).

The University of Economics and Finance (UEF) in Ho Chi Minh City exemplifies the challenges and opportunities in building brand sustainability within Vietnam's competitive educational landscape. As a forward-thinking institution, UEF has invested in initiatives such as community-engaged courses and international conferences to strengthen its reputation. However, translating these efforts into a sustainable and robust brand identity requires a deeper understanding of the dynamic between student engagement and brand sustainability. While UEF has made strides in modernizing its infrastructure and fostering partnerships, its ability to effectively engage students as stakeholders in its brand-building efforts remains underexplored. Existing literature often focuses on institutional strategies or external factors affecting brand sustainability but tends to overlook the active contributions of students in shaping their university's reputation (Trowler, 2020). This research addresses this gap by examining how dimensions of student engagement—behavioral, emotional, cognitive, social, and motivational—impact brand sustainability at UEF. The findings aim to provide actionable insights for UEF and similar institutions to enhance branding strategies while aligning with global sustainability goals, contributing to the evolving discourse on higher education branding.

2. Literature review

2.1 Brand sustainability

Brand sustainability in higher education refers to the integration of long-term social, environmental, and economic values into an institution's core identity and operations, creating a resilient brand that meets evolving societal demands while fostering trust and loyalty among stakeholders (O'Sullivan et al., 2024; González Laskibar, Insunza Aranceta, & Alvarez-Meaza, 2023). Sustainable branding emphasizes authenticity, responsibility, and alignment with student expectations for socially responsible practices, which enhance brand loyalty and long-term engagement (Salib & Endrawes, 2023; Wong & Adams, 2023). Universities must innovate continually to maintain relevance by embedding ecological and social practices into their academic and operational strategies. These efforts not only strengthen the institution's global reputation but also positively influence students' perceptions and behaviors toward sustainability (Maulana et al., 2022; Aghajani, Memari, & Tumpa, 2023). Sustainable branding also involves transparent communication and accountability, which build

credibility and resonate with environmentally-conscious students (Morsing et al., 2020; Rizzi, Capecchi, & Castiglioni, 2021).

A sustainable brand within higher education is further characterized by its ability to balance institutional growth with global sustainability goals, creating enduring value for students and stakeholders. This includes fostering ecological responsibility, promoting ethical practices, and ensuring institutional resilience through continuous improvement efforts (Petersen & Green, 2019; Anderson & Kim, 2019). Ultimately, sustainable branding contributes to a positive brand image that reflects care for societal well-being and aligns with the long-term aspirations of future generations (Lopez & Turner, 2018; Mahmoud, 2020). The measurement of brand sustainability in higher education involves identifying key dimensions that capture its multifaceted nature. Based on existing research, four primary dimensions emerge as essential for assessing brand sustainability: alignment of values and practices, community engagement, pro-environmental choices, and transparency in reporting.

The first dimension, alignment of values and practices, reflects how effectively a university integrates sustainable principles into its brand identity. This includes aligning academic and operational strategies with ecological, economic, and social values. Research highlights that such alignment fosters trust, enhances students' loyalty, and supports brand sustainability (Wong & Adams, 2023; Mahmoud, 2020). Students' perception of this alignment is often measured through their recognition of the institution's visible actions, consistency, and commitment to sustainability goals (Schultz, 2020). Community engagement, as the second dimension, measures the involvement of students, faculty, and stakeholders in sustainability-related activities. This dimension captures how deeply the institution integrates its community into initiatives that promote sustainability and social responsibility (Jonsdottir & Ottosson, 2022). Measurement focuses on participation rates, stakeholder collaboration, and the perceived impact of such activities on institutional growth and resilience (Brown & Davis, 2019). The third dimension, pro-environmental choices, captures the extent to which universities promote sustainable behaviors within campus life. Examples include recycling programs, energy conservation, and sustainable dining options. Studies have demonstrated that these choices resonate with students' personal values and enhance emotional ties to the institution (Maulana et al., 2022; Rizzi et al., 2021). This dimension is typically measured through students' reported involvement in and perception of the institution's environmental initiatives (O'Sullivan et al., 2024).

