# Brand Experience and Engagement: Influences on Brand Loyalty among University Students and Alumni in an Indonesian Higher Education Institution

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**Abstract:**
*The loyalty of students and alumni to higher education institutions is one of the factors that influences the marketing and sustainability of higher education institutions. Students and alumni often attribute their experience with a college to their level of loyalty. The experience of students and alumni represented by brand experience, the relationship represented by brand engagement and their loyalty to the higher education institution representaed by brand loyalty. This are a factors that strongly influence the sustainability of the higher education institution. The aim of this research at analyzing the influence of brand experience to brand loyalty of the students of Hei's mediated by brand engagement. This research is quantitative research using primary data obtained through questionnaires filled by 412 students and alumni Hayam Wuruk Perbanas University. This research uses the probability sampling method. Validity and reliability tests were carried out to test the instrument before being distributed to the respondents. The data was analysed using Structural Equation Model (SEM) by WarpPLS. The research results there is a positive relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty, and brand engagement can mediate this relationship. Positive brand experience can lead to a higher level of brand engagement, which in turn can increase brand loyalty among students and alumni of Hayam Wuruk Perbanas University. creating positive brand experiences and growing brand engagement can help universities build and increase a strong student and alumni loyalty.*

**Keywords:** *Brand Experience, Brand Engagement, Brand Loyalty*

## 1. Introduction

Students and alumni often attribute their experience with a college to their level of loyalty. How the college interacts with them, their college experience, or the support they receive from the brand throughout their academic journey can influence how loyal they are to the college. How a college engages in activities, events, or programmes within the college can be a key factor. For example, whether the brand

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collaborates with the college on projects, provides scholarships, or supports student and alumni activities. The influence of the brand's experience and brand engagement in the college environment may not only influence current loyalty, but also shape long-term perceptions of the brand in the job market after the student graduates. Through careful research and analysis, deeper insights can be gained into how these factors interact and how brands can enhance experience and engagement to strengthen loyalty among students and alumni in Indonesian HEIs.

Universities have an important role in involving students and alumni as customers. In carrying out its role, universities try to ensure that their students have a positive experience. This experience covers all aspects that students experience due to their interactions with all parties on campus as well as the physical environment of the campus. This is in line with the opinion of Haeckel et al. (2003) in (Wijaya, 2019) which states that brand experience is a customer's feeling due to their interactions with goods, services and atmosphere. Therefore, it is necessary to develop quality in all activity processes within universities, in order to form brand loyalty between students and alumni towards the campus. Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty are two very important concepts in the world of business and marketing (Wardani, 2009). Brand Experience refers to all interactions and experiences that customers have with a brand, including all aspects such as product quality, service, brand image, and so on (Waqas, 2022). On the other hand, Brand Loyalty is the level of customer tendency or loyalty to choose a particular product or brand again compared to its competitors (Teeroovengadumdel, 2019).

Hayam Wuruk Perbanas University is a university that has a strong brand and has been involved in the world of education for a long time. Students and alumni of this university have a variety of experiences with the university brand during their studies and even after graduation. Therefore, it is important to understand how Brand Experience at these universities influences the brand loyalty of their students and alumni. When a consumer has trusted a certain brand, a positive attitude will appear in the consumer's mind with a greater desire to buy Jin & Lee (2010) in (Susanti et al., 2021). Apart from that, in an increasingly competitive marketing environment, the role of Brand Engagement has also become very important. Brand Engagement is the level of customer involvement or emotional attachment to a brand. This includes the feelings, beliefs and emotional connections that customers build with the brand (Waqas, 2022). Mediation by brand engagement is an interesting concept to consider because it can describe the extent to which experience with a university brand influences customer engagement levels, which then influences brand loyalty. The role of Hei's in creating brand loyalty among students and alumni is very important for universities. Loyal customers tend to provide positive feedback and recommend the college to others, which can improve the college's image and reputation. Brand loyalty refers to an individual's attachment to a particular brand, and is an important factor of brand management Boo, Busser, and Baloglu (2009) in (Shaalan et al., 2022). In building close ties between customers and brands (brand engagement), universities

need to develop good experiences for students and alumni. Overall, brand involvement plays an important role in mediating the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty in the university context. By creating positive brand experiences and encouraging brand engagement, universities can increase brand loyalty among students and alumni to build a strong brand reputation (Ong et al., 2018).

