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**Brand Activism in the 21st Century: What makes brand
activism authentic among millennials?**

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Management Summary

The increasing presence and popularity of brand activism is creating new opportunities for brands to demonstrate their support for social and political issues by taking a stance on these controversial issues and communicating this. The expectation of brands to participate in brand activism is particularly prevalent among millennials, who constitute a large share of the population and have significant spending power but are also increasingly skeptical of marketing ploys. Thus, participating in brand activism carries substantial risks for brands. It can lead to backlash and have negative financial implications if the efforts are not deemed authentic. However, the concept of brand activism authenticity in general and with a focus on millennials has not received adequate attention in research. Since brand activism authenticity is a relatively novel topic and is crucial to the initiative's success, and because of the critical role millennials play in society, both practitioners and academics have an interest in addressing this research gap.

Therefore, the overall purpose of this study was to delve into the factors that make brand activism authentic among millennials. Insights were first gathered through existing research on authenticity, both within brand activism and CSR, which allowed for the construction of a conceptual model of brand activism authenticity. The conceptual model proposes the following factors of brand activism: impact, fit, self-serving motives, and brand attitude. Brand attitude was found to have a mediating effect in other contexts within the existing research. As such, it was also tested whether brand attitude mediates the effect of impact, fit and self-serving motives on brand activism authenticity. Thus, this study explores the factors of brand activism authenticity by adopting a deductive research approach and conducting primary quantitative research through an online survey.

The results of the quantitative analysis revealed that three of the four proposed factors affect the perceived authenticity of brand activism among millennials. In order of their strength, the factors that significantly affect the authenticity of brand activism are fit, impact, and brand attitude. Self-serving motives were not found to affect the authenticity of brand activism initiatives. The study additionally finds that brand attitude mediates the effect that fit and impact have on brand activism authenticity.

Considering that brand activism authenticity is a novel topic and that no quantitative research has been conducted, the findings of this study provide several implications for managers and academics. For example, considering the importance of fit in authenticity, managers should make efforts to gain an understanding of what issues consumers are concerned with when choosing a brand activism initiative to ensure alignment. Moreover, several recommendations for future research were suggested, such as testing further factors of authenticity in the context of brand activism.

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1. Introduction

Today, society faces an abundance of issues ranging from racism and gender inequality to climate change. Consumers expect brands to help solve society's problems (Edelman, 2020) rather than solely acting as profit-maximizing entities. This demand is particularly prevalent amongst millennials (Shetty et al., 2019), who expect corporations to take a stance on social and political issues and communicate this (Alharbi et al., 2022). Simultaneously, consumers often perceive involvement in societal issues as marketing ploys and are increasingly skeptical of such participation (WARC, 2019), leading to a change in consumer behavior.

This change in purchasing behavior, in which consumers consider products they buy to be an extension of their values, views, and beliefs (Amed et al., 2019), has forced companies to respond to consumer demands and participate in brand activism: a form of making a political and social statement and an opportunity to make an impact (Alharbi et al., 2022). Large multinationals from various industries have participated in brand activism, taking a socio-political stand on varying issues. A handful of examples include Nike, Ben & Jerry's, Pepsi, Patagonia, Microsoft, and Gillette.

The social movement Black Lives Matter (BLM), founded in response to the killing of African American Trayvon Martin in 2013 (Black Lives Matter, n.d.), gained traction in 2020 following the homicide of African American George Floyd by a white police officer. This caused a global public outcry, and companies made statements to show their support of the BLM movement. The American multinational corporation Nike is one example of a company that demonstrated significant support for the BLM movement. The company launched a campaign called "For Once, Don't Do It" a few days after Floyd's murder (Nike, 2020a). Their campaign urged people to stand up to racism, inequality, and police brutality. It garnered millions of views and hundreds of thousands of likes on social media within days of publishing (netimperative, 2020), with praise for "using its voice to connect people" (Baker, 2020).

However, brand activism initiatives can also be prone to backlash if they are not perceived as authentic. Pepsi's 2017 "Live For Now Moments Anthem" advertisement featuring Kendall Jenner, in which the model diffuses a potential riot with a can of

Pepsi, is a prime example of consequences that brand activism can have when misdirected. The ad made obvious allusions to the BLM Movement but depicted peaceful and barely-armed police officers, severely contrasting with the reality of the violence present at protests (Caruso, 2017). The advertisement failed to address “political implications of protest, systematic racism in the police, white privilege and police brutality” (O’malley, 2020). Additionally, it employed a white, affluent model and reality TV star as the promoter of social justice, which was deemed tone-deaf in the context. Pepsi pulled the advertisement within two days of its release in response to the extreme online backlash (Victor, 2017). The company also had to publicly respond to Bernice King, the youngest daughter of the renowned civil rights activist leader, Dr. Martin Luther King. Bernice King took to Twitter to post a picture of her father being assaulted by a police officer with the caption, “If only Daddy would have known about the power of #Pepsi” (Taylor, 2017). This illustrates the public relations backlash that brand activism can have when it is executed in an inauthentic manner or perceived as being a marketing strategy with the sole purpose of increasing profits. The repercussions of this act of brand activism were not limited to public relations backlash. Pepsi’s sales revenue generated by millennials dropped, and younger consumers’ consideration of purchasing a Pepsi beverage reached the lowest point in three years in the aftermath of the advertisement (Tillman, 2019).

Nike and Pepsi are two examples that demonstrate how brands currently operate in a society where consumers increasingly expect them to enter the socio-political domain while being faced with increased scrutiny of their underpinning motives (Kotler & Sarkar, 2018). Assuring consumers of authentic brand activism is thus crucial for marketing success, as it addresses consumer skepticism and is crucial to ensuring the potential for social change (Vredenburg et al., 2020). This poses the question: what factors make consumers perceive brand activism as authentic? This research paper aims to investigate what makes brand activism perceived as being authentic among millennials.

1.1 Justification of Significance

Although brand activism is increasingly present in society, the topic is still relatively novel. According to Mirzaei et al. (2022) and Vredenburg et al. (2020), it is crucial for companies to understand how consumers perceive brand activism and what they expect to engage in it successfully. Furthermore, while there is available research on brand activism, the lack of available research on brand activism authenticity needs to be addressed. The combination of decreasing trust in brands (KMPG, 2020) and the increased consumer demand for brand activism emphasizes the need for further research.

The paper adds to existing research on brands that take a stance on social, political, environmental, and cultural issues. It aims to investigate the gap in research on the perception of millennials towards the authenticity of brand activism. The findings of this research are relevant because of the significant role that millennials currently play and will continue to play in society and the effectiveness of brand activism in targeting the generation (Shetty et al., 2019, Kotler & Sarkar, 2018). Furthermore, understanding factors that make brand activism authentic among millennials can help brands avoid backlash and its consequent repercussions. Moreover, to the best of the authors' knowledge, no quantitative research has been conducted with the same objective. Brand managers can learn valuable lessons from the findings of this study, mainly: which aspects of brand activism campaigns need to be considered for the campaign to be deemed authentic and to avoid backlash.

1.2 Research Objective and Research Question

The purpose of this master thesis is to gain insights into what makes brand activism perceived as authentic among millennials. More specifically, when consumers are confronted with an act of brand activism, what factors make consumers perceive it as authentic. The absence of quantitative research on the topic results in leaning on existing research on corporate social responsibility (CSR) for a conceptual model. Thus, millennials' perceived brand activism authenticity is investigated among four attributes: fit, impact, self-serving motives, and brand attitude. Fit, impact, and motive are referred to in research on brand activism authenticity and are frequently cited as antecedents of authenticity in other domains, such as CSR. While CSR authenticity may provide a foundation for research into brand activism authenticity, it is still a distinct phenomenon

that requires further research. Targeting this gap in research, this study aims to answer the following question:

Research question: What factors make brand activism authentic amongst millennials?

1.3 Research Scope

This research investigates factors that make brand activism authentic among millennials for numerous reasons. Firstly, millennials are currently the largest adult cohort worldwide, comprising 23% of the population (Neufeld, 2021). This is a significant number alone but has critical implications for brand activism, considering that 62% of millennials favor brands that are open about their social and political beliefs (Kitterman, 2020). Secondly, millennials have a spending power of \$2.5 trillion (YPulse, 2020). Coupled with their increasingly cautious purchasing behavior and willingness to boycott brands that do not align with their values, this can significantly impact brands. According to the 5WPR consumer culture report (2020), millennials are also more concerned with the alignment of their values with those of brands that they support than older generations, such as Baby Boomers. Finally, practitioners insist that brand activism strategies are favorable when targeting millennials (Smiley, 2019, as cited in Vredenburg et al., 2020). If implemented correctly, it can be used as a strategic branding move, which can result in a stronger emotional attachment to the brand (Mirzaei et al., 2022). Shetty et al. (2019) recognized the potential of brand activism as a means to appeal to millennials; however, the study focuses on millennials' perception of brand activism rather than what factors make brand activism authentic among millennials.

In contrast to Vredenburg et al. (2020), who conducted a qualitative study on brand activism and developed a typology framework based on theory, this research collects primary data through quantitative means to allow for generalizations about what makes brand activism authentic. Mirzaei et al. (2022) similarly conducted qualitative research on the topic through an interpretive inductive approach and content analysis. They developed a brand activism authenticity framework that includes practice, inclusion, fit, motivation, social context independency, and sacrifice. The conceptual model bears similarities to research conducted on the topic of CSR authenticity. There is more available research on topics such as brand authenticity (Campagna et al., 2022; Choi et

al., 2015; Morhart et al., 2015; Moulard et al., 2016; Napoli et al., 2014; Schallehn et al., 2014) and CSR authenticity (Alhouti et al., 2016; Jeon & An, 2019; Joo et al., 2019). As brand activism is an evolution of CSR (Kotler & Sarkar, 2018) and CSR authenticity is conceptually more similar to brand activism authenticity than brand authenticity, it is reasonable to assume that a framework used for CSR authenticity can be applied to brand activism authenticity.

