

'We are the Teachers of the Nation': A Discursive Analysis of Institutional Identity in Ghanaian University Anthems

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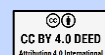
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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the anthems of two prominent Ghanaian universities, the University of Cape Coast (UCC) and the University of Education, Winneba (UEW), to understand how they contribute to institutional identity and serve as tools for institutional branding within a competitive higher education context. The study is informed by Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and Institutional Branding Theory (Balmer & Gray, 2003). Utilising a qualitative multiple case study design, the study purposively selected official lyrics of anthems of both universities, conducting textual analysis complemented by thematic analysis. The findings indicate that UCC and UEW strategically leverage their anthems to project distinct brand identities to both internal and external audiences, with UCC foregrounding pedagogical leadership and national service, and UEW emphasising moral purpose and ethical excellence. Despite these contrasts, three core identity dimensions emerged for both institutions: professional teacher education, institutional pride and prestige, and forward-looking aspirations. The study concludes that university anthems serve as active instruments of identity construction and branding, reinforcing cohesion, distinctiveness, and the institutional mission. These findings underscore the importance of symbolic cultural artefacts in shaping the identity and communication strategies of higher education institutions.

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1. Introduction

University anthems transcend their role as mere ceremonial pieces; they are thoughtfully crafted textual and musical artefacts that allow institutions to express their values, history, and identity (Ayoola, 2022; Graham & Ward, 2024; Opoku, 2022; Wanyama & Shitandi, 2023). Typically performed during significant events such as matriculations, graduations, and inaugurations, these anthems serve both internal and external purposes (Silaghi-Dumitrescu, 2020). Internally, they instil pride, foster cohesion, and cultivate loyalty among students, staff, and alumni. Externally, they articulate the institution's ethos, historical background, and uniqueness to the wider community (Ayinuola & Francis, 2021; Jaja & Obianime, 2022; Mwinwelle, 2020). Although the musical aspect of these anthems can elevate emotional connection, it is

the lyrics that primarily encode institutional ideals, historical narratives, and aspirational goals in language that is both repeated and internalised (Amenorvi & Grumah, 2019; Donkor et al., 2024; Gapur et al., 2018; Pujiono & Gapur, 2019; Saksono & Endriyati, 2024; Sani & Ogungbe, 2024).

Recent studies (Adeniyi & Ehibor, 2024; Alabi, 2020; Hasanah et al., 2024; Okafor, 2020) increasingly recognise the role of ceremonial texts, such as charters, mottos, and anthems, in shaping institutional identity and cohesion within higher education. Saksono and Endriyati (2024) noted that the lyrics of Indonesian university anthems, by referencing cultural heritage and institutional achievements, enhance students' identification with the institution's values. Similarly, Sani and Ogungbe (2024) also demonstrated that anthem lyrics, along with semiotic and symbolic elements, effectively communicate the ethos, aspirations, and pride of Nigerian institutions, thereby reinforcing internal cohesion while crafting a curated external image (Silaghi-Dumitrescu, 2020). These studies illustrate that anthem lyrics are intentionally designed textual tools that encode values and construct institutional identity through language, rather than solely relying on musical performance. Furthermore, the repeated performance of these lyrics ritualises institutional memory, strengthens commitment to norms, and fosters a shared sense of belonging, highlighting the intersection between textual meaning and performative practice (Hatch & Schultz, 2008).

In the Ghanaian context, studies on university anthems have mostly concentrated on the linguistic and stylistic elements of the texts. For instance, Klutse and Israel (2024) examined the use of imperatives, declaratives, and collective pronouns in Ghanaian university anthems, illustrating how these strategies cultivate unity and institutional commitment. Mwinwelle et al. (2021) analysed rhetorical devices such as repetition, parallelism, metaphor, and personification in Technical University anthems, revealing how these devices convey mission, identity, and cohesion. While these studies provide valuable insights, they are largely descriptive and do not critically examine how lyrics function strategically to construct institutional identity or perform branding work.

This gap is particularly salient within Ghana's teacher education sector, where universities play a central role in shaping national educational values and professional identity. The University of Cape Coast (UCC) and the University of Education, Winneba (UEW), as the country's leading teacher education universities, offer rich cases for examining how institutional identity and mission are discursively articulated. To address this gap, the study employs a dual-theoretical framework. Institutional Branding Theory serves as a lens through which to examine how universities strategically utilise lyrics to convey their mission, values, and reputation, thereby shaping both internal cohesion and external perception. Additionally, Social Identity Theory (SIT) (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) provides insight into how engagement with anthem lyrics fosters group identification, loyalty, and a shared sense of belonging.