Finally, transparency in reporting serves as a critical dimension for building trust and credibility. It measures the clarity, accessibility, and consistency of the institution's communication regarding its social and environmental efforts. Transparency reassures students and stakeholders about the university's accountability, reinforcing their confidence in the brand (Salib & Endrawes, 2023). Metrics for this dimension include the frequency and comprehensiveness of sustainability reports, as well as stakeholder perceptions of institutional honesty and accountability (Morsing et al., 2020; Gonzalez Laskibar et al., 2023).

Together, these dimensions—alignment of values and practices, community engagement, pro-environmental choices, and transparency in reporting—provide a robust framework for measuring brand sustainability in higher education. By capturing both the institutional and stakeholder perspectives, they offer insights into how universities can sustain their reputation and build long-term loyalty.

Variable	Description	Reference
Alignment of Brand Values and Practices	Universities that consistently align branding with sustainable practices gain student loyalty and advocacy, enhancing brand sustainability.	Wong & Adams (2023); Morsing et al. (2020); Mahmoud (2020); Schultz (2020); Kovács (2021)
Community Engagement	Actively involving students in sustainability initiatives strengthens their connection to the brand, driving both engagement and commitment to sustainability.	Jonsdottir & Ottosson (2022); Lopez & Turner (2018); Brown & Davis (2019); Ray & Price (2018)
Pro-Environmental Choices	Promoting eco-friendly behavior within campus life aligns brand sustainability with students' personal values, fostering deeper engagement.	Maulana et al. (2022); Jonsdottir & Ottosson (2022); O'Sullivan et al. (2024); Rizzi et al. (2021)

Transparency in Reporting	Reporting on social and environmental initiatives builds trust, as students view the brand as accountable and committed to sustainability.	Salib & Endrawes (2023); Morsing et al. (2020); Rizzi et al. (2021); Gonzalez Laskibar et al. (2023)
Trust and Loyalty	Trust builds a perception of authenticity and commitment to sustainable values, which drives student loyalty—a critical component for any sustainable brand, particularly in the context of higher education.	Petersen and Green (2019);Schultz (2020); O'Reilly and Lancendorfer (2018);Kovács (2021);Lopez and Turner (2018);Thompson (2019)

2.2 Student engagement

Student engagement is a complex and multidimensional construct that encapsulates how students interact with and invest in their academic and social experiences within a university. Defined as the time, effort, and energy students dedicate to their studies and institutional activities, student engagement serves as a cornerstone of higher education research and practice (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004; Trowler, 2010). To fully understand and measure student engagement, scholars have identified five distinct dimensions: **behavioral engagement**, **emotional engagement**, **cognitive engagement**, **social engagement**, and **motivational engagement**. These dimensions not only represent diverse facets of how students engage but also reveal their combined impact on academic outcomes, institutional reputation, and long-term loyalty (Sinatra, Heddy, & Lombardi, 2015).

Each of the five dimensions contributes uniquely to the overarching construct of student engagement. **Behavioral engagement** encompasses observable actions such as class attendance and active participation, which are indicative of a student's involvement in learning activities. **Emotional engagement** highlights affective components, including feelings of belonging and enthusiasm for learning. **Cognitive engagement** captures the intellectual effort and self-regulated learning strategies that drive academic success. **Social engagement** emphasizes collaborative interactions with peers, faculty, and the university community, fostering a sense of inclusion and shared purpose. Finally, **motivational engagement** explores the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that inspire persistence and dedication in students' academic pursuits.

These dimensions operate interdependently, collectively shaping the student experience and their connection to the institution. For universities, understanding and enhancing these dimensions is critical, as engaged students are more likely to succeed academically, develop loyalty toward their institution, and act as brand ambassadors. In this study, the five dimensions are conceptualized as **independent variables** (IVs) that drive broader outcomes, including brand sustainability and institutional resilience. The subsequent sections provide a detailed exploration of each dimension, focusing on its definition, significance, and methods of measurement.

