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Determinants of 12th grade students' intention choose at Saigon International Private University (SIU): A study in Ho Chi Minh City

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Abstract

Forest being the most important resource for the welfare of humankind, provide many tangible and intangible benefits to human beings. In many countries, people are dependent on forests for various produces of which fuelwood is the main component. Fuelwood is the principal energy service provider to about 70% of the Indian population as it is extensively used for cooking and heating purposes. Lack of alternative sources of fuelwood makes the rural population mostly dependent on adjoining forest resources which ultimately results in the depletion of forest resources. The aim of present study was to examine the patterns of fuelwood consumption and their ecological implications in two villages namely village Chhani and village Lanchan of Bhaderwah forest division (J&K). The study was based on general survey and interview and it was observed that 12 plant species such as *Pinus wallichiana*, *Pinus roxburgii*, *Cedrus deodara*, *Quercus floribunda*, *Quercus leucotrichophora*, *Quercus semicarpifolia*, *Lyonia ovalifolia*, *Aesculus indica*, *Pyrus pashia*, *Indigofera species*, *Alnus nitida* and *Abies pindraw* were utilized as source of fuel wood in the study area. However, *C. deodara*, *Q. floribunda* and *P. wallichiana* were the most exploited fuel wood plant species. The preference for these species were due to ease of their availability and better fuel quality. Increase in fuel wood harvest caused intense forest degradation and biodiversity loss. The forests of the study area demand immediate attention in order to conserve the depleting forest structure. The policy makers must provide a sustainable solution to reduce the overexploitation of forest resources.

Keywords: Chhani, consumption, fuel-wood, households, Lanchaan

Introduction

In the increasingly competitive higher education landscape of Ho Chi Minh City, both public and private universities are striving to attract and retain prospective students. While private institutions have made notable progress in improving infrastructure, curricula, and international engagement, they continue to face significant challenges in appealing to high-performing students. This is largely due to persistent societal perceptions and skepticism regarding the quality and credibility of private education providers.

Saigon International Private University (SIU), one of the leading private institutions adopting an internationalized educational model, is currently navigating the complexities of student recruitment in this dynamic environment. As 12th grade students represent a critical demographic in shaping enrollment outcomes, understanding their decision-making process has become an urgent priority for the university (Nguyen Phuong Toan, 2011) ^[19]. Insights into these students' intentions and preferences are vital for designing effective communication strategies, strengthening institutional branding, and aligning recruitment efforts with the evolving expectations of modern learners Bangun *et al.*, 2023) ^[3, 4].

Despite the practical significance of this issue, existing research on university choice behavior, particularly in the context of SIU remains limited. Most marketing and recruitment efforts rely on anecdotal evidence or fragmented data, resulting in strategic misalignments. Meanwhile, the intention to enroll in a university is shaped by a complex interplay of factors, including personal motivations, social influences, institutional reputation, cost and tuition considerations, career prospects, and the perceived effectiveness of promotional activities.

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This study aims to examine the determinants of 12th grade students' intention to choose SIU in Ho Chi Minh City. By exploring the influence of multiple psychological, social, and institutional factors on enrollment decisions, this research seeks to provide empirical evidence that informs strategic policymaking and enhances institutional competitiveness. In doing so, the study also contributes to the broader literature on student decision-making in private higher education, offering insights for academic leaders and education marketers in Vietnam's rapidly evolving academic context.

Literature Review

Personal Factors

Previous studies have consistently highlighted personal factors as central to students' university choice decisions. These include academic ability, self-perception of learning competence, personal interests, and career orientation (Truong Hoai Anh *et al.*, 2023^[27]; Le Thi My Linh and Khuc Van Quy, 2020)^[14]. Students often base their decisions on prior academic performance, alignment between personal aspirations and academic programs, and long-term professional goals.

In addition, personality traits such as independence, self-confidence, and proactiveness play a significant role (Nguyen Thi Minh Huong, 2020^[20]). Learners with clear goals and strong self-awareness are more likely to choose institutions that support their desired academic and career trajectories.

Other notable components include students' expectations of an ideal learning environment, their capacity to adapt, and financial self-sufficiency, especially relevant for those considering private universities (Nguyen Anh Tuan *et al.*, 2022^[18]; Ananda *et al.*, 2019)^[19].

