Research Article | Araştırma Makalesi

Celebrity Endorsement Strategy Uses And Popular Culture: 'A Fidgety Coca-Cola' Ad
Star Stratejisi Kullanımları ve Popüler Kültür: 'Kıpır Kıpır Bi Coca-Cola' Reklamı

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Abstract

The use of celebrity endorsement strategy in ads brings attributes like admiration, advertising appeals awareness, favorable attitudes, famousness, memorability, popularity, attractiveness, likability, and sympathy. Furthermore, celebrity endorsement enables an increase in sales as well as market share. Popular culture, on the other hand, is a set of values and practices that are adapted by subcultures through globalization, media and consumption culture, which become widespread as a mechanism aiming to oppose the system while integrating with it. In this research 'A Fidgety Coca-Cola' advertisement, in which the global brand uses the celebrity endorsement strategy is analyzed using the descriptive content analysis method according to Hofstede's Cultural Onion Model and Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory. The research aims to find out the uses of celebrity endorsement strategy as well as the role of celebrity endorsement strategy in producing hybrid popular codes. The celebrity endorsement strategy uses in the ad is for the means of producing popular culture codes like following trends, being trendy, bringing trendiness to the product as well as embracing celebrity culture and consumption culture. The celebrity endorsement strategy is used in the ad to internalize globalized American cultural value dimensions through proposing trendy self-images and symbolic consumption.

Keywords: Advertising Research, Celebrity Endorsement Strategy, Media, Popular Culture, Symbolic Consumption.

Öz

Reklamlarda star stratejisi ürüne marka bilinirliği, takdir, olumlu tutum, ün, akılda kalıcılık, popülarite, çekicilik, beğenilirlik ve sempati gibi özellikler katmaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra star stratejisi aracılığıyla markaların satışlar ve pazar payında artış gözlenmektedir. Popüler kültür ise toplumun farklı kesimleri tarafından küreselleşme, medya ve tüketim kültürü aracılığıyla benimsenerek yayılan ve halkın sisteme bir yandan karşı çıkarken bir yandan onunla bütünleşmesini sağlayan değerler ve uygulamalardan oluşan bir alt kültürdür. Bu araştırmada star stratejisinin kullanıldığı hibrit 'Kıpır Kıpır Bi' Coca-Cola reklamı betimsel içerik analizi yöntemi aracılığıyla Hofstede'nin Kültürel Soğan Modeli ve Kültürel Değerler Kuramına göre analiz edilecektir. Araştırmada star stratejisinin kullanım alanları ve hibrit popüler kodlar üretmede star stratejisinin rolü incelenmiştir. Reklamda star stratejisi trendleri takip etmek, trend olmak, ürüne trend olan bir imaj katmak ve bunların yanı sıra star imajı ile tüketim kültürünü özümsetmek amacıyla kullanılmıştır. Star stratejisi reklamda trend olan benlik imajları ve sembolik tüketim aracılığıyla küresel Amerikan kültürel değer boyutlarını içselleştirmek amacını taşımaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Medya, Popüler Kültür, Reklam Araştırmaları, Sembolik Tüketim, Star Stratejisi.

Introduction

Celebrity endorser is as McCraken (1989, p. 310) explains, a person who is publicly recognized and prefers to use this recognition in the best interests of a consumer good through appearing in the advertisements with it. As competition increases among brands, marketers have developed more creative advertising strategies in order to draw the attention of the consumers, create interest, arouse desire and direct the consumers towards purchasing behavior (Udo & Nwulu, 2015). Throughout the developments in mass communication technologies, using celebrity endorsement strategy in ads has been an effective method that is often benefited in branding efforts in order to create brand awareness, recognition and brand image as well as its use in integrated marketing communications.

With its wide opportunities, media offers products that can be simply perceived and understood. Celebrities are reproduced as part of the products through this audiovisual production process. Popular celebrities, who are enjoyed and consumed by a wide section of the society are indeed a part of popular culture. A celebrity is indeed a product, that can be uploaded with a content and can be quickly adopted, glorified and get forgotten (Yüksel, 2001, p. 31).

Media creates new celebrities through the fame process, by reliance on mediated promotion, publicity and advertising in order to initiate their status and maintain it (Penfold-Mounce, 2009, p. 13). Celebrity culture in contemporary society, is recognized as a symptom of cultural change in popular culture (Turner, as cited in Penfold-Mounce, 2009, p. 13). Although these cultural changes relating to celebrity are based on its defining characteristic of being indeed a both transient and superficial media product to a great extent (Giles, 2000, p. 3) celebrity culture is an important part of advertising and popular culture.

On the other hand, ads carry traces of the culture in which they take place, because advertisers hope that the decoding of the ad by the audience will take place according to their wishes. In this direction, advertisers take the cultural codes that everyone is familiar with in social life and creates a hybrid meaning by constructing it for its own purposes. Therefore, the cultural models and references that advertising transforms are often the sum of materials from popular culture (Ş. Yavuz, 2006).

The aims of this study are to find out the uses of celebrity endorsement strategy in glolocal advertising as well as the role of celebrity endorsement strategy in producing hybrid popular culture codes. Therefore, a literature review is made regarding the uses of celebrity endorsement strategy in the ads and the impact of media and advertising on popular culture is covered in an attempt to describe the role of tastemakers. Furthermore, the cultural codes in Turkish society are explored along with a content analysis making use of Hofstede's Cultural Onion Model and Cultural Dimensions Theory in an attempt to define the produced hybrid popular culture codes and their relationship to celebrity endorsement strategy in the ad of 'A Fidgety Coca-Cola' of the global company.