2.3 Behavioral Engagement

Behavioral engagement refers to the observable actions and behaviors that demonstrate a student's involvement in academic and extracurricular activities. It is often considered the most tangible dimension of student engagement, reflecting how students actively participate in their learning environment through behaviors such as attending classes, completing assignments, and contributing to discussions (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). As one of the foundational components of engagement, behavioral engagement serves as a key predictor of academic success and retention, emphasizing the importance of effort and persistence in achieving educational outcomes (Griffin, Parker, & Neal, 2008).

This dimension captures a wide range of measurable actions. For example, students who consistently attend lectures, actively participate in classroom activities, and diligently complete their coursework exhibit high levels of behavioral engagement. These behaviors not only reflect their commitment to academic success but also indicate their integration into the institutional culture (Fredricks et al., 2004). Sinatra, Heddy, and Lombardi (2015) further argue that behavioral engagement can vary across contexts, requiring flexible and precise tools for measurement.

In education, behavioral engagement is linked to positive outcomes, including improved academic performance, reduced dropout rates, and enhanced learning experiences. Liu et al. (2015) demonstrated how tools like Tracer effectively measure students' engagement by visualizing their participation in writing activities, while Hastie and Wallhead (2020) emphasize the importance of including both in-class behaviors and student self-perceptions in capturing behavioral engagement comprehensively. Moreover, interventions that foster autonomy and encourage participation—such as teacher support—are proven to enhance task involvement and effort among students (Reeve & Jang, 2006).

The measurement of behavioral engagement focuses on specific, observable indicators, such as **attendance, task completion, and participation rates.** For example, Fredricks et al. (2004) propose statements like, "I attend classes regularly and on time," and "I actively participate in class discussions," as useful metrics for capturing this dimension. Henrie, Bodily, and Graham (2015) further suggest that attentiveness during lectures and sustained effort in completing assignments are critical components of behavioral engagement. Beyond education, behavioral engagement has also been studied across healthcare and workplace settings. In healthcare, it represents patients' active participation in treatment plans and rehabilitation, which has been linked to better outcomes and higher satisfaction rates (Bright, Kayes, Worrall, & McPherson, 2015). Similarly, in organizational psychology, behavioral engagement is seen as employees' proactive contributions to workplace goals, such as taking initiative and completing tasks diligently, which ultimately improve organizational performance (Borst, Kruyen, & Lako, 2020; Macey & Schneider, 2008). These interdisciplinary perspectives highlight the centrality of behavioral engagement as a construct that transcends educational contexts, while also emphasizing its unique manifestations in academic settings.

In summary, behavioral engagement provides a concrete means of understanding how students interact with their learning environment through observable actions. Its measurement, while requiring careful consideration of contextual nuances, is integral to assessing overall student engagement. By fostering behavioral engagement through targeted interventions, institutions can enhance academic outcomes and build stronger connections with their student community.

2.4 Emotional Engagement

Emotional engagement refers to the affective reactions of students toward their academic environment, encompassing feelings of belonging, interest, enthusiasm, and connection. It reflects the emotional ties students form with their studies, peers, and faculty, which play a significant role in shaping their motivation, persistence, and overall academic success (Sinatra, Heddy, & Lombardi, 2015). Unlike behavioral engagement, which focuses on observable actions, emotional engagement highlights the internal, affective states that influence students' willingness to invest effort in their educational journey. This dimension of engagement is particularly critical in higher education, as students' emotional experiences often determine the depth of their commitment to learning and their connection to the institution. For example, feelings of belonging create a sense of inclusion and safety, while genuine interest in subjects fosters intrinsic motivation and curiosity. Additionally, enjoyment of learning activities contributes to sustained enthusiasm and persistence, even in the face of academic challenges (Skinner & Pitzer, 2012).

Research has consistently linked emotional engagement to positive educational outcomes. Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004) found that students who experience positive emotions in their learning environment are more likely to persevere through difficulties and achieve higher academic performance. Similarly, Reeve and Jang (2006) demonstrated that emotionally supportive teaching practices, such as autonomy support, enhance students' sense of interest and enjoyment, leading to deeper engagement in academic tasks. Sinatra et al. (2015) emphasize the need for educators to recognize and nurture the emotional aspects of learning, as they are crucial for sustaining students' intrinsic motivation and commitment to their studies.