Investigating the evolution of brand experience, engagement, and loyalty over time among students and alumni. Understanding how these perceptions change from the student years to post-graduation phases could offer insights into the longevity of brand loyalty. According to Sumarmi & Wijayanti, (2023). brand experience is not related to brand loyalty, and this shows that consumers do not develop attitudes from their experience in choosing an item. The results of this study are not in line with the findings which found that brand experience is related to brand loyalty. Conducting comparative studies across different higher education institutions in Indonesia to identify variations in brand experience, engagement strategies, and their impacts on loyalty. This could reveal best practices and unique aspects of each institution.

By addressing these gaps, researchers can contribute to a deeper understanding of how brand experiences and engagement influence brand loyalty among students and alumni within Indonesian higher education institutions. This knowledge can be valuable for institutions aiming to strengthen their relationships with current students and maintain connections with alumni. This research will provide important insights for universities in Indonesia, especially at Perbanas Hayam Wuruk University, to understand the extent to which their brand experience can influence the loyalty of their students and alumni, and how brand engagement can be an important link in this process. All the factors that can occur can be seen from the aspects of sensation, behaviour and feelings felt, as well as the intellectual drive and engagement that occurs on campus. This also affects the cognitive, emotional and behavioural attitudes of students and alumni. To build sustainability at Perbanas Hayam Wuruk University, the results of this study can also help other universities understand the importance of customer experience in building their loyalty amid increasingly fierce competition in the world of education.

## 2. Theoretical Background

### Brand Experience
Brand Experience is defined as sensations, feelings, behavior and intellect which are responses resulting from brand stimulation which includes design, brand identity, packaging, communication and the environment Brakus et al (2009) in (Waqas, 2022) who uses this to researching brand experience in higher education. According to (Yu et al., 2021), brand experience is defined as consumers' belief that their experience is consistent across marketing channels (i.e., online and offline channels). This is supported by the opinion of  Haeckel et al. (2003) in (Wijaya, 2019) which states that

brand experience is a customer's feeling due to their interactions with goods, services and atmosphere.

Brakus et al. (2009) in (Waqas, 2022) defines brand experience as subjective, internal consumer response and customer response to brand stimuli, such as name, logo, mascot, packaging, marketing communications, store atmosphere and environment. In this view, it can be understood that brand experience is a variable that can be a measuring tool to see customer responses to the products they have purchased. This is also supported by the measurement dimensions contained in brand experience. Brakus et al (2009) in (Waqas, 2022) stated that there are four dimensions of brand experience, including: Sensory, Feeling, Intellectual, Behavioral.

HEI brand experience can be defined as students' internal and subjective reaction to any direct or indirect contact with the HEI across multiple touchpoints. HEI brand experience may include communication between staff and students, consumption of services, as well as the service encounters. HEI brand experience depends on service quality which may enhance HEI brand engagement and brand loyalty. Embracing the HEI brand experience, student and alumni engagement, and the HEI brand loyalty, a conceptual model is proposed to test the role of HEI brand experience as the antecedent of student engagement and HEI brand loyalty as the outcome of student engagement. This study will also test the mediating role of student engagement between HEI brand experience and HEI brand loyalty

**Brand Engagement**
According to Conduit et al. (2016) in (Waqas, 2022) defines brand engagement as a consumer's cognitive, emotional and behavioral efforts to interact with the brand that the consumer uses. In the context of higher education, brand engagement is the cognitive, emotional and behavioral attachment of students to resources related to their educational experience at a higher education institution (Waqas, 2022). This definition was also used in the research of (Sohaib et al., 2023) who explain that brand engagement is a combination of affective, cognitive and behavioral factors that consumers understand about a brand.

Pansari and Kumar (2016) in (Wijaya, 2019) define brand engagement as attitudes, behavior, level of connectedness between customers, between customers and employees, and between customers and employees within the company. Heath (2007) in (Wijaya, 2019) stated that Brand Engagement is a subconscious emotional construction. Hollebeek et al. (2014) in (Wijaya, 2019) analyzed 3 dimensions of Brand Engagement, including: Cognitive, Emotional, Behavioral.

