
Reasons of Cancel Brand in Opinion of Consumer of Different Generations

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Abstract:

Purpose: The article's subject is cancel brand as an observable phenomenon in the brand world with positive and negative consequences. The cancel brand theme is an issue that is relatively new in the literature. More radical customer attitudes towards brands acting against commonly accepted values, norms, or social order are being observed. Customers expect brands to respond strongly to displays of evil, intolerance, or any type of harm. Brand users are highly sensitive to the brand's communication and action consistency in the market. Simultaneously, social media popularization allows for ongoing observation and evaluation of brand activity by customers. On the other hand, social media is often a platform where customers may initiate brand stigma due to poor behavior. A particular area of interest is identifying and evaluating reasons for excluding or boycotting brands from the consumers' perspective representing different generations.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The article presents a research approach based on a literature search and empirical research. Starting from the essence of the cancel culture phenomenon, through the terminology order, the essence of the cancel brand phenomenon and the conditions of its occurrence are presented. The empirical research was conducted by a diagnostic survey method using a survey questionnaire on a representative sample of 1,000 respondents. The research results were statistically analyzed using the Kruskal-Wallis test and the χ^2 independence test.

Findings: A survey results analysis reveals differences in how different generations of consumers evaluate the reasons for excluding brands. In particular, they display different attitudes when identifying the most common and most significant reasons for excluding brands. The variable approach depending on the consumers' age also relates to the evaluation of the reasons for excluding brands in connection with certain value communication and value declarations. Generally different assessment is shown by the youngest respondents' group. A particular difference can be seen regarding non-ecological activities, lack of climate responsibility, or offending religious feelings.

Practical Implications: The obtained research results allow us to formulate practical implications for brands regarding the communication of specific brand image elements to different age audiences. The research can be used, from a causal and social perspective, to attempt to capture factors that are uniquely important for brand communication, including values that are important to different generations of audiences to avoid or minimize the danger of brand exclusion.

Originality/Value: This study borrows from existing research on marketing communication, branding, and brand management to argue that organizations are required to verify the

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real expectations of brands regarding their market activity and marketing communication of specific benefits and values.

Keywords: *Cancel brand, brand value, gender of the consumer, age of the consumer, marketing communication.*

JEL codes: *M3, M31, M37.*

Paper Type: *Research article.*

1. Introduction

Brands, building their market image based on specific promises, values, and ambitions, are constantly being assessed by customers. Brand activity is embedded in a framework where customers simultaneously use digital and non-digital channels, have unlimited access to information, but also the ability to express their opinions, expectations, and reactions (Wyrwisz and Dziwulski 2021).

Therefore, brands communicate and offer certain values are often exposed to misunderstanding, negativity, boycotts or exclusion. Making a mistake in communication, or undertaking actions that don't gain approval, can be a reason for turning away from the brand. Moreover, sometimes by adopting a neutral attitude and not reacting to certain phenomena, the brand can inform views and contribute to questioning the values the brand declares.

Brand management is experiencing a kind of radicalization. Brands communicate specific political directions, do not avoid social topics, and represent themselves on important issues, gathering around them people with similar values. Against this background, a cancel brand is born - the phenomenon of a collective turning away from a brand as a result of its actions being perceived as inappropriate and violating accepted norms.

The cancel brand subject is relatively new and current, so far rarely discussed in publications and scientific research, especially in the context of brand value communication.

Considerations of cancel brands are centered around the thesis: Brands communicating values are susceptible to exclusion. The research aims to attempt a multifaceted assessment of the brand exclusion phenomenon. In particular, focused on identifying reasons for excluding brands from consumers' perspective in different age groups. A distinction was made between causes resulting from brands' market activity (real declared values) and causes resulting from brands' marketing communications (communicated values).

A closed catalog of potential reasons for brand exclusion was evaluated, including misleading customers, intolerance, insulting religious feelings, or attitudes toward armed conflicts. In addition, the research included the identification and analysis of the most common and most important reasons for brand exclusion.

