



Becoming an Activist: what brands should know before taking a stand

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Dissertação apresentada para cumprimento parcial dos requisitos para a obtenção do grau de Mestre em Gestão Aplicada (Applied Management) na Universidade Católica Portuguesa.

Março de 2023

Dissertação escrita sob a supervisão da Professor Doutora Daniela Langaro

“- What if I fall?”

- Oh, but darling, what if you fly?”

Erin Hanson

Acknowledgements

The completion of this work marks the end of a two and half year's journey, while also representing the beginning of a brand new one. Concluding my master's degree was a lifelong goal of mine, and now that I have done it, I cannot help but to feel proud of myself and of all the dedication I put into this project. Thank you to Católica Business School, for making this achievement possible.

To my Professor, Daniela Langaro, thank you for accepting to embark on this journey with me. Without your guidance, expertise, and knowledge I would not have come this far. I genuinely thank you for all the time spent with me to make this work possible.

To my parents, Fátima and Carlos, who are the reason I am what I am today, thank you for always pushing me to be better. Thank you for your constant support and encouragement. Without you, I would not have come this far.

To my sisters, Edna and Vilma, thank you for always being there, and for helping me keep going with a smile on my face every day.

And finally, to all my friends, thank you for sharing this journey with me, without ever letting go of my hand.

Abstract

Brand activism has been gaining popularity over the years and has given brands the opportunity to show their concerns over social issues. However, this one is a double-edged sword, since consumers expect brands to take a stand on important matters, but often interpret these stands as mere marketing ploys, because they cannot perceive authenticity in these ones, which puts brands at risk. Thus, the purpose of this study is to understand the impact that perceived brand authenticity (PBA) has on consumers' attitudes toward the activism message, and if the fit between the brand and cause also influence these attitudes. An online survey was conducted, and 319 responses were obtained. Results revealed that (PBA) influences consumer's attitudes through symbolism. Yet, it was proven that brand fit also has a significant impact on consumers' attitudes, with these attitudes being more positive when the fit between the brand and the cause of the activism is higher, compared to when this fit is lower. Moreover, since this study focuses on the brand's perspective, the effects of consumers' attitudes were measured based on brand advocacy and overall brand equity (OBE), and it was proven that consumer's attitudes are a good predictor of these last two. Hence, brands should investigate these relations further, to deeper connect with their audiences.

Title: Becoming an Activist: what brands should know before taking a stand

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Keywords: Brand Activism, Perceived Brand Authenticity (PBA), Authenticity Dimensions, Consumers' Attitudes, Brand Fit, Brand Advocacy, Overall Brand Equity

Resumo

O ativismo de marca tem vindo a ganhar popularidade ao longo dos anos, e tem dado oportunidade às marcas de mostrarem as suas preocupações em relação a tópicos sociais. Porém, este é uma espada de duas pontas, uma vez que os consumidores esperam que as marcas tomem posições em assuntos importantes, mas muitas vezes interpretam estas posições como meros esquemas de marketing, pois não conseguem perceber autenticidade nas mesmas, o que coloca as marcas em risco. Desta forma, o propósito deste estudo é entender o impacto que o (PBA) tem nas atitudes dos consumidores para com o ativismo e a sua mensagem, e se o fit entre a marca e a mensagem também tem influência nestas atitudes. Foi realizado um questionário online, e foram obtidas 319 respostas. Os resultados revelaram que o (PBA) influencia as atitudes dos consumidores, através do simbolismo. Foi provado também que o fit da marca tem um impacto significativo nas atitudes dos consumidores, com estas atitudes a serem mais positivas quando o fit entre a marca e a causa do ativismo é maior, comparativamente quando o fit é menor. Ainda, uma vez que este estudo se foca na perspectiva da marca, os efeitos das atitudes dos consumidores foram medidos com base na avogacia da marca e no valor global da mesma, e foi verificado que as atitudes dos consumidores são um bom preditor destas duas. Posto isto, as marcas devem investigar mais estas relações, de forma a conectarem-se mais profundamente com o seu público.

Título: Tornarem-se Ativistas: o que as marcas precisam de saber antes de tomarem uma posição

Autor: Alicia Januário Pereira

Palavras-chave: Ativismo de Marca, Autenticidade Percecionada da Marca, Dimensões da Autenticidade, Atitudes dos Consumidores, Fit da Marca, Avogacia da Marca, Capital Próprio da Marca

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1. Introduction

Nowadays, societies across the world are faced with sensitive matters that are heavily debated in public discourse, and many of these are of global eminences, such as equality, sexuality, and immigration (Sarkar & Kotler, 2018). More and more, people are loudly voicing their perspective about these matters (Sarkar & Kotler, 2018), which is highly facilitated by today's digital channels for communication, such as social media (Korschun et al., 2020). As Mirzaei et al. (2022) stated, "social media platforms have democratized the flow of information and opinion expression and have become the main arena for consumers to debate social issues and how brands act and respond" (p. 3). Because of this, consumers are more informed than ever, which leads them to be more demanding when it comes to brands' consistency and authenticity, and highly intolerant of insincere behavior (Fritz et al., 2017).

For several decades, companies and brands stayed on the sidelines of controversial sociopolitical disputes to avoid possible side effects and conflicts with their consumer base. Today, however, brands do not have any other option but to get involved in these disputes, since silence and neutrality have become unacceptable (Carroll, 1991). Today, there are many companies and brands that are aware of this new demand and understand that they are "held responsible in a new way" (Stanley, 2020, p. 393), and for that, have been religiously following the consumers demand to take a stand in recent years (Bhagwat et al., 2020; Korschun et al., 2020; Shortall, 2019), through activism.

However, brand activism is still a new phenomenon (Bhagwat et al., 2020; Vredenburg et al., 2020), and companies still do not know exactly how this phenomenon affects consumers, their behavior alone, and their relationship with the brand (Fritz et al., 2017). Knowing and understanding brand activism is important, as this one plays a relevant role as a target dimension of marketing management (Fritz et al., 2017).

Although there is a considerable amount of relevant literature on this topic, there are still research gaps that need to be considered (Fritz et al., 2017). By filling these gaps, marketing managers will be able to develop new strategic brand decisions and communication tools to improve brand authenticity and customer-brand relationships (Fritz et al., 2017). Thus, a particular and interesting subject to study today is the developments of brands that get involved in controversial topics, as trust in the media and public institutions is decaying, at the same time

the public demand for corporations to take a stand, speak up, and comply with their responsibility as members of society, is on the rise (Edelman, 2020a, 2021; Manfredi-Sánchez, 2019).

Research Problematic

Being such relevant players in society and influential identities (Mick, 2007), it is the brand's responsibility to give back to society and its members. More than ever, consumers are paying attention and taking interest in brands' positions regarding controversial matters and demanding that they take actions and take a stand on public discourse regarding their opinion on relevant topics (Bhagwat et al., 2020; Edelman, 2020b).

Recent studies show that 64% of consumers are belief-driven buyers (Edelman, 2018), and 67% either buy or boycott a brand according to the brands' position regarding a controversial topic (Edelman, 2017, 2018). This will and demand that consumers have regarding brands taking a stand can be explained by consumers' belief that companies play a bigger role in solving major issues than governments themselves, since they also believe brands are more easily encouraged and influenced to act compared to governments (Edelman, 2018).

According to Vredenburg et al. (2020), brand activism can often be considered a marketing strategy, but few are the brands who successfully implement it, as many of them completely neglect the authenticity of their values and purpose, which puts their brands at risk, by damaging their relationships with consumers. There is no question brand activism can be risky for brands (Korschun et al., 2020; Hydock et al., 2020), and that authenticity can be recognized as a fundamental element for its success, as without it, brands will most likely be accused of woke-washing (Vredenburg et al., 2020).

Nonetheless, despite the significant literature around (PBA), there still is not a clear answer on how this one impacts the success of brand activism, more specifically, how it affects consumers' attitudes toward activism. Understanding this relation, its outcomes, and influencers presents an opportunity for a new study.

Problem Statement

The purpose of this study is to serve as a guide to help brands navigate through the world of activism, by providing them with the knowledge they must have before enrolling in activism, to be successful.

The above can be summarized in the following problem statement:

What are the main aspects brands should know before engaging in activism?

The main objective of this study is to elaborate on the concept of perceived brand authenticity (PBA) and understand how this impact brand activism campaigns developed by brands. In fact, how does (PBA) influences consumers' attitudes? And what impact do these attitudes have on brands?

Moreover, brand fit is introduced as a moderator effect of (PBA) influence on consumers' attitudes, as it is expected this one plays a significant role in this relationship. Given so, how will this one impact the effectiveness of the activism? Is the fit between the brand and the activism topic a key point for consumers' positive attitudes to be enhanced?

With this in mind, to help answer the problem statement above, the following Research Questions were placed:

1. What is the impact of perceived brand authenticity (PBA) on consumers' attitudes toward brand activism? Does brand fit have a moderator effect on this impact?
2. What are the effects of consumers' attitudes toward the activism for brands?
3. Does the fit between the brand and the activism message impacts consumers' attitudes?
4. Is there a difference between consumers' attitudes when they are exposed to activist content versus when they are not?

Structure of the Study

This study is divided into five chapters. In the first chapter, an introduction is made regarding the main problematic and theme of the study, followed by the research questions developed around their concepts, as well as the main objectives for this study.

In the literature review, concepts like value, purpose, brand activism, legitimacy, and other topics regarding the relationship between consumers and brands are approached and introduced.

In the following chapter, a presentation of the methodology chosen is presented. It is also described the structure of the approaches used, as well as the scales selected to measure and confirm the concepts that are being studied.

In the fourth chapter, the results obtained from the methodology applied, which was an online survey, are analyzed. After this, an evaluation regarding the reliability of the scales used to measure the constructs is made, followed by the tests done on the hypotheses presented.

Finally, in the last chapter, the results are discussed, conclusions are presented, and the marginal implications and limitations of the study are also pointed out. Additionally, suggestions for future research are also identified.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Corporate Social Responsibility

According to Porter & Kramer (2006), if brands try to use society to succeed and prosper, they will quickly understand that this success is not real, and it will not last. This led to the appearance of what we know as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), which, for a long time now, is a mandatory practice for companies (Hollender, 2004; Ignatius, 2011; Vredenburg et al., 2020). CSR activities are all of those that have no economic or legal interests and obligations attached and have the sole purpose to assure society's well-being (Carroll, 1991; McWilliams & Siegel, 2001). Although CSR was, at first, based on voluntary actions for corporations, they are now understanding and viewing it as an essential part of their sustainability, in which they must invest (Varadarajan & Menon, 1988). Also, and according to Porter & Kramer (2006), it will continue to be, for many years, a priority for business leaders.

For Kanter (2011), businesses' CSR goals should be focused on developing relevant products and services, helping create new jobs for the community, innovating, creating new synergies and partnerships, and developing emotional connections with the companies' surroundings. Financial return is not the goal of CSR, so any short-term financial sacrifice needed to accomplish the company's purpose is justified (Kanter, 2011).

Stakeholders tend to see and perceive CSR activities and behaviors as a good thing when this one is perceived as authentic, but when they perceive it as inauthentic, they will harshly criticize and punish companies who are only pretending to be responsible (Costa & Menichini, 2013; Eilert & Nappier Cherup, 2020). This is a major factor for a brand's reputation (Nalick et al., 2016; Turban & Greening, 1997), and for the way consumers relate to the brand, their attachment, loyalty, attitude toward it, and advocacy (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). The perception consumers have of the company's CSR also contributes to the way they view and evaluate the companies' products and influences their purchase habits depending on factors like brand-cause fit, quality, and price (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). CSR has demonstrated not only an improvement in financial performance, but also a significant contribution to customer satisfaction, which, ultimately, helps increase the company's market value (Hollender, 2004; Luo & Bhattacharya, 2009).

2.2 Brand Values and Purpose

Values are an instrumental concept to have in mind when talking about brand activism. According to Kluckhohn (1962), “[a] value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action” (p. 395), which means that values can be either shared or personal, and are related to an aspirational state of what is important and right, without being limited with common conceptions of morality. Also, Kluckhohn (1962) states that the values of corporations “define the common elements in the situations in which the actors repeatedly find themselves, and they must make some kind of functional sense in terms of a group’s special history, present social structure, and environmental situation” (p. 417), meaning that the recognition of the historical and environmental context is essential for brands (Kluckhohn, 1962).

When it comes to purpose, its concept is very well-known, important, and even omnipresent in today’s management and marketing. Damon et al. (2003) says that purpose is a “stable and generalized intention to accomplish something that is at once meaningful to the self and of consequence to the world beyond self” (p. 121). It is purpose that ignites action, and companies use it to define their core values and strategy (Malnight et al., 2019). Sinek (2009) goes as far as saying that consumers nowadays do not buy based on the product but rather based on why brands sell the products, which justifies why brands should focus on their purpose first. Since products can be easily copied, purpose represents an opportunity for brands to gain a competitive advantage, since this one can be singular (Sinek, 2009). A strong purpose is also very relevant to help brands establish strong and emotional connections with consumers (Malnight et al., 2019). Nowadays, most brands use purpose to help them grow in a sustainable way, stay relevant in their market, and establish a significant stakeholder-brand relationship (Malnight et al., 2019). Despite all this, describing in words what the company’s purpose is, is not that straightforward, although all companies must do it (Sinek, 2009). Something to have in mind is that the process of identifying the brand’s purpose is a process of discovery and not of invention (Sinek, 2009).