These findings suggest that understanding students' internal motivations and attributes is essential for both researchers and educational institutions. Incorporating factors such as academic competence, field-specific interest, career expectations, self-directedness, and financial readiness can enhance the explanatory power of models predicting university choice. It also provides a practical foundation for institutions to tailor recruitment and communication strategies to better align with student characteristics in increasingly competitive educational contexts.

Family-Social Factors

Family-social factors exert a strong indirect influence on high school students' university choices. Prior research identifies key influences such as parental expectations, family guidance, teacher opinions, and peer influence (Truong Hoai Anh *et al.*, 2023^[27]). Families with strong academic traditions tend to shape students' choices, while friends and relatives impact students' emotional and social perceptions of universities.

Other studies highlight practical constraints such as the desire to study near home and financial pressure from parents (Nguyen Phuong Toan, 2011)^[19], as well as the influence of local traditions and learning environments. These elements combine both psychological and contextual dimensions in students' decision-making. Given the sociocultural context of Ho Chi Minh City, incorporating family-social factors such as parental influence, peer pressure, and academic surroundings is essential for accurately capturing student behavior and informing university recruitment strategies.

University-Related Factors

University-related factors are consistently identified as key determinants in students' decision making processes. Core

components include quality of education, faculty qualifications and reputation, modern facilities, and reasonable tuition fees (Truong Hoai Anh *et al.*, 2023)^[27]. Other influential elements include university branding, scholarship policies, student support services, and a friendly learning environment.

Additional studies highlight factors such as geographic location, cost of living, employment prospects, and practical curricula (Nguyen Thi Minh Huong, 2020^[11]; Vo Nhut Thu *et al.*, 2021)^[28]. International research also emphasizes academic flexibility, media presence, and personalized learning pathways as vital for meeting modern students' expectations (Gan *et al.*, 2022^[10]; Bangun *et al.*, 2023)^[3, 4].

In the context of this study, incorporating variables such as teaching quality, faculty expertise, infrastructure, tuition affordability, and institutional reputation is essential. These factors closely align with the practical concerns and academic aspirations of 12th-grade students in Ho Chi Minh City.

University Reputation Factors

University reputation is a critical determinant in students' decision to enroll. According to Truong Hoai Anh *et al.* (2023)^[27], reputation is shaped by consistent branding, strong media presence, international partnerships, and proven training outcomes. For private universities, reputation builds trust and enhances competitiveness.

Nguyen Thi Minh Huong (2020)^[20] found that local communities prioritize a university's stable history, word-of-mouth from relatives and alumni, and post-graduation employment rates. In this context, reputation reflects trust more than modern marketing.

Gan *et al.* (2022)^[10] emphasized global recognition through academic rankings, international accreditation, and the number of foreign students. For high-achieving students, reputation signals degree value and access to global opportunities. Similarly, Rudhumbu (2017)^[23] viewed reputation through employability and alumni feedback. Students seek institutions with strong employer ties and internationally recognized qualifications.

In a distance education context, Santoso *et al.* (2019)^[24] linked reputation to institutional legitimacy, accessibility, and government endorsement. Here, reputation is associated with educational equity and reliability.

In summary, university reputation encompasses both traditional dimensions (community trust, graduate success) and modern standards (branding, global rankings, international recognition). For this study, key components include brand recognition, media presence, perceived academic value, and community trust, elements particularly relevant to 12th-grade students navigating a highly competitive, information-rich environment.

University Promotion Factors

University promotion plays a pivotal role in shaping students' initial perceptions and enrollment decisions. Truong Hoai Anh *et al.* (2023)^[27] emphasized that campus-based admission seminars, promotional videos, and social media campaigns significantly enhance students' information access and emotional connection with the institution. These tools offer immersive experiences, enabling prospective students to visualize campus life and interact with faculty and current students.

Šola and Zia (2021)^[25] highlighted the growing influence of social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram in university marketing. These channels allow for high

interactivity, personalized content, and real-time communication, which foster familiarity and trust among students. Santoso *et al.* (2019) ^[24] noted that word-of-mouth from alumni serves as an authentic and persuasive promotional channel. Positive testimonials and success stories shared by former students help reinforce institutional credibility and appeal.