The following research questions were formulated for the survey:

- What market activities of a brand can be a reason for its exclusion?
- What elements of a brand's communication can be a reason for its exclusion?
- Is there a different approach to brand exclusion among consumers of different age generations?
- What is the most important reason for excluding brands from the perspective of different age consumers?
- What is the most common reason for excluding brands from the perspective of different age consumers?

2. Cancel Brand - Essence and Determinants of the Phenomenon

The term *cancel brand* is derived from *cancel culture* - that is, a culture of cancellation, understood as a type of informal, usually extra-legal punishment of individuals or organizations that violate and break social norms. It is also a form of boycott aimed at enforcing the social justice principles. The cultural world situation also transferred into the business field, where image crises or even company collapses, were caused by consumer movements that affected the brand's business dimension (Saldanha *et al.*, 2023, Ruszkowska, 2022).

Terminology referring to the *cancel brand* phenomenon indicates terms such as brand exclusion, brand invalidation, or brand cancellation. It means that customers turn away from the brand, which is a specific punishment from consumers. It can have tremendous power, especially if it lasts long. It brings a negative image and, consequently, financial consequences (Costa and Azevedo, 2023).

Sense of agency can be distinguished among the determinants of the occurrence and severity of brand exclusion phenomena. Consumers expect brands to declare certain values, including social or political ones. Brands building their market power on unique, rare, and difficult to imitate tangible and intangible assets can gain a relatively sustainable competitive advantage (Kozielski, 2023).

Brands create certain attitudes, therefore their actions are not without consequences. Additionally, intense competition between brands leaves no space for neutral brands (Ruszkowska, 2022). The 2024 Marketing Trends Report indicates that consumers strongly express their brand expectations, distinguishing and choosing brands that clearly declare their values, especially socially important ones (Kantar, 2023). The brand nullification phenomenon is helping to publicize important issues that were once downplayed or concealed.

However, looking from the other side, the brand's exclusionary attitude implies a failure to accept differences, other values, and opposing views. It is also a form of fashion to boycott and publicly shame. A radical approach can lead to the erasure of a brand's accomplishments, traditions, and heritage (Abassi *et al.*, 2023).

Social media has become an integral space for brand activity, value communication, and audience interaction (Miller, 2019). Simultaneously, they are an environment that can easily be used for the initiation process and the actual brand exclusion.

This is because everyone has an unlimited opportunity to express their opinion, commenting, recommending, expressing emotions. Such a message has the potential to reach numerous users and enlist the support of individuals holding similar perspectives and attitudes (Kyriakou *et al.*, 2023).

Brand marketing activities are exposed to evaluation, criticism, or attacks. In particular, brands are facing pressure from negative reviews or boycotts due to the following actions (Woźniczka, 2023):

- hiding or falsifying marketing research results,
- misleading the public,
- offering defective, harmful, or illegal (counterfeit) products,
- undertaking unfair or illegal pricing practices,
- discriminating against buyers,
- failing to support a promise made in marketing communications,
- greenwashing.

In response to social change, brands are embracing a rebranding strategy by changing not only their visual identity but more importantly their values hierarchy. The PepsiCo or Uncle Ben's brand examples confirm that in response to consumer opposition and protests, the brand communication strategy was changed. Brand boycotts can also be caused by the political views expressed.

This was negatively experienced by the New Balance brand, taking sides during the U.S. presidential election. Brand exclusion can also be caused by limiting the brand's availability, favoring certain social groups, or granting certain benefits that may pose a threat to others. Such exclusion was experienced, among others, by some restaurants during the pandemic that served only vaccinated customers (Ruszkowska, 2022).

Considerations regarding the reasons evaluation for the brands' exclusion by differently-aged customers require supplementing with the identification of the basic generation types, i.e., the silent generation, baby boomers, generation X, millennials, and Generation Z. This division is considered useful for targeting specific age groups in marketing efforts (Sobura, 2023).

3. Research Methodology

The research method used for the empirical study was the diagnostic survey method. A research tool in a survey questionnaire with simple and complex scales to measure attitudes was used. In particular, the questionnaire construction was based on the Likert scale, which in social research is the most appropriate scale for measuring perceptions of the item under study.