Celebrity Star Image Concept and the Uses of Celebrity Endorsement Strategy in Ads

The celebrity emerges as an object produced in line with the needs and expectations of the society and is consumed by the individuals, who constitute the society. The fields where the celebrity has the most presence are cinema, television and music. The celebrity is a social phenomenon. Due to this structure that meets certain needs of society, it is

impossible to think of society independently of the celebrity and the celebrity from the society. With the mass media that began to diversify with the influence of modernization, more and more mentioned and admired celebrities have been placed on the agenda. As all over the world, the Turkish society, which is experiencing the process of modernization, has also starred and glorified some names (Baygal, 2016, pp. 145–146).

According to Richard Schickel the history of celebrity in Western culture is parallel to the history of communication technologies. As new communication vehicles develop and traditional media invents new ways to reach wider target audiences in faster ways, the demand for information and its availability has skyrocketed. However, as a result of the information explosion more and more customers need simplification and relying on symbols that stand for an ideal, a longing and personification of the issues. These symbols are created for the needs and desires of the modern societies and in order to reach our selective perception, they guide us in giving meanings to the competing stimuli in our social world. Celebrity image, is therefore an effective ideological symbol in constructing meanings in the western capitalist system (as cited in Meyers, 2009, p. 890).

Today, being a well-known person, in other words, being famous or a celebrity, image creation and fame are achieved as a result of marketing and marketing communication studies. In order to make the brand a pioneering brand through the celebrity endorsement strategy, the product is identified with a person or personality who is considered a celebrity. This strategy ensures that the brand gains fame and gets prominent in a short time. In this process, celebrity star image is used not only by using celebrity endorsements in ads, but also as a branding strategy (Kocabaş & Elden, 1997, p. 129).

Celebrity endorsement used ads stand out from the surrounding clutter while improving their communication ability due to the high profile (as cited in Erdogan vd., 2001). If the celebrity chosen is congruent with the product, using celebrity endorsement strategy brings brand personality, credibility, more favorable attitudes towards the ad and the product, a high brand awareness, memorability, positioning and repositioning means, admiration, popularity, attractiveness, likability, sympathy, certain advertising appeals depending on the messages given in the ad like sexuality and humor, brand attitude, buying intentions and an increase in market share (Ateke vd., 2015; Gaied, 2017; Krom, 2022; Muda et. al., 2014; Okonkwo, 2007; Roy & Moorthi, 2009; Silvera & Austad, 2004; Udo & Nwulu, 2015). Furthermore, celebrity attachment has a positive impact on brand attachment and brand loyalty (Özer et al., 2022).

On the other hand, there are also some risks associated with celebrity endorsement strategy and the celebrities should be selected according to a combination of attributes such as trustworthiness, expertise, familiarity, similarity, likability and a congruence in between the celebrity and the given message (Udo & Nwulu, 2015). While there are potential advantages of celebrity endorsement strategy like increased attention, image polishing, brand introduction, brand repositioning, and underpinning global campaigns, potential hazards include overshadowing the brand, public controversy, image change and overexposure, image change and loss of public recognition as well as its expensiveness. However, these potential hazards can be avoided through pre-testing and careful planning, buying insurances and placing preventive clauses in contracts, explaining the celebrity's role and placing restrictive clauses in contracts for other endorsements, clarifying the life-stage of the brand, and selecting celebrities who are appropriate for the target audience instead of selecting them according to their popularity (Erdoğan, 1999).

The celebrity's effectiveness is partly based on the meanings he or she brings to the witnessing process. The meanings the celebrity star image comprises are numerous and various. Revealing status, class, gender, age and personality and lifestyle types; providing a wide range of meanings (McCraken, 1989, p. 312) in order to create a brand image, are among the uses of celebrity endorsement strategy in marketing. Furthermore, marketers use celebrity endorsement strategy to add new dimensions to the brand image (Erdogan et al., 2001).

Popular Culture Concept

The term popular has two basic definitions as it is used today. The first meaning of popular is "widely listened, read, bought, consumed and enjoyed to the full." According to Stuart Hall this first common-sense meaning is the 'market' or commercial definition of the terms and is associated with the manipulation and debasement of culture of the people. The second definition of the term popular, on the other hand is defined by Hall as a 'descriptive' one. This second definition is closer to an anthropological definition: the cultures, the customs and folkways of the people, which defines their distinctive way of life (Hall, 2002a, pp. 186–188).

In his *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction* book Storey (1994) lists six different definitions of popular culture. The first definition is Bennett's definition of popular culture: "popular culture is simply culture that is widely favored or well-liked by many people (as cited in Storey, 1994, p. 5)."

However, Storey (1994, p. 5) notes that this definition is rather quantitative than qualitative.

In his second suggestion supported by the claims that popular culture is mass-produced commercial culture, and that high-brow culture results from the individual acts of creation, Storey (1994, p. 6) defines popular culture as the culture what is remnant after what we define as high culture. However, he also indicates that this definition rather sees popular culture as an inferior culture.

Based on views like Fiske's, Frith's and theoreticians of Frankfurt School, Storey's (1994, p. 8) third definition of popular culture is "mass culture."

According to Fiske (2012, p. 17), popular culture defines the culture of the powerless and subordinate. For this reason, we can always find the traces of the powers of domination and subordination as well as the signs of power relations in it. These power relations exist in the center of our social system and therefore are central to our social experience. On the other hand, popular culture is also resistant of these forces. Therefore, we can regard to it as a self-contradictory culture.

Furthermore, Fiske gives the branded and torn jeans example to popular culture: wearing torn jeans is a typical example of the self-contradictoriness in popular culture; opposing the system while integrating with it through consumption (Fiske, 2012, p. 15). Therefore, Fiske's argument is what people make from the products of the culture industries; that is taking the repertoire of mass culture and actively making something from it through consumption and altering the consumed product (Storey, 1994, pp. 11–12).

According to Storey (Bennett, as cited in Storey, 1994, p. 9) the fourth definition defines popular culture as a culture that originates from 'the people'. This definition indicates the authentic culture of the people and sees popular culture as folk culture. This

definition is "often equated with a highly romanticized concept of working-class culture construed as the major source of symbolic protest within contemporary capitalism (Storey, 1994, p. 9)."