2.4 Brand Activism and its Different Meanings

Only recently the term Brand Activism started to be used. In previous research, brand activism is referred to in terms of consumer responses, such as boycotting and advocacy (Romani et al., 2015). Nevertheless, current approaches to brand activism focus on the actions made by brands and not on the actions that are directed at them, as we will see below.

The concept of Brand activism can be found back in Sethi's (1979) concept of advocacy advertising, where he refers to it as the awareness regarding controversial topics relevant to society, and the propagation of these same topics and ideas. It is also present in Sethi's (1982) concept of corporate political activism, in the sense that corporations assume a clear position and actively lead political change.

As for Sarkar & Kotler (2018), the current conceptualization of brand activism, is that it "consists of business efforts to promote, impede, or direct social, political, economic, and/or environmental reform or stasis with the desire to promote or impede improvements in society" ("What is Brand Activism?", para. 29). So, in other words, it is a marketing strategy that brands use, to stand out from the competition, by taking a position on controversial social topics (Moorman 2020; Sarkar & Kotler 2018). Eilert and Nappier Cherup (2020) present the same point of view with their definition of corporate activism, where they state that "corporate activism is a company's willingness to take a stand on social, political, economic, and environmental issues to create societal change by influencing the attitudes and behaviors of actors in its institutional environment" (p. 463). With this in mind, in the understanding of this study, brand activism stands for a brand's public engagement in controversial topics (Sarkar & Kotler, 2018).

Also, since actions speak louder than words, Sarkar & Kotler (2018) say that resorting only to communication to address these problems is not enough. If communication was sufficient, direct advocacy advertising, which stands for addressing controversial topics in public through clearly establishing the brand's stand on it, while incentivizing all people around them to act (Sethi's 1979), would be sufficient and nothing else would be required. However, consumers want to see action, and this one is a fundamental part of brand activism's concept (Sarkar & Kotler, 2018).

There are other very similar concepts used to define when brands take a public position and action regarding a controversial topic in order to originate change. Some of these terms are brand political activism (Moorman, 2020), corporate political advocacy (Wettstein & Baur, 2016) and corporate socio-political activism (Bhagwat et al., 2020). However, it is important to stand out that only Sarkar & Kotler (2018) and Bhagwat et al. (2020) definitions underline the fact that activism is as much in compliance with a topic as it is in opposition. Although many of these definitions focus on the social and political strands, it is important to understand that brand activism addresses all ranges of different matters, and for the purpose of this study, brand activism conceptualization includes all activist activities, despite the topic (Sarkar & Kotler, 2018).

2.5 Legitimacy to do it

According to Steven M. Kates (2004) study, a lot of brands 'cultural success can be related to a common phenomenon: legitimacy. For Suchman (1995), consumers perceive legitimacy when they understand a brand's actions as proper and appropriated, based on a set of social norms, values, and beliefs. This means that the perception of legitimacy can be negotiated with consumers (Steven M. Kates, 2004).

Steven M. Kates (2004) says that both companies and their brands are highly embedded in the economy and all institutional environments. This last one covers concepts like the ideals and social norms of a specific society (Steven M. Kates, 2004). These norms are nothing more than guidelines that brands need to follow if they want to fit with important stakeholders, like consumers, public opinions and regulators (Steven M. Kates, 2004). When brands can align themselves with these norms, they will be considered legitimate or institutionalized (Suchman, 1995).

Companies that are viewed as legitimate by those who surround them are recognized as more worthy, meaningful, predictable, and trustworthy (Suchman, 1995). Also, if companies want to influence and motivate positive behavior from those around them, e.g., consumers or other companies, they need to provide them with valuable insights and contributions, and add value to them (Suchman, 1995).

Companies' have a natural sense of legitimacy that is provided by the environment where they act (Suchman, 1995). This means that when brands try to board certain subjects that are not directly related to them or their activity, this sense of natural legitimacy is not perceived by those around it (Suchman, 1995). It is important brands have their own topics and ideas in order before getting involved in different issues, since the risk of falling to transmit legitimacy to consumers is high and can bring tremendous consequences and backlash, putting the integrity of the brand at stake (Wettstein & Baur, 2016).

2.6 Consequences of Brand Activism

2.6.1 Not taking a Stand

According to Bergstrom et al. (2002), consciously or not, implicitly, or not, brands are always communicating something. Today, even if brands are just living their life and behaving correctly, if they do not speak up on relevant and important topics for consumers, they will read the silence as unprincipled management (Carroll, 1991), because they would be showing low interest and sensitivity regarding societal problems.

Brands are more and more aware of their responsibilities and are also aware they need to go beyond their own doors and be leaders to others and empower change Carroll (1991). Moorman (2020) shares the same standpoint as Carroll (1991) and recognizes that not taking a stand on today's matters is the same as being an accomplice, because silence is complicity, and consumers are not here for it.

Giving that silence speaks for itself, it is better for brands to raise their voice before people start putting words into their mouths since most often, these words tend to be in detriment of the brand (Vredenburg et al., 2020). However, this is not an easy task and brands need to be very careful with what they say, while, at the same time, managing stakeholders' expectations, their own responsibilities and facing various risks (Vredenburg et al., 2020). For brands to live and be recognize as an activist takes time, but what will help them in that direction is for them to stay true to themselves, their identity, values, and have a communication strategy align with all of these (Vredenburg et al., 2020).

2.6.2 When Brand Activism lacks authenticity

2.6.2.1 Woke-washing

According to Vredenburg et al. (2018) brands can be accused of wake-washing when they use social activism marketing to help them position in their marketplace, although there's no record of social cause practices done by them. The authors also say that, if brands cannot accomplish their promises, then the massaging is inconsistent, and this can be perceived as woke-washing (Vredenburg et al., 2018). When this happens, consumers will automatically accuse the brand of hypocrisy, and the brand will face backlash (Chatterji & Toffel, 2018; Edelman, 2020b; Eilert & Nappier Cherup, 2020; Shetty et al., 2019; Wagner et al., 2009). Curry (2020) goes as far as saying that for brands to engage with consumers hypocritically is "a recipe for disaster" (p. 8).

According to (WARC, 2021), more than half of the people surveyed do not believe on brands' intentions when they take a position on a social topic, claiming they are profit seeking. However, long and strong relationships between brands and consumers, built on good experiences, can protect brands, to a certain point, from potential backlashes (Fournier, 1998; Huber et al., 2010). To build this type of relationship, brands need to be recognized as sincere and good hearted, meaning their intentions cannot be questioned (Fournier, 1998; Huber et al., 2010).

2.7 The path for Successful Brand Activism

2.7.1 Brand Authenticity

The concept of authenticity has been studied in various fields through the years, such as psychology (Kernis & Goldman, 2006), sociology (Carrol & Wheaton, 2009; Fine, 2003), philosophy (Heidegger, 1962; Sartre, 1943), and the most relevant for the present study, in the marketing field (Beverland, 2006).

Philosophers Heidegger (1962) and Sartre (1943) say that people are described as authentic when they are honest, assume responsibility for their actions and make clear value-based choices regarding these actions. As for Kernis & Goldman (2006) psychological analysis, authentic people reject any behavior influenced by external sources and are against strategic self-expression. According to Carrol & Wheaton (2009), authenticity is related to expectations,

in the sense that authenticity is a socially constructed phenomenon, and Fine (2003) links it to “an absence of cognitive understanding”, which leads to “an unmediated experience”. Lastly, from a marketing perspective, Beverland (2006) presents the concept of authenticity as an attribute of an object, i.e., brand authenticity. The understanding of brand authenticity is influenced by the three different perspectives that conceptualize authenticity: the objectivist perspective (Trilling, 1972), the constructivist perspective (Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Leigh et al., 2006), and the existentialist perspective (Steiner & Reisinger, 2006).

In the objectivist perspective, authenticity is defined as a quality of an entity or object. From a branding point of view this means that brand authenticity perception originates from an “evidence-based reality” (Morhart et al., 2015, p. 201), where consumers can resort to objective information to judge it (Beverland et al., 2008), such as performance, age, and others. The term “indexical” can also be used to approach this type of authenticity (Grayson & Martinec, 2004). According to the constructive perspective, authenticity it is a “socially and individually phenomenon” (Morhart et al., 2015, p. 201), and it is a projection of our own beliefs and expectations toward an entity (Wang, 1999). This type of authenticity comes from the consumers’ perception of abstract elements, such as values, which means brands need to be able to create a fit between them and the consumers’ expectations regarding authentic brands (Beverland et al., 2008). Grayson & Martinec (2004) refer to this type of authenticity as “iconic authenticity”. Finally, the existentialist perspective relates authenticity with the idea of being true to oneself (Morhart et al., 2015) i.e., the ability of a brand to help consumers reveal their true selves and help them fill true to themselves when purchasing the brand (Morhart et al., 2015).

Although all these perspectives present different insides on authenticity, they are all intertwined (Leigh et al., 2006), which allows to conclude that perceived brand authenticity (PBA) originates from “objective facts (indexical authenticity), subjective mental associations (iconic authenticity), and existential motives connected to a brand (existential authenticity)” (Morhart et al., 2015, p. 202).

Consumers do not fully trust brands’ motivations behind their activism and fights on social causes, believing they are nothing more than a marketing ploy and woke washing (WARC, 2019b). Morhart et al. (2015) said that for consumers, nowadays, authenticity is more important than quality and has now a higher weight as a criterion in the purchasing decision process, in

the same way quality outranked cost, and cost outranked availability. Also, in today's market, positioning a brand based on premium products and services is too common, while authenticity enables a brand to be true without having to be perfect (Beverland, 2005; Beverland et al., 2008; Napoli et al., 2014), not to mention its concept is in line with today's social movements (Brown et al., 2003)

For a brand to claim to be authentic is not enough, and it will not guarantee their success when it comes to their positioning, so brands need to prove it as something inherent to their core (Beverland, 2005; Gilmore & Pine, 2007; Napoli et al, 2014). Moreover, if consumers believe that the brands positioning on a certain topic is authentic, not only will they buy from them, but 7 out of 10 will advocate for the brand, and defend it (Mirzaei et al., 2022). However, only 5 out of 10 consumers will buy from a brand based on product quality trust, which comes to show that authenticity is now more important than quality (Mirzaei et al., 2022), and its essential to end skepticism (Schmidt et al., 2021) and help marketing strategies promote social change (Vredenburg et al., 2020). Given that, brand authenticity is clearly a differentiating factor for consumers (Fritz et al., 2017).

2.7.2 Authenticity's dimensions

Understanding authenticity and how to achieve it is key for marketers, since it is the only way they'll be able to measure it and assess it (Napoli et al., 2014). These last two points allow to create and identify new strategies and opportunities for brands, helping them with new positioning and value creation strategies, which will improve and increase consumer loyalty and attachment (Napoli et al., 2014). Guarantee and enhance authenticity allow companies to be more effective when it comes to satisfying consumers' needs, while also increasing their communications and corporate performance strategies' effectiveness (Napoli et al., 2014).

2.7.2.1 Studies Analise

There are different studies that provide different insides on authenticity and its antecedents and influencing factors, to which the authors refer to as dimensions, that contribute to the perception of brand authenticity (PBA). In the current dissertation, four different studies were carefully analyzed (Fritz et al., 2017; Mirzaei et al., 2022; Morhart et al., 2015; Spiggle et al., 2012).

In Morhart et al. (2015) study, the authors proposed that the three perspectives presented above - objectivist, constructive and existentialist - cover all of today's authenticity conceptualizations. Through literature review and exploratory in-depth interviews, the authors identified four different brand authenticity dimensions: continuity, credibility, integrity, and symbolism (Morhart et al., 2015). After this, they developed a conceptual framework, presented in Fig. 1, with these dimensions, and with what they identified as the key drivers for these dimensions: indexical cues, which are related with brand's characteristics based on evidence (i.e., brand scandals and brand-congruent employee behavior), iconic cues, which are related with brand's characteristics based on impression (i.e., communication style emphasizing a brand's root and virtue), and finally, existential cues, which are related with self-referential brand characteristics (i.e., brand anthropomorphism) (Morhart et al., 2015). Regarding the iconic cues, the authors considered marketing skepticism in their framework, as they found this one works as a moderating effect between iconic cues and perceived brand authenticity, since consumers' skepticism affects their perception of authenticity regarding advertisements (Morhart et al., 2015). The authors concluded that perceived brand authenticity is influenced by indexical, iconic, and existential cues, being that these ones work as drivers for authenticity dimensions, and that (PBA) promotes emotional brand attachment and positive word-of-mouth (Morhart et al., 2015).