Respondents were allowed to answer on a five-point scale (definitely no, rather no, neither yes/nor no, rather yes, definitely yes). The survey questionnaire included factual questions, divided into thematic sections. They referred to the identification of reasons for excluding brands considered at different levels. The four metric questions (gender, age, place of residence, and education) were an integral final part of the questionnaire.

The research procedure included a reliability analysis of the research tool. Therefore, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated for each question. For each question, the coefficient reached high values above 0.7. This confirms the high test reliability in each subject group. Additionally, no questions were observed that underestimated the overall result for the group, giving no indication to exclude any survey questions. Table 1 presents sample values of Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

Table 1. Selected Cronbach's alpha reliability statistics

Question	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items
In your opinion, what in the brand's actions could be the reason for its exclusion?	0.908	18
In your opinion, what in a brand's communication could be the reason for its exclusion?	0.922	18
To what extent can brand communication using shocking messages/shock advertising be a reason for brand exclusion?	0.827	9
To what extent can brand communication using an influencer be a reason for brand exclusion?	0.921	11
To what extent can brand communication on social media be a reason for brand exclusion?	0.847	8
What do you think brand exclusion is?	0.849	12
Which brands do you think are susceptible to exclusion?	0.811	10

Source: Own elaboration.

A CAWI (*Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing*) technique was used for the survey. The study was commissioned to BIOSTAT, Research and Development Center. The sample for the study was representative. The sample's representativeness was guaranteed by BIOSTAT. The survey included a sample of 1,000 adult Poles, participants in the online panel "Badanie opinii".

The sample included a representative distribution by age and gender according to CSO data (Population status as of December 31, 2022, updated as of May 31, 2023). The sample distribution is included in Table 2.

Table 2. Sample structure

Specification	[N]	[%]
Gender		
Women	520	52.0
Men	480	48.0
Age		
18 - 24 years	110	11.0
25 - 34 years	209	20.9
35 - 44 years	264	26.4
45 - 54 years	179	17.9
55 – 65 years	138	13.8
over 65 years	100	10.0
Place of residence		
city of less than 10,000 inhabitants	219	21.9
city of more than 10,000 to 20,000 inhabitants	95	9.5
city of more than 20,000 to 50,000 inhabitants	137	13.7
city of more than 50,000 to 100,000 inhabitants	122	12.2
city of more than 100,000 to 250,000 inhabitants	140	14.0
city of more than 250,000 inhabitants	287	28.7
Education		
primary	24	2.4
vocational	90	9.0
secondary	411	41.1
higher	475	47.5

Source: Own elaboration.

4. Research Results and Discussion

The survey results analysis was based on identifying reasons for excluding or boycotting brands. In particular, differences in perceptions about the reasons for excluding brands among audiences of different ages were evaluated. Respondents evaluated a catalog of diverse reasons for excluding brands. Reasons for customers diverting from brands were divided into two groups.

The first group included a set of reasons based on the brand's actual activity in the market. The second group included reasons for brand exclusion resulting from brand marketing communications. Consumers rated individual items describing reasons for excluding the brand on a five-point Likert scale.

The analysis of the collected data was directed at assessing the relationship between the answers given by the respondents regarding age. Tests with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov distribution normality test revealed that the distribution in the age subgroups is not close to a normal distribution, therefore a non-parametric equivalent of ANOVA was used, the Kruskal-Wallis test.

The Kruskal-Wallis single-factor variance analysis provided an opportunity to illustrate whether respondents of different age generations show different assessments of the reasons for brand exclusion in all the categories indicated.

Regarding the reasons for brand exclusion resulting from the brand's real activity in the market in all issues, the null hypothesis assumes that the feature distribution in the different age groups is the same, against the alternative hypothesis that it varies. Based on the Kruskal-Wallis test results, the null hypothesis was rejected in the following cases of the statements:

- misleading the customer (p=0.040)
- lying/deception (p=0.001)
- defective/broken/contaminated product (p=0.001)
- non-ecological activities (p=0.001)
- corruption (p<0,001)
- targeting communications to children (p<0.001)
- insulting religious feelings (p=0.018)
- lack of response to armed conflict (p<0.001)
- no reaction to social evil (p<0.001)
- vulgar language communication (p<0.001)

In other cases, accept the alternative hypothesis meaning that there are differences in the perception of the reasons for brand exclusion resulting from its market activity by different age respondents.