In sum, university promotion via experiential events, digital media, alumni advocacy, and interactive communication serves not only to inform but also to emotionally connect with students. For 12th grade students in Ho Chi Minh City, where information is abundant and competitive pressure is high, effective promotion strategies are essential for brand awareness and decision-making. This justifies its inclusion in the current research model.

Research Gap

Although numerous studies have investigated factors influencing students' university choice, there remains a significant gap concerning 12th-grade students selecting private universities in Vietnam, especially in Ho Chi Minh City. Most existing research focuses on public institutions with historical prestige and government funding. For instance, Nguyen Thi Minh Huong (2020) ^[20] studied students in central Vietnam aiming for public universities, while international studies (e.g., Gan *et al.*, 2022 ^[10]; Rudhumbu, 2017) ^[23] primarily target public or international institutions.

There is also a lack of focused research on student decision-making for internationalized private universities, a rapidly growing segment in Ho Chi Minh City. Despite over 20 private universities operating in the city (Quynh Giang and Tran Tu, 2024) ^[22], empirical studies on students' intentions toward these institutions are rare. This is notable given the rising interest among Vietnamese students and parents in modern, internationally affiliated universities, such as the SIU.

Moreover, prior research tends to isolate specific factor groups, such as personal traits or institutional attributes, without integrating them into a comprehensive model. Few studies combine all major categories of influence, including personal, familial-social, institutional, reputational, and promotional factors. For example, while Tran Van Quy and Cao Hao Thi (2010) considered personal and institutional aspects, they did not examine promotional influences, which are increasingly decisive in the digital age. Consequently, there is a need for a holistic model to examine the combined impact of these factors on students' intentions to choose international private universities in urban Vietnam.

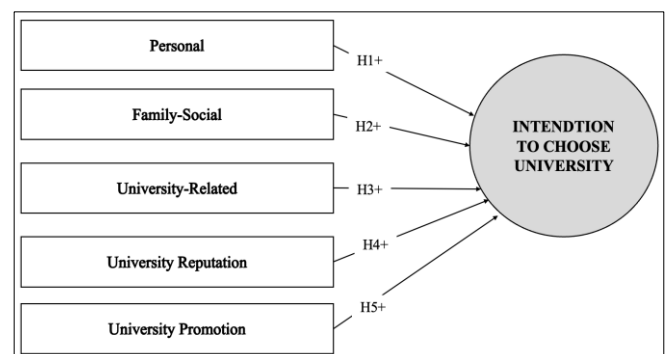
Hypotheses Development and Research Model

Personal Factors (e.g., interests, academic ability, learning goals, and career orientation) are internal motivations driving students to seek suitable learning environments aligned with their capabilities and long-term objectives (Maslow, 1943) ^[16]. Prior studies (Truong Hoai Anh *et al.*, 2023 ^[27]; Nguyen Thi Minh Huong, 2020 ^[20]; Gan *et al.*, 2022) ^[10] confirm the significant role of personal factors in shaping university choice intentions. International research (Jafari and Aliemaili, 2013 ^[13]; Adeoye *et al.*, 2022) ^[1] further supports the critical influence of self-development needs in decision-making.

- **H1: Personal factors positively influence 12th-grade students' university choice intention:** Family and Social

Factors (e.g., parents, teachers, peers, and social environment) significantly shape educational choices. Hossler *et al.* (1999) ^[12] and Brooks (2003) ^[5] show strong social influence in decision-making. Vietnamese and international studies (Truong Hoai Anh *et al.*, 2023 ^[27]; Santoso *et al.*, 2019) ^[24] reinforce the impact of collective decision-making in Asian contexts.

- **H2: Family and social factors positively influence 12th-grade students' university choice intention:** Institutional Attributes (e.g., academic quality, tuition, location, infrastructure, curriculum) are key considerations. Research (Gan *et al.*, 2022 ^[10]; Nguyen Thi Thu Huong, 2020 ^[20]; Perna, 2006) ^[21] consistently shows that institutional offerings significantly affect enrollment decisions. Practical experiences and perceived training quality enhance students' intention to enroll.
- **H3: Institutional attributes positively influence 12th-grade students' university choice intention:** University Reputation (e.g., brand image, rankings, achievements, social recognition) contributes to trust, pride, and perceived value. Studies (Ananda *et al.*, 2019 ^[2]; Rudhumbu, 2017) ^[23] confirm that a strong academic reputation increases confidence and intention to choose a university.
- **H4: University reputation positively influences 12th-grade students' university choice intention:** Promotional Activities (e.g., media, recruitment events, online engagement, campus visits) enhance awareness and emotional connection. According to TRA and Diffusion of Innovation Theory, exposure to positive information can influence attitudes and behavioral intentions (Duffett, 2017 ^[9]; Gan *et al.*, 2022) ^[10]. Vietnamese research (Truong Hoai Anh *et al.*, 2023) ^[27] highlights the effectiveness of multi-channel promotion strategies.
- **H5: Promotional activities positively influence 12th-grade students' university choice intention:** The proposed model includes five key constructs influencing university choice intention. These constructs serve as the basis for testing hypotheses H1-H5 and are supported by theoretical foundations and empirical evidence.