Measurement of Emotional Engagement focuses on students' affective responses to their academic

experiences. According to Skinner & Pitzer (2012), common indicators include **feelings of belonging, interest, enjoyment, and excitement.** These can be assessed through self-reported measures, such as:

➢   "I feel a strong sense of belonging at my university."

➢   "I am genuinely interested in the subjects discussed in my courses."

➢   "I enjoy the learning activities and projects assigned."

➢   "I feel enthusiastic about attending my classes" .

Beyond education, emotional engagement has also been studied in organizational and healthcare contexts, underscoring its universal relevance. In organizational settings, emotional engagement manifests as employees' attachment to their work, leading to increased job satisfaction and performance (Macey & Schneider, 2008). In healthcare, Bright, Kayes, Worrall, and McPherson (2015) noted that emotionally engaged patients are more likely to adhere to treatment plans and maintain long-term health outcomes. These cross-domain findings highlight the significance of emotional engagement as a core construct influencing outcomes in diverse settings.

In conclusion, emotional engagement captures the affective connections that students form within their academic environment. By fostering positive emotional experiences, universities can enhance students' motivation, persistence, and sense of loyalty to the institution. Understanding and measuring emotional engagement provides valuable insights for creating supportive, inclusive learning environments that prioritize student well-being and academic success.

2.5 Cognitive Engagement

Cognitive engagement refers to the intellectual investment and mental effort students dedicate to their learning processes. It emphasizes students' active involvement in understanding, analyzing, and synthesizing information, which extends beyond rote memorization or surface-level learning. This dimension encompasses critical thinking, self-regulated learning, and the use of deep learning strategies, all of which are essential for fostering long-term academic success and lifelong learning (Kahu, 2013). Students who are cognitively engaged exhibit curiosity, persistence, and a commitment to mastering complex ideas and concepts, demonstrating their ability to go beyond the minimum requirements of coursework.

The significance of cognitive engagement lies in its strong connection to academic outcomes. Students who engage cognitively are more likely to apply deep learning strategies, such as critical analysis and problem-solving, leading to greater knowledge retention and improved academic performance (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). Furthermore, self-regulation—a key component of cognitive engagement—enables students to set learning goals, monitor their progress, and adjust their strategies to achieve desired outcomes (Li & Xue, 2023). This proactive approach to learning helps students navigate academic challenges and develop skills necessary for success in both education and their future careers.

Research underscores the importance of fostering cognitive engagement in educational settings. For example, Sinatra, Heddy, and Lombardi (2015) emphasize that students who engage cognitively are better equipped to tackle complex academic tasks and persist in achieving mastery. Similarly, Henrie, Bodily, and Graham (2015) found that students' use of self-regulated learning strategies correlates with higher levels of engagement and academic success. Cognitive engagement also promotes deeper understanding and long-term knowledge retention, particularly when students are encouraged to critically analyze and synthesize information rather than passively consume it (Kahu, 2013).

Measurement of Cognitive Engagement focuses on students' intellectual involvement and use of deep learning strategies. According to Li & Xue (2023), indicators of this dimension include **self-regulation, critical thinking, learning development, and motivation** to explore beyond the curriculum. These can be assessed

using statements such as:

- ➢ "I set specific goals to improve my academic performance."

- ➢ "I critically analyze the information presented in my classes."

- ➢ "I actively seek feedback to deepen my understanding."

- ➢ "I am motivated to explore subjects beyond the curriculum".

By understanding and enhancing cognitive engagement, educators and institutions can promote more meaningful learning experiences that prepare students for lifelong success. Encouraging students to adopt self-regulated learning strategies and engage in critical thinking not only improves academic performance but also equips them with the skills needed to thrive in an increasingly complex and dynamic world.

2.6 Social Engagement

Social engagement refers to students' interactions and relationships within their academic and social environments, emphasizing the importance of interpersonal connections in fostering a supportive and inclusive community. This dimension includes collaborative learning, peer support, participation in extracurricular activities, and meaningful interactions with instructors, all of which play critical roles in creating a sense of belonging and shared purpose among students (Bond et al., 2020). Social engagement extends beyond individual actions to encompass the collective experiences that enhance students' educational journeys and strengthen their ties to the institution.