Two problems exist regarding this definition: First is the question of qualification for inclusion of the category of 'the people' and second is that the 'commercial' nature of the resources that constitute the popular culture is disregarded since the raw materials of the popular culture are commercially provided (Storey, 1994, p. 9) .

According to Storey (1994, p. 10) the fifth definition of popular cultural is based on hegemony theory and cultural theorists, who have taken Gramsci's political concept (Bottomore, 1988, p. 201) in order to explain the nature and politics of popular culture. These cultural theorists including Stuart Hall and Paddy Whannel see popular culture as a site of struggle in between the forces of incorporation who favor the interests of dominant groups and the resisting subordinate groups. In this means popular culture is not imposed from above or emerged from below, but it emerges as the oppositional culture of the people spontaneously as a terrain which is marked by incorporation and resistance in between the two of them.

According to Özkan (2006, p. 33), who defines popular culture parallel to this definition, popular culture is the culture that the dominant classes produce to maintain their status and re-formulate cultural values and traditions in line with dominant ideologies and present them to individuals, who are dependent on popular culture consumption. Popular culture is not a concept produced by the upper social classes, but rather a concept that is produced from the bottom up. The culture that the subclasses produce directly is manipulated by dominant ideologies and the opposing elements in the culture of subgroups are absorbed and passivated. In this respect, the concept of popular culture is a subculture (Özkan, 2006, p. 33).

Similarly, Oskay (1988, p. 156) sees popular culture as a mechanism that tightly connects people to the system, while he also states that it functions as a rebellion of the people against the system.

The final and sixth definition of popular culture of Storey (1994, pp. 12-211) depends on the contemporary views and the debates on postmodernism. Storey no longer sees a distinction between high and popular culture and defines this cultural change as the "the postmodern blurring of the distinction between 'authentic' and 'commercial' culture (Storey, 1994, p.12)."

According to Schudson (1987, pp. 51-52) folk culture has been distinguished for its authenticity and mass culture has been decried for its commercial origins, ideological aims or its lack of aesthetics until recently. However, today's authentic folk traditions often depend on metropolitan or elite roots, whereas mass culture is often incorporated into ordinary people's everyday lives authentically.

Postmodernism has had an important impact on the theoretical and cultural basis of the studies in the field of popular culture. For instance, Levine (as cited in Grindstaff, 2008, p. 208) defines popular culture as the folklore of the industrial society.

After looking at all these different definitions of popular culture existing, since the values and practices adopted by subcultures do not belong to Anatolian culture and rather under the impact of globalization, media and American culture we can define popular culture as

a set of values and practices adapted by subcultures through media, globalization and consumption culture, which act by means of a mechanism that opposes the system while integrating with it and become widespread in the society later on. This new definition is given in order to give a bring an understanding to popular culture and to be used for the rest of the study.

Media, Advertising and Popular Culture

A close relationship exists between advertising and culture, both of which cannot be easily separated. While culture provides sources of content for the ad, from the other side of the coin, advertising also has an impact on culture. Both advertising and culture interact with each other (Sharma, 2017, p. 341).

In the 1880s, before George Eastman developed the Kodak camera, photography was mostly practiced by professionals. Although Kodak was relatively cheap and easy to use, most Americans had not felt a need for a camera or a had seen a sense in documenting their lives visually. After the ad campaigns Kodak reached a worldwide fame, because he had realized that what he actually had to sell was photography. Let's take the contemporary example of the Apple Inc. company which is a master of this advertising technique. Just by leaking enough information about a product to raise curiosity, the technology company guarantees that people excitedly wait for an official release (McFadden, 2016, p. 37).

Tastemakers -like celebrity endorsers- keep a culture vital by introducing the people to new ideas, music, programs or products. In the traditional media (McFadden, 2016, p. 37) model, prominent companies set aside large advertising budgets, in order to promote their most promising products while tastemakers buzz about 'the next big thing' (McFadden, 2016, pp. 37–38).

Advertising and popular culture flows in two directions. Advertising, typically underlines the symbolic material of popular culture and throughout this attempt new symbols with enlivened meanings are born. Advertising reconditions public symbols and wait for consumers to attain agreeable meanings to this to this new creation. Although very few of these contrived symbols are actually getting approved by the public, most of them die within this commercial atmosphere. However, some of these symbols gain attention and get endorsed forming the popular culture. Popular culture is expressive content which is produced and consumed and this absorption by the individual is voluntarily (Fowles, 1996, pp. 1–10).

Culture industries attain a flow of information through ratings and sales figures that have an influence on the offerings of the ads. For instance, the Energizer Bunny symbol has become a popular icon after the visit of some school children to the white house led by President George Bush in 1992. After the visit, a reporter questioned the children about their guided visit of the interior and when the 11 years-old Lonnie Thomas replied, "He kept going and going and going; just like an Energizer Bunny," about his experience with the hyperactive president. This characterization reached millions of newspaper readers. In this way the Eveready Battery Company managed to alter the vocabulary of symbols in a major way. In the end 'the Energizer Bunny' became a viable symbol in both commerce and society to a great extent. Symbols are means by which meanings are created. Symbols have possible meanings: They not only signify a product, but they also stand metaphorically as a means for behavior. Mass popular culture is fostered by an active and tastes defining mass media, which inspires the adoption of certain trends. Anything that

exists in the culture, or in other words, in the shared meanings and symbols world, is a means to establish the "ins" and "outs" of a society (Fowles, 1996, p. 4).

A symbol is appropriate -or in other words a product will be used and enjoyed- when it combines with, overlaps with, adds to, or reinforces the way the consumer thinks about him/herself. This situation can be explained by basic human nature. In the broadest sense, each person seeks to develop their own sense of self and behaves in ways that are consistent with their image of the person they are or want to be (Levy, 1959).