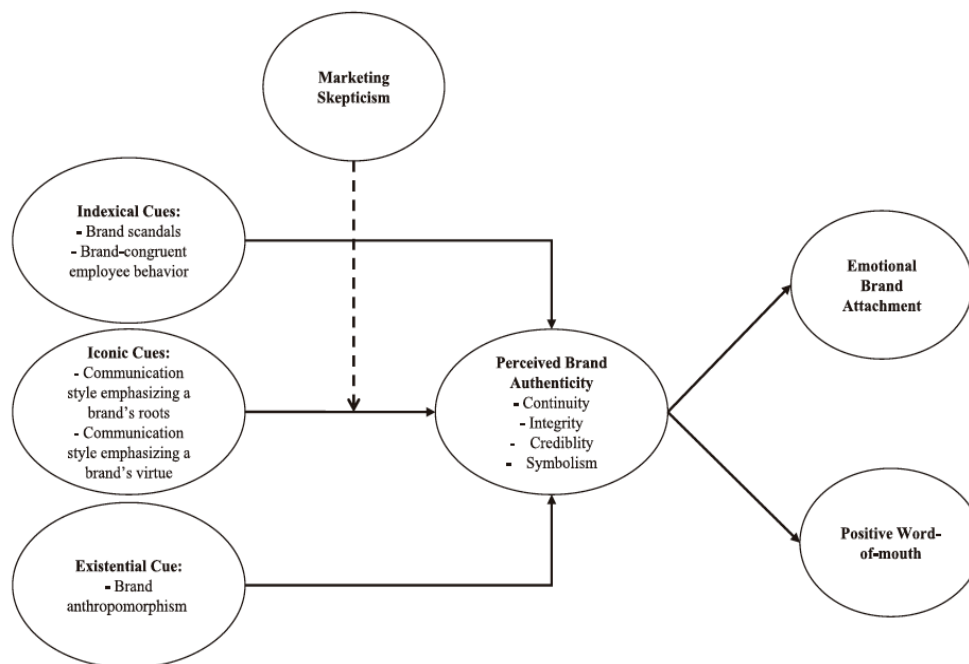


Fig. 1 Conceptual framework of perceived brand authenticity

Font: (Morhart et al., 2015)

Through literature review, Fritz et al. (2017) identified different dimensions of brand authenticity. When analyzing them, the authors understood that some of these variables were confirmed empirically, while others resulted from casual effects relationships (Fritz et al., 2017). The author’s goal was to close this research gap, so they added new dimensions into their model, shown on Fig. 2. These dimensions were related with the brand’s past (i.e., brand heritage and nostalgia), with the brand’s virtuousness (i.e., brand commercialization, clarity, and social commitment), and the perceived cultural fit (i.e., brand legitimacy) (Fritz et al., 2017). After this, they went on adding perceived self-congruence with the brand as a form to measure consumer-brand identification, and finally, also added employee’s passion to understand the effects of individuals representing the brand. The authors went on to add brand involvement into the framework as they understood this one works as moderator effect in both brand authenticity and brand relationship quality. The study also concludes that brand authenticity influences brand relationship quality, proving that a strong bond of the brand with their consumers increases customer loyalty, i.e., purchase intention, willingness to pay a higher price, and increases the customer tolerance for bad experiences, i.e., forgiveness (Fritz et al., 2017).

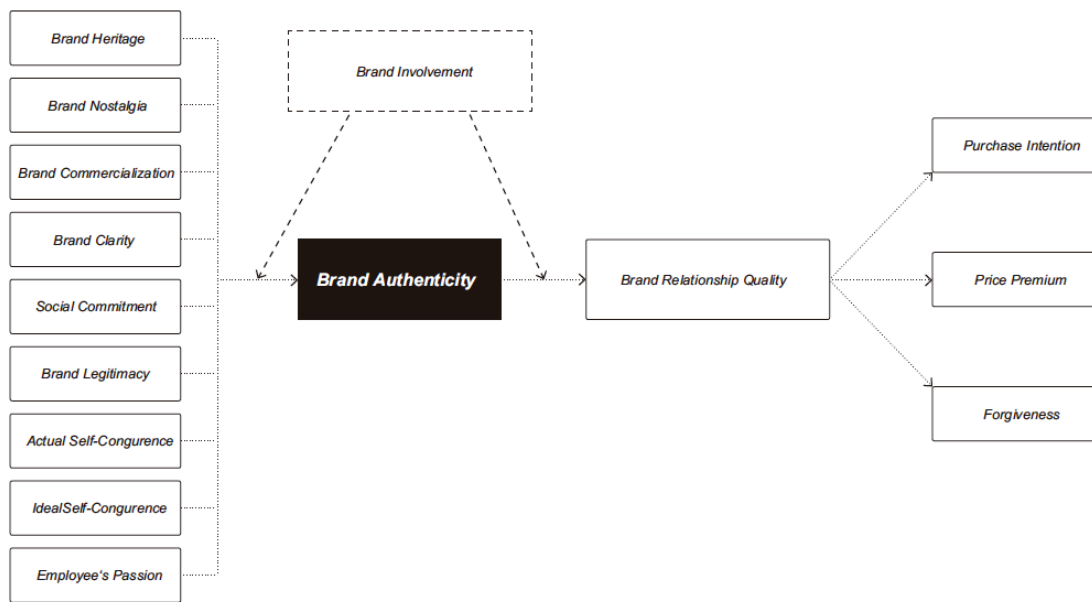


Fig 2. Conceptual Framework

Font: (Fritz et al., 2017)

In Mirzaei et al. (2022) study, the authors identified different dimensions through content analysis on online conversations, regarding two different woke brand activism campaigns: Gillette’s “The Best Men Can Be” and Nike’s “For once, Please Don’t Do It”. Six key subjects were identified with this analysis: social context independency, inclusion, sacrifice, practice, fit, and motivation (Mirzaei et al., 2022). Not only did the authors identified these six dimensions, but they also explored and mapped their relationships and their interactions. The results show that social context independency is a key element in activist campaigns and can also influence the impact of fit in perceived authenticity (Mirzaei et al., 2022). Also, if a brand remains inclusive to all audiences is more likely to be perceived as authentic when addressing difficult subjects like racism, quality, sexism, and more. Moreover, when combining no practice or low fit with a trendy activism topic, its likely consumers will perceive it as virtue signaling, motivated by profit intentions, which goes against the conceptualization of financial sacrifice, meaning it will be perceived as inauthentic (Mirzaei et al., 2022). Finally, the authors also highlighted the mediation role that sacrifice, and social context independency have on the remaining dimensions, since these two can influence the remaining dimensions impact on authenticity. They represent all these different interactions and roles in a framework, which they called “woke activism authenticity framework (WAAF)”, present in Fig. 3 (Mirzaei et al., 2022).

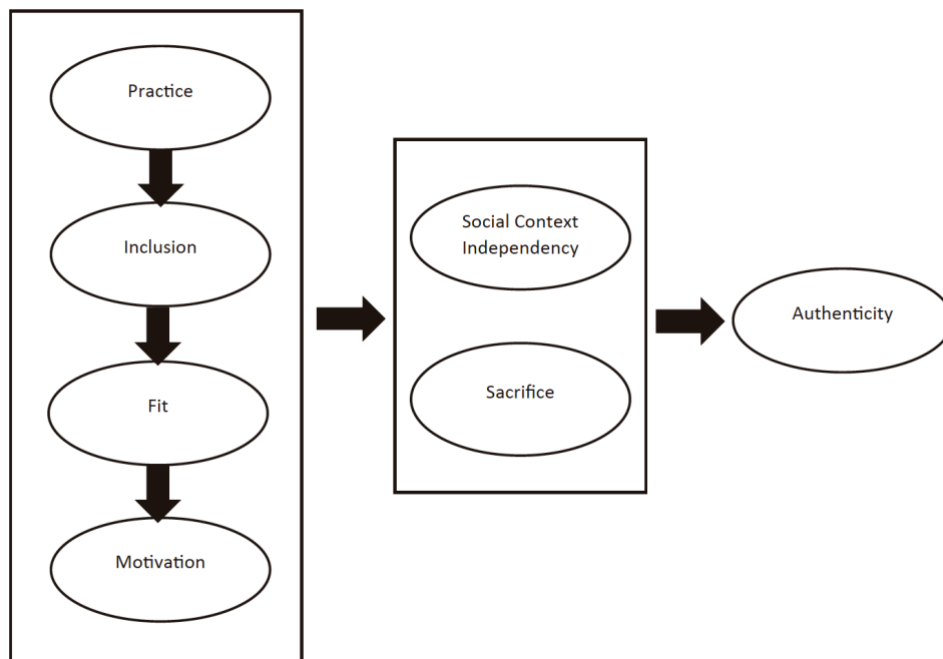


Fig 3. Woke activism authenticity framework (WAAF)

Font: (Mirzaei et al., 2022)

In Spiggle et al. (2012) study, the authors purpose was to understand the importance of brand extension authenticity (BEA) in brand extension success. They started by elaborating a list of authenticity dimensions based on previous literature, where, in a first instant, they came up with 25 different dimensions. To corroborate this list, they interviewed 61 undergraduate students and ask them to define what authentic brand extension was for them. They then overlapped their initial list with the interview's results and reduced the list to 8 dimensions. After combining similar meanings, they proposed four dimensions for authenticity: brand style, heritage, essence, and brand exploitation (Spiggle et al., 2012). The authors then developed a conceptual framework, where they present the different relationships among these dimensions, BEA, Fit, Brand Extension Responses, and Self-Brand Connection, as shown in Fig. 4. In their studies, they concluded that adding BEA to models that have similarity and relevance helps increase consumers' positive attitudes, intention to purchase and willingness to recommend (i.e., brand extension responses) (Spiggle et al., 2012). They also proved that self-brand connection is a moderator of the effect of BEA on brand extension responses, showing that consumers with high self-brand connections prefer authentic brand extensions over inauthentic ones, despite their assessment on relevance and similarity (i.e., brand extension fit) (Spiggle et al., 2012).

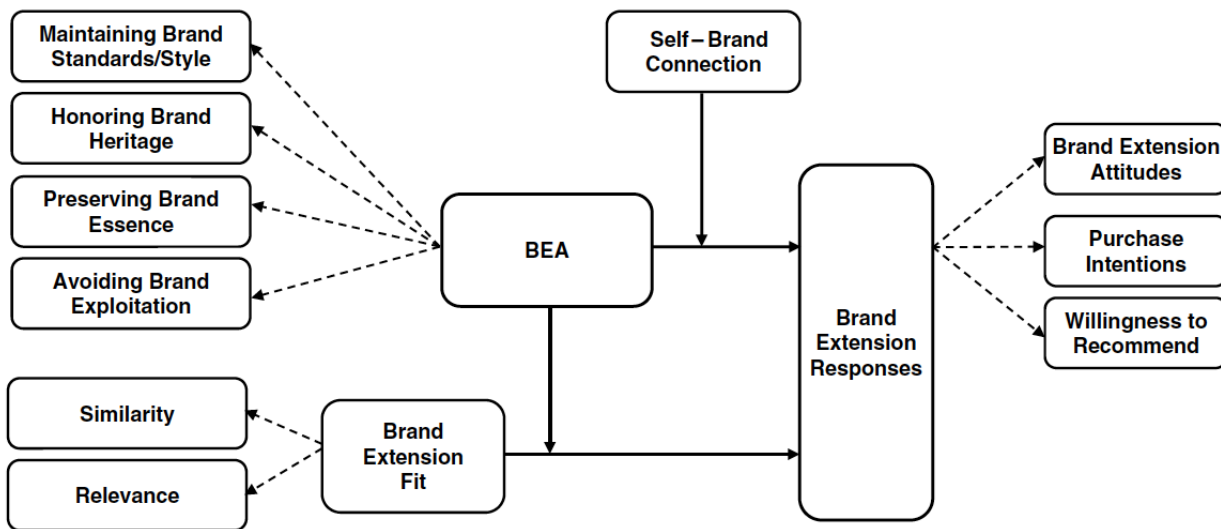


Fig. 4 Conceptual Framework

Font: (Spiggle et al., 2012)

2.8 (PBA) Antecedents and influencing factors

At this point it is clear there is not just one single path for brand authenticity, as there are so many dimensions brands can try to reach to achieve authenticity (Napoli et al., 2014). We can understand just that through the analysis presented above, where so many dimensions were identified in the different studies, despite some presenting close meanings.

Credibility and Practice

Morhart et al. (2015) conceptualizes *credibility* “as the brand’s transparency and honesty toward the consumer, and its willingness and ability to fulfill its claims” (p.202) and, according to the authors, a high perception of credibility helps increase consumers’ perception of brand authenticity. Yet, a high level of credibility associated with an authentic brand promotes the perception of a brand being truthful and honest with itself and its consumers (Morhart et al., 2015). Mirzaei et al. (2022) *practice* dimension presents the same meaning as Morhart et al. (2015) *credibility* dimension, as it also refers to a brands ability to act “on what they preach”.

Continuity and Heritage

Both *continuity* Morhart et al. (2015) and *heritage* Fritz et al. (2017) present a similar meaning, since both refer to the brand's stability and history through the years, and the likelihood that it will remain the same in the future (Merchant & Rose, 2013; Urde et al., 2007; Wiedmann et al., 2011). *Continuity* also reinforces the capacity of a brand to survive trends (Morhart et al., 2015), and *heritage* outlines the sense of tradition reflected in a brand (Fritz et al., 2017). Both contribute for (PBA) as they allow consumers to know what to expect from a brand, based on their history (Fritz et al., 2017; Morhart et al., 2015).