Research has consistently highlighted the significance of social engagement in promoting positive academic and personal outcomes. For instance, Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004) found that students who engage socially are more likely to develop a sense of belonging and commitment to their institution, which positively impacts retention and satisfaction. Peer collaboration, in particular, fosters teamwork, problem-solving skills, and mutual support, while interactions with instructors contribute to students' academic confidence and success (Bond et al., 2020). Participation in community projects and extracurricular activities further enhances students' connection to their university, reinforcing the institution's role as a supportive and inclusive space for growth and development.

Social engagement is also instrumental in shaping the overall academic climate. Positive interactions with peers and faculty not only foster a sense of community but also create an environment conducive to collaboration and knowledge sharing. Studies have shown that students who are socially engaged are more likely to contribute actively to group discussions, seek assistance when needed, and participate in activities that enhance both their academic and personal development (Fredricks et al., 2004; Bond et al., 2020).

Measurement of Social Engagement involves capturing the quality and frequency of students' interpersonal interactions and their participation in collaborative and community activities. According to Fredricks et al. (2004), indicators include **peer collaboration, instructor interaction, community involvement, and social support.** These aspects can be assessed through statements such as:

- ➢ "I collaborate effectively with my peers during group activities."

- ➢ "I feel comfortable seeking help from my instructors."

- ➢ "I actively participate in extracurricular activities at my university."

- ➢ "I contribute to community projects organized by my university".

By fostering social engagement, institutions can create a more inclusive and dynamic learning environment that benefits both individual students and the broader university community. Encouraging students to engage

socially enhances their sense of belonging, strengthens institutional loyalty, and cultivates the collaborative skills needed for success beyond the classroom.

2.7 Motivational Engagement

Motivational engagement refers to the internal and external forces that drive students to actively participate in their learning and persevere in their academic endeavors. This dimension is a critical component of student engagement, as motivation directly influences students' willingness to persist in their studies, overcome challenges, and achieve academic success (Chapman et al., 2010). By fostering a sense of purpose and determination, motivational engagement shapes students' ability to navigate the demands of higher education while maintaining focus on their personal and professional goals.

Motivational engagement is typically divided into two key types: **intrinsic motivation** and **extrinsic motivation**. Intrinsic motivation stems from curiosity, personal interest, and a desire for mastery, driving students to learn for the sake of learning itself. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation arises from external rewards, such as achieving high grades, securing scholarships, or advancing career opportunities (Saeed & Zyngier, 2012). Both types of motivation play essential roles in influencing students' behavior and engagement, though their balance and intensity can vary among individuals.

Persistence is another crucial aspect of motivational engagement. It reflects students' ability to remain committed to their studies, even in the face of academic difficulties or setbacks. Students who exhibit strong persistence are more likely to stay focused on long-term goals and overcome obstacles, which contributes to higher retention and overall success rates (Saeed & Zyngier, 2012). Moreover, career motivation—defined as the desire to excel academically to achieve professional aspirations—further underscores the importance of motivational engagement in connecting educational experiences to future opportunities.

Measurement of Motivational Engagement involves assessing students' levels of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, as well as their persistence and career-oriented aspirations. According to Saeed & Zyngier (2012), common indicators include:

➢ **Intrinsic Motivation**: "I am driven to learn out of curiosity and personal interest."

➢ **Extrinsic Motivation**: "Achieving high grades motivates me to study harder."

➢ **Persistence**: "I remain determined even when faced with challenging coursework."

➢ **Career Motivation**: "I am motivated to succeed academically to achieve my career goals".

The importance of motivational engagement extends beyond individual academic performance to institutional outcomes. Motivated students are more likely to engage deeply with their studies, build meaningful connections with their peers and instructors, and act as advocates for their universities. Research has shown that institutions that foster motivational engagement—through supportive environments, clear goal-setting frameworks, and recognition of achievements—enhance students' academic experiences while building long-term loyalty (Chapman et al., 2010).

In conclusion, motivational engagement captures the driving forces that propel students to engage with their academic journey. By nurturing both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators and fostering persistence, institutions can help students realize their academic potential while preparing them for future success.