Source: Author's proposal, 2025

Fig 1: Research Model ()

Aim of the study

This study aims to identify and measure the impact of factors influencing 12th-grade students' intention to choose SIU in Ho Chi Minh City. The research findings are expected to support SIU in developing short-and medium-term strategies to enhance the effectiveness of its student recruitment efforts and attract more talented individuals to study and conduct research at the university.

Objectives

- To identify the factors influencing 12th-grade students' intention to choose SIU in Ho Chi Minh City.
- To measure the impact level of these factors on students' university choice intentions.
- To propose managerial implications to improve the effectiveness of SIU's student recruitment strategy.

Research Design

Data Collection Procedure

- **Step 1:** Design the questionnaire based on standardized scales (Hair *et al.*, 2010) ^[11], adapt it to local culture and target group, and pilot test with 30 12th-grade students for refinement.
- **Step 2:** Conduct the official survey at high schools in Ho Chi Minh City using controlled convenience sampling. A

total of 450 questionnaires were distributed, with 427 valid responses collected (response rate: 94.9%).

- **Step 3:** Clean and process the data using SPSS 26.0. Invalid responses were removed, resulting in 400 usable questionnaires for analysis, including Cronbach's Alpha, EFA.

Results of scale content discussion

Based on the identified factors influencing students' intention to choose SIU, the author reviewed relevant literature and developed a preliminary measurement scale comprising 5 independent constructs and 1 dependent construct (Intention to choose a university). After conducting expert interviews and receiving professional feedback, the official measurement scale was finalized. Some items were revised or removed to enhance clarity, contextual relevance, and construct validity. As a result, the finalized research scale consists of 6 variables with 28 observed variables, as presented in Table 2.

Table 1: Official Measurement Research Scale

No	Variables	Sources
Personal Factors		
CN1	The university offers academic programs aligned with personal interests.	Nguyen Phuong Toan (2011) [19]
CN2	The university offers academic programs that match individual capabilities.	
CN3	The university’s admission requirements are suitable for personal academic ability.	Chapman (1981) [7]
CN4	The university provides academic programs that are appropriate for one’s gender.	Tran Van Quy and Cao Hao Thi (2009)
Family-Social Factors		
XH1	Influenced by the opinions of parents.	Le Thi My Linh and Khuc Van Quy (2020) [14]
XH2	Influenced by the opinions of homeroom teachers or career counselors.	
XH3	Influenced by the opinions of current or former students of the university.	
XH4	Influenced by the opinions of university presenters.	
XH5	Influenced by the opinions of classmates or close friends.	
University-Related Factors		
DH1	The university is located close to home, providing convenient transportation (geographical location).	Chapman (1981) [7]; Ming (2010) [17]; Tran Van Quy and Cao Hao Thi (2009) [26]; Cabrera and Nasa (2000) [6]; Nguyen Phuong Toan (2011) [19]
DH2	The campus infrastructure is modern, clean, spacious, and surrounded by greenery.	
DH3	The university offers a wide variety of academic programs.	
DH4	Tuition fees are affordable for students’ financial conditions.	
DH5	The university provides reasonable scholarships and financial aid policies for students.	
DH6	Attracted by the university’s extracurricular activities such as arts, music, and sports.	
University Reputation Factors		
DT1	I chose to study at this university because it has a well-known brand reputation.	Le Thi Thanh Giao <i>et al.</i> , (2023)
DT2	The university has a prestigious faculty team.	
DT3	The university offers high-quality academic programs.	
DT4	The university has strong partnerships with various businesses.	Expert recommendation
DT5	The university is accredited by recognized organizations.	Expert recommendation
University Promotion Factors		
QB1	The university organizes campus tours for high school students.	Expert recommendation
QB2	The university maintains alumni engagement activities.	Expert recommendation
QB3	The university’s website provides comprehensive and engaging information about its programs and related matters.	Truong Hoai Anh <i>et al.</i> , (2023) [27]
QB4	I had prior knowledge of the university through media channels.	
QB5	I was introduced to the university through career orientation activities at my high school.	
Intention to choose university Factors		
YD1	You have researched Saigon International Private University.	Expert recommendation
YD2	You believe Saigon International Private University is a good fit for you.	
YD3	You intend to choose Saigon International Private University.	