Symbolism

Morhart et al. (2015) symbolism dimension represents the symbolic quality of the brand that can help consumers define who they are. This dimension relates to the connection benefit of authentic brands (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010), as well as to the identity-related aspect of the brand attachment concept (Park et al., 2010). In situations where brands reflect values that consumers find important and relate to, authenticity is more easily perceived, as consumers can connect on a personal level (Morhart et al., 2015).

Motivation

Mirzaei et al. (2022) *motivation* dimension refers to the intention behind the stand taken by a brand, being that the motivation can be perceived by consumers as profit-seeking and exploitative, or genuine and altruistic. Joo et al. (2019) suggests that if consumers assess the motivation behind a brand's position toward a certain topic as altruistic and transparent, this can influence their perception of brand authenticity.

Commercialization and Commitment

Fritz et al. (2017) *commercialization* dimension refers to the extent to which brands bend their own values in favor of profit maximization, and for *commitment* refers to the brand's awareness of social responsibility. So, according to these two dimensions, for a brand to be perceived as authentic, they should avoid being regarded as commercial brands, but rather being perceived as unconcerned regarding possible profits, and as committed with the social cause they are taking a stand on (Fritz et al., 2017).

Brand Exploitation, Sacrifice and Integrity

According to Spiggle et al. (2012), for a brand to be perceived as authentic, brand exploitation must be avoided, i.e., it must be clear to consumers that there is not a commercial interest behind a brand's actions. Mirzaei et al. (2022) *sacrifice* dimension also presents this same concept – forgo profit in favor of society. As mentioned in chapter 2.6.2, in Mirzaei et al. (2022) study analyses, some dimensions play a mediating role with some of the other dimensions, which is the case of *sacrifice* when it comes to motivation, since it is expected that, for motivation to be perceived as authentic, brands must be willing to sacrifice, even if it means loss of profit, to be perceived as authentic. Along with this same line of reasoning, Morhart et al. (2015) *integrity* dimension also states the importance of brands being without an “instrumental economic agenda”, to be perceived as genuine.

Social Context Independency

The concept behind this dimension is the extent to which the topic surrounding the stand taken by the brand is independent from trendy social matters, meaning that taking a stand on “hot” topics can easily lead consumers to perceive the motivation behind it as exploitive (Mirzaei et al., 2022). This one can also play a mediating role in with other dimensions (Mirzaei et al., 2022).

Consumer Skepticism

Although consumer skepticism is not a dimension, it is still important to stand out, since it can play a moderator effect between (PBA), and the iconic cues defined by Morhart et al. (2015). According with Gaski & Etzel (1986), skepticism refers to the overall disbelief of consumers toward any marketing claims. Given this, and being that brand activism can be seen by consumers as a marketing strategy (Vredenburg et al., 2020), it is only expected that consumers' skepticism influence the way they interpreted the brand's motives behind the activism, since skeptical consumers develop persuasion knowledge regarding marketing motives and strategies (Campbell & Kirmani, 2000), that allows them to understand “how, when, and why marketers try to influence them” (Friestad & Wright, 1994, p. 1).

Table 1. Brand Authenticity dimensions definitions

<i>Authors</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Definition</i>
<i>Morhart et al. (2015)</i>	Integrity	"Signifies the moral purity and responsibility of the brand (i.e., its adherence to good values and sincere care about the consumer)."
	Credibility	"A brands' willingness and ability to deliver on their promises."
	Continuity	"Reflects a brand's timelessness, historicity, and its ability to transcend" trends."
	Symbolism	"Brand's potential to serve as a resource for identity construction by providing self-referential cues representing values, roles, and relationships."
<i>Fritz et al. (2017)</i>	Social Commitment	"Represents the company's assumption of social responsibility."
	Brand Commercialization	"The process by which brands subordinate their values and norms to interests of profit maximization."
	Heritage	"Perceived anchoring of the brand to its tradition."
<i>Mirzaei et al. (2022)</i>	Motivation	"How the public perceives the intentions of the woke brands as profit-seeking, self-centered versus other-centered, corrupt, genuine or exploitative."
	Fit	"It is the extent to which the woke topic is in line with the brand's current or past core business, meaning/image, positioning, and culture."
	Sacrifice	"The extent to which a woke brand is prepared to forgo profit to support the society in general and its target audience in particular."
	Social Context Independency	"The extent to which a woke campaign is independent from topical and trendy social issues."
	Practice	"The extent to which the woke brands exercise and act on what they preach."
<i>Spiggle et al. (2012)</i>	Brand Exploitation	"Resist exploiting the brand in pursuit of commercial opportunity."

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2.9 Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Developments

Figure 5. presents the conceptual framework for the current study. The central assumption of this model is that (PBA) influences consumers' attitudes toward the content of brand activism, and that the effects of these attitudes are captured by overall brand equity, as well as by consumers' advocacy toward the brand and its stand. It is also proposed that (PBA)'s effect on consumers' attitudes toward the activism is moderated by brand fit, i.e., according with the fit between the brand and the activism content, brand fit can enhance or decrease (PBA)'s effect

on consumers' attitudes toward the brand activism. Moreover, it is also proposed that brand fit directly affects consumers attitudes, in the sense that a clear fit between the brand and the activism cause will enhance positive attitudes, compared to when there is not a clear fit.

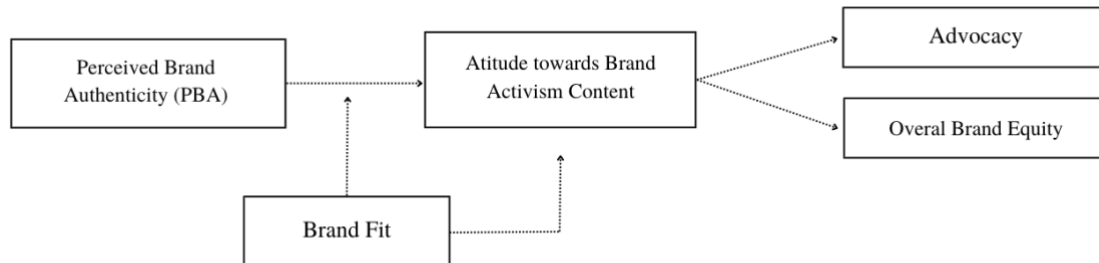


Fig. 5 Brand Activism Conceptual Framework

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2.9.1 Effects of (PBA) in Brand Activism

2.9.1.1 (PBA) and Brand Activism

According to Schmidt et al. (2021), companies need to take a position on relevant social issues, to socially connect to their audience. However, the use of communication alone is not enough - brands need to understand brand activism execution, know how to implement authenticity variables, and study how their consumers interpret these variables (Schmidt et al., 2021). All these impact consumers' perceived brand authenticity, what in turn, should impact consumer's attitudes. Therefore, the following hypothesis is raised:

H1. (PBA) has a significant effect on consumers' attitudes toward Brand Activism content.

As mentioned before, according to Morhart et al. (2015), authenticity is composed of four different dimensions, that influence its perception: credibility, integrity, continuity, and symbolism. To measure (PBA), the authors developed a scale composed of different items related to these four dimensions. Therefore, to measure H1, Morhart et al. (2015) scale will be used, and for this reason, the following 4 sub-hypothesis are proposed:

H1.1- *Continuity* has a significant effect on consumers' attitudes toward Brand Activism content.

H1.2 - *Credibility* has a significant effect on consumers' attitudes toward Brand Activism content.

H1.3 - *Integrity* has a significant effect on consumers' attitudes toward Brand Activism content.

H1.4 - *Symbolism* has a significant effect on consumers' attitudes toward Brand Activism content.

2.9.1.2 Brand Fit effects

In Pracejus & Olsen (2003), the authors demonstrated that a high fit between a brand and a charity can lead to 50% more valuable donations comparing to when there's no fit between these two. For this reason, a direct effect of brand fit in consumers' attitudes is also expected:

H2. Brand Fit has a significant effect on consumers' attitudes toward brand activism content.

Also, in Vredenburg et al. (2020), the authors highlighted the importance of the alignment between the brand's values, its activism communication, and prosocial corporate actions, i.e., an alignment between the activism and the brand's purpose, communicated message and practice. Mirzaei et al. (2022) *fit* dimension refers exactly this - the extent to which the brand's business, image, culture, and positioning aligns with the topic to which the activism is focused on, in the sense that the stand taken by the brand should highly align with the brand's core business and values. Thus, it is expected that brand fit plays a moderating effect on (PBA)'s effect on consumers' attitudes toward brand activism content. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3. Brand Fit with the activism cause has a moderating effect on (PBA)'s effect on consumers' attitudes toward brand activism content, so, when the brand fit is high, positive effects of (PBA) on consumers' attitudes will be higher than when the brand fit is low.

For this hypothesis, Morhart et al. (2015) scale will also be used to measure (PBA)'s effect on consumers' attitudes, so the following 4 sub-hypothesis are proposed:

H3.1- Brand Fit with the activism cause has a moderating effect on *continuity's* effect on consumers' attitudes toward brand activism content.

H3.2 - Brand Fit with the activism cause has a moderating effect on *credibility's* effect on consumers' attitudes toward brand activism content.

H3.3 - Brand Fit with the activism cause has a moderating effect on *integrity's* effect on consumers' attitudes toward brand activism content.

H3.4 - Brand Fit with the activism cause has a moderating effect on *symbolism's* effect on consumers' attitudes toward brand activism content.

2.9.1.3 Brand Advocacy and Overall Brand Equity

Brand Advocacy

Brand advocacy has been defined as positive communication regarding a brand, its recommendation to others and its protection when attacked (Kemp et al., 2012; Park & MacInnis, 2006; Keller, 2007). More than this, it is also consumers' willingness to spend time and effort to support a brand (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Jillapalli & Wilcox, 2010; Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012), and their need to share their experiences with the brand with others, in a voluntary way (Fuggetta, 2012). Moreover, Jillapalli & Wilcox (2010) define advocacy as an active engagement that involves expending more effort in promoting the brand", each indicates that those who advocate for a brand are not just willing to share their experiences, but they desire it.

Brand activism allows consumers to verify the level of self-brand similarity, as it helps them confirm if the brand's moral foundation is aligned with their own (Mukherjee et al., 2020). So, as expected, consumers' brand advocacy will be enhanced in situations where the level of self-brand similarity is high (Mukherjee et al., 2020). Considering that, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4. Consumers' attitudes toward Brand Activism content have a significant effect on Brand Advocacy

Overall brand Equity

When it comes to overall brand equity, in Keller (1993) study regarding this concept, the author introduced the consumer-based model of brand equity, defining it as: “the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand”. It has been confirmed in different studies that if consumers’ perception regarding a brand is stimulated, brand equity is developed (Tanveer et al., 2016).

According to Vredenburg et al., (2020), practicing authentic brand activism enhances the possibility for brands to enlarge their brand equity. However, this scenario can go both ways, in the sense that brands risk losing brand equity if the activism comes across as inauthentic (Vredenburg et al., 2020). Situations where consumers react positively to brand activism, according to Aaker (1996), are due to consumers’ brand associations, which is a dimension of brand equity, that is present in consumers’ minds (Keller, 1993; Vredenburg et al., 2020). Therefore, when consumers’ associations are positive, brand equity is enhanced (Vredenburg et al., 2020), and vice versa. With this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5. Consumers’ attitudes toward Brand Activism content have a significant effect on Overall Brand Equity.

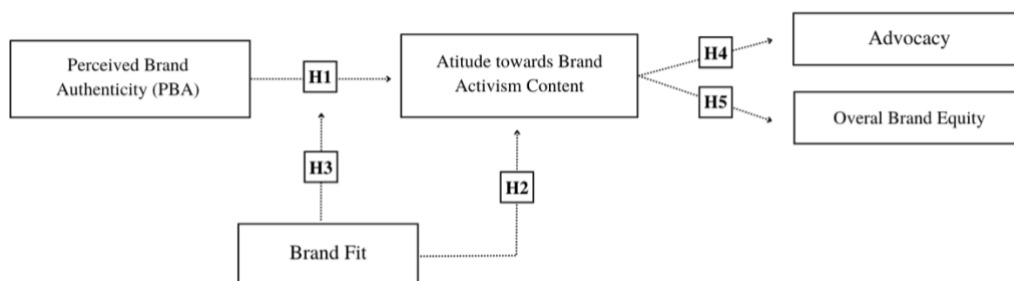


Fig. 6 Brand Activism Conceptual Framework with the hypotheses represented

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3. Methodology

3.1 Research Objectives

To the author’s best knowledge, there are not many studies that have thoroughly investigated the relation between (PBA) and consumers’ attitudes toward brand activism content, and how (PBA) influences consumers behavior in this context. In fact, there is a lack of empirical

evidence to support these arguments. Therefore, the main objective of the current study is to understand the relation between these two, as well as to comprehend if brand fit has a moderator effect on this relation or not. To do so, this study was developed using a specific method to evaluate consumers' attitudes

3.2 Research Method and sampling procedure

The methodology to investigate the research questions purposed in the beginning of this study will be presented in this chapter, as well as the methodology that will validate the hypotheses raised in the previous chapter. A quantitative approach has been used through the means of a questionnaire to help validate the hypotheses. The survey was developed through the platform Qualtrics, and was presented to a target audience (Malhotra, 2017). For the purpose of this study, the target audience includes any individual. No restrictions were applied.