Tables 3-12 summarize the significant Kruskal Wallis test results of the pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for excluding brands resulting from the brand's real market activity. To illustrate the age subcategories, the designations are: Mean1 – mean for 18-24 years; Mean2 – 25 – 34 years, Mean3 – 35 – 44 years, Mean4 – 45 – 54 years, Mean5 – 55 – 64 years; Mean6 - mean for ≥ 65 years.

Table 3. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand market action) - misleading the customer

Sample 1- Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 1- Mean 5	-78.688	33.583	-2.343	.019
Mean 1- Mean 6	-98.718	36.303	-2.719	.007

Mean 2- Mean 5	-58.087	28.820	-2.016	.044
Mean 2 Mean -6	-78.117	31.948	-2.445	.014

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 4. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand market action) – lying/deception

Sample 1- Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 1- Mean 6	-101.513	32.624	-3.112	.002
Mean 1- Mean 5	-104.883	30.179	-3.475	<.001
Mean 2- Mean 6	-74.286	28.710	-2.587	.010
Mean 2- Mean 5	-77.656	25.898	-2.998	.003
Mean 4- Mean 6	-64.685	29.478	-2.194	.028
Mean 4- Mean 5	-68.055	26.748	-2.544	.011
Mean 3- Mean 5	-57.477	24.802	-2.317	.020

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 5. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand market action) – defective/broken/contaminated product

Sample 1- Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 1- Mean 2	-70.719	31.399	-2.252	.024
Mean 1- Mean 4	-85.731	32.294	-2.655	.008
Mean 1- Mean 3	-109.089	30.250	-3.606	<.001
Mean 1- Mean 5	-129.758	34.071	-3.808	<.001
Mean 1- Mean 6	-130.997	36.830	-3.557	<.001
Mean 2- Mean 5	-59.039	29.238	-2.019	.043

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 6. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand market action) – non-ecological activities

Sample 1- Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 1- Mean 3	-97.660	31.185	-3.132	.002
Mean 1- Mean 5	-117.883	35.123	-3.356	<.001
Mean 2- Mean 5	-88.551	30.141	-2.938	.003

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 7. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand market action) – corruption

Sample 1- Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
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Mean 1- Mean 6	-104.913	37.290	-2.813	.005
Mean 1- Mean 5	-138.611	34.496	-4.018	<.001
Mean 2- Mean 6	-97.900	32.816	-2.983	.003
Mean 2- Mean 5	-131.598	29.603	-4.445	<.001
Mean 3- Mean 6	-67.200	31.690	-2.121	.034
Mean 3- Mean 5	-100.898	28.350	-3.559	<.001
Mean 4- Mean 5	-82.317	30.573	-2.692	.007

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 8. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand market action) – targeting communications to children

Sample 1- Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 1- Mean 4	-81.428	33.390	-2.439	.015
Mean 1- Mean 3	-125.645	31.278	-4.017	<.001
Mean 1- Mean 6	-126.242	38.081	-3.315	<.001
Mean 1- Mean 5	-131.327	35.228	-3.728	<.001
Mean 2- Mean 3	-83.378	25.518	-3.267	.001
Mean 2- Mean 6	-83.975	33.512	-2.506	.012
Mean 2- Mean 5	-89.060	30.231	-2.946	.003

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 9. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand market action) – insulting religious feelings

Sample 1- Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 1- Mean 6	-76.305	38.080	-2.004	.045
Mean 1- Mean 5	-90.320	35.227	-2.564	.010
Mean 1- Mean 3	-97.745	31.277	-3.125	.002
Mean 4- Mean 3	63.961	26.685	2.397	.017

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 10. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand market action) – lack of response to armed conflict

Sample 1- Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 1- Mean 4	-73.665	33.690	-2.187	.029
Mean 1- Mean 3	-79.692	31.559	-2.525	.012
Mean 1- Mean 6	-122.428	38.423	-3.186	.001
Mean 1- Mean 5	-129.334	35.544	-3.639	<.001
Mean 2- Mean 4	-59.777	28.320	-2.111	.035
Mean 2- Mean 3	-65.804	25.748	-2.556	.011
Mean 2- Mean 6	-108.540	33.813	-3.210	.001
Mean 2- Mean 5	-115.446	30.502	-3.785	<.001

