

REFLECTION OF BRAND HATE ON BRAND FORGIVENESS

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Abstract

Brand hatred consists of elements such as negative experiences that consumers have with the brand, symbolic and ideological incompatibilities, disturbing advertisements and immoral behavior. To prevent brand hatred, brands need to establish a strong bond and empathize with consumers. This situation increases the likelihood of consumers forgiving brands and the concept of brand donation emerges. Brand donation is when consumers' negative emotions towards brands are replaced by positive emotions. In this context, the aim of the study is to examine the effect of brand hatred on brand donation. In addition, the mediating role of the sub-dimensions of brand hatred with the sub-dimensions of brand donation was examined in the study. In the first part of the research, Hegner et al.'s (2017) brand hatred study titled "Determinants and outcomes of brand hate" was used. In the second part, Christodoulides et al.'s (2021) scale called "Don't be rude! The effect of content moderation on consumer-brand forgiveness" was used. In the last part of the study, descriptive questions are included. The research was conducted on 530 participants. According to the findings of the study, the most important factors in forgiveness are symbolic incompatibility and negative past experiences. Therefore, symbolic dissonance should be reduced and brands should be ensured to represent consumers. Based on the research, it appears that brand hatred, symbolic incongruity, brand avoidance and brand retaliation have the most significant impact on cognitive brand donation. In order for the consumer to forgive the brand, the effects of these elements must be minimized.

Keywords: Brand Hate, Brand Forgiveness, Brand

MARKA NEFRETİNİN MARKA BAĞIŞLAMASINA YANSIMASI

Öz

Marka nefreti, tüketicilerin markayla yaşadıkları olumsuz deneyimler, sembolik ve ideolojik uyumsuzluklar, rahatsız edici reklamlar ve ahlak dışı davranışlar gibi unsurlardan meydana gelmektedir. Marka nefretini önlemek için markaların tüketicilerle güçlü bir bağ kurması, empati yapması gerekmektedir. Bu durum tüketicilerin markaları affetme olasılığını artırmakta ve marka bağışlanması kavramı oraya çıkmaktadır. Marka bağışlanması, tüketicilerin markalara yönelik olumsuz duygularının yerini olumlu duygulara bırakması sürecini ifade etmektedir. Bu bağlamda çalışmanın amacı marka nefretinin marka bağışlanmasına etkisini incelemektir. Ayrıca çalışmada marka nefretinin alt boyutlarının marka bağışlanmasının alt boyutlarıyla aracılık rolünün varlığı incelenmiştir. Araştırmanın birinci bölümünde, Hegner ve arkadaşlarının (2017) "Determinants and outcomes of brand hate" adlı marka nefreti

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çalışmasından faydalanılmıştır. İkinci bölümde, Christodoulides ve arkadaşlarının (2021) “Don't be rude! The effect of content moderation on consumer-brand forgiveness” adlı ölçeğinden yararlanılmıştır. Çalışmanın son bölümünde ise tanımlayıcı sorulara yer verilmiştir. Bu çalışma, 530 katılımcı üzerinde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Çalışmadan elde edilen bulgulara göre, bağışlamada en önemli etken sembolik uyumsuzluk ve olumsuz geçmiş deneyimlerdir. Diğer bir deyişle, tüketicinin markayla sembolik uyumsuzluğu veya olumsuz deneyimleri artıca markayı bağışlaması azalmaktadır. Bu nedenle, sembolik uyumsuzluk azaltılmalı ve markaların tüketicileri temsil etmesi sağlanmalıdır. Araştırmaya bağlı olarak bilişsel marka bağışlanması üzerinde marka nefreti, sembolik uyumsuzluk, markadan kaçınma ve marka misillemesinin en önemli etkiye sahip olduğu görülmektedir. Tüketicinin markayı bağışlaması için bu unsurların etkilerinin en aza indirilmesi gerekmektedir. Bu bağlamda, davranışsal marka bağışlanması için en önemli etkinin olumsuz geçmiş deneyim, sembolik uyumsuzluk ve marka misillemesi tarafından meydana geldiği görülmüştür. Duygusal marka bağışlanması için ise en önemli etkenin sembolik uyumsuzluk olduğu görülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Marka Nefreti, Marka Bağışlaması, Marka

INTRODUCTION

Today, the abundance of products and services leads consumers to become more selective. This situation raises their expectations from brands. Brands, on the other hand, aim to strengthen their bond with consumers in order to differentiate themselves from their competitors. However, establishing the desired connection with consumers is not always possible. In other words, consumers can have a negative attitude towards brands. Consumers who harbor negative emotions such as anger, frustration, and hatred exhibit certain behaviors. These behaviors have led to the emergence of the concept of brand hate. Brand hate stems from factors such as consumers' negative experiences with the brand, symbolic and ideological mismatches, disturbing advertisements, and unethical behavior. The feeling of hate resulting from these factors leads consumers to develop a negative attitude towards the brand and sometimes act with thoughts of revenge. Consumers may experience brand hate at different levels. For example, some may exhibit a cold attitude towards the brand, while others may respond with a cooler hatred. Some consumers may even nurture a hot anger and hatred towards the brand. The consequences of hate also vary. In other words, due to brand hate, consumers may boycott the brand, influence other consumers through negative word-of-mouth communication, or display aggressive behavior towards the brand.

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When brands encounter a negative situation with consumers, they make efforts to apologize, express regret, accept their faults, and compensate for the current situation in order to strengthen their relationship and reduce brand hate. However, in order to cope with brand hate, brands need to establish a strong bond with consumers, show empathy, and increase the likelihood of consumer forgiveness. This situation gives rise to the concept of brand forgiveness. Brand forgiveness, which refers to the process of replacing consumers' negative emotions towards brands with positive ones, generally arises as a result of corrective or compensatory actions taken by the brand towards consumers. Brands strive to communicate actively with consumers to compensate for negative experiences, apologize, restore brand reputation, increase consumer satisfaction, build trust, and maintain brand loyalty. Being sincere, open communication and being consumer-oriented during active communication are very important in the brand forgiveness process. In addition to the way the communication is established, consumers see that brands are aware of their mistakes and it is very effective in re-confidence in the brand. If consumers feel that the brand values them and conclude that they have learned from their mistakes, they can forgive the brand and turn their negative feelings into positive. Thus, it can be said that brand donation contributes to the rebuilding of the relationship between the consumer and the brand.

The main aim of the research is to examine the impact of brand hate on brand forgiveness. In other words, it investigates whether there is a mediating role in brand forgiveness concerning brand hate. Additionally, the study examines the presence of the mediating role between the sub-dimensions of brand hate and the sub-dimensions of brand forgiveness. In this context, the research consists of three sections. In the first section, the study "Determinants and outcomes of brand hate" by Hegner et al. (2017) is utilized. The second section draws on the scale "Don't be rude! The effect of content moderation on consumer-brand forgiveness" by Christodoulides et al. (2021). The final section of the research includes descriptive questions.

