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Extended Abstract | The 1st Research Innovations in Sustainable Marketing: A Global Virtual Symposium

Brand Social Responsibility and Activism in the Turkish Context

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Extended Abstract: This study explores an under-researched area concerning the impact of emerging market dynamics on brands that adopt sociopolitical stances. Our purpose is to investigate the significance of brand activism in emerging markets, the influence of social media in driving brand activism, and the consequences of brand activism on both society and the brand itself. These research questions are approached within the framework of Scandinavian institutionalism theory, which focuses on the evolving interpretations of ideas as they migrate from one context to another. The study employs in-depth interviews and iterative literature reviews to gather insights.

Through qualitative thematic analysis, the conceptualization of brand activism in emerging markets is found to have three layers: government, society, and the brand itself. This challenges the current definition of brand activism, which is predominantly based on advanced countries, and proposes a revised definition tailored to the emerging market context. The study also examines the positive and negative aspects of social media in shaping brand activism in emerging markets.

From a macro perspective, the study presents a taxonomy of social impact for brand activism in emerging markets. By extending the scope of brand activism beyond advanced economies, this research contributes to the field of marketing and addresses the dichotomy between "us" and "them" in brand activism literature. The study emphasizes the role of marketing in political activities and highlights the significance of social media in generating positive outcomes for activism. It encourages business executives to engage in strategic and intelligent activism in the digital space while considering environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors.

The study proposes a dynamic and interactive process where brand activism ideas and practices circulate across national boundaries and institutional frameworks. This process involves the transformation of generalized notions into locally embedded practices, leading to both homogenization and variation in brand activism. While the study provides a breadth of perspectives, it is based on a single emerging economy and a limited number of participants. Further research could expand on these findings through comprehensive case studies or quantitative investigations that explore the motivating and obstructive roles of different social media dimensions using experimental or secondary data. This would contribute to a better understanding

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of consumer, social media audience, and company perspectives in brand activism.

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