3.3 Data Collection

3.3.1 Measuring (PBA) and Consumers' Attitudes toward Brand Activism

To understand the impact of (PBA) on consumers attitudes toward brand activism, a study was conducted to compare the impact of three different campaign scenarios done by the same brand, on consumers' attitudes toward the brand: two of these campaigns presented activist content, while the last one did not have an activist tone. The brand selected to conduct this study was Lipton, a famous and well-known brand of tea, since this one does not use activism as a form of communication.

The first step was to measure (PBA), to understand how consumers perceive authenticity, and for that Morhart et al. (2015) 15-item scale was used (Table 2). Second, to measure consumers' attitudes toward brand activism, Spears et al. (2004) brand attitude scale was used and adapted to measure consumers' attitudes toward brand activism (Table 3), and to measure the effect of these attitudes, i.e., brand advocacy (BA) and overall brand equity (OBE), Wilk et al. (2020) and Washburn et al. (2002) scales were used, respectively (Table 4). Yet, to measure the impact of brand fit in (PBA) influence in consumers' attitudes, Lafferty et al. (2004) scale was used (Table 5).

Lastly, to measure the participants' perception and knowledge regarding brand activism, direct questions were asked based on Vredenburg et al., (2020) definition of this concept. This one points to brands that align their purposes and values with their prosocial corporate practice as activists. Yet, more questions regarding Vredenburg et al., (2020) characteristics of activist brands were asked, focusing on rather or not the brand is purpose and values-driven, addressing controversial topics, and taking stands on polarizing social issues.

When respondents first entered the survey, their perception of authenticity regarding Lipton was first assessed, before they were introduced to one of the campaign scenarios, so the content of the campaign did not influence (PBA), and to see if this one played a role in consumers' attitudes toward the campaign content.

The respondents were then introduced to one of the 3 questionnaires that presented the different campaign scenarios regarding the launch of a new Lipton tea flavor. Has mentioned before, in two of the three scenarios, respondents were presented with a *Lipton* activist campaign: in the first scenario, the campaign activist content focused on the rights and work conditions of tea plantation workers. In this one, the storytelling revolves around *Lipton's* dedication to protecting tea plantation workers' rights. In a second scenario, the campaign activist content focuses on animals' rights, where the storytelling revolves around the importance of protecting animals. Lastly, in the third scenario, respondents were presented with a regular campaign, with no activist content presented in it, regarding the tradition of the brand.

After being shown one of the three scenarios, the respondents were asked about their perception of the campaign, their attitudes toward it, in terms of brand advocacy and overall brand equity, and the fit between the content of the campaign and the brand Lipton.

3.3.2 Measuring Instruments

With the purpose of the study being to understand (PBA) effect on consumers' behavior toward brand activism content, no initial questions to limit the sample were needed. As mentioned before, the respondents were randomly sent to one of the three scenarios developed, in which they were confronted with different stimuli throughout, by using brand activism as the source of the manipulation. Yet, and to identify respondents' understanding of the manipulation and

their attention while responding to the questionnaire, control questions were presented and answered.

In the first set of questions, (PBA) was measured using Morhart et al. (2015) 15-item scale, keeping all the original items, where respondents were presented with a 7-point Likert scale from 1- Totally Disagree to 7- Totally Agree. These questions were presented before the different scenarios with the campaigns were shown to the respondents, to first assess their perception of authenticity regarding Lipton. After this, the scenarios were presented, and control questions were answered to assure respondents read and understood the information described.

Then, Spears et. al (2004) original 5 items scale to measure brand attitude was used to measure consumers' attitudes toward the message of the campaigns. This analysis was done through the evaluation of a bipolar scale, from 1 to 7, where each construct was placed in one of the extremes of the scale, i.e., 1- Unappealing, Bad, Unpleasant, Unfavorable, unlikable to 7- Appealing, Good, Pleasant, Favorable, Likable. Then, both brand advocacy and overall brand equity were measured using Wilk et al., (2020) and Washburn et al. (2002) original scale and items, respectively, in a 7-point Likert scale from 1- Totally Disagree to 7- Totally Agree. The first one has 8 different items and the last one has 4 items.

Lastly, and to assess the impact of the moderator, i.e., Brand Fit, and to understand if this one affects the impact of (PBA) on consumers' attitudes toward the message of the campaign, it was measured the fit perception that the respondents had between the message of the campaign and Lipton, by using Lafferty et al. (2004) 3 item scale, in a bipolar scale, from 1 to 7, where each construct was placed in one of the extremes of the scale, i.e., 1- Not consistent, Not complementary, Does not makes sense to 7- Consistent, Complementary, Makes sense.

Table 2. (PBA) scale

<i>Authors</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Item</i>
<i>Morhart et al. (2015)</i>	Continuity	<i>CO1.</i> A brand with history <i>CO2.</i> A timeless brand <i>CO3.</i> A brand that survives times <i>CO4.</i> A brand that survives trends
	Credibility	<i>C1.</i> A brand that will not betray you <i>C2.</i> A brand that accomplishes its value promise <i>C3.</i> An honest brand
	Integrity	<i>I1.</i> A brand that gives back to its consumers <i>I2.</i> A brand with moral principles <i>I3.</i> A brand true to a set of moral values <i>I4.</i> A brand that cares about its consumers
	Symbolism	<i>S1.</i> A brand that adds meaning to people's lives <i>S2.</i> A brand that reflects important values people care about <i>S3.</i> A brand that connects people with their real selves <i>S4.</i> A brand that connects people with what is really important

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Table 3. Consumers' Attitude scale

<i>Authors</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Item</i>
<i>Spears et al. (2002)</i> <i>(Adapted)</i>	Consumer's Attitude <i>(Brand Attitude)</i>	<i>CA1.</i> Unappealing/Appealing <i>CA2.</i> Bad/Good <i>CA3.</i> Unpleasant/Pleasant <i>CA4.</i> Unfavourable/Favourable <i>CA5.</i> Unlikable/Likable

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Table 4. Brand Advocacy and Overall Brand Equity (OBE) scales

<i>Authors</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Item</i>
<i>Wilk et al. (2020)</i>	Brand Advocacy	<p>BA1. I could see myself defending X when others talk it down/negatively about it.</p> <p>BA2. I could see myself trying to convince others to buy X.</p> <p>BA3. I could see myself saying positive things/talk favourably about X.</p> <p>BA4. I could see myself mentioning I am happy with X performance.</p> <p>BA5. I could see myself saying that X is great.</p> <p>BA6. I could see myself providing details about upcoming promotions and available discounts for X.</p> <p>BA7. I could see myself providing extra details about X.</p> <p>BA8. I could see myself providing lengthy explanations as to why X is better than other brands.</p>
<i>Washburn et al. (2002)</i>	Overall Brand Equity	<p>OBE.1 It makes sense to buy X instead of any other brand, even if they are the same.</p> <p>OBE2. Even if another brand has the same features as X, I would prefer to buy X.</p> <p>OBE3. If there is another brand as good as X, I prefer to buy X.</p> <p>OBE4. If another brand is not different from X in any way, it seems smarter to purchase X.</p>

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Table 5. Brand Fit scale

<i>Authors</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Item</i>
<i>Lafferty et al. (2004)</i>	Brand Fit	<p>BF1. Consistent/No consistent</p> <p>BF2. Complementary/Not complementary</p> <p>BF3. Makes sense/ Does not make sense</p>

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3.4 Data analysis procedure

After reaching a satisfactory number of responses through the online survey, the data was extracted from the software Qualtrics to excel to do a first filtration of the data, to remove all responses that were considered invalid, which were those who were incomplete, or those where was verified that the respondents did not pay attention while responding or did not read or understand the scenario to which they were exposed, as they failed the majority of the control questions. After the final database was obtained, this one was imported to SPSS 28.0, where the values of the variables were added.

Yet, for analysis purposes, a new variable named “Activist Manipulation” was added to the databased, to separate the respondents into three different groups, according to the scenario in which respondent was presented to. This way, respondents who were present to the activist manipulation regarding tea plantation workers were coded has 1 (group 1), respondents who were presented to the activist manipulation regarding animal’s rights were coded with as 2 (group 2), and respondents who were presented to the non-activist manipulation were coded as 3 (group 3).

After the databased was ready, a descriptive analysis of the final sample was conducted. Firstly, the analysis was done on the entire sample, and then on each of the groups, so they could be compared between them. In addition to this, the items means between the groups were also used to compared them.

An exploratory factorial analysis was conducted to verify the validity and consistency of the constructs. This was done by using Kaiser’s criteria of extracting factors with Eigenvalues equal or greater than 1 values until an acceptable value of explained variance was verified. This verification was made to understand rather the items were loading in the constructs or not. After, Cronbach’s alpha was verified to assess the reliability of the scales. All variables that scored above 0,6 were considered acceptable.

Before the hypotheses were validated, to understand if the groups were comparable, a first analysis was conducted to (PBA) dimensions, to see if their means differed between groups. To do so, three new variables were created – C0mean, C1mean, Smean. Each of these variables represented the mean of the respective items’ values of each variable. After this, an Oneway

Analysis Of Variance (ANOVA) test was conducted to verify if the means between groups varied, and after, a post hoc test was performed to understand between which groups the means varied. It was expected that the means did not vary, as consumers were questioned about (PBA) before they were introduced to the different scenarios (Q1 to Q4).

After this, the same tests were applied to brand fit, and a new variable was created – BFmean, which represented the mean of *brand fit* items' values. These tests were conducted to check the manipulation implemented, as it was expected that the respondents exposed to the different scenarios would differ on their level of agreement in the questions regarding the fit of the campaign's message and the brand Lipton (Q12).

Finally, the hypotheses were analyzed, and statistical tests were performed to check their validity. From H1 to H3 and for H5, a multiple (H1) and simple (H2, H3, H5) linear regressions were conducted to predict the value of a dependent variable on three independent variables (H1) and on one independent variable (H2, H3, H5), to validate the hypotheses. After this, Independent Sample T-Tests were conducted for H1, H2, and H3, to compare the means of *consumers' attitudes*, *brand advocacy* and *overall brand equity* between groups, respectively, and understand if the difference was significant. To do this, new variables were created representing the mean of each variable's items – CAMEAN, BAMEAN and OBEMEAN. All tests from H1 to H3 and H5 were conducted only on the two groups exposed to the activist manipulation.

As for H4, Process was used to test brand fit moderation on (PBA)'s effect on consumers attitudes. To do that, a new variable named Moderator was created, coded as 1 (when brand fit ≥ 4) and 0 (when brand fit < 4). This test was also conducted only for groups 1 and 2. Yet, an additional hypothesis was analyzed, to understand if the attitude toward activist communication differed between groups exposed to activist communication (1 and 2) and those not (3). It would be expected that group 3 differed from groups 1 and 2. An ANOVA test was used to validate this.

4. Results

4.1 Measuring Instruments

Through the online survey a total of 385 responses were collected, of which (54) were not considered as they were unfinished or empty. Yet, due to lack of attention of some respondents regarding the inquiry, and additional (12) answers were removed from the sample. Given this, the final target sample had 319 valid responses (n=319), of which 106 (n=106) were presented to the Tea Plantation Worker's Rights scenario, 103 (n=103) were presented to the Animal's Rights scenario, and the remaining 110 (n=110) were presented to the Non-Activist manipulation. The survey was distributed online between January and February 2023.

4.2 Sample Descriptive Analysis

The final sample obtained from the online survey was mainly composed of female respondents, being that 70,2% were women and only 29,2% were men. The remaining 0,6% identified as "other".

Regarding age, half of the sample was under 34 years old (50,9%), being that 23,2% were between 18-24 years old, and 27,6% were between 25-34 years old. As for the remaining sample, 22,3% were between 35-44 years old, 16,3% were between 45-54 years old, 9,4% were between 55-65 years old, and only 1,3% were older than 65 years old.

A vast majority of the respondents are employed (71,5%), compared to a small percentage of unemployed (3,4%). 23,4% are students (12,9%) or working students (10,2%), and the remaining 1,9% in already retired. When it comes to education, the sample is highly educated, as 62,3% has either a Bachelor's degree (38,2%), a Postgraduate (6,9%) or a Master's degree (17,2%). As for the remaining 37,6%, they have either completed high school (28,2%) or 9th grade (9,4%).

As for the individual descriptive analysis of each group, the same can be observed in Table 6, bellow.