This definition proposes students' thinking and emotions as factors that influence their engagement (Vivek et al., 2012). Based on a review of research in the marketing literature on customer engagement, a working definition of student engagement to the

HEI brand can be developed. Student engagement with the HEI brand can be defined as "a psychological, motivational state consisting of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions based on students' interactive experiences  with the HEI brand.

**Brand Loyalty**

Brand loyalty is a deep commitment to consistently repurchase a product or service in the future, despite situational influences and marketing efforts potentially causing switching behavior Oliver (1997) in (Teeroovengadumdel, 2019). Student loyalty in the context of higher education involves behaviors such as providing positive word-of-mouth regarding the university, recommending the university to others, and choosing the same university again in the future Dado et al (2012) in (Teeroovengadumdel, 2019).

Brand Loyalty describes consumers' alignment with a brand, which is reflected in their desire to make repeat purchases from that brand (Susanti et al., 2021). Brand loyalty is a positive attitude and consistent loyalty that consumers have towards a brand or company. Brand loyalty refers to an individual's attachment to a particular brand, and is an important factor of brand management Boo, Busser, and Baloglu (2009) in (Shaalan et al., 2022). From this definition it can be concluded that brand loyalty is the result of continuous consumer satisfaction with a brand, which leads to a tendency to maintain purchases of that brand and avoid competing brands.

In general, brand loyalty involves consumers' tendency to purchase repeatedly from a brand, feel satisfied with their experience, and have a strong commitment and trust in the brand (Westhuizen, 2018). One of the most valuable assets for any brand is brand loyalty. Brand loyalty measures how loyal consumers are to a particular brand and consistently repurchase that brand. In the context of higher education, students who are loyal to the college brand will contribute in terms of finance, banking, and college resources. In addition, loyal students will be willing to recommend the institution or study programme to others, maintain contracts with faculty, choose the institution for future studies, or join the alumni (Tammubua, 2021).
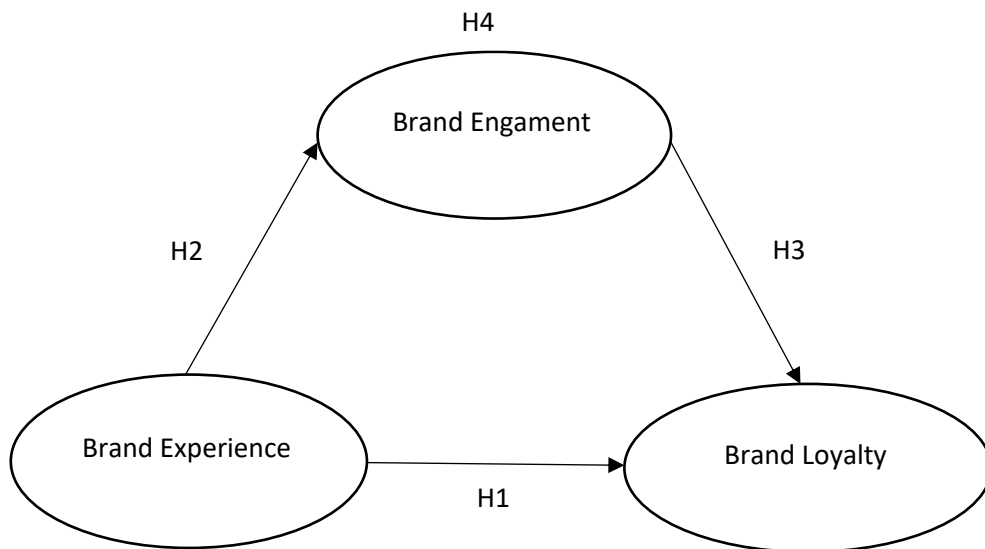
**Figure 1. Structural Framework**

## 3. Methodology

The population of this study were students and alumni of Hayam Wuruk Perbanas University. For students taken from the class of 2018-2022. because every period runs, the last three years are the class with a large number of students (no one has graduated yet). While the alumni group is taken from the last three years of graduates, namely alumni who graduated in 2014-2022. The consideration for taking this period is that they are students who experienced the transformation period of the form of higher education from STIE Perbanas Surabaya to Hayam Wuruk University.