Research Results

Research sampling

The target population includes 12th-grade students currently studying at public, private, or semi-public high schools in Ho Chi Minh City. They were selected due to their imminent

university decision-making, aligning with the study's objectives. A purposive random sampling method was used to ensure diversity in gender, residence, school type, and post-secondary orientation, enhancing the representativeness and generalizability of the finding.

Reliability Analysis of the Scales

The Table 2 summarizes the research variables: Initially, there were 28 observed variables across 6 factor groups. After analysis, 2 variables (DH2 and QB4) were eliminated, resulting

in 26 variables retained including 5 independent factor groups (Personal, Family-Social, University-Related, University Reputation Factors, and University Promotion Factors) and 1 dependent factor (Intention to choose SIU).

Table 2: Summary of eliminated observed variables after reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha

No	Item	Code	Type of variables	Number of variables before analysis	Eliminated variable	Number of variables after analysis
1	Personal Factors	CN	Independent	4		4
2	Family-Social Factors	XH	Independent	5		5
3	University-Related Factors	DH	Independent	6	DH2	5
4	University Reputation Factors	DT	Independent	5		5
5	University Promotion Factors	QB	Independent	5	QB4	4
6	University Promotion Factors	YD	Dependent	3		3
Total				28		26

All scales show good reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha ranging from 0.755 to 0.890 (Table 3). Two items (DH2 and QB4) were removed due to low CITC values (< 0.3). The remaining items meet reliability standards and are suitable for further analysis.

Table 3: Summary of Reliability Analysis for Measurement Scales (Cronbach's Alpha)

Factor	Code	No of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Item with lowest CITC	CITC Value	Alpha if Item Deleted	Note
1. Personal Factors	CN	4	0.804	CN2	0.623	0.765	All items acceptable
2. Family-Social Factors	XH	5	0.841	XH1	0.603	0.820	All items acceptable
3. University-Related Factors	DH	6	0.851	DH2	0.201	0.876	DH2 violates CITC $< 0.3 \rightarrow$ removed in next step
4. University Reputation	DT	5	0.890	DT4	0.700	0.874	All items acceptable
5. University Promotion	QB	5	0.755	QB4	-0.089	0.870	QB4 violates CITC $< 0.3 \rightarrow$ removed in next step
6. Intention to Choose University	YD	3	0.846	YD1	0.642	0.854	All items acceptable

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

The KMO coefficient reached 0.807 (greater than 0.5) and the Sig. value of Bartlett's test was 0.0 (Less Than 0.05), meeting the requirements for conducting Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: KMO Value and Bartlett's Test-Official EFA Analysis

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy			0.871
Bartlett's Test of sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square		3284.235
	df		253
	Sig.		0.000

Using Principal Component Analysis (PCA), all communalities (Table 5) met the required threshold (greater than 0.2).

Table 5: Communalities-Official EFA Analysis

Variable	Initial	Extraction	Variable	Initial	Extraction
XH1	1.000	0.687			
XH2	1.000	0.726	QB3	1.000	0.679
XH3	1.000	0.754	QB5	1.000	0.799
XH4	1.000	0.743	DH1	1.000	0.747
XH5	1.000	0.751	DH3	1.000	0.771
DT1	1.000	0.695	DH4	1.000	0.770
DT2	1.000	0.710	DH5	1.000	0.816
DT3	1.000	0.676	DH6	1.000	0.853
DT4	1.000	0.670	CN1	1.000	0.625
DT5	1.000	0.778	CN2	1.000	0.527
QB1	1.000	0.712	CN3	1.000	0.521
QB2	1.000	0.728	CN4	1.000	0.702

Five factors were extracted (with Total or Eigenvalue greater than 1), accounting for a total variance of 71.477% (greater than 50%), (Table 6)

Five factors were extracted (with Total or Eigenvalue greater than 1), accounting for a total variance of 71.477% (greater than 50%), (Table 6).