Contemporary advertising images in the media promote contemporary consumer culture as well as furthering contemporary capitalism to a greater extent. They also play a vital role in cultural and value change at both the superficial, product selling and structural levels, causing shifts in cultural values such as an increased emphasis on personal satisfaction through consumption, acceptance of the growing use of sexuality to sell products, an obsession with youth, looks and body image, and an overwhelming obsession with modernity and the latest technology (Ciochetto, 2011).

Cultural Codes

The 'cultural turn' in the social sciences and humanities and especially in cultural studies has been the emphasis on the importance of meaning (Hall, 1997, p. 2). Codes are a system of words, symbols or behaviors that signify certain meanings which are used to convey messages. These codes are learned by all members of a society within a certain culture. Accordingly, cultural codes can be explained as symbols and systems of meanings that are relevant to the members of a particular culture (Hyatt & Simons, 1999). As Berger (2014, p. 30) puts it out codes are "secret structures" in the minds of individuals that have an effect on how they interpret the signs and symbols that exist in media and the way they live. From this point of view cultures can be viewed as codification systems that have a significant role in the lives of people often on a subconscious level. In order to be socialized and to become a member of a culture, children need to be taught a number of specific codes such as social class, geographic location, ethnic group and so forth.

Certain signs represent certain concepts in various languages. As children learn the language, they not only become biological individuals, but also cultural subjects. This information is not imprinted genetically, but it is learned and gradually they grow up to become members of their culture. Unconsciously children internalize these codes that enable them to express and to interpret certain ideas through their systems of representation such as writing, speech, gestures and visualization (Hall, 1997, p. 8). These cultural codes are the means to constitute the social order and find their way in texts, such as poems, novels, animations and films (Berger, 2014, p. 16) As these texts gets internationalized, cross-cultural communication takes place. In this form of communication one culture is the sender source culture whereas the other side is the target culture and optionally a mediator exists somewhere in between, which is usually the target side. When this communication occurs via electronic means this bilateral model is interchanged with one in which a group of specialists generate the texts and then communicate to a wide range of receivers from other cultures (Pym, 2004). By including diversity in its content, media has the potential to develop the children's cross-cultural communication skills in a multicultural world, where values vary from one culture to another. Social psychologist Geert Hofstede (2011, p. 8) has identified six different value dimensions among different nations and explained these as individualism versus collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity versus femininity,

indulgence versus restraint, and long term versus short term orientation. Power distance dimension refers to the distribution of power among the members of society. In individualist countries like Western societies, straightforwardness, taking the initiative and independence is highly valued, whereas in collectivist Asian societies the emphasis is placed on the group and society and the decisions are made together accordingly. Traditionally, Western societies avoid uncertain situations and are control-oriented, while Eastern societies can be tolerant for uncertain life conditions for long periods. In short term- oriented cultures like the West, plans are made for short periods and status is valued. In long term-oriented cultures like China, on the other hand, life-long plans can be made. Furthermore, wisdom and patience are valued. Masculine cultures are cultures which value authoritarianism and are ego-centered with a traditional family structure whereas feminine cultures are more horizontal in structure in terms of relationships having a flexible family structure. Finally indulgence oriented countries like the west emphasize realizing their desires and needs, whereas restraint-oriented countries like the Eastern society remit their desires and needs and focus more on the social norms. These value dimensions differ from culture to culture, however in order to develop a mutual understanding for different societies and develop the necessary social skills, media can be used as a means to enrich cultural sources.

In comparison to the U.S. we can state the value dimensions profile of Türkiyeas follows:

Table 1. Country Comparison

Value Dimensions of Türkiye	Value Dimensions of the US
High Power Distance (66)	Low Power Distance (40)
Collectivist (37)	Individualist (91)
Feminine (45)	Masculine (62)
High Uncertainty Avoidance (85)	Low Uncertainty Avoidance (46)
Long Term Oriented (46)	Short Term Oriented (26)
Restraint Oriented (49)	Indulgence Oriented (68)

Source: (Hofstede Insights, 2023).

The Analysis of Coca-Cola's 'A Fidgety Coca-Cola' Ad

The Aim and Significance of the Research

This research aims to identify the popular culture codes in glolocal ads in which celebrity endorsement strategy is used and their relationship to celebrity endorsement. The case in this research is 'A Fidgety Coca-Cola' ad (Megastar Tarkan Fan, 2023) that features the world widely popular Turkish singer Tarkan. According to researches, ads that take advantage of the celebrity status draw more attention in comparison to brands that do not take advantage of celebrities and are found more credible (Muda et al., 2014; Sternthal B, 1978). Furthermore, there is a close relationship in between celebrity cult and popular culture and it is difficult to imagine one without the other. An important part of popular culture rest on the popularity and celebrity status of individuals. As soon as an individual gains a celebrity status, celebrity fans start following their performances benefitting the products advertised in different TV programs (Hollander, 2010). In order to enter international markets global brands often make use of local cultural codes and researches has been made in the field about these attempts of global brands. However, these researches do not focus on popular culture, but culture, which is more deep-rooted and harder to change (Ozel & Karakas, 2022; Yenici, 2019).The main problem of
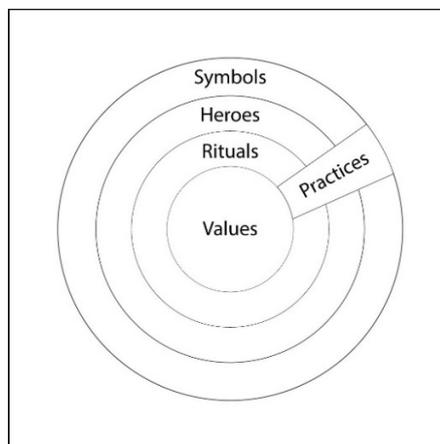
this research is how do global brands use celebrity endorsement strategy in glolocal ads producing hybrid popular culture codes.