1. The Concept of Brand Hatred

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Today, consumers are faced with problems such as flight cancellations, high bills, and long waiting times for service, which can be encountered everywhere (Appelman, 2001; Brady, 2000). This situation leads consumers to experience negative emotions such as “anger”, “frustration”, and “disappointment. However, consumers not being satisfied with a brand due to certain situations does not necessarily mean that they will hate the brand and become enemies of it. Consumers may remain indifferent or exhibit avoidance behavior towards brands they are not satisfied with (Samuelsen, 2014, p. 6). Consumer with a high level of dissatisfaction with a brand can develop anger and hatred towards the brand and even adopt an aggressive attitude.

Kucuk (2019, p. 20) defines brand hatred as the negative emotions that consumers feel towards brands that cause negative experiences. According to Gregoire et al. (2009, p. 19), brand hatred is the desire for revenge against the hated brand and avoidance. In other words, consumers want to punish and harm the brands that make them unhappy. Johnson et al. (2011) explain this concept as the consumer's strong desire for revenge and resistance against the brand. At times, consumers may want to attack and destroy the brand they hate (Roseman, 1984; Frijda, 1986). Brand hatred is also defined as the intense negative emotional state that consumers feel towards a brand (Bryson, Atwal & Hulten, 2013; Romani, Grappi & Dalli, 2012). The negative emotions (anger, hatred, unwillingness, etc.) that consumers feel towards a brand can vary (Preijers, 2016, p. 43). In Kucuk's (2019) study, consumers' hatred towards a brand is divided into three categories: “cold”, “cool” and “hot”. Cold brand hatred corresponds to the negative emotions that consumers feel towards a brand, such as “boredom”, “disappointment” and “frustration” (Zhang, 2017, pp. 16-17). Consumers devalue the brand they harbor these emotions towards, sever their relationship with it, and ignore it. In cool brand hatred, consumers experience emotions such as “repulsion”, “anger”, “disgust” and “rebellion”. It can be said that the emotions experienced by consumers in cool brand hatred are sharper and stronger (Kucuk, 2019, p. 31). In hot brand hatred, consumers feel “strong anger” and “hatred” towards the brand. The feeling of hatred is so strong that consumers want to take revenge on the brand (Zhang, 2017, p. 22). It is a well-known fact that angry individuals can easily exhibit violence and aggressive behavior. In this context, it is often inevitable for consumers experiencing hot brand hatred to attack and show violence towards the brand.

Although brand hatred is a negative emotion with a high intensity level, it is not precisely known what exactly causes this emotion. According to Perijers (2016, p. 50), various reasons such as negative experiences, negative stereotypes, and unethical behavior of the brand can contribute to the formation of brand hatred. It is said that negative experiences are among the main reasons for consumers to harbor negative feelings towards a brand (Bryson, Atwal & Hulten, 2013; Gregoire, Tripp & Legoux, 2009; Johnson, Matear & Thomson, 2011). It is considered sufficient for consumers to have a “negative experience that the brand's elements such as price, quality, performance, and service experience fail (Sampedro, 2017; Oliver, 1989; Weiner, 2000, p. 383; Donoghue. & de Klerk, 2006).

In other words, if the actual experience of consumers does not match the brand promise, it leads to dissatisfaction. It has been observed that dissatisfied consumers also harbor negative feelings towards the brand (Dülek & Cömert, 2019, p.37). Apart from negative experiences, ethical reasons and negative information about the brand also contribute to the formation of brand hatred in consumers (Lee, Motion & Conroy, 2009; Yoon, 2013). Bryson et al. (2013) explain the reason for hatred arising from the violation of ethical norms as behavior that consumers find inappropriate. Nowadays, conscious consumers are experiencing changes in their lifestyles. Consumers are more environmentally conscious and show a sensitive approach towards animal and human rights. This reflects in their consumption habits. Consumers have started paying attention to whether the brands they use respect the rights of humans and animals and whether they cause harm to the environment (Çakır, 2010, p.122). In this context, it is observed that brands that harm the environment, disregard societal values, and violate the rights of living beings negatively influence consumer attitudes. Conscious consumers can react and exclude brands that do not pay attention to the elements they value (Antonetti & Maklan, 2016; Grappi, Romani & Bagozzi, 2013). Most consumers do not want to engage with brands that engage in unethical and immoral actions and act unlawfully (Dalli, Simona & Gistri, 2006). In addition to the brand's unethical behavior, “ideological” and “symbolic mismatch between the consumer and the brand also leads to the formation of hatred (Dalli, Simona & Gistri, 2006; Romani, Sadeh & Dalli, 2009; Lee, Motion & Conroy, 2009; Johnson, Matear & Thomson, 2011). Today, people don't consume just to meet their essential needs. They prefer brands that reflect the personality, lifestyle, and status they want to embrace. The values they want to

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embrace can influence consumer's choice to use a brand. Brands that aim to attract consumers to a world surrounded by symbolic meanings create symbolic meanings through interaction with consumers. However, when designing symbolic meanings for the brand, if the brand ignores the desires and aspirations of consumers and does not take their life dynamics seriously, it creates a significant risk for brands (Domzal & Kernan, 1993, p.8). When consumers do not like the symbolic meanings created by the brand, they may feel emotions such as anger, resentment, disgust, or hatred towards the meaning conveyed by the brand. Hegner et al. (2017) state in their study that “negative experiences”, “symbolic”, and “ideological incongruence trigger brand hatred. In this context, another factor that leads to the formation of brand hatred in consumers can be considered as the incongruence between “consumers” and “brand's ideology”. Ideology, which consists of beliefs and values aiming to maintain a certain social order or supporting social change against the existing order, affects individuals' consumption habits. While consumers tend to purchase products that are compatible with their ideologies, the opposite is true in cases of incongruence. In other words, ideological incongruence implies the avoidance of consumers from the brand for political purposes. It is not necessary for the brand that is rejected due to ideological incongruence to be of foreign origin. In other words, consumers may reject the ideology of any domestic or foreign brand if it does not align with their ideology (Sandıkcı & Ekici, 2009, pp.208-209). Another factor that causes brand hatred in consumers is brands with disturbing advertisements. Consumers do not want to purchase brands that have exaggerated, disturbing, and unethical advertisements. According to research, such advertisements lead consumers to hate the brand (Delzen, 2014, p.36). According to a study conducted by Hedrick et al. (2007), if consumers lose their trust in a brand, they can exhibit strong negative reactions and engage in retaliatory efforts against that brand. It has been observed that individuals with high empathy tend to have stronger feelings of hatred towards brands that commit ethical violations compared to others (Romani, Grappi, Zarantonello & Bagozzi, 2015, p.669). Furthermore, research indicates that consumers want to punish and express their reactions towards brands that they find disturbing and unethical (Lee, Motion & Conroy, 2009). In line with this, consumers tend to avoid the brand, speak negatively about it to people around them, and refrain from making purchases. In fact, consumers can even develop a sense of hatred towards the brand. The more exposed a consumer is to the brand's disturbing advertisements, the more intense their negative emotions become. Even if the advertisement

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causing consumer hate is taken down, the negative feelings experienced by the consumer can linger in their memory (Ülker, 2021).