1.4 Outline of the Study

This paper is divided into eight chapters. The introduction, the first chapter, is followed by a literature review, in which brand activism is defined, the motivation behind brand activism is explained, a comparison of CSR and brand activism is provided, and antecedents of authenticity are examined. The following chapter presents the conceptual model and the developed hypotheses. The third chapter presents the methodology, in which the research approach is explained in detail. The fourth chapter consists of the results of the collected data. This chapter is followed by a discussion and leads to the recommendations and implications from an academic and managerial perspective. The final chapter consists of a conclusion and critically analyses the paper providing limitations and suggestions for future research.

2. Literature Review

The literature review is divided into two sections. The first section provides information about brand activism, which is composed of five sub-sections, starting with the definition of brand activism. This is followed by a literature review of the motivation behind brand activism, the consequences of inauthentic brand activism, a comparison of brand activism and CSR, and concludes with a review of the available literature on brand activism and millennials. The second section is concerned with authenticity. Subchapters provide information about antecedents of authenticity, antecedents of brand activism authenticity, antecedents of brand authenticity, and antecedents of CSR authenticity. The section concludes with a chapter on brand attitude.

2.1 Defining Brand Activism

The most common definition of brand activism is that of Kotler and Sarkar (2018): “Brand Activism consists of business efforts to promote, impede, or direct social, political, economic, and/or environmental reform or stasis with the desire to promote or impede improvements in society” (p. 462). They suggest that brand activism, which is values-driven, is the evolution of marketing-driven initiatives like cause promotion, cause-related marketing, and corporate social marketing, which evolved into corporate-driven initiatives such as corporate philanthropy, workforce volunteering, and socially responsible practices (Kotler & Sarkar, 2017). Similarly, Shetty et al. (2019) suggest the following definition for brand activism: “Brand activism is when a company or brand takes a plunge into the social, cultural, gender, environmental issue and supports the same in its marketing and advertising communication to the society” (p. 165). They suggest that brand activism can take various forms, such as making a public statement, lobbying for the cause, or donating money to the cause. The definition provided by Shetty et al. (2019) is similar to the one suggested by Kotler and Sarkar (2018), with the exception that it does not refer to the political and economic aspects associated with brand activism.

Kotler and Sarkar (2018) identified six broad categories of brand activism: political, economic, workplace, environmental, legal, and social. According to the authors, issues associated with social activism include but are not limited to equality in race, LGBTQ, gender, and age. Workplace activism is concerned with governance and includes areas such as CEO pay, worker compensation, and labor and union relations. Political

activism is concerned with lobbying and voting rights, while areas of environmental activism include air and water pollution, conservation, and environmental laws and policies. Economic activism is primarily concerned with wage and tax policies affecting income equality and wealth redistribution. Finally, topics in the legal activism category include tax, citizenship, and employment laws that impact companies.

Kotler and Sarkar (2018) add that brand activism can be progressive and regressive. The former refers to a firm's desire to promote the common good, while the latter refers to companies hurting the common good. An example of a company conducting progressive brand activism is the ice cream brand Ben & Jerry's. The company has a long history of supporting the LGBTQ+ community and went as far as refusing to sell two scoops of the same ice cream flavor in Australia in 2017 until the country's marriage law allowed people of the same sex to get married in a show of support for gay rights (Purdy, 2017). Regressive activism is best exemplified by tobacco firms, which continued to advertise and deny the health issues associated with smoking, although research revealed the contrary (Kotler & Sarkar, 2018).

Following a critical literature review of brand activism, and with reference to Kotler and Sarkar's (2018) definition of brand activism, Sibai et al. (2020) suggest three markers of brand activism: "an activist brand is (1) a moral subject (2) that reforms dominant judgments (3) to promote social benefits" (p. 1652). A moral subject refers to a brand being perceived as a purpose and value-driven brand by stakeholders and possessing a moral conscience, which can be used to influence the morality of others. Reforming dominant judgments entails "challenging existing judgments and promoting alternative ones" (Sibai et al., 2021, p. 1652). The third marker, promoting social benefits, implies that the activist brand aims to make a positive social change.

Vredenburg et al. (2020) draw and elaborate on research about brand political activism and suggest the following definition of brand activism: "a purpose- and values-driven strategy in which a brand adopts a nonneutral stance on institutionally contested sociopolitical issues, to create social change and marketing success" (p. 446). They define four characteristics in their examination of brand activism. The first characteristic of brand activism is that the brand is purpose- and values-driven. This is necessary because brand activism is driven by purpose and values, with a goal greater than profit. Secondly, the brand activism initiative addresses a "controversial, contested,

or polarizing sociopolitical issue(s)” (Vredenburg et al., 2020, p. 446). These issues are defined as having competing values and interests, which are politically sensitive and evoke disagreements and strong emotions. They acknowledge that contested and controversial issues can change over time. Examples of controversial issues include but are not limited to sexual harassment, gender equality, LGBTQIA+ rights, gun control, racism, and reproductive rights. Thirdly, they posit that the issue can have a progressive or conservative nature. The final characteristic posits that both messaging and brand practice are used to contribute toward a sociopolitical issue(s).

2.1.1 The Motivation behind Brand Activism

With brands increasingly taking part in brand activism, the question regarding the motivation behind it arises. There are risks associated with taking a public stance on controversial and divisive issues, yet brands still participate.

There are numerous reasons why brands engage in brand activism, which can seemingly be categorized. It can be argued that brand activism initially emerged as a response to consumer demand. According to research conducted by Accenture (2018), 62% of consumers expect companies to stand up for issues that they are passionate about. This is supported by Hoppner and Vadakkepatt (2019) and Vredenburg et al. (2020), who state that there is increasing pressure and expectations for business entities to actively participate in society rather than solely operating as profit-maximizing entities. Kotler and Sarkar (2018) also state that positioning is no longer sufficient and that customers want action from brands because of how brands live and behave in the world.

In addition to the consumer demand or expectation aspect of participation in brand activism, it is notable that there are numerous other benefits of brand activism that may motivate entities to partake. Benefits of brand activism include grasping the attention of the target audience and creating a buzz around the brand. Furthermore, brand activism can increase brand equity, customer loyalty, favorable brand attitudes, and brand trust (Shetty et al., 2019, Vredenburg et al., 2020).

There are undoubtedly also financial benefits that companies can reap from participating in brand activism. Nike’s 2018 ad with Colin Kaepernick, who famously kneeled during the National Anthem before a National Football League game in 2016 (Haislop, 2020), exemplifies this. According to Bloomberg, Nike received \$43 million

worth of media exposure within 24 hours of revealing the advertisement (Novy-Williams, 2018), and Nike's online sales increased by a staggering 31% (Edison Trends, 2018). Although Nike experienced some backlash from the campaign, Nike's stock rose over 18% in the year after the announcement of the Kaepernick deal (Sarkar & Kotler, 2018). The financial benefits associated with participating in brand activism are corroborated by Shetty et al. (2019), who state that brand activism can have a favorable impact on profits.

2.1.2 The Consequences of inauthentic Brand Activism

Knowledgeable consumers can differentiate between marketing gimmicks and a genuine purpose (Amed et al., 2019). Consequently, brand activism can have severe repercussions on a company's reputation if consumers perceive it as inauthentic. Vredenburg et al. (2020) define brands that conduct inauthentic brand activism as lacking "explicit brand purpose and values and either do not exhibit substantive prosocial corporate practices or actively hide their absence of practices" (p. 451). Consequences of acting in this manner can lead to perceptions of insincerity, inauthenticity, and deceptiveness which accordingly has negative implications on brand equity due to unfavorable brand associations and false signaling (Vredenburg et al., 2020). Additional negative consequences of inauthentic brand activism associated with brand equity include alienating the core customer base, losing consumer trust, and losing customers (Shetty et al., 2019, Vredenburg et al., 2020).

The negative effects of inauthentic brand activism are not limited to brand equity. There are financial repercussions that result from the loss of brand equity, as customers that feel alienated by the act of brand activism may lead to the boycotting of the brand, which can negatively affect sales, cash flow, and stock prices (Shetty et al., 2019). Furthermore, if consumers do not perceive the brand activism initiative to be an authentic way of driving social change, the potential for social change is limited (Vredenburg et al., 2020).

2.1.3 Brand Activism vs. CSR

In order to understand the difference between brand activism and CSR, it is necessary to gain a comprehensive understanding of CSR. The European Commission defines CSR as "the responsibility of enterprises for their impact on society" (European Commission,

n.d.). It suggests that companies can become socially responsible by “integrating social, environmental, ethical, consumer and human rights concerns into their business strategy and operations in close collaboration with their stakeholders” and “following the law.” Specific issues targeted by CSR initiatives typically include but are not limited to human rights, working conditions, the environment, to the extent that enterprises aim to improve their impact on it, combating corruption, corporate governance, gender equality in employment, and occupational integration (SECO, n.d.). According to the European Commission (n.d.), integrating these concerns should maximize the creation of shared value for company owners and shareholders, their other stakeholders, and society in general and identify, prevent, and mitigate possible adverse impacts. While there are varying definitions of CSR, with the earliest definition originating in 1953, definitions consistently refer to the following five dimensions: social, economic, stakeholder, voluntariness, and environmental (Dahlsrud, 2008).

It is undeniable that brand activism and CSR have similarities. Both CSR and brand activism involve actions from a firm that intends to positively impact society and include social, economic, and environmental aspects. Furthermore, in terms of impact and importance, brand activism has recently been equated to CSR (Osorio et al., 2020). There are, however, significant differences. One key aspect that distinguishes brand activism from CSR is the nature of the targeted issues. In contrast to CSR, which addresses issues that “prevent or dampen the potential adverse effects of its (the enterprise’s) activities” (SECO, n.d.), brand activism is concerned with the “biggest and most urgent problems facing society” (Kotler & Sarkar, 2018, p. 474).

Furthermore, Dodd and Supa (2015) state that brand activism differs from corporate social responsibility as it involves a company aligning itself with a “controversial social-political issue outside the normal sphere of CSR interest” (p. 287). This is further supported by Mirzaei et al. (2022), Mukherjee & Althuizen (2020), and Vredenburg et al. (2020), who state that CSR usually concerns non-divisive, generally accepted, and prosocial issues, which are considered to be beneficial by the majority of society. In contrast, the controversial nature of issues addressed by brand activism are politically sensitive, evoke strong emotions, and alienate certain consumers (Vredenburg et al., 2020). Therefore, it can be deduced that because not all stakeholders will share the same

opinion on the matter of these sensitive topics that can lead to backlash, participating in brand activism is riskier than CSR.