Universe, Sampling and Limitations of the Research

The universe of the research is glolocal ads of brands in which celebrity endorsement strategy is used. For the research the ad of Coca-Cola is chosen as sample because it is widely consumed in Türkiye among different generations. Although Coca-Cola is an entirely foreign brand, in order to increase sales and increase brand awareness, the company has been successful in entering each international market either through its long-lasting sponsorships, social projects and by identifying itself with the local cultural elements specific to each county including Türkiye (A. Yavuz, 2020, p. 41). The sampling of the research is the global Coca-Cola brand's one glolocal ad in which celebrity endorsement strategy is used. The limitation of the research is the Coca-Cola's celebrity strategy used TV ads in the last five years.

Methodology of the Research

In this research, the descriptive content analysis method is used. Trough focusing on the content and themes underneath as well as meanings observed in the text, qualitative methods of content analysis aim to seek and study sense-making patterns and the meanings that are created in the given audiovisual or written content. There are three types of qualitative content analysis: Descriptive, explanatory, and exploratory (Preiser et. al., 2022). Among these methods, descriptive content analysis is a structural research technique that is used in social sciences in order to draw out inferences either from transcripts/records that are received from a research (Olgun, 2008). The case of the research is determined with the purposive sampling method. The data collecting method of this research is archive records, which include YouTube records of ads. Furthermore, according to Hofstede's Cultural Onion model certain heroes have impact on different cultures and in this case, it is assumed that Tarkan as a globally popular celebrity, has had an impact on shaping the popular culture. The case is analyzed in the light of Cultural Onion Model of Hofstede (G. Hofstede et. al., 1990) as well as Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory (G. Hofstede et al., 2010) In the Cultural Onion Model, the phenomenon of culture is covered in four different dimensions at different depths. While values are located at the deepest level, rituals are located in the next upper layer and heroes and symbols in the next layers. These phenomena are at different levels and it is relatively easier for these phenomena to change existing in the upper levels in comparison to the lower layers (G. Hofstede et. al., 1990).

Figure 1. *The Cultural Onion Model*
Source: (G. Hofstede et al., 1990).

Hofstede defines values as general tendencies through which certain states of affairs are preferred over others. These values are feelings that are perceived as a dialectical phenomenon that have two extreme sides such as evil vs. good; dirty vs. clean; dangerous vs. safe; and etc. (G. Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 9). On the other hand, according to Schwartz and Bilsky (as cited in Schwartz, 1992, p. 4) values are relatively important beliefs or concepts that are related to desirable outcomes or behaviors for certain situations guiding the evaluation of events and behavior.

Furthermore, rituals are collective activities that are unnecessary for desired outcomes, but part of a culture and therefore considered socially essential. Rituals are therefore continued for their own sake (G. Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 9).

Heroes, on the other hand, might be dead or alive and real or imaginary persons, whose characteristics are highly prized in a culture and who therefore serve as role models for behavior (G. Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 8).

Finally, symbols are comprised of words, gestures, pictures or objects holding a specific meaning that are only recognized by people who share the same culture. Examples of symbols include words and jargon in a specific language, as well as dresses, hairstyles, status symbols and flags. As new symbols develop, old ones tend to disappear. Symbols represent the most superficial layer (G. Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 7).

According to Hofstede, (G. Hofstede et al., 2010, pp. 19-20) while culture change is more easy for the practices like rituals, heroes and symbols that are visible part of the cultures, values are acquired in childhood and they are harder to change.
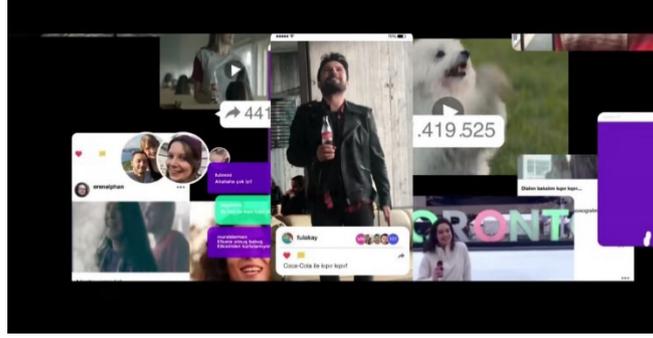
The main research questions of the study are as follows:

1) How has celebrity endorsement strategy been used in the ad?
2) What are the messages given in the ad regarding popular culture?
3) What are the local and hybrid popular culture codes in the ads?
4) What is the relationship in between celebrity endorsement and the produced popular culture codes in the ad?

Findings

The Popular Culture Values in the Ad

In the ad we see that the fans of Tarkan instantly start following the posts of Tarkan's fans and immediately these posts become a world-wide trend. We see that social media, celebrities and being trendy are a part of popular culture values. Furthermore, the popularization of Coca-Cola through a Turkish celebrity, signals the internalization of consumption through hedonism. The celebrity endorsement strategy is used in the ad in order for the production of popular culture codes like celebrity culture, trendiness, popularity of the brand and consumption culture. The ad gives the message that consumption is a global value and that through hybrid means like following the trends, consumption, it can be internalized.

Figure 2. *Popular Culture Values*
Source: (Megastar Tarkan Fan, 2023).

The Popular Culture Rituals in the Ad

The most basic ritual in the ad is imitating the celebrities, whose behavior become a trend. In the ad we see that after seeing the social media posts, the fans of Tarkan immediately start following him and imitating his dance. Therefore, we can state that following the trends that the celebrities set is a part of popular culture. Celebrating popular culture items like Coca-Cola as we see are also a part of popular culture rituals in the ad. Consumption and symbolic consumption are also among the rituals which can be noticed. Another ritual apparent in the ad is using social media. Average amount of time spent in social media in Türkiye is 2 hours 57 minutes, which is remarkably high. There are 68.9 million in Türkiye using social media, which totals 80,8 percent of the total population (We are social, 2023). The ad gives the message that social media use, following the trends and embracing celebrity culture should become hybrid rituals. The celebrity endorsement strategy is used in the ad to promote hybrid rituals like pleasure seek, embracing celebrity culture and social media trends.