Based on the information provided above, the factors that contribute to brand hatred in consumers include "negative past experiences" with the brand, "symbolic and ideological mismatch" with the brand, "offensive advertisements," and "unethical behaviors." As a result of these factors, consumers develop negative attitudes towards the brand and sometimes take action. The actions resulting from consumer hatred towards a brand can be classified as "passive" and "active." Passive brand hatred refers to consumers experiencing low-intensity negative emotions such as fear, disappointment, and dissatisfaction (Laros & Steenkamp, 2005; Zarantonello, Romani, Grappi, & Bagozzi, 2016) and displaying a silent attitude. Despite these negative emotions, consumers do not seek revenge against the brand but may choose to avoid the brand, switch to another brand, or refuse to use the product (Sampedro, 2017; Alba & Lutz, 2013; Bryson, Atwal & Hulten, 2013; Gregoire, Tripp & Legoux, 2009). It is observed that consumers with a passive attitude generally live with these negative emotions and do not have a desire to seek revenge against the brand. In contrast, in active brand hatred, consumers feel emotions such as anger and contempt towards the brand (Zarantonello, Romani, Grappi & Bagozzi, 2016) and display active attitudes. In other words, consumers exhibit aggressive attitudes and behaviors towards the brand. As a result of brand hatred, consumers may seek revenge against the brand (Alba & Lutz, 2013; Bryson, Atwal & Hulten, 2013; Gregoire, Tripp & Legoux, 2009). In this context, brands that trigger consumers' hostile feelings are boycotted, enemy websites are created, anti-advergame platforms are established, negative word-of-mouth communication is spread to make other consumers hate the brand (Preijers, 2016). Some researchers categorize active brand hatred into "direct revenge" and "indirect revenge" (Sampedro, 2017; Gregoire, Laufer & Tripp, 2010): Indirect Revenge: It is defined as consumers sharing their dislike and hatred for the brand with their friends, family members, and people around them. Consumers take advantage of technology to seek revenge against the brand by creating brand-hostile websites, anti-advergame platforms, and expressing their complaints online (Sampedro, 2017). There are many negative websites and fake pages on social media created by consumers in the name of brands that have gained their hatred, such as Starbucks, Coca-Cola, Nestle. In these websites, consumers share their negative experiences

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and thoughts about the brand with each other. Through anti-advergemes, consumers can express their hatred towards the brand and seek revenge during the game. Direct Revenge: In direct revenge, consumers experience intense and strong negative emotions towards the brand. They can recall their negative emotions every time they encounter the brand. This leads consumers to wish for the disappearance of the brand (Preijers, 2016, p.50-51). In this context, consumers are seen to want to seek revenge and harm the brand (Sampedro, 2017). Consumers who have negative emotions towards the brand believe that by causing harm, they can punish the brand and seek revenge (Gregoire, Tripp & Legoux, 2009; Bechwati & Morrin, 2003). Brands may attempt to reconcile with consumers in order to convert their negative emotions into positive ones.

2. The Concept of Brand Forgiveness

The concept of forgiveness, defined as a successful outcome of an active effort to replace negative thoughts with positive ones, is described as reconciliation, reacceptance, and overcoming (North, 1987, p. 506). In other words, someone who has been physically or emotionally hurt by another person often harbors negative feelings towards the offender. These feelings can lead the individual to engage in a battle with the one who caused the harm, either physically or mentally. However, when the injured party ends the fight with the other party, it signifies forgiveness (Enright, Gassin, & Ching-Ru, 1992, p. 101). The Turkish Language Institution defines forgiveness as "to forgive, to meet with tolerance, to overlook, and to allow someone to resign from a responsibility or position" (<https://sozluk.gov.tr/>). However, due to the lack of a common understanding of forgiveness, there is no universal definition of the concept (Younger, Piferi, Jobe, & Lawler, 2004, p. 838). While the main component of the concept of forgiveness is generally described as the transformation of "negative emotions" into "positive ones" (Tsarenko & Tojib, 2011, p. 382), it is expressed as an emotional, cognitive, and behavioral phenomenon (Tatarlar & Çangarlı, 2018, p. 592). These phenomena occur towards the person who has caused psychological or physical harm, and this process can sometimes progress slowly. In the emotional aspect of this process, negative emotions such as anger, hatred, resentment, and sadness may subside. This doesn't necessarily mean that the person has forgiven, but it indicates a natural psychological healing process (Horsbrugh, 1974, p. 271). In the cognitive process, the injured party stops judgment, condemnation, and thoughts of revenge.

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In the behavioral process, the individual refrains from seeking revenge (Enright, Gassin, & Ching-Ru, 1992, p. 101). The offender's acknowledgment of their actions, remorse, and promise not to repeat the incident facilitate the forgiveness process. However, the injured party's retaliation against the other person, whether physically or emotionally, can also have an impact on the forgiveness process (North, 1987, p. 503).

Consumers can change their brands, engage in “negative word-of-mouth communication, and exhibit activities such as destructive advertising, anti-advertising, and anti-public relations due to negative past experiences, disturbing advertisements, unethical behaviors, and symbolic and ideological incompatibility. Additionally, they can boycott the brand and cause physical harm (Ülker, 2021). Due to these reasons, consumers may experience negative feelings towards the brand. In this context, individuals can exhibit avoidance, compromise, revenge, or forgiveness behaviors not only towards individuals who physically or emotionally harm them but also towards brands that create negative emotions within them (Aquino, Tripp, & Bies, 2006).

However, consumers' propensity to forgive brands varies under certain conditions. For instance, when there is a strong relationship between “consumers” and “brands, the likelihood of forgiving the brand increases (Sinha & Lu, 2015, p. 1). According to a study conducted by Aaker et al. (2004, p. 4), when there are strong bonds between consumers and the brand, consumers can overcome and forgive the brand's negative effects. In this regard, brands should establish a good and strong relationship with consumers. For this reason, brands should establish a good and strong relationship with their consumers. For this purpose, brands should keep their promises, create a strong image or strengthen their existing image, differentiate from other brands and determine a strategy that will arouse positive emotions in consumers (Gürce, Tosun, & Pektaş, 2022, p. 33). However, sometimes the communication activities of brands do not give the desired results. In such cases, negative emotions usually occur in consumers. In such cases, brands usually apologize to consumers, say they regret it, admit their guilt and try to compensate for the negative situation (Fehr & Russell, 1984; Ülker, 2021). However, the brand's apology to the consumer does not mean that it will be forgiven. According to Roschk

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and Kaiser (2013, p. 293), empathy, intensity and timing are very important for the acceptance of an apology. In other words, how the apology is conveyed, the accuracy of its timing and the level of intensity affect the consumer's forgiveness of the brand. Also, the positive reception of an apology, which can help resolve conflict and provide forgiveness, also depends on the victims' sense of self. For this purpose, the regulation of apology depending on the individual's sense of self affects the possibility of increasing forgiveness (Fehr & Russell, 1984, p. 48). According to a study by Ran et al. (2016), brands should accurately identify and respond to consumers' negative emotions. The study suggests that when the brand responds to angry consumers with guilt and to fearful consumers with shame, the likelihood of forgiveness increases. Additionally, it should be remembered that brands need to make more effort to be forgiven (Roschk & Kaiser, 2013, p. 305). The stronger the relationship of consumers with brands, the more likely they are to forgive the brand (Yagil & Luria, 2016, p. 557). In line with this objective, brands should strive to strengthen their relationships with consumers because the forgiveness of the brand ensures the continuation of consumer loyalty (Tsarenko & Tojib, 2011, p. 382). In this context, brands understanding when and how consumers forgive them is crucial in winning their hearts and loyalty (Aaker, Fournier, & Brasel, 2004).