Additionally, in contrast to brand activism, CSR activities are associated with the company's core business (Economie Suisse, 2015). The following example illustrates these differences between CSR and brand activism: if a company produces bottles out of plastic, the CSR activity could be to engage in recycling plastic bottles, which is associated with the company's core business and is not a controversial topic. However, a brand activism initiative would be to engage in a topic such as racial equality or same-sex marriage rights, which is not associated with the company's core business and is more divisive.

Mukherjee and Althuizen (2020) suggest that a further differentiating factor between CSR and brand activism is the planned nature of the act. They state that acts of brand activism can occur accidentally because a CEO can unintentionally express their opinion on a matter, or in an ad hoc manner, through a response to a current issue. This differs from CSR campaigns, which are predominantly integrated into a company's strategic plan. A further fundamental difference between CSR and brand activism is their underlying motives. According to its definition, CSR is the enterprise's responsibility for its impact on society which maximizes the value created for shareholders. It could thus be inferred that CSR has stakeholder-driven motives. This is different from the values-based nature of brand activism, which brands engage in for intrinsic motives.

It can thus be concluded that the most significant differences between CSR and brand activism include that the nature of the issues addressed by CSR are non-controversial (Mukherjee & Althuizen, 2020; Vredenburg et al., 2020) and associated with the company's core business (Economie Suisse, 2015) and that stakeholder and legal motives drive CSR. In contrast, the issues addressed by brand activism are controversial topics that are not necessarily associated with the company's core business and the motives behind it are values-based (Kotler & Sarkar, 2018; Vredenburg et al., 2020). Despite these differences, CSR and brand activism are conceptually similar in that there is a shared desire to 'do good'. Additionally, both can lead to financial benefits and increased brand equity, and brands can distinguish themselves from others by participating in such initiatives. A further important commonality is that CSR and brand

activism are prone to backlash if the initiatives are not perceived as authentic (Książak, 2017; Shetty et al., 2019; Vredenburg et al., 2020).

2.1.4 Brand Activism and Millennials

Millennials are the largest living adult generation (Fry, 2020) and have a high spending power (Bucic et al., 2012). As such, they are considered a valuable and lucrative customer base that has and will continue to have a significant impact on the economy (Bucic et al., 2012). Furthermore, millennials are aware of the problems that society faces and have expectations from brands to contribute to society (Kotler & Sarkar, 2018). The generation differentiates from older generations in that they are more familiar with advertising clutter and have a heightened awareness of marketing gimmicks (Shetty et al., 2019). Because of their expectations of brands, their size, spending power, and awareness of marketing gimmicks, it is crucial to gain a deeper understanding of brand activism with a focus on millennials. No consensus has been reached on the definition of the birth year of the millennial generation. Researchers and popular media refer to millennials as the generation born between the early 1980s and the early 2000s (Kotler & Sarkar, 2018; Shetty et al., 2019). The term ‘millennials’ refers to the generation born between 1980 and 2000 in this study.

Practitioners have found brand activism to be effective in targeting millennials (Smiley, 2019, as cited in Vredenburg et al., 2020). However, as a presumable consequence of the limited research on the individual topics of brand activism and millennials, limited research exists on brand activism and millennials. Researchers have found that millennials expect brands to contribute to the communities they serve as well as global issues (Kotler & Sarkar, 2018; Shetty et al., 2019). Kotler & Sarkar (2018) suggest that this is partly due to the environmental and political issues they grew up with. A further proposed explanation for this expectation is that millennials are more aware and informed about contemporary issues due to their exposure to the internet (Parment, 2013).

Shetty et al. (2019) conducted an empirical investigation on millennials and brand activism and found that millennials prefer to purchase from a brand if it supports a cause or purpose and continue to do so if it benefits a cause or people in need. Their research also found that millennials are willing to pay a price premium for activist

brands to support the cause. A further finding of their study is that brand activism leads to backlash and boycotting amongst millennials if it is perceived to be insincere.

While the research on millennials and brand activism is limited, there is substantial literature on the consumer behavior of millennials, which is related to their beliefs on how brands should act and respond to social and political matters. According to the Deloitte Global 2021 Millennial and Gen Z Survey (2021), millennials do not hesitate to shun companies whose actions discord with their own and will discontinue or initiate relationships with brands based on the companies' environmental initiatives and how they position themselves on social and political issues. This is supported by Weyland (2011), who states that it is not solely a product that matters to millennials but also what values and ethics the brand stands for. Research frequently highlights that millennials are not loyal customers (Lissitsa & Kol, 2016; Moreno et al., 2017; Ordun, 2014), which suggests that the generational cohort does not hesitate to boycott or discontinue consuming from a brand that they no longer believe their values to be aligned with.

2.2 Antecedents of Authenticity

Authenticity is defined as “the quality of being real or true” (Cambridge, n.d.). Literature suggests numerous definitions for the term and different types of authenticity in the context of consumption. As consumers' quest for authenticity grows, abundant research has been conducted on the topic in diverse contexts ranging from car clubs (Leigh et al., 2006) to the beverage industry (Beverland et al., 2008).

Antecedents of authenticity have been classified into three categories: iconic cues, indexical cues, and moral cues. Grayson and Martinec (2004) found that consumers assess authenticity based on different cues and identified two types of authenticity derived from concepts based on American philosopher Charles Peirce's, *Philosophy of Signs*. They suggest that a market offering is indexically authentic when perceived as having a factual and spatio-temporal connection to history. Factors substantiating indexical authenticity include a form of verification, such as a certification or trustworthy context, as well as being true to self-and/or cultural identity and avoiding actions that differ from the personality and heritage. Alternatively, a market offering has iconic authenticity when it resembles the original's physicality based on physical attributes. A prerequisite for iconic authenticity is pre-existing knowledge of how the

market offering should be as a reference point (Grayson & Martinec, 2004). While numerous literature has adopted these cues for authenticity, others have included existential or moral cues (Beverland et al., 2008; Morhart et al., 2015). The existentialist perspective relates to one's identity and refers to "being true to one's self", which translates to an object's ability to assist the consumer in uncovering their true self, serving as an identity-related source (Morhart et al., 2015, p. 201). Iconic and indexical cues of authenticity are used in research conducted by Beverland et al. (2008), who found that these types of authenticity can be applied to marketing communications.

2.2.1 Antecedents of Brand Activism Authenticity

Limited research has been conducted on the topic of brand activism authenticity. Mirzaei et al. (2022) conducted a qualitative study on the topic through content analysis and found several factors that authenticate brand activism. Their findings revealed six dimensions of brand activism authenticity: social context independency, inclusion, sacrifice, practice, fit, and motivation.

They find that practice, defined as the "extent to which the woke brands exercise and act on what they preach" (Mirzaei et al., 2022, p. 6), influences brand activism authenticity. Furthermore, they posit that a history of practicing brand activism that is aligned with previous commitments is imperative to the perception of authenticity. The authors also found that a high fit, which they define as "the extent to which the woke topic is in line with the brand's current or past core business, meaning/image, positioning, and culture" (Mirzaei et al., 2022, p. 7), is essential for authenticity perception. They find that no practice and low fit will lead to perceived profit-seeking motivations and thus result in low perceived authenticity.

The importance of the aspect of fit is reflected in the findings of Vredenburg et al. (2020), which they refer to as alignment. The researchers state that the alignment between three key characteristics determines the authenticity of brand activism. This alignment needs to be between:

- "(1) its core purpose and values as a reflection of employees, brand promise, and caretaking of stakeholder needs and wants and how those are articulated and understood in the marketplace;
- (2) the messaging type and content circulated

through brand vehicles, traditional media vehicles, and peer-to-peer and social media vehicles/channels; and (3) its corporate practices and how key stakeholders catalogue, demonstrate, and interpret these practices in the marketplace” (Vredenburg et al., 2020, p. 445).

This means that brand activism is perceived as authentic when the brand’s purpose and values are aligned with the marketing messaging and prosocial corporate practice.

The results of the research conducted by Mirzaei et al. (2022) indicate that the motivations and intentions behind brand activism could negatively impact the authenticity of the campaign if they are perceived to be profit-seeking or exploitative. They define motivation as the extent to which “the public perceives the intentions of woke brands as profit-seeking, self-centered versus other-centered, corrupt, genuine, or exploitative” (Mirzaei et al., 2022, p. 7). This dimension was found to be the most significant barrier to authenticity. The negative impact of perceived profit-seeking motives on authenticity is reflected in the research conducted by Vredenburg et al. (2020).

The social context independency dimension identified by Mirzaei et al. (2022) is conceptually similar to the aforementioned motivation dimension. Social context independency refers to the “extent to which a woke campaign is independent from topical and trendy social issues” (Mirzaei et al., 2022, p. 5). In their research, Mirzaei et al. (2022) find that companies who take advantage of a trendy social issue and seemingly participate in brand activism to generate free publicity are likely to be perceived as inauthentic. The similarity to the motivation dimension lies in the notion that brands are engaging to generate publicity, which is an ulterior motive. Nonetheless, they found that social context independency increases perceived brand activism authenticity.

A further finding of the research conducted by Mirzaei et al. (2022) suggests that for brands to be perceived as authentic in their brand activism act, they must remain neutral and inclusive to all target audience groups. Inclusion is defined as the “extent to which the target audience finds the woke message neutral; that is gender-, race-, and age-neutral, as well as politically neutral” (Mirzaei et al., 2022, p. 5). They posit that

consumers whose values do not match those of the brand activism initiative will feel ignored and that this leads to perceptions of inauthenticity. Inclusion as a dimension contradicts the second key characteristic of brand activism identified by Vredenburg et al. (2020), who state that taking a stance on a controversial and contested issue will alienate some consumer groups. The proposed conceptual model for the woke activism authenticity framework developed by Mirzaei et al. (2022) is depicted in Figure 1.