Figure 3. *Popular Culture Rituals*
Source: (Megastar Tarkan Fan, 2023).

The Popular Culture Heroes in the Ad

The popular culture hero in the ad, is undoubtedly Tarkan, who is a world-wide famous singer from Türkiye. Everything that Tarkan does or says becomes news and almost a new trend and this fact proves the power of popular culture in Türkiye. His recent song "Geççek (It'll pass)" has immediately become popular in the country and there has been discussions and speculations about what hidden message he gives with his song. For instance, some argue that he means COVID-19 period will pass, some argue that he gives a political message and some argue that the economic crises will pass. Therefore, it can also be inferred from the ad that through celebrity endorsement strategy, the brand gains a brand personality and images like likeability, popularity, charm, attractiveness and trendiness are transferred to the product.

Figure 4. *Popular Culture Heroes*
Source: (Megastar Tarkan Fan, 2023).

The Popular Culture Symbols in the Ad

The most obvious popular culture symbol in the ad is the Coca-Cola brand and the Coca-Cola bottle. Coca-Cola has long been a trend in the world as one of the most valuable brands and the internalization of this symbol has been through the adaptation of American consumer values as an impact of globalization. For instance, even in many Hollywood films like "Gods, must be crazy" film series we see how Coca-Cola bottle is part of our lives. Tarkan is also a symbol in the ad of popular culture and this fact emphasizes the power of celebrity culture and popular culture in Türkiye. The other popular culture symbols in the ad are social media icons. Social media icons have long been in our lives and people in Türkiye use social media on a daily basis. Social media users in Türkiye accumulate %70.8 of the total population and they use the social media applications such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and Twitter (We are social, 2023) daily to address their reactions to popular social media posts, which is a part of popular culture. The ad gives the message that popular culture symbols like celebrities, social media culture, consumption, Coca-Cola bottle, icons and trendiness are a means to embrace popular culture. Also, through the celebrity endorsement strategy use, the brand gains a popular and trendy status.

Figure 5. *Popular Culture Symbols*
Source: (Megastar Tarkan Fan, 2023)

The Analysis of the Ad in the Context of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory

Power Distance: According to Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory, Türkiye is a high power distance prevalent country and power is not equally distributed among members of the society. We see this fact through the sudden meeting of the back stage working girl carrying two bottles of Coca-Cola and Tarkan as the girl doesn't know what to do when she all of a sudden finds herself on the stage in front of thousands of Tarkan fans. However, as Tarkan takes one of the Coca-Cola bottles and drinks it, this power distance is overcome as the drink symbolizes a means to overcome the power distance as a hybrid popular culture code. We also see this overcoming of high-power distance, when the

women at the airport offers a bottle of Coca-Cola to Tarkan as he wakes up. Coca-Cola in the ad is a symbol of overcoming social distances and embracing celebrity culture.

Figure 6. *Power Distance*
Source: (Megastar Tarkan Fan, 2023).

Individualism-Collectivism: According to Triandis (as cited in Samovar vd., 1998, p. 68) collectivism refers to both the social norms defined by the in-group rather than behavior to get pleasure as well as great readiness to co-operate with in-group members. On the other hand, the ad carries the idea of enjoying indulgences as stated with the slogan of 'Enjoy its Taste.' Local soft drinks in Turkish culture are ayran, tea and Turkish coffee, and drinking Coca-Cola or the idea of getting pleasure is rather an individualistic social norm. However, the ad places emphasis on following the trend of drinking Coca-Cola and dancing as a social norm and introduces the hybrid popular culture code of receiving pleasure in drinking Coca-Cola and consumption of it through celebrity endorsement strategy.

Figure 7. *Individualism-Collectivism*
Source: (Megastar Tarkan Fan, 2023).

Femininity: In feminine cultures like Türkiye caring and nurturing behaviors are emphasized. Furthermore, gender roles are more fluid and sexual equality is promoted (Samovar vd., 1998, p. 72) In the ad, the leading roles other than the male celebrity Tarkan are female characters like the woman offering Coca-Cola to Tarkan at the airport, the woman recording Tarkan, the female student starting to dance after seeing the social media post and the woman sharing the stage with Tarkan. Women are portrayed as social media influencers or in other words leading characters who initiate social media trends, proposing gender equality local cultural code. However, as it is evident the main character is Tarkan, a male figure who symbolizes the masculine hybrid cultural code.

Figure 8. *Femininity-Masculinity*

Source: (Megastar Tarkan Fan, 2023).

Uncertainty: In comparison to high uncertainty-oriented cultures like Türkiye, low uncertainty-oriented cultures like the U.S. are more tolerant for uncertainty. These cultures are not threatened by unusual people or ideas; therefore, they tolerate the unusual. They prize taking the initiative, avoid hierarchy, are more flexible and do not need written rules or depending on commonsense (Samovar vd., 1998, p. 69) In the ad, the back stage staff woman's taking stage with Tarkan as she gets elevated and not knowing what to do is an uncertain situation. However, Tarkan takes one of the two Coca-Cola bottles in her hand and starts drinking and dancing in order to 'Enjoy it's Taste' as emphasized with the slogan. Through this means of celebrity endorsement she also starts drinking the other drink and begins dancing, as the uncertain situation culminates. The hybrid popular culture code in the ad is overcoming uncertain situations through celebrity endorsement, consumption of Coca-Cola and following social trends.

Figure 9. *Uncertainty*

Source: (Megastar Tarkan Fan, 2023).

Time Orientation: Since Turkish culture is a long-term-oriented country, in the long run the heroes of the culture are not pop stars, but national heroes like Atatürk, innate folk heroes like Yunus Emre, and Köroğlu, as well as wise authorities like Mevlana. Tarkan, on the other hand, is a popular celebrity, but not a real national or folk culture hero nor a wise authority. The Coca-Cola ad uses celebrity endorsement strategy as a means to gain popularity in a short time via celebrities, consumption and following social trends as a hybrid popular culture code.