3. Research design and data collection

Research Design - This study employs a quantitative research design to examine the impact of student engagement on brand sustainability within the context of higher education, specifically focusing on the University of Economics and Finance (UEF) in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The research aims to validate the hypothesis that

the five dimensions of student engagement—behavioral, emotional, cognitive, social, and motivational—individually and collectively influence brand sustainability. A cross-sectional survey method was utilized for data collection, enabling the efficient gathering of information from a diverse sample within a short period. The study sample consisted of **384 students** from UEF, representing a wide demographic spectrum. Among the participants, 61.7% were female, 38.0% were male, and 0.3% identified as "Other." Regarding their academic levels, the vast majority of respondents (98.7%) were pursuing a bachelor's degree, while 0.5% were enrolled in MBA programs, and 0.8% were pursuing DBA/PhD degrees. In terms of year of study, most students were in their third (49.0%) or final year (33.1%), while smaller proportions were in their second (10.2%) and first (7.3%) years. This distribution ensures that perspectives from students at various academic stages and levels of study are well-represented in the dataset.

Survey Design and Data Collection - Data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, ensuring convenience and accessibility for participants. The questionnaire was structured into three main sections:

➢ **Demographics**: Capturing gender, education level, and year of study.

➢ **Student Engagement**: Measuring the five dimensions of student engagement—behavioral, emotional, cognitive, social, and motivational—using validated scales adapted from Fredricks et al. (2004), Sinatra et al. (2015), and Kahu (2013). Each dimension included four items assessed on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree).

➢ **Brand Sustainability**: Assessing five key constructs—alignment of brand values, community engagement, pro-environmental choices, transparency in reporting, and trust and loyalty—using validated items adapted from prior studies (e.g., Wong & Adams, 2023; Salib & Endrawes, 2023).

The demographic data were analyzed using frequency distribution, providing a clear overview of the sample population.

Data Analysis - The collected data were analyzed using SPSS statistical software. Descriptive statistics, including frequency distribution, were used to summarize the demographic data. The reliability of the constructs was verified through Cronbach's Alpha. Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) was employed to test the primary hypotheses regarding the impact of student engagement dimensions on brand sustainability. This statistical approach ensured the validity and robustness of the study's findings.

4. Findings

This study explored the impact of student engagement on brand sustainability in higher education, with a focus on the University of Economics and Finance (UEF) in Ho Chi Minh City. The findings reveal strong reliability in the measurement scales and validate the hypothesized relationships between the dimensions of student engagement and brand sustainability.

4.1 Cronbach's Alpha for Reliability Testing

The reliability of the scales measuring the five dimensions of student engagement and brand sustainability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha to ensure internal consistency. The results are presented in Table 1:

Table 1
Reliability of Measurement Scales

	Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
1	Behavioral Engagement	4	0.88
2	Emotional Engagement	4	0.89
3	Cognitive Engagement	4	0.89

4	Social Engagement	4	0.88
5	Motivational Engagement	4	0.91
6	Brand Sustainability	4	0.95

The Cronbach's Alpha values ($\alpha > 0.7$ for all variables) indicate strong internal consistency, confirming that the scales used in this study are reliable for measuring student engagement and brand sustainability.

4.2 Impact of Student Engagement on Brand Sustainability

Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) analysis was conducted to evaluate the impact of the five dimensions of student engagement on brand sustainability. The results demonstrate that there are 3 IVs that have a significant and positive effect on brand sustainability. The standardized coefficients (B) and significance levels (p-values) are summarized in Table 2:

Table 2
MLR Result

Independent Variable (IV)	Dependent Variable (DV) Brand Sustainability	B	p-value
Behavioral Engagement	Brand Sustainability	0.02	> 0.05
Emotional Engagement	Brand Sustainability	0.35	≤ 0.05
Cognitive Engagement	Brand Sustainability	0.05	> 0.05
Social Engagement	Brand Sustainability	0.17	≤ 0.05
Motivational Engagement	Brand Sustainability	0.45	≤ 0.05

The results of the Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) analysis reveal varying levels of significance among the five dimensions of student engagement in their influence on brand sustainability:

➢ **Behavioral Engagement**: The relationship between behavioral engagement and brand sustainability is not statistically significant (B = 0.02, p > 0.05).