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 11. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand market action) – no reaction to social evil

Sample 1-Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 1- Mean 3	-106.228	31.134	-3.412	<.001
Mean 1- Mean 6	-119.120	37.906	-3.142	.002
Mean 1- Mean 5	-140.575	35.066	-4.009	<.001
Mean 2- Mean 3	-88.398	25.401	-3.480	<.001
Mean 2- Mean 6	-101.289	33.358	-3.036	.002
Mean 2- Mean 5	-122.744	30.092	-4.079	<.001
Mean 4- Mean 3	84.874	26.563	3.195	.001
Mean 4- Mean 6	-97.765	34.251	-2.854	.004
Mean 4- Mean 5	-119.221	31.079	-3.836	<.001

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 12. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand market action) – vulgar language communication

Sample 1-Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 1- Mean 3	-66.344	30.406	-2.182	.029
Mean 1- Mean 4	-87.473	32.460	-2.695	.007
Mean 1- Mean 6	-122.524	37.020	-3.310	<.001
Mean 1- Mean 5	-134.745	34.247	-3.935	<.001
Mean 2- Mean 4	-68.624	27.286	-2.515	.012
Mean 2- Mean 6	-103.675	32.579	-3.182	.001
Mean 2- Mean 5	-115.896	29.389	-3.944	<.001
Mean 3- Mean 5	-68.402	28.145	-2.430	.015

Source: Own elaboration.

The survey results indicate that the greatest discrepancies in the assessment of reasons for brand exclusion are found in actions aimed at children, responses to armed conflict, the use of vulgar language, or the corruption phenomenon. The most common differences in attitudes are at the extremes of the youngest and oldest age groups, which is characteristic for all the reasons analyzed.

Such a result is not counterintuitive. Significant differences can be seen between close age groups of respondents (e.g., 25-34 and 35-44), particularly in assessing the brand's response to armed conflict. This may suggest specific experiences with brands in this area that influenced respondents' ratings.

The second essential part of the study was to assess the reasons for brand exclusion related to the brand's communication of various attributes, including value. This was

to indicate differences in consumers' perceptions of why they boycott or avoid brands at different ages. This part of the survey also gave information about the differences in the respondents' attitudes towards realistically declared and taken actions in opposition to only communicating certain values.

Concerning the causes arising from the brand's marketing communications, the null hypothesis assuming that the characteristics' distribution across age groups is the same, against the alternative hypothesis that it varies, was made in all issues. Based on the Kruskal-Wallis test results, the null hypothesis was rejected in the following cases of the statements:

- misleading the customer (p=0.035)
- communicating product features and benefits that the brand does not actually offer (p=0.015)
- lying/deception (p=0.005)
- defective/broken/contaminated product (p<0.001)
- lack of concern for employees' well-being (p=0.048)
- non-ecological activities (p=0.010)
- lack of climate brand responsibility (p=0.002)
- corruption (p<0.001)
- directing communications to children (p<0.001)
- lack of response to armed conflict (p<0.001)
- lack of response to social evils (p<0.001)
- vulgar communication language (p<0.001)

In other cases, accept the alternative hypothesis meaning that there are differences in the perception of the reasons for excluding a brand resulting from its marketing communications by different age respondents. The following tables include significant differences in scores when comparing age groups pairwise.

Tables 13-24 summarize the significant discrepancies in evaluating reasons for brand exclusion related to brand communication when comparing age groups pairwise.