Guided by this framework, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. How do the lyrics of UCC and UEW anthems function as resources of institutional branding within Ghana's higher education landscape?
2. How do the lyrics of UCC and UEW anthems construct institutional identity?

In addressing these research questions, the study fills a significant gap in the existing literature. The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: the next section outlines the theoretical framework employed. Following that, the methodological approach, including data collection and analysis, is discussed in detail. An in-depth analysis of the anthems is then presented. Finally, the paper concludes by summarising contributions, limitations, and future research directions.

2. Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in Social Identity Theory (SIT) (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and further complemented by Institutional Branding Theory (Balmer & Gray, 2003), adapted to the higher education context. These frameworks provide a lens for exploring how the lyrics of university anthems shape institutional identity and serve as strategic branding tools. Anthem lyrics are particularly apt for this analysis because they are linguistic artefacts that both promote internal cohesion and convey institutional values externally.

Social Identity Theory (SIT) explains how individuals derive their sense of self and belonging from their membership in social groups, emphasising that collective identification fosters loyalty, cohesion, and a shared sense of purpose (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). Within higher education institutions, students, faculty, and alumni often see themselves not merely as individuals but also as representatives of their institutions. This shared identification enhances pride, reinforces institutional norms, and establishes distinctions from other universities. SIT identifies three key mechanisms for maintaining group identity: social categorisation, which delineates in-groups and out-groups; social comparison, which assesses the group relative to others; and positive distinctiveness, which nurtures a favourable collective self-concept. In this study, SIT guides the analysis of anthem lyrics by interpreting how linguistic and thematic elements bolster internal cohesion, foster pride, and create a shared sense of belonging. These insights directly inform how the anthems of UCC and UEW serve as discursive tools that reinforce shared values and promote a cohesive institutional identity, highlighting the psychosocial processes through which members internalise and enact institutional identity.

While Social Identity Theory (SIT) effectively explains the internal psychosocial mechanisms of identity construction, it falls short in addressing the strategic projection of identity to external audiences. To fill this gap, the study draws on Institutional Branding Theory (Balmer & Grey, 2003). This theory underscores the intentional management and communication of organisational identity through both symbolic and strategic means, illustrating how institutions shape and project distinct values, missions, and reputations.

In the context of higher education, ceremonial texts, particularly anthem lyrics, function as branding artefacts that strategically transmit ethos, historical legacy, prestige, and aspirational values to both internal stakeholders, such as students, faculty, and alumni, and external audiences, including prospective students, government entities, and society at large (Chapleo, 2010; Irawan et al., 2025). By analysing word choice, rhetorical structures, and thematic content within anthem lyrics, the study reveals how language serves as a vehicle for strategic positioning and institutional differentiation. This directly informs how the anthems of UCC and UEW operate as tools of institutional branding within the higher education landscape. Thus, this framework situates anthems not only as instruments of internal cohesion but also as performative symbols that communicate institutional distinctiveness and strategic messaging. The theoretical frameworks significantly influenced the analytical approach adopted in this study. The coding and thematic analysis of the lyrics were guided by the constructs of Social Identity Theory (SIT) and Institutional Branding Theory. Lyrics that express collective purpose, loyalty, and unity were examined through the lens of SIT to identify mechanisms of in-group cohesion and positive distinctiveness. Meanwhile, references to institutional history, achievements, and aspirational vision were interpreted using Institutional Branding Theory to evaluate strategic messaging and external positioning.

Integrating SIT and Institutional Branding Theory, we achieve a dual-level analysis of university anthems. At the internal level, SIT provides insights into how anthems

cultivate emotional attachment, pride, and a sense of collective belonging among members. At the external level, Institutional Branding Theory highlights how these anthems serve as strategic texts that communicate the institution's values, prestige, and vision beyond the campus, thereby positioning it competitively within the higher education landscape (Hatch and Schultz, 2008). This combined approach acknowledges that university anthems are not only symbolic and performative but also strategic; they foster a positive group identity while signaling institutional legitimacy, ethos, and aspirations to a broader audience.