➢ **Emotional Engagement**: Emotional engagement demonstrates a strong and statistically significant positive influence on brand sustainability (B = 0.35, p ≤ 0.05).

➢ **Cognitive Engagement**: Cognitive engagement shows no statistically significant impact on brand sustainability (B = 0.05, p > 0.05).

➢ **Social Engagement**: Social engagement exhibits a statistically significant positive relationship with brand sustainability (B = 0.17, p ≤ 0.05).

➢ **Motivational Engagement**: Motivational engagement is the strongest predictor of brand sustainability, with a highly significant and positive effect (B = 0.45, p ≤ 0.05).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion - This study underscores the critical role of student engagement in fostering brand sustainability within higher education, specifically at the University of Economics and Finance (UEF) in Ho Chi Minh City. Among the five dimensions of student engagement—behavioral, emotional, cognitive, social, and motivational—emotional, social, and motivational engagement emerged as significant predictors of brand sustainability, with motivational engagement having the strongest influence ($\beta = 0.45$, $p \leq 0.05$). The findings highlight that while not all dimensions of engagement contribute equally, a well-rounded engagement strategy can significantly enhance the institution's sustainable brand identity. This study emphasizes the importance of fostering an engaging academic environment to strengthen UEF's reputation and align with its sustainability goals.

Recommendations - This section provides actionable recommendations for the University of Economics and Finance (UEF) to enhance brand sustainability by leveraging the five dimensions of student engagement: behavioral, emotional, cognitive, social, and motivational. Each recommendation is grounded in existing literature and tailored to address the significant predictors identified in the study.

Strengthening Emotional Engagement Emotional engagement, which includes a sense of belonging and enthusiasm, plays a pivotal role in influencing brand sustainability (Sinatra et al., 2015). UEF should invest in initiatives that foster emotional connections between students and the university. These could include personalized mentorship programs, inclusive events celebrating cultural diversity, and recognition systems to highlight student achievements. By creating a campus environment where students feel valued and connected, UEF can build stronger emotional ties, enhancing loyalty and advocacy for the institution (Fredricks et al., 2004).

Fostering Social Engagement Social engagement emphasizes peer collaboration, instructor interaction, and participation in community activities (Bond et al., 2020). To strengthen this dimension, UEF should create more opportunities for students to engage socially, such as student-led clubs, team-based projects, and collaborative workshops. Organizing community service initiatives, like environmental clean-ups or social responsibility projects, can further embed sustainability values within the student body. These initiatives not only enhance students' interpersonal skills but also reinforce their alignment with UEF's mission and brand values (Jonsdottir & Ottosson, 2022).

Enhancing Motivational Engagement Motivational engagement, particularly intrinsic motivation, was identified as the strongest predictor of brand sustainability (Saeed & Zyngier, 2012). UEF can enhance this dimension by aligning academic programs with students' career aspirations and personal interests. Offering career counseling services, internships, and industry mentorship programs can help students see the tangible benefits of their education. Additionally, integrating experiential learning opportunities, such as real-world projects and case studies, can further stimulate both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. This alignment fosters a deeper connection between academic pursuits and long-term career goals, driving loyalty to the institution (Chapman et al., 2010).

Limitations and Future Research Directions - The study provides meaningful insights into the relationship between student engagement and brand sustainability at the University of Economics and Finance (UEF). However, some limitations should be acknowledged. The exclusive focus on UEF provides in-depth, context-specific findings, but it limits the broader applicability of the results to other higher education institutions. The study's conclusions are tailored to the unique organizational culture, student demographics, and branding strategies of UEF, which may differ significantly from other universities. Furthermore, the reliance on self-reported data introduces the possibility of response bias, where participants may provide answers that reflect perceived expectations rather than their authentic experiences, potentially influencing the validity of the findings. Additionally, the cross-sectional design of the study limits its ability to establish causal relationships between student engagement and brand sustainability. Although significant associations are observed, the temporal sequence and causality remain unclear. Future research should consider employing longitudinal designs and incorporating external factors, such as the competitive landscape or evolving societal trends, to offer a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between student engagement and brand sustainability in higher education.

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