Table 6: Total Variance Explained-Official EFA Analysis

Comp.	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cum.%	Total	% of Variance	Cum.%	Total	% of Variance	Cum.%
1	8.059	35.039	35.039	8.059	35.039	35.039	3.926	17.070	17.070
2	2.805	12.197	47.236	2.805	12.197	47.236	3.656	15.894	32.964
3	2.182	9.485	56.721	2.182	9.485	56.721	3.554	15.454	48.418
4	2.033	8.840	65.561	2.033	8.840	65.561	2.896	12.592	61.009
5	1.360	5.915	71.477	1.360	5.915	71.477	2.407	10.467	71.477
6	0.779	3.385	74.862						
7	0.647	2.815	77.677						
8	0.589	2.559	80.236						
9	0.532	2.315	82.550						
10	0.480	2.086	84.636						
11	0.448	1.946	86.582						
12	0.400	1.740	88.322						
13	0.378	1.645	89.968						
14	0.358	1.557	91.525						
15	0.336	1.460	92.985						
16	0.295	1.282	94.268						
17	0.266	1.155	95.423						
18	0.249	1.083	96.507						
19	0.201	0.876	97.382						
20	0.182	0.791	98.174						
21	0.170	0.739	98.913						
22	0.147	0.639	99.552						
23	0.103	0.448	100.000						

The rotated component matrix using varimax rotation extracted five factors consistent with the structure of the official research scale (Table 7). All factor loadings met the required threshold (Greater Than 0.5).

Table 7: Rotated Component Matrix-Official EFA Analysis

	Factors				
	1	2	3	4	5
DH6	0.867				
DH5	0.861				
DH3	0.831				
DH4	0.823				
DH1	0.800				
XH4		0.840			
XH2		0.821			
XH3		0.818			
XH1		0.795			
XH5		0.763			
DT5			0.839		
DT2			0.805		
DT1			0.791		
DT3			0.774		
DT4			0.750		
QB5				0.850	
QB2				0.814	
QB3				0.793	
QB1				0.768	
CN4					0.789
CN1					0.751
CN3					0.684
CN2					0.648

EFA Analysis of the Dependent Variable

The “intention to choose a university” factor (coded as Y) is a composite variable derived from three observed items (YD1, YD2, YD3) using EFA. It reflects 12th-grade students’ intention to choose Saigon International Private University in Ho Chi Minh City (Table 8).

Table 8: Aggregated to form the variable measuring 12th-grade students’ intention to choose SIU in Ho Chi Minh City

Before aggregation	
YD1	You have searched for information about SIU
YD2	You think SIU is suitable for you
YD3	You intend to choose SIU
After aggregation:	
Y	Intention to choose SIU among 12 th -grade students in Ho Chi Minh City

Table 9 shows the EFA results. KMO=0.698 (> 0.5) and Bartlett’s test is significant (Sig.=0.000 < 0.05), indicating suitability for EFA. Three observed variables were grouped into one factor, explaining 71.477% of the variance.

Table 9: KMO and Bartlett’s Test Results

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy		0.698
Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	293.383
	df	3
	Sig.	0.000

All three items (YD1-YD3) have high extraction values (0.688-0.832), indicating good representation of the underlying factor and suitability for aggregation (Table 10).

Table 10: Communalities in the official Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

	Initial	Extraction
YD1	1.000	0.688
YD2	1.000	0.779
YD3	1.000	0.832

The first component explains 76.63% of the total variance, exceeding the commonly accepted threshold of 50%, confirming unidimensionality of the construct (Table 11).

Table 11: Explained variance

Component	Total Variance Explained					
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative%	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative%
1	2.299	76.628	76.628	2.299	76.628	76.628
2	0.455	15.174	91.802			
3	0.246	8.198	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Descriptive statistics of independent variables

The descriptive statistics indicate that all factor groups have mean scores above 3.0, suggesting generally positive perceptions among 12th-grade students in Ho Chi Minh City.