The research approach used in this research is quantitative . This research is conclusive research because it tests the hypothesis developed , namely to show the causal relationship between brand experience , brand engagement and brand loyalty . This research uses primary data. Primary data is data that is originally obtained directly from the object being researched and provided to the data collector directly (Sugiyono, 2015). Primary data in this study was obtained by researchers from questionnaires filled out by respondents, in the form of the identity and responses of the respondents. The population of this study were students and alumni of Hayam Wuruk Perbanas University with a total sample of 412 respondents taken using a probability sampling method with a proportional random sampling technique (Ferdinand, 2014).

The data that will be generated will be used to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, so an outer model test will be carried out (Solimun et al., 2017). Outer model evaluation is carried out to assess the validity and reliability of the indicators

that measure research variables (Ghozali & Latan, 2014). The validity test is used to test whether the indicators or items measure the variables of this research. Meanwhile, the reliability test is used to measure the consistency of indicator reliability in forming variables which can be seen through the consistency of responses between respondents to variable indicators (Ghozali & Latan, 2014).

Indicator validity is measured by looking at the Loading Factor (LF), Average Variance Extract (AVE) values, while reliability is measured by looking at the Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach Alpha values. This research data was analyzed using structural equations (Structural Equation Model) using SEM-WarpPLS. SEM-WarpPLS is easier and faster to implement than another conventional SEM methods. This analysis includes the model suitability analysis stage (model fit), as well as structural model analysis (inner model). In testing this research model, the test results between hypotheses and the regression coefficient values are presented (Solimun et al., 2017).

## 4. Empirical Findings/Result

Data collection for this research involved 412 students and alumni of Hayam Wuruk Perbanas University, Surabaya. The majority of respondents to this study were students (72%). The study program most often chosen by students and alumni is management (60%).

### Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

|  | *Intervals* | *Amount* | *%* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Status | Student | 272 | 66% |
|  | Alumni | 140 | 34% |
| Study Program | S1 Management | 249 | 60% |
|  | S1 Accounting | 135 | 33% |
|  | S1 Sharia Economics | 12 | 3% |
|  | Magister Management | 16 | 4% |
| Students by Class | 2018 | 7 | 3% |
|  | 2019 | 10 | 4% |
|  | 2020 | 90 | 33% |
|  | 2021 | 69 | 25% |
|  | 2022 | 96 | 35% |
| Alumni Based on Year of Graduation | 2014 | 16 | 11% |
|  | 2016 | 11 | 8% |
|  | 2018 | 8 | 6% |
|  | 2019 | 5 | 4% |
|  | 2020 | 27 | 19% |
|  | 2021 | 38 | 27% |
|  | 2022 | 35 | 25% |

The respondent categories were divided into students and alumni. The active students section shows the class year from 2018-2022. The largest number of active student data was obtained from the class of 2020, namely 33% of the 272 student respondents. In the alumni section, data was obtained based on year of graduation from 2014 , 2016 , and 2018-2022. Most alumni data based on graduation year was obtained from 2021, namely 27% of the 140 alumni respondents.

**Validity and Reliability Test Results**
Based on the test results, the validity test results were obtained as follows :