3. Research Methodology

With the advancement of technology, consumers can now communicate with each other and with brands at any time without physical boundaries. However, the rapid spread of information and easy communication can sometimes lead to unwanted consequences. One of these consequences is brand hatred. Consumers can develop hatred towards a brand for various reasons, leading them to stop purchasing from the brand or seek revenge for the negative attitude. In today's world, brands conduct certain activities to change these negative attitudes in consumers, which is referred to as brand forgiveness. In this context, the main objective of the research is to examine the impact of brand hatred on brand forgiveness, specifically exploring the mediating role of brand forgiveness. The research consists of a screening question and three sections. Screening questions, also known as filtering questions, direct individuals based on their response to a question (Baş, 2001). Participants are asked to respond only to questions that are relevant to them (Beidernikl ve Kerschbaumer, 2007). At the beginning of the research,

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participants are provided with an explanation of the concept of brand hatred, followed by the filtering question: "Do you have any brand in mind that you feel negative emotions towards in the context of the explained concept of brand hatred?" Participants who answer "yes" to this question are asked to continue answering the research questions. In the first section of the research, the study "Determinants and outcomes of brand hate" by Hegner et al. (2017) is utilized. The second section draws on the scale "Don't be rude! The effect of content moderation on consumer-brand forgiveness" by Christodoulides et al. (2021). The final section of the research includes descriptive questions. In this research, the diversity of definition of variables and the relationship between variables is extended. For this reason, the descriptive research model, which helps reveal the characteristics of a population, was used (Zikmund, 1999, p.42). Additionally, due to time and cost constraints, the convenience method was used in the research (Kurtuluş, 2010, p.63). Convenience sampling method was chosen in the research; therefore, the main population of the research consists of Marmara University students. The research conducted is aimed at solving the problem and generalization across Turkey is not possible. The volume of volume in this style is generally between 300 and 500 (Naresh and Birks, 2000, p.351). In this context, a face-to-face survey was applied to the participants in the research and a population of 530 people, which was deemed reliable, was reached. In addition, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to assess the measurement model and evaluate its reliability and validity. Subsequently, the proposed model was examined using structural equation modeling. The structural validity of the structural equation model was determined using various indices including the χ^2/sd ratio, "CFI", "GFI", "AGFI", "NFI", "RMSEA" and "RMR". Demographic variables were analyzed using frequencies and percentages. Descriptive statistics were computed using the "SPSS" package program, while the "LISREL" program was utilized for the structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis. Also, Ethics Committee Approval was received for the research of this article in accordance with the decision of Marmara University Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee dated 2023-13-01 and numbered 2023-2.

4. Findings

Table 1: "Demographic Distribution"

	n	%
"Gender"		
Male	318	60,0

	<i>Female</i>	212	40,0
	<i>High School</i>	184	34,7
<i>"Education"</i>	<i>Associate degree</i>	88	16,6
	<i>Undergraduate</i>	200	37,8
	<i>Postgraduate</i>	58	10,9
		Mean±Sd	Min-Max (Median)
<i>"Age"</i>		24,29±4,62	18-49 (24)

Participant 60.0% (n = 318) men and 40.0% (n = 212) are women. While 34,7% (n = 185) are high school, 16.6% (n = 88) are associate degree, 37.8% (n = 127) are undergraduate and 10.9% (n = 58) in the postgraduate. Their ages ranged between "18" and "49, with a mean of 24.29±4.62.

4.1. Result for Exploratory Factor Analysis

"Table 2" presents the results of the "Kaiser-Meyer Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy" and "The Bartlett Sphericity Test". "The KMO" measure of sampling adequacy is employed to determine if factor analysis is appropriate for this study. Meanwhile, "The Bartlett Test of Sphericity" is utilized to examine the null hypothesis that the variables in the correlation matrix of the sample are irrelevant. "The KMO value" of the determinants of "brand hate" was 0.828, "consumer-brand forgiveness" was 0.877 and "Bartlett's Test of Sphericity" was significant with a "p-value of <0.001". Živadinović (2004) recommended a basic criterion for "The KMO value" of greater than "0.5" to ensure readiness for factor analysis.

Table 2: EFA Results for "KMO" and "Bartlett's Test"

	<i>"Determinants of Brand Hate"</i>	<i>"Consumer-Brand Forgiveness"</i>
<i>"Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy"</i>	0,935	0,881
<i>"Chi-Square"</i>	11000,071	2629,579
<i>"Df"</i>	561	36
<i>"Sig."</i>	<0.000	<0.000

Eigenvalues, variances and factor loadings of the factors are given in "Table 3". The total variance explanation rate of brand hate predictors was calculated as 65.90. The larger the variance rates obtained as a result of the analysis, the stronger the factor structure and it is accepted that this value is between 40% and 60% (Karagöz, 2017). In order to say that an item measures a construct or a factor well, the factor load value is expected to be "0.30 and above" (Stevens, 2002). The results of the study support the findings. In addition, all values were found within the range specified in the literature.

Table 3: "EFA Results for Determinants of Brand Hate"

"Factors/Items"	"Factor Loading"	"Eigen Value"	"Explained Variance (%)"
"Brand Hate"			
"I'm disgusted by brand X."	0,601		
"I don't tolerate brand X and its company."	0,690		
"The world would be a better place without brand X."	0,630	13,452	39,564
"I'm totally angry about brand X."	0,731		
"Brand X is awful."	0,679		
"I hate brand X."	0,709		
"Negative past experience"			
"The performance of products of brand X is poor."	0,700		
"The brand products are inconvenient."	0,586		
"My hate for this brand is linked to the bad performance of this product."	0,533	2,794	8,219
"I'm dissatisfied by brand X."	0,619		
"Symbolic incongruity"			
"The products of brand X do not reflect who I am."	0,664		
"The products of brand X do not fit my personality."	0,685		
"I don't want to be seen with brand X."	0,645	1,725	5,073
"This brand does not represent what I am."	0,657		
"This brand symbolizes the kind of person I would never wanted to be"	0,567		
"Ideological incompatibility"			
"In my opinion, brand X acts irresponsible."	0,653		
"In my opinion, brand X acts unethical."	0,715	1,453	4,273