3. Method

This study utilised a qualitative multiple case study design to examine how the anthems of the University of Cape Coast (UCC) and the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) construct their institutional identities. A multiple case study was particularly employed, as it allows for in-depth, context-sensitive analysis of meaning-making processes within bounded institutional settings, aligning with Social Identity Theory's focus on internal identification and Institutional Branding Theory's emphasis on strategic identity projection. These two universities were purposively selected due to their central and long-standing mandates in teacher education and their prominent roles as mentoring institutions for publicly funded Colleges of Education in Ghana. The data comprised the official versions of the anthem lyrics of UCC and UEW as in use at the time of data collection (2025). The lyrics were sourced from the universities' official websites and corroborated using verified institutional publications to ensure textual accuracy. No alternative or competing versions of the anthem lyrics were identified across sources; where minor orthographic differences occurred, the version appearing in official institutional publications was prioritised for analysis. This ensured consistency and reliability in the textual data analysed. As these are publicly available institutional texts, formal consent was not required; however, ethical standards were rigorously upheld. All texts were appropriately attributed to their respective universities, and interpretations were conducted with sensitivity to accurately represent institutional values. Reflexivity was integral to the research process, particularly due to the researchers' positionality. Methods such as critical reflection, reflective journaling, and regular reflexive discussions were implemented to identify and mitigate potential biases arising from prior affiliations or personal viewpoints. To enhance analytic rigour, several measures were put in place. Intercoder reliability was established through iterative discussions among researchers, ensuring consistency in coding decisions. Triangulation was achieved by cross-referencing emerging findings with relevant literature. The analysis unfolded in several stages: open coding revealed notable linguistic and symbolic features; axial coding organised related codes into broader categories; and selective coding synthesised these categories into overarching themes that illustrate the construction of institutional identity and branding. Data were analysed through textual analysis, supplemented by thematic analysis, which integrated patterns from the textual features into broader categories and into emerging identity themes.

4. Result and discussion

This section of the study answers the main research questions posed. ***How do the anthems of UCC and UEW function as tools of institutional branding within the higher education landscape?***

In the context of higher education, universities intentionally craft and promote distinctive identities, missions, and reputations to external audiences (Chapleo, 2010;

Hanifa & Yusra, 2024; Mårtensson & Åkerlund, 2013). These institutional anthems represent significant branding artefacts, functioning as symbolic vehicles through which universities convey their ethos, prestige, historical legacy, and aspirational values (Hatch & Schultz, 2008). Drawing on Institutional Branding Theory (Balmer & Gray, 2003), the anthems of UCC and UEW can be viewed as strategic tools utilised to project their institutional brands externally.

The UCC anthem positions the university as an institution of **academic excellence, teacher formation, and national significance**. The opening lines of the anthem assert:

Excerpt 1

*UCC, UCC we're the teachers of the nation
We learn to teach; we find out and pass on
We counsel, we guide that all may be enlightened*

(UCC Anthem)

The excerpt illustrates how the anthem communicates UCC's mission to produce educators who actively contribute to national development. The repeated reference to "teachers of the nation" serves as a branding slogan, signalling to external audiences that UCC holds a position of authority within the education sector. Furthermore, the inclusion of a Latin phrase symbolically reinforces the university's intellectual authority and academic credibility.

Excerpt 2

Veritas nobis lumen (truth our guide)

(UCC Anthem)

This excerpt shows that the University of Cape Coast (UCC) is an institution where knowledge and truth are core to its public identity. Collectively, these elements of the anthem serve to distinguish UCC as a university of academic excellence in the eyes of the public.

Moreover, the anthem enhances the university's prestige through its historical affiliations.

Excerpt 3

*UCC, UCC, we're the brainchild of Nkrumah
We train, we mould and live by his vision
To impart all virtues that Ghana may be strengthened.*

(UCC Anthem)

The mention of Ghana's first president strategically positions UCC within a narrative of nation-building, projecting an image of prestige, heritage, and societal significance.