The Family-Social Factors show the highest mean values, while Personal Factors exhibit the lowest. Standard deviations across all factors indicate moderate variability in responses (Table 12).

Table 12: Descriptive Statistics Results for Observed Variables of the Family-Social Factor Factors (XH)

Factor	Variables	Mean	Std.	N (Valid)
Personal Factors	CN1 CN2 CN3 CN4	2.95-3.25	0.864-1.026	219
Family-Social Factors	XH1 XH2 XH3 XH4 XH5	3.42-3.61	0.922-0.974	219
University-Related Factors	DH1 DH3 DH4 DH5 DH6	3.24-3.36	0.822-0.909	219
University Reputation	DT1 DT2 DT3 DT4 DT5	3.13-3.30	0.879-1.027	219
University Promotion	QB1 QB2 QB3 QB5	3.07-3.18	0.969-1.062	219

Correlation Analysis: All factors are positively and significantly correlated with intention (YD). Promotion (r=0.678), personal factors (r=0.653), and reputation (r=0.510) show the strongest associations (Table 13).

Table 13: Descriptive statistics results for observed variables of the family-social factor factors (XH)

		Correlations					
		XH	DT	QB	DH	CN	YD
XH	Pearson Correlation	1	0.378**	0.271**	0.472**	0.232**	0.457**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000
	N	219	219	219	219	219	219
DT	Pearson Correlation	0.378**	1	0.356**	0.381**	0.378**	0.510**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	219	219	219	219	219	219
QB	Pearson Correlation	0.271**	0.356**	1	0.287**	0.444**	0.678**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	219	219	219	219	219	219
DH	Pearson Correlation	0.472**	0.381**	0.287**	1	0.359**	0.504**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000
	N	219	219	219	219	219	219
CN	Pearson Correlation	0.232**	0.378**	0.444**	0.359**	1	0.653**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000
	N	219	219	219	219	219	219
YD	Pearson Correlation	0.457**	0.510**	0.678**	0.504**	0.653**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	219	219	219	219	219	219

All independent variables are significantly correlated with YD. The strongest is QB (r=0.678), followed by CN

(r=0.653). DT and DH show moderate-strong correlations, while XH is moderate (Table 14).

Table 14: Correlation Statistics of Independent Variables

Indepent Variables	Correlation with YD	Correlation Strength	Statistical Significance
DT	0.510**	Moderate-Strong	Significant (Sig.=.000)
QB	0.678**	Very strong	Significant (Sig.=.000)
DH	0.504**	Moderate-Strong	Significant (Sig.=.000)
CN	0.653**	Strong	Significant (Sig.=.000)
XH	0.457**	Moderate	Significant (Sig.=.000)

Regression Analysis

All five independent variables significantly predict YD ($p < 0.01$). QB ($\beta = 0.399$) and CN ($\beta = 0.340$) have the strongest effects. VIF values < 1.5 indicate no multicollinearity issues (Table 15).

Table 15: Estimated Regression Coefficients Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	0.859	0.150	5.721	0.000		
	XH	0.127	0.036	0.154	3.492	0.001	0.724
	DT	0.103	0.036	0.125	2.842	0.005	0.725
	QB	0.313	0.034	0.399	9.206	0.000	0.747
	DH	0.128	0.039	0.146	3.243	0.001	0.689
	CN	0.311	0.040	0.340	7.667	0.000	0.716

a. Dependent Variable: YD

The model explains 70.1% of the variance in YD ($R^2 = 0.701$), indicating strong explanatory power. The Durbin-Watson value (2.100) suggests no autocorrelation in residuals (Table 16).

Table 16: Regression Coefficients

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	0.837 ^a	0.701	0.694	0.36828	2.100

a. Predictors: (Constant), CN, XH, DH, DT, QB

b. Dependent Variable: YD

Managerial Implications

▪ Personal factors

Personal factors such as individual interests, academic goals, and career orientation significantly influence 12th-grade students' decisions when choosing a university, with a regression coefficient of $\beta = 0.34$, ranking second in the research model. Among these, having clear academic goals and specific career directions received the highest agreement, suggesting that students tend to make rational and well-considered choices rather than impulsive ones. Based on these findings, universities should enhance personalized enrollment counseling by developing online career guidance platforms, providing accessible and detailed information about academic programs, expanding interdisciplinary and flexible study options, and organizing experiential activities to help students better understand their future majors. In addition, improving the capacity of academic advisors, using real student stories in communication, segmenting student profiles for targeted outreach, and conducting regular feedback surveys will strengthen recruitment strategies and help students make more informed and suitable academic choices.