Restraint-Indulgence Orientation: As Tarkan starts to 'enjoy the drink' and dancing, the fans start imitating his behavior. Although Türkiye is a restraint-oriented country, the hybrid popular culture code in the ad is indulgence orientation through consumption and celebrity endorsement.

Figure 10. *Restraint-Indulgence*
Source: (Megastar Tarkan Fan, 2023)

Results and Evaluation

As a social phenomenon, celebrity culture is a part of popular culture and the celebrity endorsement strategy is widely used in advertising. Through the use of this strategy the brands gain brand awareness, credibility, positive attitudes, memorability, attractiveness, popularity and images like attractiveness, charm, likability and trendiness are transferred to the product. While brand personalities attain these images, the brands can even gain world-wide recognition in a short period.

Through the use of celebrity endorsement strategy, the attractiveness and the credibility of the celebrity is transferred to the product and gets consumed by the audience along with the symbolic meanings created. These symbolic meanings carry images that the consumers want to internalize. In other words, through the ads, the consumers can consume the brand and the transferred celebrity images that come along with easily.

On the other hand, popular culture is a site of struggle, which aims to oppose the system while integrating with it as the set of values and practices it offers get adapted by subcultures are through globalization, media and consumption culture. In the end resistant forces of expression and behavior are due to reciprocal perception as well as the object of practical negotiation. Cultural forms are not indifferent to power structures on their own, independent of any context. We can see an endless cycle of rebellious disruption, commercialization, reactions as well as the transformation of the temporarily controversial to a different aesthetic formation on the market, which is the standard model in popular culture research (Maase, 2017). Popular culture is the culture of the subcultures; however, we live in the age of consumption. Therefore, the symbols surrounding us in media are the ins and outs of the consumption society in our 'global village'. The subcultures do not know the means to produce, therefore they consume the images and hybrid popular culture codes in the media and ads producing altered self-images.

Along with the developments in technology and globalization, the level of interaction among cultures is very high and the distances are overcome. As a result of this social communication, the exchange of values, opinions and cultures has increased to a great extent. While media, globalization and social change have an impact on this accelerated flow of information and cultural transactions, values and believes in cultures go through assimilation which mostly have an impact on young people since especially the young people frequently accept new cultural identities though popular culture (Singh, 2022). Still, according to Berube, popular culture is important for cultural studies since it creates a social subjectivity ground while Frow carries it to the extreme analyzing culture in advanced capitalist societies stating that even in an inverted culture we can no longer

talk about a stable hierarchy of value such as 'high' to 'low' culture (as cited in Gregorio-Godeo & Ramon Torrijos, 2017).

In 'A Fidgety Coca-Cola' ad we see that Coca-Cola also associates itself with popular culture concept through celebrity image and positions itself as a trendsetter popular brand in Türkiye and globally. Coca-Cola is also a symbol of consumption culture and attains mass consumption through advertising, media, globalization and popular culture. The ad comprises popular culture values like following celebrity culture and social media trends as well as getting pleasure through consumption. The popular culture rituals as the model puts forward are seeking for pleasure, imitating celebrities, following social media trends and celebrating celebrity culture. The mass consumption of Coca-Cola as a popular culture item also indicates that consumption and symbolic consumption are among popular culture rituals. The popular culture hero in the ad is Tarkan, who has gained a world-wide and well appreciated world-wide recognition. Through celebrity endorsement strategy use, Tarkan has also added brand personality to the brand and images like likeability, popularity, charm, attractiveness and trendiness of Tarkan are therefore transferred to the product. The popular culture symbols used in the ad are Coca-Cola as a mass consumed product, Tarkan as a celebrity with a world-wide fame as well as social media culture of icons which we often use to express ourselves and our reactions in social media. The celebrity endorsement strategy is used in the ad for the production of popular culture codes like trendiness, being trendy, bringing trendiness to the product, as well as embracing celebrity culture and consumption culture. The ad gives the message that consumption is a global value that can be internalized through embracing celebrity culture and following the social media and consumption trends. The local popular culture codes in the ad are gender equity, femininity as well as restraint-orientation. The celebrity endorsement strategy is used in the ad to produce hybrid popular codes like low power distance, low uncertainty avoidance, indulgence orientation, individualism and masculinity-since the celebrity is a male character-, which shows us that the values promoted in the ad are all globalized American cultural values. Therefore, we can state that celebrity endorsement strategy is used in the ad to internalize American cultural values through proposing trendy self-images to be consumed together with the product along with hedonism and symbolic consumption. For future research the hybrid ads of other global brands can be analyzed using different methods.

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Star Stratejisi Kullanımları Ve Popüler Kültür: 'Kıpır Kıpır Bi Coca-Cola' Reklamı

İpek KROM (Asst. Prof. Dr.)