"The company violates moral standards."	0,625		
"The brand doesn't match my values and beliefs."	0,689		
"Brand avoidance"			
"I don't purchase products of brand X anymore."	0,660		
"I reject services/products of brand X."	0,644		
"I refrain from buying X's products or using its services."	0,685	1,169	3,437
"I avoid buying the brands products/using its services."	0,709		
"I do not use products or services of brand X."	0,717		
"Negative word of mouth"			
"I spread negative word of mouth about brand X."	0,527		
"I denigrated the brand to my friends."	0,479		
"When my friends were looking for a similar service, I told them not to buy from brand X."	0,406	0,940	2,766
"I always tell my friends about my feelings towards this brand."	0,696		
"I try to influence a lot of people in not purchasing this brand."	0,501		
"Brand retaliation"			
"I have deliberately bent or broken the policies of the brand."	0,690		
"I have showed signs of impatience and frustration to someone from brand X."	0,630		
"I complained to brand X to give a hard time to the representatives of the company."	0,731	0,875	2,574
"I complained to brand X to be unpleasant with the representatives of the company."	0,679		
"I complained to the brand to make someone from the organization pay."	0,709		

The eigenvalues, variance explanation ratios of the factors and the factor loadings of each item are also given in "Table 4". The total variance explanation ratio of these "consumer-brand forgiveness" is calculated as "72.90". The results of the research support these findings and all values were found within the range specified in the literature.

Table 4: "EFA Results for Consumer-Brand Forgiveness"

Factors/Items	Factor Loading	Eigen value	Explained Variance (%)
"Cognitive"			
"I think the brand should get what it deserves"	0,930		
"I wish that others could see that this brand is worthy"	0,885	3,856	42,840
"I approve of this brand"	0,807		
"Affective"			
"I feel sympathetic towards this brand"	0,965		
"I have compassion for the brand, which wronged me"	0,951	1,758	19,529
"I feel as if I have restored my faith in this brand"	0,944		
"Behavioral"			
"I am not avoid using this brand"	0,866		
"I do consider this brand anymore when evaluating alternatives"	0,635	0,981	10,897
"I am high likely to try this brand again"	0,843		

Checking the normality of the sample is a basis prerequisite before conducting any statistical methods, including structural equation modeling. In order to assess this, measures of "skewness" and "kurtosis" are examined. Skewness values within the range of "+1" and "-1" are considered indicative of a "normal distribution", while "kurtosis values" should fall between "+3 and -3" for "normal distribution" (Kline, 2011). As shown in "Table 5", both "skewness and kurtosis values for the factors are within the recommended range, suggesting that the dataset follows a normal distribution. "Cronbach's alpha" is a measure of how closely items in a dataset are related to each other. "A Cronbach's alpha" coefficient between "0.70 and 0.99" indicates "good internal reliability (Tavakol ve Dennick, 2011). In this study, the "Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from "0.7 to 0.9" demonstrating good to excellent internal consistency and reliability.

Table 5: Results for "Normality Distributions" and "Cronbach's Alpha"

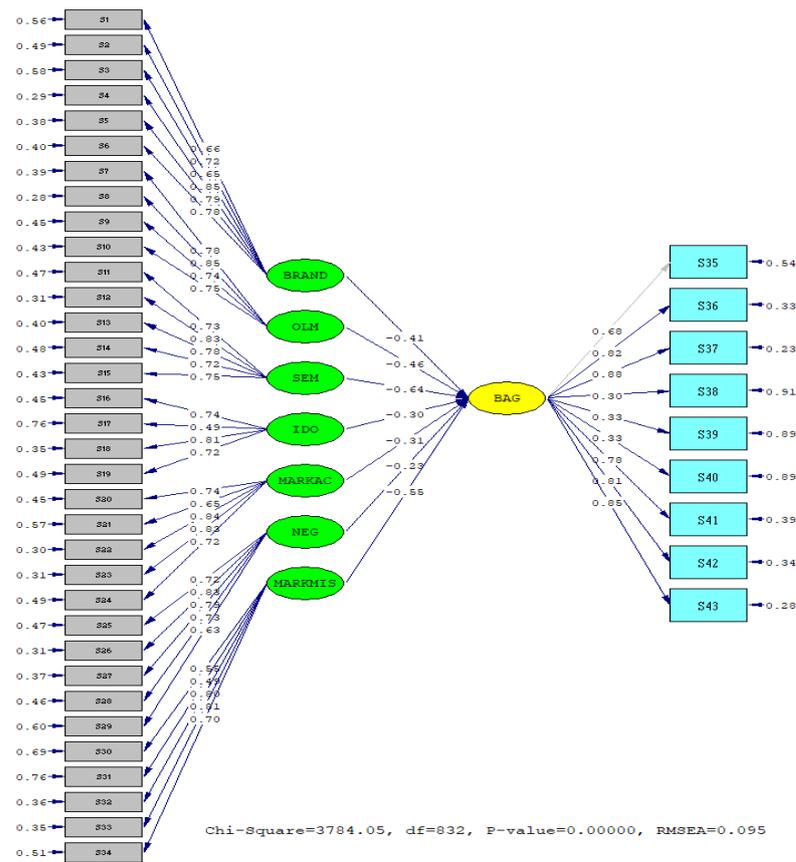
	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's Alpha
"Brand Hate"	-0,090	-0,298	0,878
"Negative past experience"	-0,617	0,531	0,863

<i>"Symbolic incongruity"</i>	-0,388	0,337	0,872
<i>"Ideological incompatibility"</i>	-0,224	0,028	0,774
<i>"Brand avoidance"</i>	-0,371	0,192	0,870
<i>"Negative word of mouth"</i>	-0,444	0,232	0,859
<i>"Brand retaliation"</i>	0,103	-0,337	0,798
<i>"Total Determinants of Brand Hate"</i>	-0,256	0,946	0,790
<i>"Cognitive"</i>	0,607	0,229	0,838
<i>"Affective"</i>	-0,418	0,091	0,816
<i>"Behavioral"</i>	0,745	0,196	0,857
<i>"Total Consumer-Brand Forgiveness"</i>	0,698	0,460	0,878

4.2. "Result for Structural Equation Modeling"

The detailed results for examining the determinants of brand hate and consumer-brand forgiveness via structural equation modeling are given in "Table 6" and "Figure 1".

Figure 1: "Examining the Determinants of Brand Hate and Consumer-Brand Forgiveness via Structural Equation Modelling"



The results of the structural model presented in “Figure 1”, along with its limits, are presented in “Table 6”. The table reveals that the model, as indicated by all goodness-of-fit statistics, is statistically significant and demonstrates a good fit. In addition to these fitness criteria, χ^2 / df was obtained as $3784.05 / 832 = 4.54$, which is less than 5. This means that the model is both statistically significant and acceptable (Erkorkmaz et al. 2013).