**Table 2. Loading Factor & *Cross Loadings***

| Indicators | Brand Loyalty (be) | Brand Engagement (bag) | Brand Loyalty ( bl ) |
|---|---|---|---|
| be.1 | (0.768) | 0.056 | 0.227 |
| be.2 | (0.770) | -0.323 | 0.228 |
| be.3 | (0.624) | -0.039 | 0.048 |
| be.4 | (0.758) | 0.149 | 0.245 |
| be.5 | (0.793) | 0.265 | -0.334 |
| be.6 | (0.555) | -0.353 | -0.256 |
| be.7 | (0.599) | 0.315 | -0.046 |
| be.8 | (0.584) | -0.120 | -0.332 |
| be.10 | (0.563) | -0.027 | 0.113 |
| bag.1 | -0.091 | (0.768) | -0.008 |
| bag.2 | 0.557 | (0.661) | 0.010 |
| bag.3 | -0.212 | (0.767) | 0.080 |
| bag.4 | -0.008 | (0.494) | 0.225 |
| bag.5 | 0.014 | (0.736) | 0.350 |
| bag.6 | 0.503 | (0.758) | 0.034 |
| bag.7 | -0.664 | (0.663) | -0.087 |
| bag.8 | 0.604 | (0.611) | -0.118 |
| beg.9 | -0.083 | (0.807) | 0.132 |
| bag.10 | 0.224 | (0.730) | -0.292 |
| bag.11 | -0.006 | (0.693) | -0.062 |
| bag.12 | -0.108 | (0.645) | -0.207 |
| bag.13 | -0.283 | (0.605) | 0.510 |
| bag.14 | -0.104 | (0.788) | -0.326 |
| bag.15 | -0.105 | (0.690) | -0.292 |
| bag.16 | -0.193 | (0.744) | 0.137 |
| bl.1 | -0.083 | 0.131 | (0.800) |
| bl.2 | 0.152 | -0.309 | (0.866) |
| bl.3 | -0.263 | 0.480 | (0.584) |
| bl.4 | 0.102 | -0.137 | (0.864) |

Cross loading values in table 2 can be seen that each indicator in the research variable has a cross loading value . Then it is known that the cross loading value is smaller

than the loading factor value of other variables or the loading factor value in the same column so it can be expressed The indicators used in this research have good discriminant validity in compiling the variables. This shows that each indicator can be clearly separated and that there are no overlapping indicators in the variable measurements carried out. These results indicate that the measurement of these variables is valid and reliable in the context of this research.

**Table 3. Results of the Research Instrument Item Validity Test**

| Latent Variables | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) | Composite Reliability | Cronbach's Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|
| Brand Experience (BE) | 0.456 | 0.881 | 0.846 |
| Brand Engagement (BEG) | 0.496 | 0.939 | 0.931 |
| Brand Loyalty (BL) | 0.619 | 0.864 | 0.786 |

The AVE value must be calculated for each latent construct. The results of the CR and AVE tests can be seen in the table below. The test results show that the CR value is greater than 0.60, the CR value is greater than 0.60, indicating that the construct is declared reliable. The AVE value is slightly less than the threshold of 0.50, this indicates that the reliability of each construct with a value of less than 0.50 is not good, but if the AVE value is less than 0.50 it is still acceptable provided that the CR value is higher than 0.60 and convergent validity meets the requirements (Ingarianti et al., 2022).

Based on Table 3 in above shows that *the average variance extracted* (AVE) value on the BE variable is 0.456 > 0.50, so it is declared invalid, the BEG variable is 0.496 <0.50, is declared invalid, the BL variable is 0.619 > 0.50, is declared valid, so the item BL can be called a reliable or dependable indicator.

Composite reliability results for a large sample of all independent variables used in this research, brand experience, brand engagement, brand loyalty, have a composite reliability value of more than 0.70 . These results can be interpreted as meaning that all the constructs used comply with the composite reliability criteria , so that the measurements are reliable or dependable.

*Cronbach alpha* value for the brand experience variable is 0.846 > 0.60, so it is declared valid, the brand engagement variable is 0.931 > 0.60, so it is declared valid, the brand loyalty variable is 0.786 > 0.60, it is declared valid, so the indicator items for all variables are declared reliable or reliable.

### *Inner Model* Evaluation

The PLS model, as seen in the picture below, shows the magnitude of the regression coefficient (beta) value for each independent variable in influencing the dependent variable.
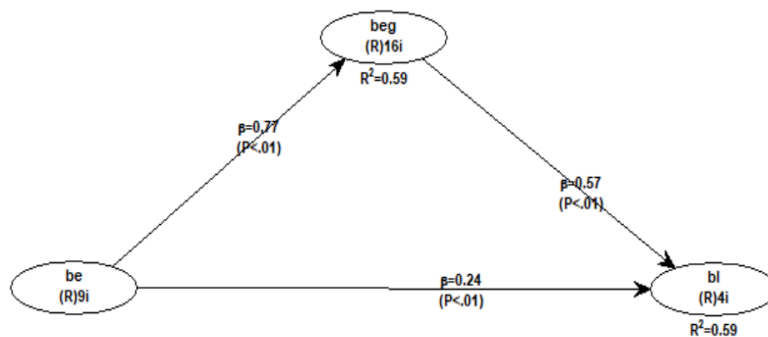
**Figure 2. Structural Equation**