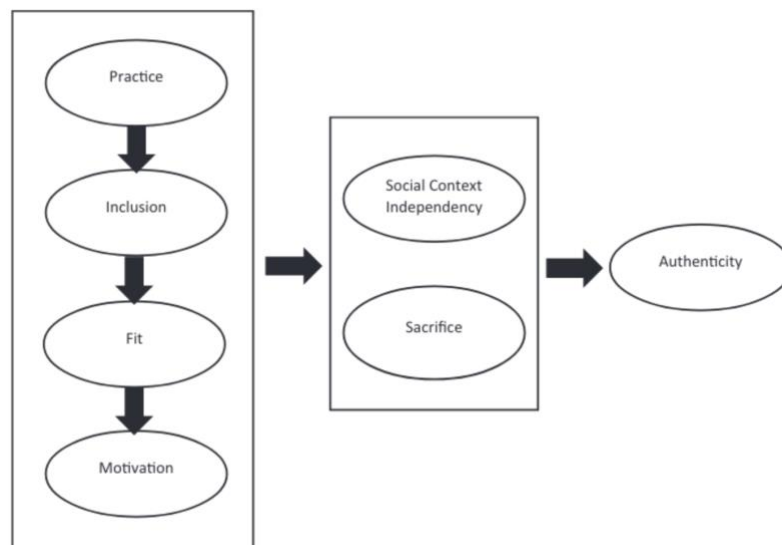


Figure 1 Woke Activism Authenticity Framework (Mirzaei et al., 2022, p. 9)

Vredenburg et al. (2020) created a typology of brand activism, which distinguishes forms of activism according to a brand's adoption of activist marketing messages and its employment of prosocial corporate practices that support the sociopolitical cause. According to Vredenburg et al. (2020), brand activism is authentic if the "brand purpose and values, activist marketing messaging, and prosocial corporate practice are aligned" (Vredenburg et al., 2020, p. 445). They posit that purpose, values, messaging, and practice build on, influence and determine each other to create authenticity. Consequently, if one of these factors operates independently from the others, brand activism authenticity is compromised. The example of the previously mentioned Pepsi advertisement is also referred to in their work. They suggest that the reason for its perceived inauthenticity lies within this misalignment. Specifically, Pepsi had a high activist marketing messaging, but the values-driven prosocial corporate practices to support the marketing messaging were absent, thus resulting in its inauthentic

perception. Their typology consists of the following four quadrants: absence of brand activism, silent brand activism, authentic brand activism, and inauthentic brand activism. This is depicted in Figure 2 below.

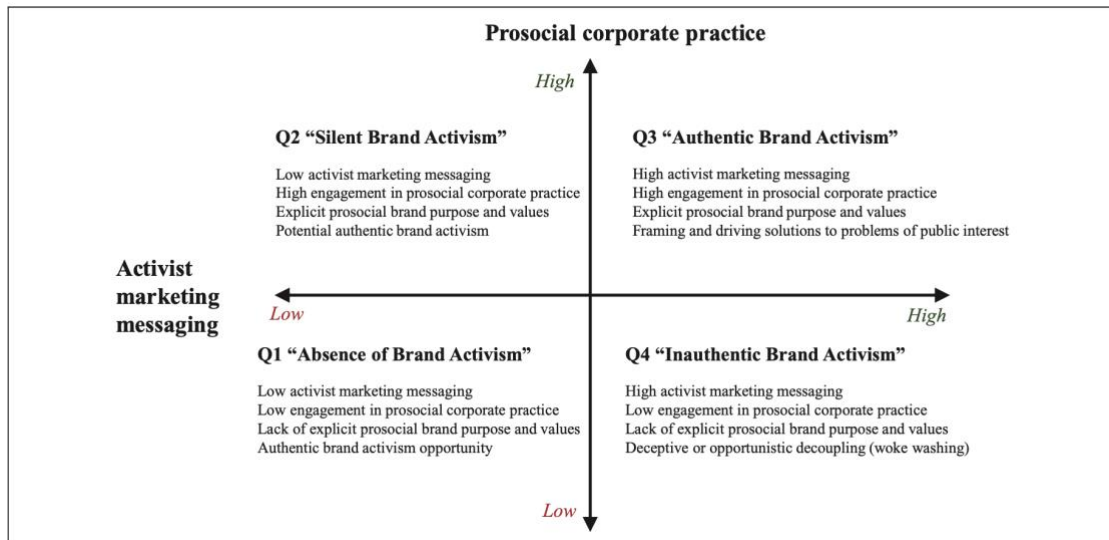


Figure 2 Typology of Brand Activism (Vredenburg et al., 2020, p. 449)

2.2.2 Antecedents of Brand Authenticity

Research on attributes of brand authenticity is examined as the brand has a significant part in brand activism. Therefore, it is expected that aspects of brand authenticity can assist in gaining a more holistic understanding of the authenticity of brand activism. There are numerous interpretations of attributes that lead to brand authenticity within branding literature that provide insights into both antecedents and attributes of brand authenticity.

Brand authenticity has emerged as a response to demand from consumers, who are confronted with increased commercialization, and an abundance of meaningless market offers and seek authentic brand partners to build their identity (Beverland, 2009). Research cites numerous differentiating definitions of brand authenticity. Proposed definitions in the literature include "a subjective evaluation of genuineness ascribed to a brand by consumers" (Napoli et al., 2014, p. 2) and "the extent to which consumers perceive a brand to be faithful toward itself, true to its consumers" (Morhart et al., 2015, p. 203). A recent literature review conducted by Campagna et al. (2022) takes aspects

from some of these definitions and proposes a holistic definition of brand activism: “a genuine brand with a unique style that cares about being open and honest with consumers and will survive times and trends” (p. 10). This definition suggests that a brand is authentic if it respects the following aspects: genuineness, uniqueness, openness, and honesty, and can survive times and trends.

Napoli et al. (2014) suggest that consumers combine cues of heritage, nostalgia, cultural symbolism, sincerity, quality commitment, and design consistency to build perceptions of brand authenticity. As a result of the similarities between some of these cues, such as heritage and nostalgia, the authors put forward three dimensions, namely heritage, quality commitment, and sincerity. In their research, heritage refers to the “sense of history and connection with traditional cultures, customs, regions, and beliefs” (Napoli et al., 2014, p. 2). Morhart et al. (2015) draw parallels in their proposed dimensions of brand authenticity. The authors identify continuity as a dimension of brand authenticity and define it as a brand’s timelessness, historicity, and ability to survive trends. Continuity is also identified as a dimension of authenticity in research conducted by Schallehn et al. (2014), whose definition entails the maintenance of core brand attributes over a long period of time. They find that consumers judge continuity to be high if the brand promise reflects past brand behavior. This is conceptually similar to what Choi et al. (2015) refer to as heritage, which includes a brand exuding a sense of tradition and having a strong link to the past. Furthermore, Campagna et al. (2022) deem longevity as one of three dimensions of authenticity. This entails a brand having history, being able to survive times and trends, reflecting a timeless design, and exuding a sense of tradition. This concept of longevity and continuity is also deemed relevant by Moulard et al. (2016), who explicitly refer to Morhart et al.’s definition of continuity in their definition of longevity. All terms are concerned with a brand’s history and preservation over time, and there is a clear consensus that this element is crucial to brand authenticity.

Morhart et al. (2015) identify credibility as a dimension of brand authenticity; this refers to “the brand’s transparency and honesty toward the consumer, as well as its willingness and ability to fulfill its claims” (p. 202). This bares conceptual similarities to what Napoli et al. (2014) define as sincerity, which states that a brand is true to its espoused values, refuses to compromise the values upon which it was founded and that the brand

adheres to its principles. This is reflected in the conscious dimension in research conducted by Campagna et al. (2022), who state that one aspect of a conscious brand is refusing to compromise its values. A summary of the various attributes of brand authenticity is depicted in Table 1.

Table 1 Attributes of Brand Authenticity in the Brand Authenticity Literature

Component	Definition
(Napoli et al., 2014, p. 4)	
Quality Commitment	Quality is central to the brand, it is a potent symbol of continued quality. It refers to the extent to which it is made to the most exacting and stringent quality standards. The brand has a mark of distinction that signifies quality.
Heritage	Heritage refers to the connection to a historical period in time, culture and/or specific region that the brand has. This includes aspects such as exuding a sense of tradition, a strong link to the past and reflecting a timeless design.
Sincerity	Refers to the ability of the brand to remain true to its espoused values and principles and the extent to which the brand builds on traditions that began with its founder.
(Morhart et al., 2015, p. 203)	
Continuity	The continuity dimension reflects a brand's timelessness, historicity, and ability to transcend trends.
Credibility	The brand's transparency and honesty toward the consumer, as well as its willingness and ability to fulfill its claims.
Integrity	The integrity dimension signifies the moral purity and responsibility of the brand (i.e., its adherence to good values and sincere care about the consumer).
Symbolism	A brand's potential to serve as a resource for identity construction by providing self-referential cues representing values, roles, and relationships. In other words, symbolism reflects the symbolic quality of the brand that consumers can use to define who they are or who they are not.
(Schallehn et al., 2014, p. 194)	
Individuality	The unique way in which the brand fulfills its promise.
Consistency	Consistency measures those attributes which are expressed by its reiterative current brand behavior. Hence, high consistency is perceived if the brand promise is fulfilled at every single brand touch-point.

Continuity	Refers to core brand attributes remaining stable over a longer period. The consumer judges continuity to be high if the present brand promise reflects past brand behavior.
(Choi et al., 2015, p. 237)	
Authority	Refers to a brand being easily recognized by people, socially approved, self-confident, and having a positive image.
Fissionability	Refers to a brand adopting fashion, trendsetting, being contemporary, and reflecting the customer's taste.
Consistency	Refers to the brand having identical images, maintaining consistency in style, and consistency in price.
Innovativeness	Refers to a brand trying new things, being innovative, and distinguishing itself from others.
Sustainability	Refers to the brand caring about the environment, public affairs, and taking social responsibility.
Origin	Refers to a brand showing the country of origin, having an exotic image, and having a national identity.
Heritage	Refers to a brand respecting the brand history and preserving it over time.
(Campagna et al., 2022, p. 12)	
Conscious	Refers to the brand caring about customers, having moral principles, reflecting important values that people care about, being genuine, and caring about openness and honesty.
Longevity	Refers to the extent to which the brand has a history, can survive times and trends, reflects a timeless design, and exudes a sense of tradition.
Self-Empowerment	Refers to the extent to which it puts the customer in control of their life and experience, adds meaning to their lives, and connects them with what is important.
(Moulard et al., 2016, p. 424-426)	
Uniqueness	Refers to the degree to which the brand is perceived as being unusual or atypical in comparison to competitors.
Scarcity	The degree to which the brand's goods or services are perceived as being accessible.
Longevity	The extent to which a brand is perceived to be in existence for a long period of time.
Longitudinal Consistency	The extent to which the brand is perceived to have remained the same.