Table 13. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand communication) – misleading the customer

Sample 1- Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 4- Mean 5	-75.760	29.574	-2.562	.010
Mean 4- Mean 6	-76.089	32.592	-2.335	.020
Mean 1- Mean 5	-74.039	33.368	-2.219	.026
Mean 1- Mean 6	-74.368	36.071	-2.062	.039
Mean 2- Mean 5	-63.561	28.635	-2.220	.026
Mean 2- Mean 6	-63.890	31.743	-2.013	.044

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 14. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand communication) – communicating product features and benefits that the brand does not actually offer

Sample 1- Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 4- Mean 3	50.885	25.751	1.976	.048
Mean 4- Mean 5	-72.012	30.129	-2.390	.017
Mean 4- Mean 6	-96.952	33.205	-2.920	.004
Mean 2- Mean 3	-43.198	24.625	-1.754	.079
Mean 2- Mean 5	-64.325	29.173	-2.205	.027
Mean 2- Mean 6	-89.265	32.339	-2.760	.006

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 15. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand communication) – lying/deception

Sample 1- Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 1- Mean 6	-89.480	34.943	-2.561	.010
Mean 1- Mean 5	-89.564	32.324	-2.771	.006
Mean 2- Mean 6	-87.118	30.750	-2.833	.005
Mean 2- Mean 5	-87.202	27.739	-3.144	.002

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 16. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand communication) – defective/broken/contaminated product

Sample 1- Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 1- Mean 2	-82.085	31.507	-2.605	.009
Mean 1- Mean 4	-113.597	32.405	-3.506	<.001
Mean 1- Mean 3	-114.608	30.354	-3.776	<.001
Mean 1- Mean 5	-167.501	34.188	-4.899	<.001
Mean 1- Mean 6	-172.885	36.957	-4.678	<.001
Mean 2- Mean 5	-85.416	29.338	-2.911	.004
Mean 2- Mean 6	-90.800	32.523	-2.792	.005

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 17. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand communication) – lack of concern for employees' well-being

Sample 1- Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
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Mean 1- Mean 3	-74.457	30.807	-2.417	.016
Mean 2- Mean 3	-64.642	25.134	-2.572	.010

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 18. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand communication) – non-ecological activities

Sample 1- Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 2- Mean 3	-75.075	25.375	-2.959	.003
Mean 2- Mean 5	-85.775	30.061	-2.853	.004
Mean 4- Mean 3	62.301	26.535	2.348	.019
Mean 4- Mean 5	-73.001	31.046	-2.351	.019

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 19. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand communication) – lack of climate brand responsibility

Sample 1- Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 1- Mean 3	-8.127	31.202	-2.856	.004
Mean 1- Mean 5	-104.076	35.142	-2.962	.003
Mean 4- Mean 3	74.361	26.620	2.793	.005
Mean 4- Mean 5	-89.311	31.146	-2.867	.004
Mean 2- Mean 3	-55.431	25.456	-2.177	.029
Mean 2- Mean 5	-70.380	30.157	-2.334	.020

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 20. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand communication) – corruption

Sample 1- Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 1- Mean 3	-66.158	30.634	-2.160	.031
Mean 1- Mean 4	-83.550	32.703	-2.555	.011
Mean 1- Mean 5	-143.841	34.503	-4.169	<.001
Mean 1- Mean 6	-165.634	37.298	-4.441	<.001
Mean 2- Mean 4	-65.492	27.491	-2.382	.017
Mean 2- Mean 5	-125.782	29.609	-4.248	<.001
Mean 2- Mean 6	-147.575	32.823	-4.496	<.001
Mean 3- Mean 5	-77.683	28.356	-2.740	.006
Mean 3- Mean 6	-99.476	31.697	-3.138	.002
Mean 4- Mean 5	-60.291	30.580	-1.972	.049
Mean 4- Mean 6	-82.084	33.701	-2.436	.015

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 21. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand communication) – directing communications to children

Sample 1-Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 1- Mean 4	-98.405	33.617	-2.927	.003
Mean 1- Mean 6	-105.591	38.340	-2.754	.006
Mean 1- Mean 3	-136.979	31.490	-4.350	<.001
Mean 1- Mean 5	-149.397	35.467	-4.212	<.001
Mean 2- Mean 3	-79.619	25.692	-3.099	.002
Mean 2- Mean 5	-92.038	30.436	-3.024	.002

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 22. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand communication) – lack of response to armed conflict