$R^2$ value in this research is 0.59, meaning that 59 % of changes that occur in purchasing decisions are influenced simultaneously by the independent variables brand experience, brand engagement, brand loyalty , the remaining 41 % is influenced by other variables outside the research.

**Table 4. Hypothesis Testing Results**

| Hypothesis | Beta Value | P-Value |
|---|---|---|
| H1: Brand Experience (be) to Brand Loyalty (bl) | 0.24 | <0.01 |
| H2: Brand Experience (be) to Brand Engagement (beg) | 0.77 | <0.01 |
| H3: Brand Engagement (beg) to Brand Loyalty (bl) | 0.57 | <0.01 |
| H4: Brand Experience (be) to Brand Engagement (beg) and Brand Engagement (beg) to Brand Loyalty (bl) | | |

Based on the results of hypothesis testing, it can be interpreted that brand experience has a significant influence to brand loyalty , because *the p-value* is <0.01 which means <0.05 ( *alpha* 5%) and brand experience has a significant influence on brand engagement , because the *p-value* is <0.01 which means <0.05 ( *alpha* 5%) . Brand engagement has a significant influence on brand loyalty , because *the p-value* is <0.01, which means <0.05 ( *alpha* 5%) . Brand engagement as a mediator has a significant influence on brand experience and brand loyalty , because *the p-value* is <0.01 which means <0.05 ( *alpha* 5%).

## 5.   Discussion

**The Influence of Brand Experience on Brand Loyalty**
Based on the research results, it was found that brand experience has a significant positive influence on brand loyalty, the p-value is <0.01 which also means <0.05 (alpha 5%). Thus, the first hypothesis which states that brand experience has a significant positive effect on *brand loyalty* of students and alumni of Hayam Wuruk University Perbanas Surabaya is accepted. This means that the better the experience felt by students and alumni, the stronger their level of loyalty to the university will be.

The results of this test explain that the sensory, affection, cognition, behaviour aspects felt by students and alumni cause them to have good loyalty to Hayam Wuruk Perbanas University. In terms of the experience of students and alumni, the results of this study show that they assess that during college they experienced interesting moments, enjoyable learning experiences, and activities that sharpened the mindset of students and alumni. By experiencing these generally positive things, students and alumni have good loyalty. They will recommend Hayam Wuruk Perbanas University to relatives, friends and neighbours, they also say positive things about UHW Perbanas, choose UHW Perbanas for further education, and defend UHW Perbanas if it is discussed negatively.

The influence of brand experience on brand loyalty from the research results supports the theory presented by (Smith & Keller, 2021), namely that the basis for forming loyalty is from experiences that have been experienced customers. Brands apply theoretical insights to tailor experiences to individual preferences. Customized interactions create a sense of exclusivity and personal connection, driving loyalty. A positive brand experience can produce an emotional bond between the brand and consumers, which in essence strengthens *brand loyalty.* In terms of *brand experience,* as stated by Brakus et al., (2009) in (Waqas, 2022) explains that brand experience is defined as sensory, affection, cognition, behavior which is a response due to stimuli created by a person's experience of the brand. In terms of *loyalty,* according to (Teeroovengadumdel, 2019) loyalty is a deep commitment to consistently repurchase products or services in the future.

The results of this research support previous research conducted by (Rasool et al., 2021) which stated positive results between brand experience and brand loyalty. This was also mentioned by (Smith & Keller, 2021) where a positive brand experience can produce an emotional bond between the brand and consumers, which in essence strengthens brand loyalty. Brand experience influences brand perception through cognitive and affective dimensions. Theoretical frameworks like the Brand Experience Model or the Experiential Marketing Model explain how sensory, affective, and behavioral interactions shape perceptions of a brand. More experience with a brand (measured in terms of years of use) increases word of mouth Karjaluoto

et al., (2016) in (Westhuizen, 2018). Therefore, these findings suggest implementing a brand experience and brand loyalty approach at a strategic level to build and maintain the loyalty of students and alumni of Hayam Wuruk Perbanas University.