Genişletilmiş Özet

Ünlü tanıklığı toplum tarafından tanınmış kişilerin ve tanınmışlıklarından ürün ve hizmetleri reklamlar aracılığıyla tanıtmak için kullanmayı ifade eder (McCraken, 1989, s. 310) Ünlü tanıklığı markalamada ve bütünleşik pazarlama iletişimde kullanılan etkili bir yöntemdir. Bu strateji yaygın olarak marka farkındalığı, marka bilinirliği ve marka imajı oluşturmak için kullanılmaktadır. Star tanıklığı stratejisi konumlandırma ve yeniden konumlandırma amaçlarıyla kullanılabildiği gibi reklamlara yönelik olarak beğeni, çekicilik, olumlu marka tutumları, sevilebilirlik, popülerlik, sempati, cinsel çekicilik ve mizah gibi reklam çekicilikleri gibi katkıları vardır. Bu strateji satın alma niyeti oluşturmak ve pazar payında artış sağlamak konusunda etkilidir (Ateke vd., 2015; Gaied, 2017; Krom, 2022; Muda vd., 2014; Okonkwo, 2007; Roy & Moorthi, 2009). Bunların yanı sıra ünlü kullanımının marka bağlılığı ve marka sadakati üzerinde olumlu bir etkisi vardır (Özer vd., 2022). Ünlü imajı ve ünlüler ile ilgili kurulan sembolik bağlantılar reklamlar aracılığıyla ürüne aktarılır. Ünlü tanıklığı aracılığıyla bu sembolik imajlar ürüne aktarıldığında, markalar kısa bir sürede dünya çapında bir üne kavuşabilmektedir. Bu strateji aracılığıyla markalar satışlarında artış sağlar, pazar payını arttırır ve güç kazanır. Bu stratejinin kullanımı ile ilgili bazı riskler de olabildiği için, tanıklığına başvurulan ünlülerin saygınlık, güvenilirlik ve sevilebilirlik gibi nitelikleri de taşımaları gerekir. Reklam ve popüler kültür yarattıkları semboller açısından iç içe geçmiştir. Reklamcılık tipik olarak popüler kültürün sembolik doğasının altını çizer ve bu girişimler aracılığıyla yeni semboller ortaya çıkar. Ticarileşme sürecinde bu sembollerin çoğu yok olmasına rağmen, bunların bazıları tanınarak toplum tarafından kabul görer ve popüler kültürü oluşturur (Fowles, 1996, ss. 1-10). Medya hem pazarlama gibi yüzeysel düzeylerde hem de tüketim, cinsellik ve yüzeysel imajlar, modernite ile son teknolojilere olan takıntı gibi kültürel değerlere aşırı vurgu yapan yapısal düzeylerde etkili olan çağdaş reklam görselleri sunmaktadır. Bu çağdaş reklam görselleri kültür ve değer değişimlerinde hayati bir rol oynnamakta ve kapitalist sistemimiz içerisinde tüketim kültürünü teşvik etmektedir (Ciochetto, 2011). Pek çok kuramcı popüler kültür üzerine araştırmalar yapmış ve popüler kültüre yönelik olarak "pek çok kişi tarafından sevilen kültür", "kitle kültürü", "alt-kültür grupları ve baskın gruplar gibi farklı direniş grupları arasındaki mücadele alanından oluşan bir direniş kültürü" benzeri farklı tanımlar yapmışlardır (aktaran Storey, 1994). Bu farklı tanımlara bakıldığında popüler kültürün, küreselleşme, medya ve tüketim kültürü ile bütünleşerek sisteme karşı çıkmayı amaçlayan bir mekanizma olarak yaygınlaşan ve alt kültürler tarafından benimsenen bir değerler ve uygulamalar bütünü olduğunu söyleyebiliriz. Ünlüler gibi trend öncüleri de trend belirlemede, mevcut trendleri değiştirmede ve tüketim mallarını popülerleştirmede önemli bir role sahiptir. Öte yandan ünlüler popüler kültürün bir parçası olmakla birlikte, kültürel değişimin belirtileri olarak kabul edilmektedir. Reklamcılar ve medya, ünlünün marka imajından ve toplumdaki kültürel kodlardan faydalanarak melez anlamlar yaratmaktadır. Bu araştırmada 'Kıpır kıpır bir Coca-Cola' reklamı betimsel içerik analizi yöntemi kullanılarak incelenmiştir. Analiz, Hofstede'nin Kültürel Soğan Modeli ve Kültürel Boyutlar teorisine dayanmaktadır ve star imajı stratejisinin kullanımlarını keşfetmeyi ve bu stratejinin hibrit popüler kodlar

üretirken nasıl kullanıldığını açıklamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu nedenle reklamda öncelikle kültürel boyutlar modeli kullanılarak popüler kültür değerleri, ritüelleri, kahramanları ve sembolleri incelenmiştir. Reklamda temsil edilen popüler kültür değerleri, sosyal medya, ünlü kültürü, trend olma ve hedonizm yoluyla tüketimin içselleştirilmesidir. Reklamda yer alan popüler kültür ritüelleri, trendleri takip etme, tüketim, simgesel tüketim ve ünlü kültürünü benimseme şeklindedir. Reklamdaki popüler kültür kahramanı Tarkan'dır ve bu ünlü tanıklığı sayesinde Coca-Cola marka kişiliği, ürüne aktarılan sevilebilirlik, popülerlik, etkileyicilik, çekicilik ve trend olma gibi imajlar kazanmaktadır. Reklamın sunduğu semboller ünlüler, sosyal medya kültürü, tüketim, Coca-Cola şişesi, sosyal medya ikonlar ve trendi olmaktır. Bu semboller melez anlamlar üretirken popüler kültürü benimsemenin bir aracıdır. Reklam Kültürel Boyutlar Kuramı üzerinden incelendiğinde, kısıtlama, yüksek güç mesafesi, yüksek belirsizlik odaklı, uzun vadeli yönelimli, toplumsal ve feminen yerel kültürel boyutların yerini hibrit Amerikan kültürel boyutlarına bıraktığı dikkat çekmektedir. Reklamda kullanılan star imajı stratejisi, trendleri takip etme, trendi olma, trendiliği ürüne aktarma, ünlü kültürü ve tüketim kültürünü benimseme gibi popüler kültür kodlarının üretilmesine yöneliktir. Bu nedenle, araştırmada reklamda başvurulan star imajı stratejisinin, Coca-Cola'yı küresel trend belirleyici bir marka olarak konumlandırmasının yanı sıra trendlere uygun kişisel imajlar, hedonizm ve sembolik tüketim önererek küreselleşen Amerikan kültürel değer boyutlarını içselleştirmek amacıyla kullanıldığı sonucuna varılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Medya, Popüler Kültür, Reklam Araştırmaları, Sembolik Tüketim, Star Stratejisi.