2.2.3 Antecedents of CSR Authenticity

In contrast to brand authenticity, which focuses on aspects of brands being authentic in their DNA, CSR authenticity refers to the authenticity of CSR initiatives undertaken by brands. Therefore, CSR authenticity arguably provides more insights into what factors make brand activism authentic, as brand activism is also concerned with initiatives and actions.

Research conducted on antecedents of CSR authenticity suggests that various factors can deem CSR activities authentic and inauthentic. Although different terms are used, the importance of self-serving motive in the authenticity of CSR activities is highlighted in research conducted by Alhouti et al. (2016) and Joo et al. (2019). Alhouti et al. (2016) refer to self-serving motives as the degree to which the CSR initiative is motivated by the company's self-interest, either for financial purposes or as a marketing ploy to better the image of a firm. While they hypothesized that perceived self-serving motives negatively influence perceptions of CSR authenticity, they found that self-serving motives did not show a significant correlation with CSR authenticity; hence this hypothesis was not supported.

Joo et al. (2019) refer to this attribute as benevolence, which represents the degree to which the CSR initiatives are perceived to be altruistic rather than commercial and profit-seeking. They propose that the authenticity of such initiatives is questioned when they are perceived to be implemented for the company's benefit. In contrast to Alhouti et al. (2016), Joo et al. (2019) found a significant correlation between benevolence and CSR authenticity. This correlation between self-serving motives and authenticity is further supported by Beckman & Colwell (2009), who found that CSR initiatives are not perceived to be authentic if the sole purpose of conducting the activities is to promote the business. Jeon & An (2019) further investigate the influence of different motives on CSR authenticity and propose a model including the following: value-driven motives, stakeholder-driven motives, strategic motives, and egoistic motives. Strategic and egoistic motives are conceptually similar to self-serving motives (Alhouti et al., 2016) and benevolence (Joo et al., 2019), referring to companies conducting CSR activities for the benefit of the company rather than the benefit of the cause. Their results also supported their hypothesis that strategic and egoistic motives negatively influence CSR authenticity.

The antipode of self-serving motives, which negatively affects CSR authenticity (Jeon & An, 2019; Joo et al., 2019), is what Jeon & An (2019) define as value-driven motives. Motives are value-driven when companies engage in CSR activities for the sole purpose of their moral, ethical, and social standards. Jeon & An (2019) found that value-driven motives positively affect CSR authenticity. This finding is similar to earlier research by Ellen et al. (2006). They suggest that values-driven motives are associated with companies feeling morally obligated to help and care about the cause. Their results find that values-driven motives are perceived as being positive. However, it is notable that this research is concerned with the motives of CSR rather than its authenticity.

Commitment is another attribute of CSR authenticity, analyzed by Joo et al. (2019). This is defined as “the degree to which stakeholders perceive the organization as dedicated or steadfast in the CSR initiatives as opposed to adjusting initiatives to meet current trends” (Joo et al., 2019, p. 239). While there are conceptual similarities to the aforementioned values-driven motive regarding an ethical concern and purpose for the initiative, this attribute differs due to the aspect of time. Their research finds that participants deem CSR activities authentic if they are dedicated to the cause for a long period of time. To the best of the author’s knowledge, no other research on the topic of CSR authenticity refers to commitment as an attribute. It is, however, referred to as an attribute in the literature of brand authenticity with varying terms such as longevity and consistency (Campagna et al., 2022; Morhart et al., 2015; Moulard et al., 2016; Schallehn et al., 2014).

A further attribute of CSR authenticity cited in research is how complementary a CSR activity is to the company and whether it aligns with its essence and values. Alhouti et al. (2016) refer to this as fit and suggest that if a company’s CSR actions align with the brand’s concept, this benefits perceived authenticity. In contrast, a misalignment between CSR activities and the brand’s concept can result in perceived inauthenticity. They further state that for the fit to be assessed, consumers require prior knowledge of both the company and the cause being supported by the CSR activity. The hypothesis that “fit between CSR act and the company positively influences the perception of CSR authenticity” (Alhouti et al., 2016, p. 1245) is supported in their research. This attribute of CSR authenticity is referred to as congruence in research conducted by Joo et al. (2019), who explicitly reference Alhouti et al. (2016) in their related dimensions and

literature within their dimension of congruence. In accordance with the findings of Alhouti et al. (2016), participants of the qualitative study of Joo et al. (2019) deemed congruence to be a significant factor of authenticity. The significance of the compatibility of a brand's CSR actions with its core is highlighted in earlier research conducted by Beckman & Colwell (2009), who found that CSR actions need to be related to the core of the mission to be perceived as authentic.

Alhouti et al. (2016) propose impact as an additional attribute of CSR authenticity. This attribute concerns whether the CSR action is perceived as making a real purposeful difference and if it is financially contributing enough to the cause based on the company's size and profits. They state that consumers perceive CSR actions as authentic if the company makes a long-term impact or has several CSR initiatives and if the company is the first to invest in a cause. Actions that are not seen as making an impact, such as simply wearing pink for breast cancer awareness month or adding rainbow colors to the company logo in honor of pride month, can be deemed inauthentic. This is supported by their findings. The antecedent of impact is incorporated in reliability in research conducted by Joo et al. (2019). They define reliability as "the degree to which stakeholders perceive the CSR program does what it promises to do" (Joo et al., 2019, p. 239), which includes items such as the extent to which the initiative does what it promises to do, and the extent to which the initiative achieves its goals. Another proposed attribute of CSR authenticity, which bears similarities to the impact attribute identified by Alhouti et al. (2016), is broad impact, which Joo et al. (2019) refer to as "the degree to which stakeholders perceive that CSR initiatives benefit numerous recipients" (p. 246). The main difference between impact and broad impact is that Alhouti et al. (2016) focus on the long-term and financial impact of the initiative, while broad impact focuses on the number of people that the initiative impacts, benefits, and helps. The findings of the research conducted by Joo et al. (2016) are in line with those of Alhouti et al. (2019), as they found impact to influence CSR authenticity positively.

The final attribute of CSR authenticity, which Alhouti et al. (2019) suggest, is reparation. Reparation refers to "the manner in which a company handles a wrong it is associated with and seeks to rectify a previous misdeed through CSR" (Alhouti et al., 2016, p. 1244). If a company responds to its wrongdoing in a genuine manner that

suggests it aims to implement preventative measures to avoid the issue's reoccurrence, this can be perceived as authentic. In contrast, the CSR act would be perceived as inauthentic if consumers believe that these actions are being executed solely to compensate for their wrongdoing. For this attribute to be effective, consumers require knowledge of the company and its wrongdoing. The various attributes of CSR authenticity are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 Attributes of CSR Authenticity in the CSR Literature

Component	Definition
(Alhouti et al., 2016, p. 1243-1245)	
Impact	Refers to whether the CSR actions is perceived as making a real and meaningful difference and whether the company is perceived to give enough related to its size and profits.
Self-serving Motive	Refers to the degree to which the CSR initiative is perceived as being motivated by the self-interests of the company rather than serving the public good.
Reparation	Refers to how a company handles a wrong it is associated with and seeks to rectify a previous misdeed through CSR.
Fit	Fit refers to how complementary the CSR initiative is and whether it aligns with what the firm sells and stands for.
(Joo et al., 2019, p. 241)	
Community Link	The degree to which stakeholders perceive CSR initiatives to be connected to their communities.
Reliability	The degree to which stakeholders perceive the CSR program does what it promises to do.
Commitment	The degree to which stakeholders perceive the organization as dedicated or steadfast in the CSR initiatives as opposed to adjusting initiatives to meet current trends.
Congruence	The degree to which stakeholders perceive an alignment between an organization's CSR efforts and the vital core of its own business.
Benevolence	The degree to which stakeholders perceive CSR initiatives as altruistic.
Transparency	The degree to which stakeholders perceive CSR decisions, practices, outcomes, etc., to be open and available to public evaluation.
Broad Impact	The degree to which stakeholders perceive that CSR initiatives benefit numerous recipients.

(Jeon & An, 2019, p. 4)	
Value driven Motives	Refer to companies engaging in CSR activities purely because of their moral, ethical, and social standards. Consumers perceive that the company genuinely cares about social problems.
Stakeholder driven Motives	Refer to companies engaging in CSR activities to satisfy stakeholder expectations.
Strategic driven Motives	Strategic-driven motives are beliefs that companies support a cause to achieve business objectives, such as customer creation, maintenance, and profits.
Egoistic Motives	Refer to beliefs that the company is exploiting rather than supporting the cause.

2.3 Brand Attitude

While researchers have not found a consensus for an explicit definition of attitude, a widely accepted definition is that of Ajzen & Fishbein (1975) “a person’s general feeling of favorableness or un-favorableness for that concept” (p. 55). They suggest that attitude is comprised of three fundamental features. The first feature is the notion that attitude is learned, which can occur through exposure to an external stimulus from various sources, ranging from mass media and literature to family and friends (Aarstad, 2013). However, research indicates that attitude is not solely learned and can also be inherited (Stangor et al., 2022). The second feature of attitude is that it predisposes action, meaning that attitude guides or influences behavior, in which people are more likely to perform the behavior if their attitude is more favorable and vice versa (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). The third component of attitude is that actions are consistently favorable or unfavorable toward the object. An earlier definition of attitude by Doob (1947, as cited in Ajzen & Fishbein 1980) states that “attitude is an implicit mediating response to a stimulus object” (p. 18). According to Ajzen & Fishbein (1980), responses to stimulus objects are mediated by the person’s attitude toward the object in question. Brand attitude is defined as a consumer’s overall evaluation of a brand (Faircloth et al., 2001). These attitudes can be related to beliefs concerning product-related attributes as well as functional and experiential benefits (Navaneethakrishnan & Sathish, 2020). Non-product-related attributes, such as price information, packaging, product appearance, user imagery, usage imagery (Keller, 1993), and symbolic benefits, can contribute to brand attitude formation. Prior research has found that brand attitude is useful in predicting responses to marketing activities (Ramesh et al., 2019) and that the

strength of brand attitude predicts behaviors of interest to firms, ranging from brand consideration to purchasing behavior (Priester et al., 2004; Schmuck et al., 2018). The effects that brand attitude can have on consumer behavior are reflective of the theory of Ajzen & Fishbein (1980) that attitude guides behavior.