**The Influence of Brand Experience on Brand Engagement**
Based on the research results, it was found that Brand Experience has a significant positive influence on Brand Engagement , because *the p-value* is 0.01, which means <0.05 ( *alpha* 5%). Thus, the second hypothesis which states that brand experience has a significant positive effect on brand engagement of students and alumni of Hayam Wuruk University Perbanas Surabaya is accepted . This means that the better the experience felt by students and alumni, the stronger their level of attachment to the university will be.

The results of this test explain that the sensory, affection, cognition , behavior aspects felt by students and alumni cause them to have a strong sense of attachment to Hayam Wuruk Perbanas University . In terms of student and alumni experiences, the results of this research show that they assess that during their studies they experienced interesting moments, enjoyable learning experiences, and activities that sharpened the mindset of students and alumni. By experiencing things that are generally positive, students and alumni have a strong bond. They will feel that as time goes by they remember a lot of UHW Perbanas. By remembering moments and interesting things such as lectures, student activities and passions found while at UHW Perbanas.

The influence of brand experience on brand engagement from research results supports the theory presented by (Waqas, 2022) namely in the context of Higher Education, the experience of the Higher Education brand was found to have a positive effect on student engagement. In other words , Hayam Wuruk Perbanas University must create a perception as a place with various enjoyable experiences. From the brand experience perspective quoted by Pine & Gilmore, (1998) in (Waqas, 2022). The college brand experience will depend on the quality of service provided to students, which is used as a platform to engage students. In terms of brand engagement, when customers are involved with a brand experience, they feel emotionally connected and excited about the product (Merdiaty & Aldrin, 2022). In a university context, positive brand experiences can result in higher emotional connections and engagement among students. Brands can create impactful experiences that resonate with consumers, fostering deeper engagement and building long-lasting relationships with their audience.

The results of this research support previous research conducted by (Farhat et al., 2021) which stated positive results between brand experience and brand engagement. This was also stated in (Marliawati & Cahyaningdyah, 2020) that positive brand experiences can lead to higher levels of brand engagement, which in turn can increase brand loyalty among students. Universities must provide a good educational

experience so as to stimulate students' creativity, imagination, and reasoning at Brakus et al., 2009; Pine & Gilmore, (1998) in (Waqas, 2022). Engagement Cycle Model emphasize that brand experiences significantly impact the level of engagement consumers have with a brand. Positive experiences tend to increase engagement levels. heoretical models suggest that cognitive processing of brand experiences plays a pivotal role in shaping engagement. This includes how consumers perceive, interpret, and remember their interactions with a brand. An interesting college will be considered meaningful by students and an integral part of their lives Calder et al., (2018) in (Islam et al., 2019). Therefore, these findings suggest implementing a brand experience and brand engagement approach at a strategic level to build and maintain student and alumni engagement at Hayam Wuruk Perbanas University.

**The Influence of Brand Engagement on Brand Loyalty**
Based on the research results, it was found that Brand Engagement has a significant positive influence on Brand Loyalty, because the p-value is <0.01, which means <0.05 (alpha 5%). . This means that the better the bond felt by students and alumni, the higher the level The university's loyalty brand will become stronger. Thus, the third hypothesis in this research which states that brand engagement has a significant positive effect on the brand loyalty of Hayam Wuruk University Perbanas Surabaya Students and Alumni is accepted .

The results of this test show the results of the cognitive, affection and behavioral aspects felt by students and alumni causes them to have a strong sense of attachment to Hayam Wuruk Perbanas University. This can be interpreted that the closer the attachment to the consumer can influence the consumer's loyalty . In terms of brand attachment to students and alumni at UHW Perbanas, they will feel that over time they remember a lot of UHW Perbanas. By remembering moments and interesting things such as lectures, student activities and passions found while at UHW Perbanas. In terms of brand loyalty, they will recommend UHW Perbanas to relatives, friends and neighbors, they also say positive things about UHW Perbanas, choose UHW Perbanas for further education, and defend UHW Perbanas if it is discussed negatively.