Table 6: “Limits and The Results of The Structural Model”

“Fitness Criterion”	Perfect Fitness	Acceptable Fitness	Model	Affective	Behavioral	Cognitive
“ χ^2 / df ”	$1 \leq \chi^2 / df \leq 3$	$3 < \chi^2 / df \leq 5$	4,54	4,94	4,96	4,74
“RMSEA”	$0 \leq RMSEA \leq 0.05$	$0.05 < RMSEA \leq 0.10$	0.095	0.086	0.087	0.088
“NFI”	$0.95 \leq NFI \leq 1$	$0.90 < NFI < 0.95$	0.92	0.95	0.94	0.94
“NNFI”	$0.95 \leq NFI \leq 1$	$0.90 < NNFI < 0.95$	0.93	0.95	0.95	0.95
“SRMR”	$0 \leq SRMR < 0.05$	$0.05 \leq SRMR < 0.10$	0.095	0.065	0.065	0.068
“CFI”	$0.97 \leq CFI \leq 1$	$0.95 \leq CFI < 0.97$	0.95	0.96	0.95	0.95

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(“RMSEA: Root Mean Square Error of Approximation”, “NFI: Normed Fit Index”, “NNFI: Non-Normed Fit Index”, “CFI: Comparative Fit Index”, “SRMR: Standardized Root Mean Square Residual”)

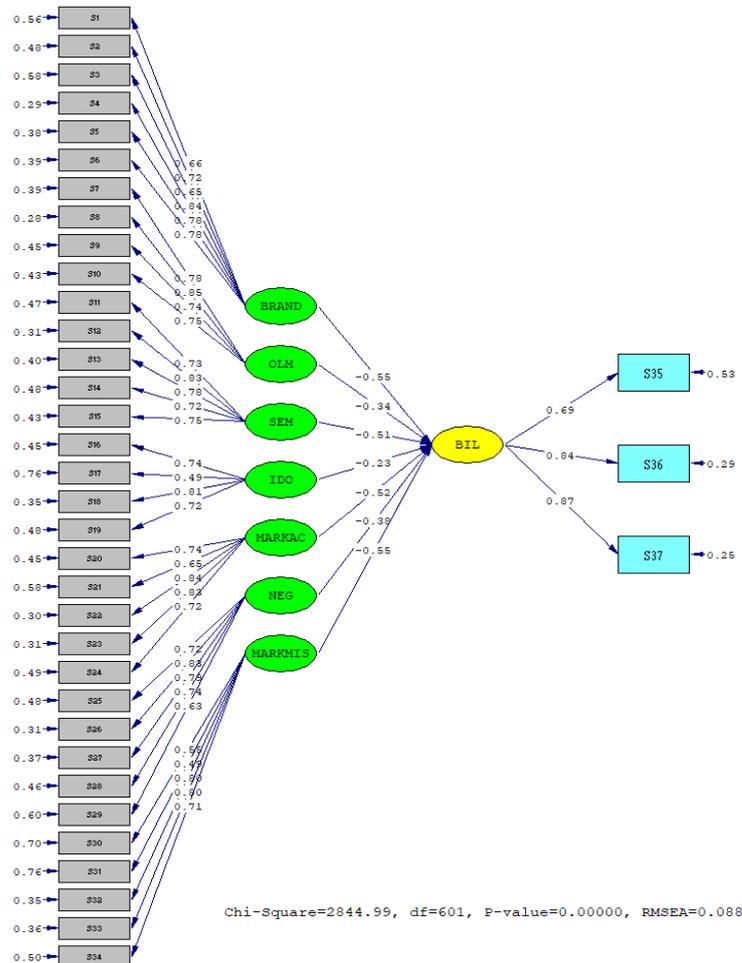
As a result of the analysis, “brand hate” has a “negative effect of 0.41 units, “negative past experience” has a negative effect of 0.46 units, “symbolic incongruity” has a negative effect of 0.64 units, “ideological incongruity” has a negative effect of 0.30 units, “brand avoidance” has a negative effect of 0.31 units, “negative word-of-mouth” has a negative effect of 0.23 units, and brand retaliation has a negative effect of 0.55 units on “consumer-brand forgiveness”. According to the findings obtained, it can be said that the most significant factor in forgiveness is “symbolic incongruity” and “negative past experiences”. In other words, as the consumer's “symbolic incongruity” or “negative experiences” with the brand increase, their willingness to forgive the brand decreases. When we examine the most important variable on “brand hate”; the item “I’m totally angry about brand X” is found to be the most effective one with the coefficient of 0.85. Changing the most influential variables affecting brand hate in a positive direction will also result in a change in negative attitudes towards the brand. As consumers' levels of brand hate decrease, the impact of brand hate on them will also diminish. When we examine the most important variable on “negative past experience”; the item “The brand products are inconvenient.” is found to be the most effective one with the coefficient of 0.85. In this context, consumers should be ensured satisfaction from the brand, and “negative experiences” should be reduced in consumers. When we examine the most important variable on “symbolic incongruity”; the item “The products of brand X do not fit my personality.” is found to be the most effective one with the coefficient of 0.83. Therefore, “symbolic incongruity” should be reduced, and brands should represent their consumers. When we examine the most important variable on “ideological incongruity”; the item “The company violates moral standards” is found to be the most effective one with the coefficient of 0.81. In this context, it can be argued that unethical behaviors of brands lead to brand hatred. When we examine the most important variable on “brand avoidance”; “I refrain from buying X’s products or using its services.” is found to be the most effective one with the coefficient of 0.84. When we examine the most important variable on “negative word of mouth”; the item “I denigrated the brand to my friends” is found to be the most effective one with the coefficient of 0.83. In line with this, it is concluded that consumers frequently share their negative emotions and thoughts about brands with their friends. When we examine the most important variable on brand retaliation; “I complained to

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brand X to be unpleasant with the representatives of the company." is found to be the most effective one with the coefficient of 0.81. In other words, consumers express their dissatisfaction with brands by lodging complaints with companies. This situation is considered significant in terms of "brand forgiveness".

The detailed results for examining the determinants of brand hate and cognitive dimension of its reflection on consumer-brand forgiveness via structural equation modeling are given in "Table 6" and "Figure 2".

Figure 2: "Examining the Determinants of Brand Hate and Cognitive Dimension of Its Reflection on Consumer-Brand Forgiveness via Structural Equation Modelling"