3. Hypotheses Development & Conceptual Model

This chapter presents the hypothesized attributes of brand activism authenticity and the conceptual model. Firstly, further elaboration is provided for each hypothesis based on the literature review. Subsequently, a conceptual model depicting the expected relationship of the variables is proposed. Table 3 provides a summary of the hypotheses.

Table 3 Summary of Hypotheses

Hypotheses	
H1	The impact of brand activism initiatives positively influences perceptions of brand activism authenticity.
H2	Perceived self-serving motives will negatively influence perceptions of brand activism authenticity.
H3	Fit between the brand activism campaign and the company positively influences perceptions of brand activism authenticity.
H4	Brand attitude positively influences perceptions of brand activism authenticity.
H4a	Brand attitude mediates the positive influence that impact has on perceived brand activism authenticity.
H4b	Brand attitude mediates the negative impact of perceived self-serving motives on perceived brand activism authenticity.
H4c	Brand attitude mediates the positive influence that fit has on perceived brand activism authenticity.

3.1 Hypotheses Development

The following subchapter presents the hypotheses that have been developed based on the literature review. These serve as the basis for the conceptual model.

3.1.1 Impact

The literature on CSR authenticity highlighted impact as an attribute of perceived CSR authenticity (Alhouti et al., 2016). This bares conceptual similarities to what Mirzaei et al. (2022) refer to as practice. In this study, impact is referred to as whether or not the brand activism action is perceived as making a real and meaningful difference and whether or not the company is perceived to give enough related to its size and profits,

based on the definition of Alhouti et al. (2016). This provides the basis for the following hypothesis:

H1: The impact of brand activism initiatives positively influences perceptions of brand activism authenticity.

3.1.2 Perceived Self-Serving Motives

Research from the literature review widely discussed motive as an antecedent of perceived authenticity. In the context of CSR, Jeon & An (2019) and Joo et al. (2019) found that perceived self-serving motives negatively impact CSR authenticity. In contrast, Alhouti et al. (2016) did not find a correlation between perceived self-serving motives and CSR authenticity. Motivation is also referred to as a significant hurdle for brand activism authenticity in the study conducted by Mirzaei et al. (2022). In the case of this study, self-serving motive refers to the degree to which the brand activism initiative is perceived as being motivated by the self-interests of the company rather than serving the public good. Given the results of the quantitative research conducted in the field of CSR as well as the qualitative research conducted on the topic of brand activism authenticity, the following is hypothesized:

H2: Perceived self-serving motives will negatively influence perceptions of brand activism authenticity.

3.1.3 Fit

As indicated in the literature review, fit between the brand and the act that the brand stands up for is essential for perceived authenticity. This was found in the context of brand activism authenticity in the qualitative research conducted by Mirzaei et al. (2022) and Vredenburg et al. (2020), as well as in quantitative research on CSR authenticity conducted by Alhouti et al. (2016) and Joo et al. (2019). Fit refers to the degree to how complementary the brand activism initiative is and whether it aligns with the firm's customers, what the firm sells, and what the firm stands for in this study. Consequently, it is hypothesized that:

H3: Fit between the brand activism campaign and the company positively influences perceptions of brand activism authenticity.

3.1.4 Brand Attitude

An additional aim of this research is to investigate whether brand attitude influences perceptions of brand activism. While brand attitude has proven to predict responses to marketing activities, it is to the best of the author's knowledge that no research has been conducted regarding the influence of brand attitude on perceived brand activism authenticity. The definition of brand attitude includes the consumer's continuous preference or loathing tendency towards a certain brand (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1980), which could affect perceived brand activism authenticity. Therefore, the following hypothesis is posited:

H4: Brand attitude positively influences perceptions of brand activism authenticity.

Furthermore, because responses to a stimulus are mediated by attitude (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) and attitude has proven to have a mediating role in predicting behavior in prior research (Ramesh et al., 2019), the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4a: Brand attitude mediates the positive influence that impact has on perceived brand activism authenticity.

H4b: Brand attitude mediates the negative impact of perceived self-serving motives on perceived brand activism authenticity.

H4c: Brand attitude mediates the positive influence that fit has on perceived brand activism authenticity.

3.2 Conceptual Model

The conceptual model is based on the reviewed literature and depicts the expected relationship between the variables (see Figure 3). As depicted in the conceptual model, the independent variables are impact, fit, self-serving motives and brand attitude. Perceived brand activism authenticity is the dependent variable, and brand attitude is the hypothesized mediator variable.

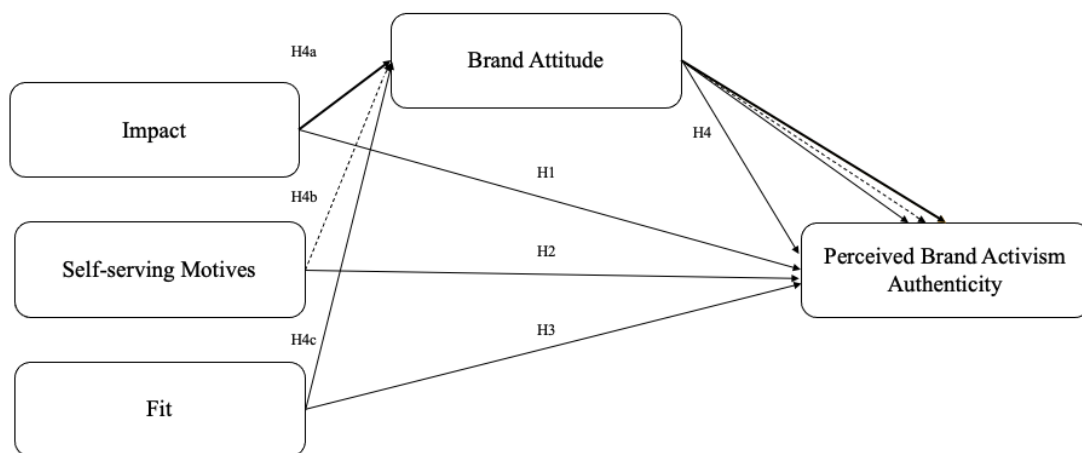


Figure 3 Proposed Conceptual Model of Brand Activism Authenticity

4. Methodology

This chapter presents the methodology implemented to answer the research question regarding what makes brand activism authentic among millennials and provides details about the research approach, research method, research design and data analysis.

4.1 Research Approach

Theory can be approached and interpreted through induction, deduction, or abduction (Patokorpi & Ahvenainen, 2009). An inductive approach to research starts with data collection and the analysis thereof and potentially leads to a theory. The starting point of a deductive approach is in the theory and research conducted by others, out of which a hypothesis is formulated and tested (Baur & Blasius, 2014). A deductive approach may be used to test existing theories in new constructs (Ghauri et al., 2020). The third approach, abduction, is referred to as the middle ground between the previously mentioned approaches and incorporates aspects of both (Patokorpi & Ahvenainen, 2009). Rather than deriving potential antecedents of brand activism authenticity through conducting interviews with consumers, reflective of an inductive approach, it was most suitable to test antecedents of authenticity from existing constructs in the context of brand activism for this study. As such, a deductive approach was employed.

4.1.1 Research Method

The two commonly used research methods in marketing studies are qualitative and quantitative research (Oflazoglu, 2017). Building on the research approach, deduction most often employs quantitative rather than qualitative research (Bell et al., 2019). The research question aims to determine factors that make brand activism authentic among a large population, millennials. Generalizability is, therefore, necessary for the research objective, and in contrast to qualitative methods, the results of quantitative methods are more generalizable on the population of interest (Chrysochou, 2017). These factors ultimately make a quantitative method the most appropriate approach.

4.1.2 Data Collection

There are several methods by which quantitative data can be collected; these include but are not limited to controlled observations, longitudinal studies, polls, telephone interviews, face-to-face interviews, and surveys (Lee & Kotler, 2015). A web survey was conducted to collect primary data regarding millennials' perceived authenticity of

brand activism. This method was selected for various reasons. Firstly, web surveys allow for an increased reach (Accenture, 2018). Secondly, they allow respondents to control how and when they want to complete the survey (Christian et al., 2009). Because they allow for an increased reach and give respondents the freedom to complete the survey in their own time, these factors enable access to a larger number of respondents than interviews or focus groups. A further benefit of conducting a survey online is the absence of an interviewer. Interviewers can affect respondents' answers in numerous ways, ranging from simply being present to interviewers' verbal and nonverbal behavior and making errors (Baur & Blasius, 2014; Lavrakas, 2008).

There are, however, also disadvantages associated with web surveys that need to be considered. One disadvantage associated with the absence of an interviewer or observer is that no follow-up questions can be asked if there is uncertainty regarding the information provided in the survey (Bell et al., 2019; Cooper & Schindler, 2011). A further disadvantage of surveys is the occurrence of respondent fatigue. This can occur when the survey is time-consuming, the questions are tedious or repetitive, and several open-ended questions are asked. Respondent fatigue can result in respondents not reading the information, skipping questions, or answering the questions with the same response to all items (Lavrakas, 2008). To circumvent respondent fatigue, information was provided in a comprehensive manner, open-ended questions were avoided, and there was no possibility of skipping a question.

4.2 Research Design

A well-designed survey is crucial to ensure data quality (Fowler & Cosenza, 2009). In order to gain relevant insights into the perceived authenticity of millennials towards brand activism, it was necessary to provide survey respondents with an example of brand activism from a brand they are familiar with. Providing an example of brand activism through a short video campaign was deemed most effective, as this is a compact and comprehensible way to convey information to respondents (Kalleitner et al., 2020). This section details the design of the research in terms of the choice of brand and campaign, the survey structure, the variables and measurement, as well as a pre-test.