Table 6. Descriptive analysis of each group

<i>Scenario</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Tea Plantations Workers' Rights</i>	Less than 18	-	Male	34%	9th grade	12,3%	Student	12,3%
	18-24 years old	26,4%	Female	66%	12th grade	24,5%	Working Student	9,4%
	25-34 years old	18,9%	Other	-	Bachelor's Degree	45,3%	Employed	75,5%
	35-44 years old	24,5%			Postgraduate	3,8%	Unemployed	2,8%
	45-54 years old	20,8%			Master's Degree	14,2%	Retired	-
	55-64 years old	8,5%			PhD	-		
	65-74 years old	0,9%						
	More than 75	-						
Total		100%		100%		100%		100%
<i>Scenario</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Animals' Rights</i>	Less than 18	-	Male	30,1%	9th grade	9,7%	Student	11,7%
	18-24 years old	-	Female	68%	12th grade	28,2%	Working Student	13,6%
	25-34 years old	19,4%	Other	1,9%	Bachelor's Degree	34%	Employed	67%
	35-44 years old	36,9%			Postgraduate	8,7%	Unemployed	5,8%
	45-54 years old	24,3%			Master's Degree	19,4%	Retired	1,9%
	55-64 years old	11,7%			PhD	-		
	65-74 years old	6,8%						
	More than 75	1%						
Total		100%		100%		100%		100%
<i>Scenario</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Non-Activist</i>	Less than 18	-	Male	23,6%	9th grade	6,4%	Student	14,5%
	18-24 years old	23,6%	Female	76,4%	12th grade	31,8%	Working Student	8,2%
	25-34 years old	27,3%	Other	-	Bachelor's Degree	35,5%	Employed	71,8%
	35-44 years old	18,2%			Postgraduate	8,2%	Unemployed	1,8%
	45-54 years old	16,4%			Master's Degree	18,2%	Retired	3,6%
	55-64 years old	12,7%			PhD	-		
	65-74 years old	1,8%						
	More than 75	-						
Total		100%		100%		100%		100%

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4.3 Measures' Validation

4.3.1 – Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

To understand and validate the reliability and dimensionality of the scales selected for this study, specifically, (PBA), consumers' attitudes, brand advocacy, overall brand equity and brand fit scales, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted. A first analysis was conducted, using Kaiser's criteria, and a solution of 7 factors was obtained. When analyzing the varimax rotation, it was possible to see that 2 of the items from the dimension *integrity* (I1 and I2) were loading higher than 0,5 in more than 1 dimension (symbolism's factor (2)), and the other two items (I3 and I4) were also loading higher than 0,5 in more than 1 dimension (credibility's factor (5)), as we can observe in Table 7. For this reason, the dimension *integrity* was excluded from the analysis, as this one could influence the model's behavior (Marôco, 2014).

Table 7. Results from the 1st explanatory analysis (PBA, CA, BA, OBE)

Scale	Constructs	Factor Loading						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Morhart et al.</i> (2015)	Continuity							
	CO1	0,025	0,058	0,070	-0,104	0,286	0,061	0,620
	CO2	-0,007	-0,030	0,008	0,053	0,213	0,068	0,634
	CO3	0,028	0,155	0,063	0,112	0,026	-0,010	0,834
	CO4	0,047	0,203	0,073	0,212	0,062	0,010	0,781
	Credibility							
	C1	0,064	0,082	0,206	0,113	0,700	0,119	0,314
	C2	0,079	0,129	0,191	0,184	0,608	0,066	0,370
	C3	0,052	0,194	0,220	0,162	0,693	0,120	0,280
	Integrity							
	I1	0,034	0,578	0,151	0,214	0,437	0,130	0,104
	I2	0,081	0,625	0,011	0,111	0,555	0,116	-0,060
	I3	0,042	0,578	0,056	0,097	0,594	0,126	-0,019
	I4	0,080	0,425	0,040	0,219	0,547	0,082	0,153
	Sybolism							
	S1	0,068	0,738	0,159	0,267	0,087	0,146	0,142
	S2	0,117	0,795	0,204	0,150	0,149	0,107	0,124
	S3	0,099	0,790	0,251	0,077	0,077	0,221	0,147
	S4	0,098	0,776	0,237	0,050	0,106	0,276	0,104

		Consumer's Attitudes							
<i>Spears et al. (2002)</i> <i>(Adapted)</i>	CA1	0,888	0,033	0,033	0,144	0,053	0,018	0,010	
	CA2	0,922	0,102	0,017	0,103	0,048	0,087	-0,009	
	CA3	0,933	0,074	0,070	0,102	0,075	0,039	0,043	
	CA4	0,931	0,069	0,101	0,101	0,056	0,071	0,039	
	CA5	0,940	0,101	0,092	0,060	0,014	0,065	0,039	
		Brand Advocacy							
<i>Wilk et al. (2020)</i>	BA1	0,168	0,282	0,268	0,558	0,283	0,315	0,056	
	BA2	0,143	0,316	0,247	0,612	0,150	0,383	0,059	
	BA3	0,177	0,115	0,162	0,817	0,182	0,072	0,165	
	BA4	0,154	0,176	0,324	0,698	0,143	0,306	0,043	
	BA5	0,187	0,194	0,322	0,630	0,159	0,265	0,139	
	BA6	0,081	0,218	0,207	0,306	0,134	0,777	0,074	
	BA7	0,087	0,320	0,230	0,204	0,102	0,818	0,037	
	BA8	0,091	0,258	0,240	0,218	0,158	0,765	0,057	
		OBE							
<i>Washburn et al. (2002)</i>	OB1	0,103	0,154	0,793	0,151	0,153	0,140	0,117	
	OB2	0,024	0,206	0,827	0,236	0,080	0,133	0,052	
	OB3	0,053	0,233	0,818	0,185	0,115	0,180	0,061	
	OB4	0,125	0,181	0,741	0,204	0,201	0,208	0,045	

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Given this, a new and final analysis was conducted, whit *integrity* excluded from it. A solution of 6 factors was obtained, using Kaiser’s criteria, and this one represented 73,4% of the total variance contained in the 28 variables. By using the varimax rotation, presented in Table 8, it was possible to identify all items that scored above 0,500 (Marôco, 2014).

Table 8. Results from the final explanatory analysis (PBA, CA, BA, OBE)

		<i>Factor Loading</i>						<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha if item Deleted</i>
<i>Constructs</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6			
	Continuity						0,753		
	CO1	-0,019	0,013	0,105	0,054	0,615	0,262	0,739	
	CO2	0,106	-0,008	-0,057	0,035	0,704	0,099	0,732	
	CO3	0,070	0,035	0,122	0,073	0,838	0,078	0,632	
	CO4	0,152	0,057	0,166	0,070	0,759	0,156	0,670	
	Credibility						0,830		
<i>Morhart et al. (2015)</i>	C1	0,184	0,051	0,152	0,141	0,227	0,773	0,756	
	C2	0,190	0,072	0,180	0,124	0,274	0,739	0,773	
	C3	0,235	0,044	0,233	0,173	0,228	0,722	0,767	
	Sybolism								
<i>Scale</i>	S1	0,329	0,075	0,704	0,128	0,124	0,163	0,902	0,894
	S2	0,229	0,121	0,775	0,183	0,115	0,182		0,876
	S3	0,241	0,091	0,827	0,201	0,099	0,151		0,855
	S4	0,266	0,087	0,815	0,192	0,069	0,132		0,868
	Consumer's Attitudes						0,965		
<i>Spears et al. (2002) (Adapted)</i>	CA1	0,126	0,892	0,105	0,009	-0,011	0,037	0,965	
	CA2	0,116	0,932	0,065	0,071	0,049	0,060	0,957	
	CA3	0,933	0,074	0,070	0,102	0,075	0,039	0,954	
	CA4	0,137	0,929	0,068	0,097	0,041	0,044	0,954	
	CA5	0,100	0,937	0,112	0,084	0,033	0,015	0,953	
	Brand Advocacy						0,918		
<i>Wilk et al. (2020)</i>	BA1	0,656	0,174	0,222	0,243	0,062	0,292	0,906	
	BA2	0,736	0,149	0,247	0,224	0,074	0,158	0,902	
	BA3	0,177	0,208	-0,041	0,154	0,178	0,309	0,915	
	BA4	0,739	0,165	0,088	0,295	0,043	0,218	0,906	
	BA5	0,666	0,198	0,107	0,300	0,148	0,215	0,909	
	BA6	0,772	0,050	0,290	0,149	0,056	0,035	0,904	
	BA7	0,738	0,051	0,403	0,176	0,035	-0,042	0,904	
	BA8	0,715	0,059	0,323	0,197	0,086	-0,004	0,908	
	OBE						0,901		
<i>Washburn et al. (2002)</i>	OB1	0,249	0,099	0,155	0,784	0,117	0,149	0,882	
	OB2	0,305	0,025	0,181	0,824	0,060	0,086	0,862	
	OB3	0,311	0,051	0,212	0,818	0,086	0,074	0,857	
	OB4	0,337	0,119	0,185	0,717	0,038	0,200	0,887	

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Also, and according to Bartlett's Test, the null hypothesis was rejected, since Sig = 0,000, which indicated that the principal component analysis (PCA) could be performed. KMO test also presented a good value, of 0,914, which is higher than 0,8 (Marôco, 2014). Lastly, Cronbach's

Alfa was used to measure the reliability of the variable, and all of them scored above 0,600 which, according to Marôco (2014), is a satisfactory value,

The same tests were applied to *brand fit*. In the (PCA) test conducted to this dimension, only 1 factor composed the solution, by using Kaiser’s criteria. This one represented 93,0% of the total variance contained in the 3 variables. With the component matrix it is possible to observe that all three variables scored above 0,500 (Marôco, 2014), and with Sig<0,001, Bartlett’s test proved that (PCA) could be conducted, since the null hypothesis was rejected. Regarding the KMO test, the value obtained was of 0,778, which although it is under 0,8 (Marôco, 2014), it is still acceptable. As for the reliability test, Cronbach’s Alfa value was 0,962, and if an item was deleted, all variables scored above 0,600 (Marôco, 2014).

Table 9. Results from Alpha Cronbach (Brand Fit)

		<i>Factor Loading</i>		
<i>Scale</i>	<i>Constructs</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha if item Deleted</i>
	Brand Fit		<i>0,962</i>	
<i>Lafferty et al. (2004)</i>	BF1	<i>0,960</i>		<i>0,949</i>
	BF2	<i>0,970</i>		<i>0,935</i>
	BF3	<i>0,963</i>		<i>0,946</i>

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4.3.2 – (PBA) and Brand Fit mean analysis between groups

Before testing the hypotheses, manipulation checks were implemented. It was analyzed if the means between the three different groups varied or not, regarding (*PBA*) and *Brand Fit*. While the first one was not expected to vary across groups, the second one was expected to vary.

(PBA)

When analyzing (*PBA*)’s means, using the ANOVA test, it was verified that the means between the groups were not different for *credibility* (Cmean) and *symbolism* (Smean), since Sig > 0,05 (Table 10). However, it was verified that the means between groups were different regarding *continuity* (COfmean), as Sig = 0,013.

Table 10. ANOVA test on (PBA) dimensions means

		df	F	Sig.
COmean	Between Groups	2	4,378	0,013
Cmean	Between Groups	2	1,958	0,143
Smean	Between Groups	2	0,399	0,617

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After this, through the Bonferroni test was possible to see the differences between each group (Table 11), and verify that, for *continuity*, the identified difference between the groups was between the non-activist group and the animal rights group. As for *credibility* and *symbolism*, as verified in the ANOVA test, there were no significant differences between groups.

Table 11. Post Hoc Test on (PBA) dimensions (Bonferroni)

	Activist Manipulation	Activist Manipulation	Mean Difference	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
COmean	Tea Plantation Workers Rights	Animal's Rights	.1319	0,633	-.1216	.3855
		Non-Activist	-.1753	0,275	-.4248	.0740
	Animal's Rights	Tea Plantation Workers Rights	-.1319	0,633	-.3855	.1216
		Non-Activist	-.3073*	0,010	-.5586	-.0561
	Non-Activist	Tea Plantation Workers Rights	.1753	0,275	-.0740	.4248
		Animal's Rights	-.3073*	0,010	.0561	.5586
Cmean	Tea Plantation Workers Rights	Animal's Rights	.1602	0,590	-.1378	.4584
		Non-Activist	-.0789	1,000	-.3722	.2144
	Animal's Rights	Tea Plantation Workers Rights	-.1602	0,590	-.4584	.1378
		Non-Activist	-.2391	0,157	-.5346	.0562
	Non-Activist	Tea Plantation Workers Rights	.0789	1,000	-.2144	.3722
		Animal's Rights	.2391	0,157	-.0562	.5346
Smean	Tea Plantation Workers Rights	Animal's Rights	-.1113	1,000	-.4998	.2771
		Non-Activist	.0231	1,000	-.3591	.4043
	Animal's Rights	Tea Plantation Workers Rights	.1113	1,000	-.2771	.4998
		Non-Activist	.1344	1,000	-.2505	.5195
	Non-Activist	Tea Plantation Workers Rights	-.0231	1,000	-.4053	.3591
		Animal's Rights	-.1244	1,000	-.5195	.2505

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As explained before, it was expected that (*PBA*) means did not differ between groups, which leads to speculate that *continuity* should not be considered in the model. However, it was still considered, and new conclusions were made during the hypotheses testing.