In contrast, the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) anthem emphasises the university's dedication to moral purpose, professional development, and aspirational success, thereby conveying a brand that embodies ethical excellence and resilience:

Excerpt 4

*Our Love for You arouses us,
To nobler thoughts, To nobler words, To nobler deeds
And to nobler heights;
We shall learn to serve,
U-E-W shall grow
By the power,
by the power of God.*

(UEW Anthem)

The repetition of *nobler* and the invocation of divine guidance signal to external audiences that UEW is an institution committed to ethical standards and the pursuit of excellence. Additionally, the refrain of the anthem further strengthens this portrayal, enhancing the university's public image as a morally grounded and high-achieving institution. The anthem's refrain further enhances this projection:

Excerpt 5

Victory! Shall be ours
Victory! Shall be ours
Victory! Shall be ours oh Lord
We shall fight, fight on and succeed

(UCC Anthem)

The anthem underscores the themes of perseverance and success, constructing a public image of resilience, ambition, and goal-orientation as core elements of UEW's strategic branding. These rhetorical and symbolic choices empower the university to distinguish itself within the higher education landscape, effectively communicating both aspirational values and ethical authority to external audiences.

Importantly, both UCC and UEW employ intentional linguistic and symbolic strategies to enhance their brand visibility and recognition. The repetition of the university names- UCC, UCC, and U-E-W- serves as a mnemonic device, reinforcing brand salience. Positive adjectives like UCC's "humblest" and UEW's "nobler" project virtuous and aspirational qualities that convey institutional prestige and societal value. Action verbs such as "train," "mould," "rise," and "fight on" express agency, dynamism, and purpose, signalling to external stakeholders that both universities are active, transformative, and impactful institutions. Historical references, Latin phrases, and religious invocations act as symbolic markers of legitimacy, authority, and excellence, further enhancing brand distinction.

Through their anthems, UCC and UEW strategically communicate the unique aspects of their institutional brands to external audiences. They articulate their missions and values, project prestige, and differentiate themselves in the perceptions of external stakeholders. While UCC leverages its historical legacy and commitment to national service, positioning itself as the premier intellectual institution, UEW emphasises moral purpose and ethical excellence, carving a unique niche among value-based teacher education providers. In this way, ceremonial texts such as university anthems serve as strategic instruments through which higher education institutions communicate their brand externally, reinforcing their prestige, differentiation, and public reputation within the higher education landscape.

4.1 How do the anthems of UCC and UEW construct institutional identity?

This section presents and interprets the findings on how the anthems of the University of Cape Coast (UCC) and the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) construct institutional identities (Whetten, 2006). The analysis draws upon Social Identity Theory (SIT) (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which posits that individuals define themselves through group memberships, gaining a sense of belonging, cohesion, and collective self-esteem from shared identities. Within institutional contexts, symbolic texts such as anthems function as discursive tools through which organisations communicate their values, missions, and aspirations.

The textual analysis of the two anthems reveals four key dimensions of institutional identity: Teacher Education Identity, Institutional Pride and Positive Distinctiveness, Forward-Looking/Aspirational Identity, and Religious Identity. Each

dimension reflects how the universities symbolically position themselves within Ghana's higher education landscape while simultaneously strengthening group cohesion among their members. Although both institutions share certain identity markers, their anthems reveal distinct ideological orientations and rhetorical strategies.

4.1.1 Teacher Education Identity

Teacher education emerges as a central identity marker in both anthems. UCC presents itself as fundamentally rooted in pedagogical formation:

Excerpt 6

*We're the teachers of the nation
We learn to teach; we find and pass on
We train, we mould...*

(UCC Anthem)

The University of Cape Coast (UCC) anthem emphasises teacher education as the cornerstone of its institutional identity. The deliberate repetition of pedagogical verbs, such as "teach," "pass on," and "mould", establishes a collective self-image rooted in a professional mandate. This focus not only strengthens the boundaries within the group but also fosters a sense of positive distinctiveness, underscoring the university's crucial role in national teacher education (Aluko, 2024). However, this rhetorical insistence may also indicate a need to reinforce a specific professional identity, suggesting that the university feels the need to affirm its historical role, which may be under threat as universities diversify their missions.

The University of Education, Winneba (UEW) similarly positions itself within the teacher education sector, albeit in a more understated manner:

Excerpt 7

For You make the Nation's Teachers strong

(UEW Anthem)

UEW acknowledges its role in teacher education, but frames it as one of many outcomes rather than the institution's sole essence. This concise representation indicates a strategic shift: while teacher training is indeed a part of the university's mandate, it is not the only narrative the institution aims to convey. The lack of references to the teaching process in its anthem may reflect UEW's intentional positioning, enabling the university to uphold its historic mission while exploring avenues for institutional diversification. This aligns with the observations of Amenorvi and Okyere (2022), who noted that older Ghanaian universities tend to emphasise their core professional roles more explicitly, while younger institutions adopt more subtle and expansive identity strategies. The contrast between UCC's clear pedagogical identity and UEW's broader institutional framing highlights differing strategies for negotiating identity within Ghana's teacher education landscape.