4.2.1 Choice of Brand & Campaign

Identifying a brand that a majority of millennials are familiar with that participates in brand activism was crucial, as basic brand knowledge is required to respond to the survey. Nike was selected for the survey for numerous reasons. Considering that the millennial generation was born between 1980 and 2000, and Nike was founded in 1964 (Nike, 2015), the company was already present before the first millennials were born and had already generated a presence. According to Statista (2022), Nike ranked as the most valuable clothing and apparel brand in 2020 and 2021. The company has also been one of the most followed brands on social media (Ashraf, 2021). Furthermore, a demographic analysis revealed that Nike's target market is between 11 and 55 (start.io, 2021). This is representative of millennials aged between 22 and 42 years at the time of the survey. What can be inferred from the aforementioned facts is that Nike has a strong brand awareness with millennials. An additional inference that can be made is that Nike can be deemed as an authentic brand, as it has been present and successful for over 50 years, suggesting that Nike has a certain quality commitment and authority, as well as the ability to survive times and trends.

Additionally, Nike's participation in brand activism is not novel. In 1995, Nike released the "Let Me Play" advertisement, advocating gender equality in sports (Harakas, 1995). In 2012, Nike released the "Be True" campaign supporting the LGBTQ community (Nike, 2012). Lastly, in 2017, Nike initiated a gender equality initiative and campaign and donated \$5 million to organizations concerning the advancement of equality in the United States (Nike, 2017). These examples reflect the integrity attribute, defined as the moral purity and responsibility of the brand (Morhart et al., 2015), and the continuity and consistency attributes of brand authenticity suggested by Schallehn et al. (2014).

The campaign selected for the survey was Nike's "For Once, Don't Do It" ad, released in May 2020 (Nike, 2020b). The campaign was selected because it depicts Nike's clear position on racism and police brutality in the United States. Furthermore, the fact that Nike made a statement announcing a \$40 million commitment to the Black community in the United States (Nike, 2020c) a few days after the campaign's release was beneficial for the context of this survey because it provided respondents with an indication of the financial impact of the initiative.

The above-mentioned facts highlight that Nike fulfills the criteria of having brand awareness with millennials, participating in brand activism, and being perceived as an authentic brand, making it a suitable choice for the survey. Nike and the selected campaign provided the necessary basis for the hypothesized antecedents to be evaluated.

4.2.2 Survey Structure

The survey was structured in four sections: the introduction, demographic questions, the stimulus, and the questionnaire. The first section included a short introduction regarding the topic; it informed respondents that if they were not born between 1980 and 2000, there was no need to participate in the survey and that responses would remain anonymous. This information was followed by a screening question, which asked respondents if they were familiar with the brand Nike. If respondents indicated that they were unfamiliar with the brand, they were brought to the end of the survey.

The second section of the survey included demographic questions composed of age, gender, and education. Demographic questions provide insights into the research sample (Hughes et al., 2016). As such, they were included in the survey to deduct whether there are variations in perceived authenticity in millennials concerning gender. Limited empirical research has been conducted about the placement of demographic questions in surveys in recent years. Teclaw et al. (2012) found that placing demographic questions at the beginning of a survey was more advantageous than placing them at the end. The purpose of placing the demographic questions at the beginning of this survey was that the question about age served as a screening question. As such, respondents born earlier or later than 1980 and 2000, respectively, were brought to the end of the survey to ensure that survey respondents belong to the millennial generation.

This section was followed by the stimulus, which consisted of a short text explanation of the Nike “For Once, Don’t Do It” campaign, the 60-second video campaign, as well as information regarding Nike’s announcement of a financial contribution to the Black community in the United States. A definition of brand activism was also provided in this section, which was crucial for completing the survey. The fourth section entailed the questionnaire, which included statements about the different variables.

4.2.3 Variables and Measurement

As brand activism is a novel topic and no quantitative research has been conducted on the authenticity of brand activism, CSR authenticity was used as a basis for data collection. A basis stemming from CSR authenticity was chosen instead of brand authenticity, as CSR authenticity and brand activism are both concerned with acts taken by brands and because qualitative research conducted on brand activism authenticity borrows antecedents from CSR (Mirzaei et al., 2022).

The variables used in the survey were predominantly adapted from research conducted by Alhouti et al. (2016) on CSR authenticity. This facilitated the operationalization process of the variables, as the respective questions were adapted from CSR to brand activism. This paper was chosen as a basis for the survey for numerous reasons. The research has been cited over 165 times, indicating its significance and credibility. Furthermore, the questionnaire revealed high reliability, with the lowest Cronbach's alpha value at 0.86 and the lowest composite reliability at 0.84. Alhouti et al. (2016) conducted their study using the following variables: CSR authenticity, impact, fit, self-serving motives, reparation, boycott, purchase intent, brand loyalty, and optimism. CSR authenticity, impact, and fit were adapted to the context of brand activism for the questionnaire. Table 4 depicts the variables and items used in Alhouti et al.'s (2016) survey and the adaptations made for this paper.

Table 4 Survey Questions adapted from Alhouti et al. (2016)

Alhouti et al. (2016)		Adaptation	
Variable	Item	Variable	Item
CSR authenticity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The company's CSR acts are genuine. • The CSR action preserves what the company means to me. • The CSR action captures what makes the company unique to me. • The company's CSR action 	Brand Activism Authenticity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nike's brand activism act is genuine. • The brand activism action preserves what Nike means to me. • The brand activism action captures what makes Nike unique to me. • The brand activism action is

	<p>is in accordance with the company's values and beliefs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The company is being true to itself with its CSR action. • The company is standing up for what it believes in. • The company is a socially responsible company. * • The company is concerned about the well-being of society. 		<p>in accordance with Nike's values and beliefs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nike is being true to itself with this brand activism action. • Nike is standing up for what it believes in. • Nike is concerned about improving the well-being of society.
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I believe that the company donates a fair portion of its resources relative to its success. • The company's CSR acts have a long-term impact. • A large monetary commitment appears to have been made to the cause the company donates to. 	Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I believe that Nike donates a fair portion of its resources relative to its success. • Nike's brand activism has a long-term impact. • A large monetary commitment appears to have been made to the cause that Nike donates to.
Fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you think the company's CSR initiatives fit with the firm? (For example: relative to how it aligns with what the firm sells, who it sells to, the company's identity, or the interest of its consumers). Low fit/strong fit • Dissimilar/similar Inconsistent/consistent Not complementary/complementary 	Fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I believe that this act of brand activism fits with the products that Nike sells. • I believe this act of brand activism fits with Nike's consumers. • I believe that this act of brand activism is consistent with the company's identity. • I believe that this act of brand activism is complementary to the interests of Nike's consumers.

<p>Self-serving Motive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The company feels that their customers expect CSR actions. • The company feels that society in general expects them to be involved in CSR. • The company feels their stockholders expect the company to have CSR initiatives. • The company will get more customers by taking a CSR action. • The company will keep more of their customers by taking a CSR action. • The company hopes to increase profits through its CSR action. 	<p>Self-serving Motive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nike feels that their customers expect brand activism participation. • Nike feels that society in general expects them to have brand activism initiatives. • Nike feels that their stockholders expect the company to participate in brand activism. • Nike will get more customers by taking a brand activism initiative. • Nike will keep more of their customers by taking a brand activism initiative. • Nike hopes to increase profits through its brand activism initiative.
<p>Brand Attitude**</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • - 	<p>Brand Attitude**</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like Nike as a brand. • Do you own Nike products? • Do you follow Nike on social media? • Have you repeatedly purchased Nike products? • Do you prefer Nike over other sports brands such as Adidas, Reebok, Puma, etc.?

* Statement not included in the survey

** Item added to the survey

The items boycott, purchase intent, brand loyalty, and optimism measure the influence of authenticity on behavior, which are not relevant to this study. As this is not within the scope of research, these items were omitted from the survey. The statement “the company is a socially responsible company” was not included within the brand activism authenticity item as this is specific to CSR.

The item brand attitude was added to determine if H4: brand attitude positively influences perceptions of brand activism authenticity is supported. Research conducted by Spears & Singh (2004) uses the following question to measure attitude toward the brand “please describe your overall feelings about the brand described,” in which the following options were provided: unappealing/appealing, bad/good, unpleasant/pleasant, unfavorable/favorable, and unlikable/likable (p. 60). The last option, “unlikable/likable,” was converted into the following statement, “I like Nike as a brand,” to which respondents were able to answer on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The researchers also used purchase intention as a measure of brand attitude. Consequently, the questions “have you repeatedly purchased Nike products?” and “do you own Nike products?” were added. Further questions that were added to gain insights on respondents’ brand attitudes include “do you prefer Nike over other sports brands such as Adidas, Reebok, Puma, etc.?” and “do you follow Nike on social media?”

With the exception of the four items within brand attitude, all items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Likert scales provide a validated and reliable manner to quantify subjective thinking (Joshi et al., 2015). As perceived authenticity is indisputably subjective, a Likert scale was suitable. There is varying research on the optimal number of anchors to use in a Likert scale. Weijters et al. (2010) found that while 5-point scales are useful for the general population, 7-point scales should be used for populations with experience with questionnaires and high levels of verbal skills, which include student populations. As the survey was predominantly sent to students, a 7-point Likert scale was appropriate. A 7-point Likert scale was preferential to a 9-point Likert scale, as research shows they require less cognitive effort (Chen et al., 2015).

4.2.4 Pre-test

Pre-testing questionnaires enables survey administrators to discover flaws and usability issues with the questionnaire as well as the administration (Wilson, 2013). A pre-test was conducted with six people to ensure that the information provided in the survey gave respondents a sufficient basis to answer the questions and to determine whether respondents understood the questions. It was also conducted to identify problems in the survey’s language, tone, structure, and design. This is recommended to facilitate

optimized data collection (Baur & Blasius, 2014). It took respondents an average time of 5.5 minutes to complete the survey. No participants mentioned that they encountered any issues with the language or structure of the survey. One participant noticed that the text field under “other” in the question about nationality was not mandatory to complete. This was changed accordingly. Another participant stated that he did not have a “yes” or “no” answer to the question, “Do you prefer Nike over other sports brands such as Adidas, Reebok, Puma, etc.?” He stated that he selected “no” even though he did not have a preference. As a result, the option “indifferent” was added.