Brand Fit

As for *brand fit*, an ANOVA test was also executed to see if the means varied between groups, and as we can see in Table 12, the means varied between groups, since Sig < 0,001.

Table 12. ANOVA test on Brand Fit between groups

		df	F	Sig.
BFmean	Between Groups	2	472,510	< 0.001

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Through the Bonferroni test, it was possible to identify that the means' variation identified in the ANOVA test happened in the three groups, as they all varied between each other (Table 13). The differences observed were expected, due to the activist manipulation presented in the different scenarios.

Table 13. Post Hoc Test on Brand Fit between groups (Bonferroni)

Activist Manipulation	Activist Manipulation	Mean Difference	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
Tea Plantation Workers Rights	Animal's Rights	3.3624*	<.001	3.0953	3.6297
	Non-Activist	1.1215*	<.001	.8988	1.4244
Animal's Rights	Tea Plantation Workers Rights	-3.3624*	<.001	-3.6297	-3.0953
	Non-Activist	-2.2009	<.001	-2.4657	-1.9361
Non-Activist	Tea Plantation Workers Rights	-1.1615*	<.001	-1.4255	-.8988
	Animal's Rights	2.2009	<.001	1.9361	2.4567

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4.4 Hypotheses Testing

4.3.1 H1 and H2 - (PBA) and Brand Fit have a significant effect on consumers' attitudes toward Brand Activism content.

As mentioned before, *integrity* was excluded from the model. For this reason, only 3 of the 4 sub-hypotheses of H1 were tested:

H1.1 - *Continuity* has a significant effect on consumers' attitudes toward Brand Activism content.

H1.2 - *Credibility* has a significant effect on consumers' attitudes toward Brand Activism content.

H1.4 - *Symbolism* has a significant effect on consumers' attitudes toward Brand Activism content.

The following tests were conducted only on the groups exposed to the activist scenarios – tea plantation workers (group 1 with $n = 106$) and animal's rights (group 2 with $n = 103$), being the total sample of 209 respondents ($n = 209$).

To test these hypotheses, the first analysis conducted was a multiple linear regression to understand if (PBA) dimensions and brand fit significantly predicted consumers attitudes toward brand activism.

The results of the multiple regression showed that the predictor explained 34,5% of the variance, with $R^2 = .345$. Through the coefficients table it was possible to identify that only *symbolism and brand fit* significantly predicted consumers' attitudes toward brand activism, as both have $\text{Sig.} < 0,05$ (Table 14). As for *continuity and credibility*, $\text{Sig.} > 0,05$, which indicated that these ones did not significantly predict consumers' attitudes. With this in mind, H1.3 and H2 are accepted, and H1.1 and H1.2 are rejected.

Table 14. Multiple Linear Regression results (H1 and H2)

R Square	df	F	Sig.
0.345	4	28,385	< 0,001

	Beta	Sig.
Cmean	0,101	0,155
COmean	-0,108	0,099
Smean	0,252	< 0,001
BFmean	0,536	< 0,001

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To understand if *credibility* and *continuity* lost significant relevance due to the correlation effects of the other constructs, a multiple linear regression was performed, but this time, only with these two (PBA) dimensions, and as we can see by the results (Table 15), *credibility* did, in fact, present a significant effect on consumer’s attitudes (Sig. < 0,05). As for *continuity*, it still did not present a significant impact.

Table 15. Multiple Linear Regression results (credibility and continuity)

R Square	df	F	Sig.
0,057	2	6,129	0,002

	Beta	Sig.
Cmean	0,263	<0,001
COmean	-0,108	.463

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After this, an Independent t-test was performed. From the Levene's test for Equality of Variances, the hypothesis that the two samples were from populations with an equal variance of the variable was not rejected, as Sig. = 0,914 ($> \alpha = .05$). Giving this, to analyze the Equality of Means, the test selected was the one that assumes the equality of variances of consumers' attitudes in the two groups.

The Equality of Means test rejects the null hypothesis, as Sig. (2-sided) $< 0,001$, which indicates that there is a significant statistical difference between the mean of consumers' attitudes in the two groups. In Table 16 we can see the mean and standard division of both groups regarding consumers' attitudes.

Table 16. Independent Sample T-Test results (H1 and H2)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Tea Plantation Worker's Rights	106	5,74	0,850
Animals' Rights	103	4,73	0,916

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4.3.2 H3 - Brand Fit with the activism cause has a moderating effect on (PBA)'s effect on consumers' attitudes toward brand activism content, so, when the brand fit is high, positive effects of (PBA) on consumers' attitudes will be higher than when the brand fit is low

Since *continuity and credibility's* effect on consumers attitudes was rejected in H1, they were not considered for this hypothesis. For this reason, only 1 of the 4 sub-hypotheses presented was analyzed:

H3.4 - Brand Fit has a significant effect on *symbolism's* effect on consumers' attitudes toward brand activism content.

The following test was also conducted only to the groups exposed to the activist scenarios (groups 1 and 2), for a total sample of 209 respondents (n = 209).

To analyze this hypothesis, Process was used. Through the model summary table, it was possible to see that the predictor explained 24,8% of the variance, as $R^2 = 0,248$ (Table 17).

Table 17. Process results – Model Summary Table (H3.4)

R Square	df	F	Sig.
0,248	3	22,498	< 0,001

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When analyzing the model table (Table 18), it was possible to see that the interaction effect was not significant, as $p\text{-value} = 0,798$.

Table 18. Process results – Model Table (H3.4)

	Coefficient	p
Constant	3,690	0,000
Smean	0,240	0,010
Moderator	0,762	0,153
Int_1	0,030	0,798

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This value was consistent with the F test (Table 19), as the $p\text{-value}$ was the same as the one in the model table. Therefore, the hypothesis that brand fit has a significant effect on (PBA)'s effect on consumers' attitudes was rejected. For this reason, H3.4 was rejected.

Table 19. Process results – F test results (H3.4)

	R Square - Chng	F	df	p
Smean x Moderator	0,000	0,065	1	0,798

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4.3.3 H4 – Consumers’ attitudes toward Brand Activism content have a significant effect on Brand Advocacy

The following tests were also conducted only on the groups exposed to the activist scenarios (group 1 and 2), for a total sample of 209 respondents (n = 209).

First, a simple linear regression was conducted to test if consumers’ attitudes toward brand activism significantly predicted brand advocacy. It was possible to verify that the predictor explained 31,4% of the variance, as $R^2 = 0,314$. It was also observed that $\beta = .561$ and $\text{Sig.} < 00.1$ (Table 20), which indicates that consumers’ attitudes significantly predicted brand advocacy. Thus, H2 was accepted as there was statistical evidence that consumers’ attitudes significantly influence brand advocacy.

Table 20. Simple Linear Regression results (H4)

R Square	df	F	Beta	Sig.
0,314	1	94,860	0,561	< 0,001

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After validating the hypothesis, an Independent t-test was performed. From the Levene’s test for Equality of Variances, the hypothesis that the two samples were from populations with an equal variance of the variable was rejected, as $\text{Sig.} = 0,029 (< \alpha = .05)$. After this, the test for Equality of Means was analyzed, and to do so, the test selected was the one that does not assume the equality of variances of brand advocacy in the two groups.

The Equality of Means test rejects the null hypothesis, as Sig. (2-sided) < 0,001, which indicates that there is a significant statistical difference between the mean of brand advocacy in the two groups. In Table 21 we can see the mean and standard division of both groups regarding brand advocacy.

Table 21. Independent Sample T-Test results (H4)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Tea Plantation Worker's Rights	106	5,06	1,054
Animals' Rights	103	4,41	0,836

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4.3.4 H5 – Consumers' Attitudes toward Brand Activism content have a significant effect on Overall Brand Equity

The following tests were also conducted only to the groups exposed to the activist scenarios (groups 1 and 2), for a total sample of 209 respondents (n = 209).

For H5, the same tests performed for H4 were applied. Regarding the linear regression, it was possible to see that, similar to brand advocacy, consumers' attitudes toward brand activism also significantly predicted overall brand advocacy, as $\beta = .587$ and Sig. < 00.1. The predictor explained 34,5% of the variance, as $R^2 = 0,345$ (Table 22). Given this, H3 was accepted as there was statistical evidence that consumers' attitudes significantly influence overall brand equity.

Table 22. Simple Linear Regression results (H5)

R Square	df	F	Beta	Sig.
0,345	1	82,830	0,587	< 0,001

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Again, after validating the hypothesis, an Independent t-test was performed. From the Levene's test for Equality of Variances, the hypothesis that the two samples were from populations with an equal variance of the variable was not rejected, as Sig. = 0,739 ($> \alpha = .05$). So, to analyze the Equality of Means test, the selected test was the one that assumes the equality of variances of overall brand equity in the two groups.

The Equality of Means test t rejected the null hypothesis, as Sig. (2-sided) < 0,001, which indicates that there is a significant statistical difference between the mean of overall brand equity in the two groups. In Table 23 we can see the mean and standard deviation of both groups regarding overall brand equity.

Table 23. Independent Sample T-Test results (H5)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Tea Plantation Worker's Rights	106	5,21	0,967
Animals' Rights	103	4,33	0,998

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4.3.6 Additional Hypothesis – Consumers exposed to activism content have better attitudes than those who are exposed to non-activist content

An additional hypothesis was analyzed to understand the impact of activist content on consumers' attitudes, and to verify if these ones change when consumers are presented with it

with versus when they are not. To understand this, the analysis was applied to all three groups, for a total sample of 319 respondents (n = 319).

An ANOVA test was conducted to compare the means of the three groups, and similar to what was verified in H1, the mean of the three groups differed when it came to consumers' attitudes, as Sig. < 0,001 (Table 24).

Table 24. ANOVA results (Additional Hypothesis)

		df	F	Sig.
CAmean	Between Groups	2	26,296	< 0.001

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Through the Bonferroni test, it is possible to verify that the means significantly differ between all the groups (Table 25). As for the means of each group, we can see them in Table 26.

Table 25. Post Hoc Test - Bonferroni (Additional Hypothesis)

Activist Manipulation	Activist Manipulation	Mean Difference	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
Tea Plantation Workers Rights	Animal's Rights	1.0076*	<.001	.6731	1.3422
	Non-Activist	.5177*	<.001	.1887	.8468
Animal's Rights	Tea Plantation Workers Rights	-1.0076*	<.001	-1.3422	-.6731
	Non-Activist	-.4899*	.001	-.8214	-.1584
Non-Activist	Tea Plantation Workers Rights	-.5177*	<.001	-.8468	-.1887
	Animal's Rights	.4899*	.001	.1584	.8214

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Table 26. Descriptive Table (Additional Hypothesis)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Tea Plantation Worker's Rights	106	5,74	0,850
Animals' Rights	103	4,73	0,916
Non-Activist	110	5,22	1,201

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Table 27. Resume of the results obtained from the hypothesis analysis

Hypothesis	Result
H1.1 Continuity has a significant effect on consumers' attitudes toward Brand Activism content.	Rejected
H1.2 Credibility has a significant effect on consumers' attitudes toward Brand Activism content	Rejected
H1.4 Symbolism has a significant effect on consumers' attitudes toward Brand Activism content.	Accepted
H2 Brand Fit has a significant effect on consumers' attitudes toward brand activism content.	Accepted
H3.4 Brand Fit has a significant effect on symbolism's effect on consumers' attitudes toward brand activism content.	Rejected
H4 Consumers' Attitudes toward Brand Activism content have a significant effect on Brand Advocacy	Accepted
H5 Consumers' Attitudes toward Brand Activism content have a significant effect on Overall Brand Equity	Accepted
Additional Hypotheses Consumers exposed to activism content have better attitudes than those who are exposed to non-activist content	Partially accepted

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5. Conclusion

The present study proposed a model to understand the effect of perceived brand authenticity (PBA) on brand activism, more specifically, on consumers' attitudes toward brand activism content, and the effect this has on brands, when it comes to brand advocacy and overall brand equity (OBE). Moreover, the effect of brand fit as a moderator was also studied, which represented the level of fit between the brand and the activism content.

More than ever, brands are using activism as a form of communication, and different studies have been conducted to understand how brands can be perceived as authentic when doing so, by analyzing the antecedents of authenticity (Fritz et al., 2017; Mirzaei et al., 2022; Morhart et al., 2015; Spiggle et al., 2012). Nonetheless, to the author's best knowledge, no study has analyzed the impact that perceived brand authenticity has on brand activism, and the impact this has on brands. For this reason, this study set out to analyze exactly this, in an era where consumers are more and more activist and demanding brands to be it too. To this end, an online questionnaire regarding, an experiment was conducted, and conclusions were made in line with the literature previously presented.

Some of the assumptions made were accepted, and others were rejected. The effect of (PBA) on consumers' attitudes was confirmed, but only with one of the four dimensions presented in the scale used (Morhart et al., 2015), which was symbolism. However, when analyzing credibility and continuity separately from the remaining constructs, it was confirmed that credibility did in fact have a significant effect on consumer's attitudes, which indicates that credibility lost significant relevance due to the strong correlation effects of brand fit and symbolism, despite still having a significant effect on consumer's attitudes.