4.1.2 Institutional Pride and Positive Distinctiveness

Both anthems cultivate institutional pride but do so through different rhetorical strategies. The University of Cape Coast (UCC) employs hyperbolic comparative descriptors:

Excerpt 8

*We're the liveliest of them all
We're the humblest of them all*

*We're the kindest of them all
We're the bedrock of all knowledge*

(UCC Anthem)

The hyperbolic self-praise positions UCC as a cornerstone of intellectual authority, reinforcing its competitive prestige while intertwining humility with elitism. The juxtaposition of humility, as in 'humblest', with grand assertion, like 'bedrock of all knowledge', creates a paradoxical yet compelling discursive identity: modest yet intellectually authoritative. According to Social Identity Theory (SIT), such assertions elevate collective self-esteem and enhance ingroup salience (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). Concurrently, these claims serve as a strategic institutional tactic to assert symbolic dominance within Ghana's competitive higher education landscape, paralleling the broader discourses of prestige identified by Iddrisu and Akolaa (2017).

In contrast, the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) constructs pride through emotional loyalty and relational attachment rather than competitive comparison:

Excerpt 9

*Your name is in our hearts
We uphold You, and are proud of You*

(UEW Anthem)

UEW articulates pride through a sense of relational loyalty and emotional attachment instead of through comparative assertions. This anthem emphasises an inward dedication to the institution, fostering community cohesion and legitimising itself by nurturing strong emotional ties among its members. The absence of claims to superiority, as seen with UCC, may represent a strategic choice, aligning with Adenike et al.'s (2022) argument that symbolic academic texts can strengthen attachment and loyalty within culturally diverse institutions.

This comparison highlights two distinct identity strategies: UCC builds pride through outward-facing prestige claims, while UEW constructs its identity through inward-facing emotional solidarity. Both approaches reinforce institutional pride and positive distinctiveness, albeit through different symbolic and affective mechanisms.

4.1.3 Forward-Looking Identity

Both anthems articulate aspirational visions, though the ideological bases differ markedly.

Excerpt 10

*Rise to your call
Veritas nobis lumen (Truth is our light)*

(UCC Anthem)

UCC's forward-looking identity is grounded in rationalism and Enlightenment ideals. The Latin motto invokes academic tradition, intellectual authority, and universality. Within SIT, such universalist cues promote cohesion by appealing to shared intellectual values rather than specific cultural or emotional identities.

UEW, however, constructs a motivational identity centred on collective struggle and perseverance:

Excerpt 11

*Victory shall be ours
We shall fight, fight on and succeed*

(UEW Anthem)

UEW constructs a vision grounded in struggle, resilience, and triumph. The combative metaphors—*fight, victory, succeed*—frame identity as a journey of resilience. This narrative dramatises institutional aspirations, presenting progress as the outcome of communal battle. While emotionally compelling, the metaphor lacks specificity concerning academic or professional goals, opting instead to shape identity through a heroic narrative. Together, these two visions position UCC as ideologically rationalist and UEW as emotionally aspirational. Both motivate their members, yet rely on simplified metaphors that may obscure the deeper complexities inherent within the institutions (Gapur et al., 2019; Mustofa & Gustine, 2025; Usman & Mawardi, 2022).

4.1.4 Religious Identity

A significant and notable observation from the data pertains to the explicit religious identity evident in the University of Education, Winneba (UEW)'s anthem, particularly when contrasted with the secular, humanistic orientation found at the University of Cape Coast (UCC). UEW directly invokes divine authority with the phrase:

Excerpt 12

By the power of God

(UEW Anthem)

UEW's explicit invocation of divine power adds a spiritual dimension to the university's institutional identity. Such an approach aligns with the religious culture of Ghana but raises important questions regarding inclusivity within the framework of a public university. The anthem implicitly reflects a Christian orientation, which may not encompass the diverse beliefs of all its members. Conversely, UCC's strictly secular anthem embodies a humanistic, enlightenment-based tradition that entirely avoids spiritual assertions. The presence or absence of religious language transcends mere stylistic choice; it highlights fundamentally different ideological foundations.