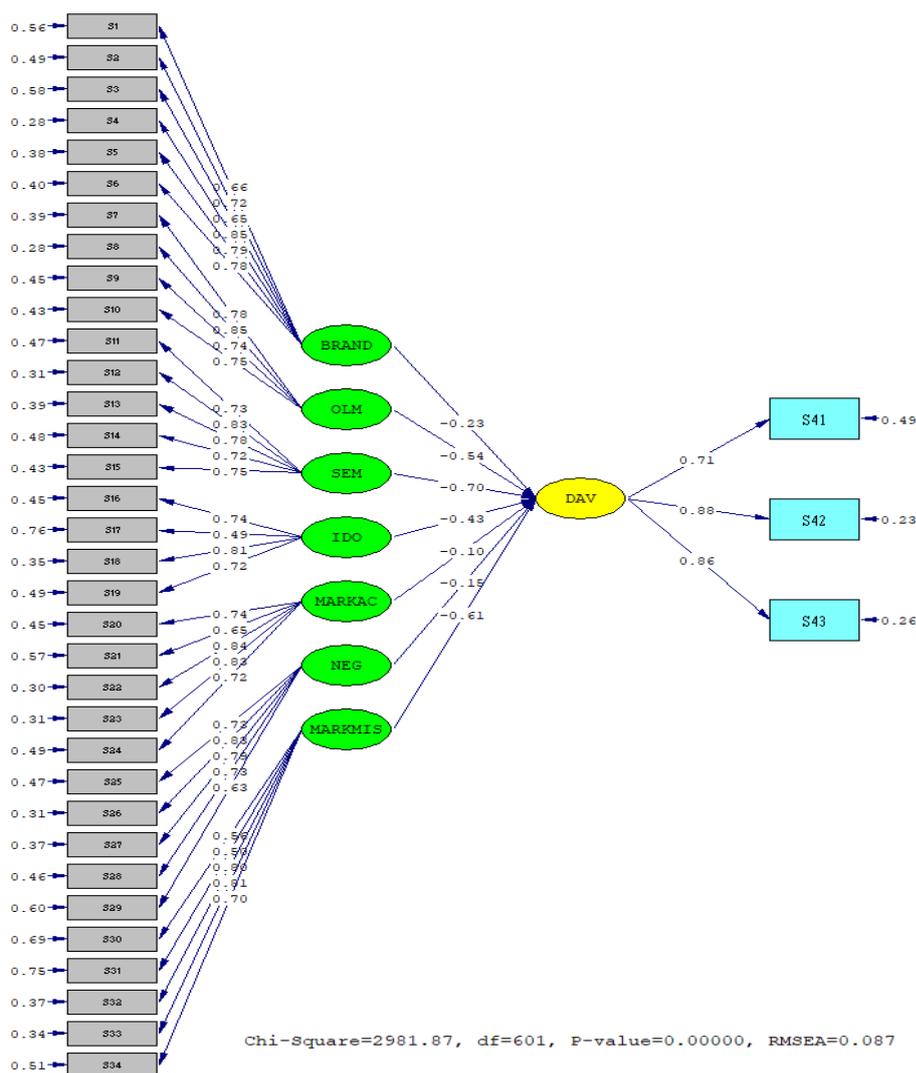
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The results of the structural model presented in "Figure 2", along with its limits, are displayed in "Table 6". According to all goodness of fit statistics, the table demonstrates that the model is statistically significant and exhibits a good fit. Additionally, the χ^2/df was obtained as which is less than 5. This indicates that the model is not only statistically significant but also an acceptable fit, as suggested by Erkorkmaz and all. (2013).

As a result of the analysis, "brand hate" has a negative effect of 0.55 units, "negative past experience" has a negative effect of 0.34 units, "symbolic incongruity" has a negative effect of 0.51 units, "ideological incongruity" has a negative effect of 0.23 units, "brand avoidance" has a negative effect of 0.52 units, "negative word-of-mouth" has a negative effect of 0.38 units, and brand retaliation has a negative effect of 0.55 units on cognitive dimension of its reflection on "consumer-brand forgiveness". In this context, it is observed that "brand forgiveness" is predominantly influenced by "brand hatred", "symbolic incongruity", "brand avoidance", and brand retaliation in terms of cognitive "brand forgiveness". To facilitate consumer forgiveness towards the brand, it is necessary to minimize the impact of these factors.

The detailed results for examining the determinants of brand hate and behavioral dimension of its reflection on consumer-brand forgiveness via structural equation modeling are given in "Table 6" and "Figure 3".

**Figure 3: "Examining the Determinants of Brand Hate and Behavioral
Dimension of Its Reflection on Consumer-Brand Forgiveness via Structural Equation
Modelling"**



The results of the structural model presented in “Figure 3”, along with its limits, are depicted in “Table 6”. The table reveals that the model is statistically significant and exhibits a good fit, as indicated by all goodness of fit statistics. Besides these fitness criteria, the χ^2/df was obtained as $2981,99/601 = 4,96$, which is less than 5 and means that the model is both statistically significant and an acceptable fit (Erkorkmaz and all. 2013).

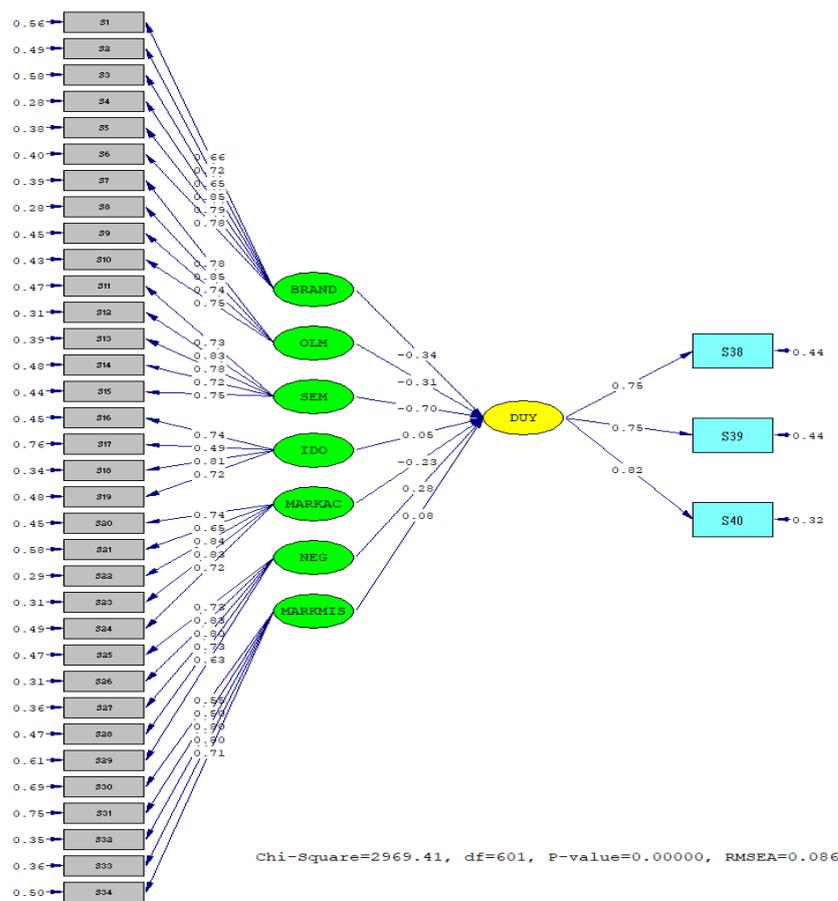
As a result of the analysis, brand hate has a negative effect of 0.23 units, “negative past experience” has a negative effect of 0.54 units, “symbolic incongruity” has a negative effect of 0.70 units, “ideological incongruity” has a negative effect of 0.43 units, “brand avoidance” has a negative effect of 0.10 units, “negative word-of-mouth” has a negative effect of 0.15 units, and brand retaliation has a negative effect of 0.61 units on behavioral dimension of its reflection

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on “consumer-brand forgiveness”. In this context, it is observed that “negative past experience”, “symbolic incongruity”, and brand retaliation have the most significant impact on behavioral “brand forgiveness”. To facilitate consumer forgiveness towards the brand, it is necessary to minimize the effects of these factors.