Yet, it was shown that brand fit also directly impacts consumers' attitudes, and that they differed between the two groups under analysis, as they were more positive when the fit between the brand and the activism content was high, compared to when this fit was low, as we could see by the means difference between the groups. As for the moderator effect of brand fit in (PBA)'s effect on consumers' attitudes, it was proven that brand fit does not have one.

Regarding consumers' attitudes toward the brand, it was confirmed that they have a significant effect on brand advocacy and (OBE), and that for both of these constructs, the mean is also

higher in group 1 comparing to group 2, which can be linked to the higher fit presented in the first one. These results can surely be supported by the fact that consumers are more and more aware of the brand's positions regarding controversial matters and demand that they take a stand (Edelman, 2020b), and when brands do, they react positively.

Lastly, it was also proven that consumers exposed to activist content have better attitudes than those exposed to non-activist content. Nonetheless, this only happens when the fit between the brand and the activist content is high. In situations where such fit is low, consumers exposed to non-activist content have better attitudes than those exposed to the activist content. This shows, once again, the importance of brand fit in an activist context (Mirzaei et al., 2022; Pracejus & Olsen, 2003).

To sum up, and although not all hypotheses were accepted, this study presents significant results that contribute to the understanding of (PBA) in consumers' attitudes toward brand activism and its outcomes for brands.

5.1- Theoretical contributions

The main goal of this study was to determine how (PBA) affected consumers' attitudes toward brand activism.

The literature on which this study is based on does not present any analysis regarding these effects. Fritz et al. (2017), Mirzaei et al. (2022), Morhart et al. (2015), and Spiggle et al. (2012) studies only test and identify (PBA) dimensions in different contexts, and although Mirzaei et al. (2022)' study revolves around activism, it still only analyzes the antecedents of (PBA) and not its precedents. The confirmation that there is a (PBA) dimension that has a significant impact on consumers' attitudes toward brand activism represents a relevant contribution to this research field. Moreover, brand fit also has a significant effect on consumers' attitudes.

Despite this, this study presents limitations, and for this reason, further research should therefore explore the construct of perceived brand authenticity in the context of brand activism, as brands should certainly consider it in strategies that explore brand activism.

5.2 – Limitations of the study and future research

Although the findings emerging from this study agree with the previous research, it is important to be considered that they might not fully reflect reality, since, according to Bollen (1989), model-data consistency does not necessarily mean model-reality consistency. Hence, this study presents various limitations that represent different opportunities for future research for brands who intend to explore brand activism and enroll in it.

One of the first limitations of this study is that the manipulation was based only on one brand of one category, and it is important to consider that respondents might have answered to the questionnaire based on previous experiences and associations they had with the brand Lipton, rather than responding according with the context presented to them. Bearing this in mind, future research could analyze the model presented in this study with a different brand, from a different industry and category, or even with a made-up brand.

Another limitation is the subjectivity of the scenarios. Even though the different groups identified the activist manipulations and non-activist manipulation as such, and it was verified that the scenarios were well understood, this evaluation still relies on individual perceptions. Therefore, something to consider might be the use of a different methodology when exposing respondents to empirical manipulation.

Additionally, a future research opportunity is to collect and analyze different samples according to age groups, to understand if consumers' behavior toward activism varies depending on age, or more specifically, generations, as Millennials and Gen Z generally have higher demands toward brands than other generations, when it comes to certain topics (Choudhary, 2020).

Moreover, it could also be interesting to analyze cross-cultural differences. Although nationality was not questioned, the survey was distributed only in Portuguese, so it is safe to admit that all respondents are Portuguese. For this reason, the results obtained cannot be considered in different cultural environments, and samples from different cultures might lead to different results.

5.3 – Final reflections on the current developments

This study revealed a significant impact of one dimension of (PBA) on consumers' attitudes. This suggests that, when authenticity is perceived, in this case, through symbolism, consumers react positively to brand activism. Results equally suggest that the fit between the brand and the cause must be of primary importance since it plays a major role in consumers' attitudes. On that account, marketers should be aware of these aspects, and should consider them when developing a communication strategy, as they are valuable. In addition, they need to identify what issues to support, how they will support them, and what the opportunities and risks are.

Regardless of the results obtained, it is not guaranteed that all brands that enroll in activism will be successful. The findings show that brands that take a stand and have the right fit with it, can accomplish positive outcomes, regarding consumers' attitudes, specifically, brand advocacy and overall brand equity. However, taking a stand has its risks, and might damage consumers' relations with the brand, when the topics are thorny, since adopting one side of an issue can result in polarized outcomes (Bhagwat et al., 2020).

Bearing this in mind, companies need to be very conscious of what they communicate, since if this one does not meet consumers' expectations, the results of it can go in unexpected directions.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 – Online questionnaire in Portuguese

Activist Manipulation - Tea Plantation Worker's Rights

A marca Lipton é uma marca conhecida pelos seus chás, e foi fundada em 1871 pelo escocês, Sir Thomas.

Recentemente a marca lançou uma nova campanha promocional para a sua nova versão de chá preto.

Num evento da marca, o Diretor de Marketing da Lipton explicou a estratégia por trás da nova campanha:

“Dada a natureza do nosso negócio, não podemos ignorar as práticas abusivas que muitos trabalhadores das plantações de chá sofrem diariamente, sendo expostos a condições de trabalho desumanas. Desta forma, decidimos usar esta campanha como forma de alertarmos para estas práticas e, juntamente com os nossos trabalhadores, lutarmos pelos seus direitos.”

Activist Manipulation – Animal's Rights

A marca Lipton é uma marca conhecida pelos seus chás, e foi fundada em 1871 pelo escocês, Sir Thomas.

Recentemente a marca lançou uma nova campanha promocional para a sua nova versão de chá preto.

Num evento da marca, o Diretor de Marketing da Lipton explicou a estratégia por trás da nova campanha:

“Hoje em dia, os animais têm um significado muito grande na vida das pessoas, mas infelizmente são completamente negligenciados no que diz respeito às leis que os protegem.

Desta forma, decidimos usar esta campanha como forma de alertar para a necessidade de proteger e lutar pelos direitos dos animais.

Non-Activist Manipulation – Brand Tradition

A marca Lipton é uma marca conhecida pelos seus chás, e foi fundada em 1871 pelo escocês, Sir Thomas.

Recentemente, a marca lançou uma nova campanha promocional para a sua nova versão de chá preto.

Num evento da marca, o Diretor de Marketing da Lipton explicou a estratégia por trás da nova campanha:

“O foco desta campanha está em enaltecer a tradição dos chás da nossa marca.”

Introdução

O seguinte questionário faz parte do estudo de uma tese de mestrado em Gestão Aplicada na Católica Business Scholl.

O objetivo deste inquérito é receber a sua opinião sobre uma campanha realizada pela marca Lipton.

Todas as respostas serão anónimas e não serão usadas para outra finalidade. O tempo previsto para conclusão do questionário é de cerca de 10 minutos.

Qualquer questão ou dúvida pode ser enviada para aliciapereira98@hotmail.com.

Muito obrigado pela sua disponibilidade,
Alicia Pereira

BECOMING AN ACTIVIST: WHAT BRANDS SHOULD KNOW BEFORE TAKING A STAND

1 - Avalie numa escala de 1- "Discordo totalmente" a 7- "Concordo totalmente", o seu nível de concordância com as seguintes afirmações:

	Discordo totalmente	Discordo	Discordo parcialmente	Nem concordo nem discordo	Concordo Parcialmente	Concordo	Concordo totalmente
A Lipton é uma marca com história	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A Lipton é uma marca "timeless"	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A Lipton é uma marca que sobrevive à mudança dos tempos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A Lipton é uma marca que sobrevive às tendências	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2 - Avalie numa escala de 1- "Discordo totalmente" a 7- "Concordo totalmente", o seu nível de concordância com as seguintes afirmações:

	Discordo totalmente	Discordar	Discordo parcialmente	Nem concordo nem discordo	Concordo Parcialmente	Concordo	Concordo totalmente
A Lipton é uma marca que não trairá o consumidor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A Lipton é uma marca que cumpre a sua proposta de valor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A Lipton é uma marca honesta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3 - Avalie numa escala de 1- "Discordo totalmente" a 7- "Concordo totalmente", o seu nível de concordância com as seguintes afirmações:

	Discordo totalmente	Discordo	Discordo parcialmente	Nem concordo nem discordo	Concordo Parcialmente	Concordo	Concordo totalmente
A Lipton é uma marca que retribui aos seus consumidores	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A Lipton é uma marca com valores morais	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A Lipton é uma marca fiel aos seus valores morais	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A Lipton é uma marca que se preocupa com os seus consumidores	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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4 - Avalie numa escala de 1- "Discordo totalmente" a 7- "Concordo totalmente", o seu nível de concordância com as seguintes afirmações:

	Discordo totalmente	Discordo	Discordo parcialmente	Nem concordo nem discordo	Concordo Parcialmente	Concordo	Concordo totalmente
A Lipton é uma marca que acrescenta significado à vida das pessoas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A Lipton é uma marca que reflete valores com os quais as pessoas se importam	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A Lipton é uma marca que ajuda as pessoas a conectarem-se com os seus verdadeiros "eu"	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A Lipton é uma marca que ajuda as pessoas a conectarem-se com o que é realmente importante	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Contextualização e Descrição da Campanha

5 - Qual das seguintes frases melhor descreve o cenário que acabou de ler?

- A mensagem da campanha da Lipton é sobre os Direitos dos Trabalhadores das Plantações de Chá
- A mensagem da campanha da Lipton é sobre os Direitos dos Animais
- A mensagem da campanha da Lipton é sobre tradição

6 - A Lipton foi fundada por um escocês chamado Sir Anthony

- Verdadeiro
- Falso

7 - O sabor da nova campanha da Lipton é frutos vermelhos

- Verdadeiro
- Falso

8 - Avalie numa escala de 1- "Discordo totalmente" a 7- "Concordo totalmente", o seu nível de concordância com as seguintes afirmações:

	Discordo totalmente	Discordo	Discordo parcialmente	Não concordo nem discordo	Concordo parcialmente	Concordo	Concordo totalmente
A Lipton está empenhada na promoção da tradição da sua marca	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A Lipton está a publicitar a tradição da sua marca	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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9 - Segundo os critérios abaixo, avalie a percepção que tem em relação à mensagem da campanha. O mensagem da campanha é:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Não apelativa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Apelativa
Má	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Boa
Desagradável	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Agradável
Desfavorável	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Favorável
Difícil de gostar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Fácil de gostar

10 - Avalie numa escala de 1- "Discordo totalmente" a 7- "Concordo totalmente", o seu nível de concordância com as seguintes afirmações:

	Discordo totalmente	Discordo	Discordo parcialmente	Nem concordo nem discordo	Concordo parcialmente	Concordo	Concordo totalmente
Eu consigo ver-me a defender a marca Lipton quando alguém fala mal dela	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eu consigo ver-me a tentar convencer outros a comprar a marca Lipton	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eu consigo ver-me a dizer algo favorável sobre a marca Lipton	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eu consigo ver-me a dizer que estou feliz com o desempenho da marca Lipton	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eu consigo ver-me a dizer que a marca Lipton é ótima	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eu consigo ver-me a detalhar os descontos e promoções da marca Lipton	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eu consigo ver-me a dar detalhes extras sobre a marca Lipton	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eu consigo ver-me a dar longas explicações sobre o porquê da Lipton ser melhor que outras marcas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11 - Avalie numa escala de 1- "Discordo totalmente" a 7- "Concordo totalmente", o seu nível de concordância com as seguintes afirmações:

	Discordo totalmente	Discordo	Discordo parcialmente	Nem concordo nem discordo	Concordo parcialmente	Concordo	Concordo totalmente
Faz sentido comprar a marca Lipton em vez de comprar outra marca, mesmo elas sendo iguais	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mesmo outra marca tendo as mesmas características da Lipton, eu prefiro comprar a Lipton	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Se existir outra marca tão boa como a Lipton, eu continuo a preferir comprar a Lipton	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Se outra marca não é diferente da Lipton de forma alguma, parece-me mais inteligente comprar a Lipton	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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12 - Segundo os critérios abaixo, avalie a percepção que tem entre a Lipton e a mensagem da campanha explicada pelo Diretor de Marketing. A relação é:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Nada consistente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Completamente consistente
Não complementar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Complementar
Não faz sentido	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Faz sentido

13 - Idade

- Menos de 18 anos
- 18-24 anos
- 25-34 anos
- 35-44 anos
- 45-54 anos
- 55-64 anos
- 65-74 anos
- Mais de 75 anos

14 - Género

- Masculino
- Feminino
- Outro

16 - Situação atual (ocupação)

- Estudante
- Estudante Trabalhador
- Empregado
- Desempregado
- Reformado

15 - Educação

- Educação Básica (até ao 9º ano)
- Secundário (12º ano)
- Licenciatura (ou equivalente)
- Pós-Graduação
- Mestrado
- Doutoramento

17 - Conhece a marca Lipton?

- Sim
- Não

18 - Costuma comprar a marca Lipton?

- Sim
- Não