The influence of brand engagement on brand loyalty from research results supports the theory presented by (Rasool et al., 2021) that is, positively engaged customers will bond with a brand through psychological and experiential processes that last longer than just a purchase. Theoretical models emphasize that higher levels of engagement with a brand positively influence brand loyalty. Engaged customers are more likely to remain loyal over time due to their emotional and psychological investment in the brand. In other words, Hayam Wuruk Perbanas University must create positive attachments to create brand loyalty. In terms of brand engagement as quoted by Bahri-Ammari et al in (Huang & Chen, 2022) consumers who are highly involved and pay attention to the entire consumption experience will probably revisit it in the near

future. Brand loyalty arises when consumers purchase or reuse products or services over time (Susanti et al., 2021).

The results of this research support previous research conducted by Darmadi et al., (2021) who found in their research that brand engagement has a significant positive influence on brand loyalty. This was also explained by (Rasool et al., 2021)that brand engagement has a positive effect on brand loyalty. Brands practically use feedback mechanisms to listen to customers and adapt based on their preferences and needs. This iterative process helps in improving engagement and fostering loyalty. Practical applications involve developing metrics to measure both engagement and loyalty. By understanding these metrics, brands can identify areas for improvement and gauge the effectiveness of their strategies. Brand involvement is very important for a company, where if consumers feel involved with the brand, then consumers will use the brand compared to other similar brands, therefore there will be an attitude of users to make actual or continuous purchases and will become loyal consumers of the brand (Susanti et al., 2021). Therefore, these findings suggest implementing a brand engagement and brand loyalty approach at a strategic level to build and maintain the loyalty of students and alumni of Hayam Wuruk University Perbanas.

**The Influence of Brand Engagement Mediation on Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty**

Based on the research results, it was found that brand experience has a significant positive influence on brand engagement and brand engagement has a significant positive influence on brand loyalty. Therefore, it can be concluded that the brand engagement variable mediates brand experience and brand loyalty because the p-value is <0.01 which means <0.05 (alpha 5%).

Results show that brand engagement as a mediator has a significant positive effect on brand experience and brand loyalty. This can be interpreted that brand involvement can mediate the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. Specifically, positive brand experiences can lead to higher levels of brand engagement, which in turn can increase brand loyalty. This suggests that universities should focus on creating positive brand experiences for students, while encouraging and facilitating opportunities for brand engagement. These results are in line with research findings conducted by (Rasool et al., 2021)who found in their research that brand engagement as a mediator has a significant positive effect on brand experience and brand loyalty. Previous consumer interactions and involvement play an important role in forming a profitable brand experience. Theoretical frameworks propose mediation models to explain how brand engagement mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. This suggests that engagement acts as a mediator variable that explains how experiences influence loyalty.

Overall, brand involvement plays an important role in mediating the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty in the university context. By creating

positive brand experiences and encouraging brand engagement, universities can increase brand loyalty among students and alumni to build a strong brand reputation. insights to develop holistic engagement strategies that leverage both brand experience and loyalty. Strategies encompass various touchpoints to create meaningful and consistent interactions.

## 6. Conclusion

Based on the findings from the research conducted, it can be concluded that there is a positive relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty, and brand engagement can mediate this relationship. Positive experiences (sensory, affective, cognitive, behaviour) increase student and alumni loyalty and engagement. Universities need to focus on creating positive experiences during lectures (interesting moments, fun learning, useful activities). Positive brand experience can lead to a higher level of brand engagement, which in turn can increase brand loyalty among students and alumni of Hayam Wuruk Perbanas University. Student and alumni brand engagement is the bridge between positive brand experience and strong loyalty. Universities need to encourage student and alumni engagement through various activations, good communication, and involving them in university activities. Develop a holistic engagement strategy that involves brand experience and loyalty. Create meaningful and consistent interactions across multiple touchpoints. Measure and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy to continuously adapt and improve loyalty. Overall, creating positive brand experiences and growing brand engagement can help universities build and increase a strong student and alumni loyalty.

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