Sample 1-Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 1- Mean 4	-76.602	33.596	-2.280	.023
Mean 1- Mean 3	-115.001	31.470	-3.654	<.001
Mean 1- Mean 6	-138.013	38.315	-3.602	<.001
Mean 1- Mean 5	-153.776	35.444	-4.338	<.001
Mean 2- Mean 3	-82.807	25.675	-3.225	.001
Mean 2- Mean 6	-105.819	33.718	-3.138	.002
Mean 2- Mean 5	-121.582	30.417	-3.997	<.001
Mean 4- Mean 5	-77.174	31.414	-2.457	.014

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 23. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand communication) – lack of response to social evils

Sample 1-Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	test	Significance
Mean 4- Mean 3	74.779	26.468	2.825		.005
Mean 4- Mean 6	-100.218	34.128	-2.937		.003
Mean 4- Mean 5	-115.867	30.967	-3.742		<.001
Mean 1- Mean 3	-72.459	31.023	-2.336		.020
Mean 1- Mean 6	-97.899	37.771	-2.592		.010
Mean 1- Mean 5	-113.548	34.941	-3.250		.001
Mean 2- Mean 3	-58.152	25.310	-2.298		.022
Mean 2- Mean 6	-83.591	33.239	-2.515		.012
Mean 2- Mean 5	-99.241	29.984	-3.310		<.001

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 24. Significant results of the Kruskal-Wallis test in pairwise comparison age groups for the question on perceived reasons for brand exclusion (brand communication) – vulgar communication language

Sample 1- Sample 2	Test statistics	Standard error	Standardized test statistic	Significance
Mean 1- Mean 3	-70.565	30.328	-2.327	.020
Mean 1- Mean 4	-86.559	32.377	-2.673	.008
Mean 1- Mean 6	-125.270	36.925	-3.393	<.001
Mean 1- Mean 5	-139.599	34.159	-4.087	<.001
Mean 2- Mean 4	-55.530	27.216	-2.040	.041
Mean 2- Mean 6	-94.241	32.495	-2.900	.004
Mean 2- Mean 5	-108.570	29.313	-3.704	<.001
Mean 3- Mean 5	-69.035	28.073	-2.459	.014

Source: Own elaboration.

The survey results of the reasons for brand exclusion related to brand marketing communications reveal that they do not fully coincide with the reasons identified with brand activities. Age differences in evaluation are also evident in factors such as communicating product features and benefits that it does not have, lack of brand climate responsibility, or concern for employee well-being.

Also, with each age-paired reason for exclusion analyzed, we see more significant discrepancies between age categories. This may be due to the audience's very different sensitivity to certain values communication and their different rankings. The reason may also be the very different experiences with marketing communications as an information and persuasive influence using various influence tools, including various ones to different age groups.

The final survey phase was to identify the most common reasons for brand exclusion. Unethical brand activity and brand communication that goes against social norms were identified as the most common reasons for brand exclusion. The collected data was analyzed to assess the relationship between the answers given by the respondents concerning age.

For this purpose, the χ^2 test of independence was applied. In all issues, the null hypothesis of no relationship between the groups was set against the alternative hypothesis that the variables are dependent. The research results in all cases indicated that the null hypothesis of no difference in perceptions should be accepted. Similar results were obtained by assessing the significance of differences in the different age generations' perceptions of the most important reasons for brand exclusion.

The results of the χ^2 independence test did not allow for the hypothesis of no relationship between age groups to be rejected. Such results suggest that both the

most common and most important reasons for brand exclusion in popular opinion are common, regardless of age. These reasons are so clear and weighty that there is an intergenerational consensus on the perception of the brands' conduct.

5. Conclusions, Proposals, Recommendations

The survey results analysis reveals areas that, from the perspective of brand management and, in particular, brand value communication, can be the reason for customers reversing the brand. In extreme cases, they contribute to brand ostracism. Customers are particularly sensitive to brand credibility issues, expressed with consistency between statements in the message and actual actions. Misleading and lying are most often seen as the primary reasons for brand exclusion.

Also, failure to respond adequately to armed conflict or social evils can contribute to brand boycotts. Different generations of customers demonstrate, in many cases, different sensitivities to the way brands communicate with the public and the brands' real market activities.

The research results contribute to the formulation of practical implications for brands to build a brand image based on important values and to communicate values. It is important to emphasize the requirement for a balanced use of communication tools and an adequate message for brand positioning.

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