The detailed results for examining the determinants of brand hate and affective dimension of its reflection on “consumer-brand forgiveness” via structural equation modeling is given in “Table 6” and “Figure 4”.

Figure 4: “Examining the Determinants of Brand Hate and Affective Dimension of Its Reflection on Consumer-Brand Forgiveness via Structural Equation Modelling”



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“Table 6” shows the limits and the results of the structural model given in “Figure 4”. According to all goodness of fit statistics, “Table 6” demonstrates that the provided model is statistically significant and exhibits a good fit. Besides these fitness criteria, the χ^2 /df was obtained as $2969,41/601 = 4,94$, which is less than 5 and means that the model is both statistically significant and an acceptable fit (Erkorkmaz and all. 2013).

As a result of the analysis, brand hate has a negative effect of 0.34 units, “negative past experience” has a negative effect of 0.31 units, “symbolic incongruity” has a negative effect of 0.70 units, ideological incompatibility has a positive effect of 0.05 units, “brand avoidance” has a negative effect of 0.23 units, “negative word-of-mouth” has a positive effect of 0.20 units, and brand retaliation has a positive effect of 0.08 units on affective dimension of its reflection on “consumer-brand forgiveness”. In this regard, it is observed that “symbolic incongruity” has the most significant impact on emotional “brand forgiveness”. To facilitate consumer forgiveness towards the brand, it is particularly important to minimize the effect of this factor.

CONCLUSION

The problems that consumers encounter in today’s world have led to “emergence of negative emotions such as “anger”, “frustration” and “hatred”. The intensity of these emotions also reflects in their behaviors. In particular, the level of hatred felt by consumers affects their behavior towards the brand. However, the feeling of hatred felt by consumers is divided into 3 dimensions. In other words, consumers' hate for the brand is divided into three as “cold”, “cool” and “hot”. Cold brand hatred is the lowest level of hatred that consumers feel. In this context, at this level, it expresses negative emotions such as disappointment, weariness and discomfort that consumers feel towards the brand. At the level of cold hatred, consumers' relations with the brand are terminated and the brand can be ignored. In other words, in this dimension of hatred, consumers may act indifferent towards the brand and stop using the brand. When the level of hatred towards the brand is mild, emotions such as “disgust” and “anger” can be experienced intensely. In the cool brand hatred, the emotions felt by the consumers are sharper and stronger than in the cold level. Hot brand hate is the strongest hate dimension. At this level of hatred, consumers feel intense anger and hatred towards the brand. This sense of hatred is so

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strong that consumers may want to harm the brand and take revenge on it. "Negative experiences", "symbolic and ideological inconsistency", "disturbing advertisements" and "immoral behavior" are among the factors that cause brand hate. These factors create negative emotions in consumers. Consumers reflect these negative emotions on their behavior. Consumers may experience low-intensity negative emotions such as "fear", "disappointment" and "dissatisfaction" but may exhibit a silent attitude. Despite these emotions, the consumer may not have the intention to seek revenge from the brand. However, due to negative emotions, they may want to avoid the brand, switch to another brand, or refrain from using the product. Intense brand hatred, on the other hand, shows that consumers experience more intense emotions such as anger and contempt towards the brand and exhibit an active attitude. In other words, consumers demonstrate an "aggressive attitude" and "behavior towards the brand. As a result of brand hatred, consumers may want to seek revenge from the brand. In this context, consumers may boycott the brand, create hostile websites, organize anti-advertising campaigns, and use negative word-of-mouth to make other consumers hate the brand as well.

Consumers may develop negative emotions and experience negative encounters with brands. However, the active effort made to replace these negative emotions with positive thoughts can be considered as a successful outcome of forgiveness. Forgiveness refers to the process of leaving behind negative emotions and forgiving the person who caused the harm, leading to reconciliation. The concept of forgiveness is generally regarded as the process of transforming negative emotions into positive ones. Forgiveness also arises in the context of brand hatred. Negative experiences, disturbing advertisements, unethical behaviors, and symbolic mismatch lead consumers to change brands, engage in "negative word-of-mouth communication, and participate in destructive advertising and anti-public relations activities. Brands make efforts for consumers to forgive them. However, consumers' forgiveness of brands depends on certain conditions. Especially when there is a strong relationship between the consumer and the brand, the likelihood of consumers forgiving the brand increases. Brands generally apologize, express remorse, accept their faults, and try to compensate for the negative situation. However, offering an apology does not necessarily mean being forgiven. Apology consists of components such as "empathy", "intensity", and "timing" and how it is conveyed, the accuracy of timing, and the intensity level affect the consumer's forgiveness decision.

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Brands can increase the likelihood of being forgiven by responding to angry consumers with a sense of guilt and to fearful consumers with a sense of shame. It is crucial for brands to make efforts to be forgiven. The stronger the consumer's relationship with the brand, the higher the probability of forgiveness. Therefore, brands should make efforts to strengthen their relationship with consumers, maintain communication with them, and preserve brand loyalty.

According to the findings, it can be said that the most important factor in forgiveness is symbolic disharmony and negative past experience. In addition, changing the most influential variables on brand hatred positively will also change negative attitudes towards the brand. As consumers' brand hate levels decrease, their impact on brand hate will also decrease. In this context, consumers should be satisfied with the brand and negative experience should be reduced. Therefore, symbolic dissonance should be reduced and brands should be made to represent consumers. Also, it can be said that the immoral behavior of brands causes brand hatred. Accordingly, it is concluded that consumers frequently share their “negative feelings and thoughts about brands with their friends. This situation is considered important in terms of brand donation. In the research, it is seen that brand hatred, symbolic mismatch, brand avoidance and brand retaliation have the most important effects on cognitive brand forgiveness. In order for the consumer to donate the brand, the effects of these elements must be minimized. In addition, it was seen that the most important effect for behavioral brand forgiveness was caused by “negative past experience”, “symbolic mismatch” and “brand retaliation. In order for the consumer to donate the brand, the effects of these elements must be minimized. In this direction, it is seen that the most important effect for emotional brand forgiveness is symbolic dissonance. In order for the consumer to donate the brand, the effect of this element should be minimized.

Brand hate is a popular topic these days. This situation increases the importance of the concept of brand donation. In this context, it is observed that in the future, consumers will pay more attention to brands' business practices, production processes, and social responsibility projects. Brands being transparent, displaying honesty and behaving in accordance with ethical values will increase consumers' trust in brands and reduce brand hatred. However, it is

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inevitable for brands to make mistakes or face crises. In the future, brands are expected to react to such situations more quickly and effectively. Well-managed crisis communication and effective apology strategies will make consumers more tolerant towards brands and facilitate brand forgiveness. In this regard, it is believed that this study will serve as a guiding tool for brands in determining their strategies. Additionally, future research could be conducted by selecting participants with different demographic characteristics. It is thought that this study will contribute to future research in line with the relevant objectives.

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