▪ Family-Social factors

The regression results indicate that the Social Influence factor has a statistically significant effect on students' intention to choose the university ($\beta = 0.154$, Sig.=0.001), ranking third among the predictors. The mean scores for observed variables ranged from 3.42 to 3.61, showing that students generally acknowledge the influence of parents, friends, and teachers on their decision-making. The relatively low variation ($SD \approx 0.92$) reflects consistent perceptions across respondents.

Notably, the highest mean was recorded for the item related to parental guidance, emphasizing the crucial role of parents in shaping university choices. Meanwhile, peer and teacher influence also showed moderate impacts. These findings suggest that universities should strengthen engagement with parents, peers, and educators through joint counseling sessions, outreach events, and school-university partnerships to leverage social support networks in influencing student decisions.

▪ University-Related factors

The regression results indicate that university-related factors significantly influence students' school choice, with a moderate and statistically significant Beta coefficient of 0.146. Among the components, geographic location (DH6) is most appreciated, suggesting that accessibility is a key concern, while tuition affordability (DH5) received the lowest score but remains relevant, especially for students from lower-income backgrounds. These findings suggest that the university should enhance internal quality especially academic programs and facilities while also improving communication of its strengths. Additionally, expanding financial aid and scholarships can help address cost concerns, making higher education more accessible and appealing to a broader range of students.

▪ University reputation

The regression results show that University reputation ($\beta = 0.125$) has a moderate and statistically significant influence on students' university choice. Although not the strongest factor, reputation remains an essential competitive asset. The highest-rated item "positive image of the university in the community" highlights the value of strong public perception. However, variations in responses suggest inconsistent brand recognition. To enhance reputation, universities should adopt a strategic branding approach grounded in educational values, consistently communicated through digital platforms, publications, and alumni success stories. Practical actions like hosting open days, promoting research achievements, and engaging with the community through partnerships or social impact projects help build trust. Furthermore, digital storytelling through tailored content for both Gen Z and parents can humanize the institution while reinforcing professionalism. A strong reputation is not built overnight; it requires coordinated efforts across internal quality, external visibility, and social engagement to establish the university as a credible and attractive choice in a competitive education landscape.

▪ University promotion

The study reveals that University promotion is the most influential factor in students' university choice decisions, with a Beta coefficient of 0.399. However, the mean scores across related indicators remain moderate, indicating limited

brand awareness. Therefore, the university should implement an integrated, multi-channel communication strategy centered on student engagement. Initiatives such as interactive livestreams, short-form videos showcasing campus life, trial classes, and career orientation events should be creatively designed to attract attention and build trust. Additionally, leveraging alumni and faculty members as brand ambassadors can enhance authenticity and emotional connection. The admissions website should be modern, easy to navigate, and equipped with tools like chatbots or program matching features to support decision-making. Most importantly, the university must highlight its unique values and strengths to help students feel a sense of alignment and pride in their choice.

Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the key factors influencing 12th-grade students' intention to choose Saigon International Private University (SIU) in Ho Chi Minh City. By integrating five major dimensions (personal, family-social, institutional, reputational, and promotional) the research offers empirical insights into the complex decision-making process of prospective university students in the context of private higher education. The results from correlation and regression analyses indicate that all five factors significantly impact students' enrollment intentions, with university promotion and personal motivation emerging as the strongest predictors. These findings suggest that while traditional considerations such as academic reputation and family influence remain relevant, modern students place increasing value on experiential engagement, clear career alignment, and dynamic outreach strategies.

From a managerial perspective, SIU and similar institutions should prioritize student-centered marketing, personalized academic counseling, and digital brand positioning to enhance recruitment outcomes. Initiatives such as trial classes, interactive media, alumni engagement, and clear communication of academic strengths can bridge the gap between student expectations and institutional offerings. Additionally, strengthening collaborations with high schools and incorporating feedback from current students can further refine recruitment approaches. Overall, the study contributes to the growing literature on university choice behavior in emerging markets and emphasizes the need for integrated, data-informed strategies to address the evolving expectations of Gen Z learners in Vietnam's competitive higher education environment.

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