The findings reveal that the anthems of both UCC and UEW contribute to the construction of institutional identities, albeit in ideologically distinct ways. UCC's anthem emphasises pedagogical centrality, historical legitimacy, rational truth, and intellectual superiority, while UEW's anthem focuses on emotional devotion, spiritual empowerment, moral transformation, and collective perseverance. Thus, these anthems embody fundamentally different philosophical orientations: UEW embraces a spiritually infused identity, whereas UCC maintains a secular academic persona. As cultural artefacts, these anthems not only reflect identity but also actively shape and negotiate it within the context of Ghana's higher education landscape.

Comparatively, the anthems of the University of Cape Coast (UCC) and the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) present distinct narratives within the broader landscape of higher education. Manning (2000), in her study of rituals and ceremonies at U.S. universities, notes that institutional songs and symbolic texts often focus on heritage, longevity, and academic prestige, with less emphasis on professional missions or spiritual elements. Similarly, Morphey and Hartley (2006) find that symbolic texts in Western universities prioritise autonomy, excellence, and historical achievement as central to identity formation. These patterns suggest that the spiritual themes in UEW's anthem and the pedagogical focus in UCC's anthem are culturally unique features rather than globally prevalent motifs. Collectively, this underscores both the contextual distinctiveness of Ghanaian university anthems and the broader applicability of ceremonial texts as tools for reinforcing institutional identity, fostering community cohesion, and enhancing strategic branding across various higher education systems.

The findings underscore several significant implications for institutions, policymakers, and scholars. Firstly, the lyrics of anthems demonstrate that ceremonial texts serve as powerful instruments of institutional storytelling, influencing how universities convey their identity and values. Consequently, universities looking to create or revise anthem lyrics should regard them as strategic branding tools, rather than mere relics of tradition. Secondly, the findings reveal that anthems can assist institutions in reinforcing core cultural values such as academic excellence, national contribution, resilience, and moral purpose. Thoughtfully selected metaphors, mottos, and identity assertions can bolster broader institutional objectives by cultivating pride, loyalty, and cohesion among students, staff, alumni, and the wider community. For institutions developing new anthems, this highlights the necessity for a deliberate alignment between lyrical content and their mission statements, strategic plans, and branding frameworks. Lastly, the distinction between secular (UCC) and spiritual (UEW) framing emphasises the importance for institutions, particularly public universities, to consider cultural inclusivity and representation when incorporating moral or religious language.

The study presents several notable limitations that warrant consideration. Its exclusive focus on two public universities in Ghana restricts the scope and generalisability of the findings, as institutional identity and branding practices may vary considerably among private, specialised, faith-based, or technical universities. Additionally, the study relies on textual analysis, which, while effective in revealing discursive patterns, does not incorporate the perspectives of essential stakeholders such as students, faculty, administrators, and alumni. Their lived experiences, emotional responses, and interpretations of anthem performance are notably absent, which limits our understanding of how these texts are received, contested, or internalised within the university community. Future research could expand its scope to include private and international universities, facilitating richer cross-cultural and comparative analyses of ceremonial texts as branding tools. Moreover, ethnographic studies could shed light on how stakeholders interpret and engage with anthems in practice. Longitudinal studies may also track how the content of anthems evolves in response to institutional reforms, providing a dynamic perspective on identity construction over time.

5. Conclusion

The anthems of UCC and UEW have been identified to function as strategic tools for constructing institutional identity and branding. UCC emphasises teacher education, secular rationalist ideals, and its historical prestige, presenting an image of intellectual authority and national contribution. In contrast, UEW focuses on moral purpose, divine empowerment, and aspirational service, showcasing ethical commitment and communal resilience. By fostering in-group cohesion, defining institutional distinctiveness, and inspiring aspirational behaviour, these anthems effectively communicate each university's mission, values, and cultural orientation to both internal and external audiences. The study further reveals that while ceremonial texts are prevalent in higher education, the integration of pedagogy, moral formation, and culturally resonant symbolism in the anthems of UCC and UEW reflects a unique approach that is both context-specific and indicative of broader global practices in branding and identity construction. These findings expand Social Identity Theory to encompass ritualised institutional discourse and highlight the practical significance of ceremonial texts in higher education. They offer valuable insights for university administrators, policymakers, and scholars aiming to strengthen institutional identity,

enhance stakeholder engagement, and strategically align mission and branding in culturally meaningful ways.

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