4.3 Sampling

In the case of this paper, the population was defined as people familiar with the brand Nike and that belong to the millennial generation, born between 1980 and 2000 as defined in this study. Given that this comprises a large population and considering time restrictions, sampling, which can represent a wider population (Bell et al., 2019, p. 188), was implemented. The Zurich University of Applied Sciences requires a sample size of $n=60$ to $n=300$ for quantitative surveys, where $n=1000$ for the data to be representative. It was the author’s goal to collect eligible data from a sample of 300 respondents. To achieve this, the survey was distributed via social media, such as LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram. The data collection period was from Monday, April 4th, 2022, to Friday, April 15th, 2022.

4.3.1 Sample Size

The total sample consisted of 424 respondents. There were, however, 104 respondents who did not complete the survey and were removed as a result. Additionally, a total of 12 respondents were under the age of 22, and one respondent was above the age of 42; as a result, these were removed from the sample. Furthermore, three respondents were not familiar with the brand Nike, and one respondent was deemed to be unreliable due to their response to the question regarding nationality. After cleaning the data based on non-accordance to the requirements and survey completion, the dataset consisted of 299 total acceptable responses.

4.3.2 Sample Distribution

Regarding gender, 65.9% of respondents were female, 33.8% were male, and .33% of respondents (one respondent) preferred not to share their gender. This is depicted in Figure 4. Participants from 40 nations responded to the survey. Notably, the majority of

respondents were of Swiss nationality (40.8%). Other nationalities that are worth mentioning include British (10.7%), Colombian (7%), French (6.0%), Italian (5.4%), and German (4.0%). This is depicted in Figure 5.

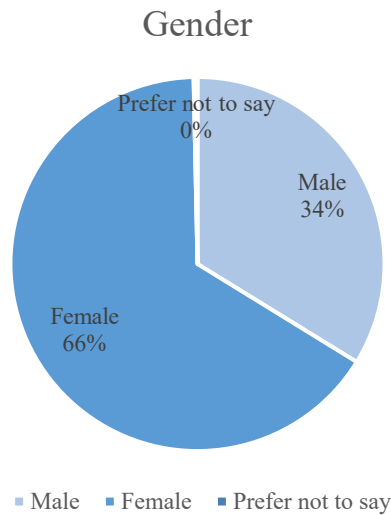


Figure 4 Sample Distribution by Gender

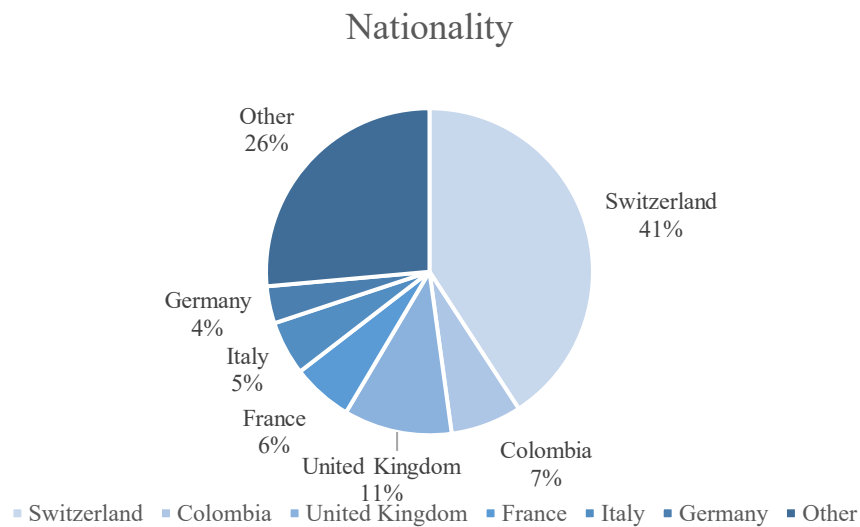


Figure 5 Sample Distribution by Nationality

4.4 Data Analysis

Following the data collection, the data was exported from Qualtrics to SPSS to be cleaned and consequently conduct data analysis. The first step in data analysis is the calculation of descriptive statistics that summarize the basic properties of sample data (Mellinger & Hanson, 2016). Descriptive statistic calculations include frequencies,

means, and standard deviations (Bickman & Rog, 2009). Following these calculations, several analyses were conducted to test the proposed hypotheses.

Multiple regression was employed as the primary statistical test to answer the research question. Multiple regressions are used to examine the correlation between two or more independent variables and a dependent variable and identify the degree to which each independent variable predicts the dependent variable (Ross & Willson, 2018). Numerous prerequisites must be met for a multiple regression to be conducted; these are detailed at a later stage.

The second phase of the analysis was concerned with testing the hypothesized mediating effect of brand attitude. A mediation analysis is used to test hypotheses about how a causal antecedent variable X affects a variable Y through a single intervening mediator variable, M, in the case of the simple mediation model (Hayes, 2017). PROCESS, written by Andrew F. Hayes, is a tool that can be used for regression path analysis modeling within SPSS. In a simple mediation model, PROCESS estimates the total and direct effects, produces estimates of the effect size for the various effects, and uses 10'000 bootstrap samples to generate a 95% percentile bootstrap confidence interval for the indirect effect. Three simple mediation analyses were conducted to test whether brand attitude mediates the effect of impact, self-serving motives, and fit on perceived authenticity.

Further testing was conducted to test whether there are group differences. A statistical analysis that can be employed to determine whether there are group differences regarding the mean value are t-tests (Mellinger & Hanson, 2017). In the case of this study, independent t-tests were conducted to determine whether there are gender differences in the responses to the questions. A further statistical analysis that can be used to test differences between the means of groups is a one-way ANOVA analysis (Mellinger & Hanson, 2017). This analysis is used when investigating whether there are differences between three or more independent groups. A one-way ANOVA was employed to gain a deeper understanding of whether brand attitude affects perceived authenticity.

4.5 Statistical Bias and possible Sources of Error

Test subjects can be influenced during data collection, which can inevitably influence the results. It is thus necessary to highlight possible factors that could lead to errors or statistical distortions. A non-exhaustive list of these is presented below:

- Undercoverage Bias: This type of selection bias occurs when some members of the population are excluded from the sample (Eckman & Kreuter, 2017). It is notable that the survey was in English, ultimately meaning that people who do not know or have a limited level of the language were excluded from the sample.
- Non-Response Bias: According to Berg (2005), non-response bias “refers to the mistake one expects to make in estimating a population characteristic based on a sample of survey data in which, due to non-response, certain types of survey respondents are under-represented” (p. 865). The data could be subject to non-response bias to the extent that only people interested in brand activism completed the survey. Non-response bias can be reduced by using different survey distribution methods, keeping the survey short, and informing the respondents about the latter (Chung, 2019). These measures were implemented.
- Multiple Participation: Multiple participation refers to participants completing the survey multiple times (Schenk, 2014). This is difficult to avoid in online surveys and could lead to errors in the data.
- Central Tendency Bias: Central tendency bias occurs when respondents avoid extreme values and opt for an answer around the mid-point, which is often the case when a Likert scale is implemented (Felser, 2015, p. 434). As the measurement implemented was a 7-Point Likert Scale, the data is subject to central tendency bias.

5. Results

The following chapter describes the results of the survey. The results are structured according to the respective tests and presented according to the variables. The most relevant results are depicted in tables; further results can be found in the Appendix. The subgroup differences regarding gender are reported for each attribute.

5.1 Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive statistics were calculated to gain insights into the basic properties of the sample data. These are presented in this section.

5.1.1 Descriptive Analysis of Brand Attitude

The respondents' brand attitude was tested through five questions. The first question, "I like Nike as a brand," indicated that a majority of participants (83%) agreed with the statement to varying degrees. 6% of respondents disagreed with this statement to varying extents, indicating that they do not like the brand Nike. Females have an overall more positive brand attitude towards the brand, with a mean of 5.68, compared to males, who presented a mean score of 5.28. The results of this are depicted in Table 5. An independent t-test was conducted to determine whether there are gender differences in liking Nike as a brand. The t-test revealed that there was a significant difference between females ($M = 5.60$, $SD = 1.06$) and males ($M = 5.28$, $SD = 1.43$) in how much they like Nike, $t(157.67) = 2.03$, $p = .03$. The results of all t-tests can be found in Appendix C.

Table 5 Descriptive Analysis of Brand Attitude I

Statement (%)		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	M
	F	1.02	1.52	1.02	8.63	20.81	54.31	12.69	5.68
I like Nike as a brand	M	2.97	2.97	4.95	12.87	20.79	39.60	15.84	5.28
	T	1.70	2.00	2.30	10.30	20.90	49.0	13.90	5.50

1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat disagree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 5 = somewhat agree, 6 = agree, 7 = strongly agree, M = Mean. Valid for all other tables

A further question used to test brand attitude was, "do you follow Nike on social media?" 85.6% of respondents stated that they do not follow Nike on social media. A

higher percentage of males follow Nike on social media (17.82%) than females (12.69%). Respondents were additionally asked if they own Nike products. 87.3% of respondents stated that they do, while 12.7% stated that they do not. The question “have you repeatedly purchased Nike products?” was also asked to gain more insights into the respondents’ attitude toward the brand. The results of the question revealed that a majority of respondents (64.2%) had done so. This is depicted in Table 6. T-tests did not reveal any statistically significant evidence of differences in gender within these statements.

Table 6 Descriptive Analysis of Brand Attitude II

Statements (%)		Yes	No
Do you follow Nike on social media?	F	12.69	87.31
	M	17.82	82.18
	T	14.40	85.60
Do you own Nike products?	F	87.82	12.18
	M	86.14	13.86
	T	87.29	12.71
Have you repeatedly purchased Nike products?	F	64.47	35.53
	M	63.37	36.63
	T	64.20	35.80

Finally, participants were asked if they preferred Nike over other brands. As shown in Table 7, 49.8% of respondents, a majority, stated that they are indifferent and do not have a preference. 36.5% of respondents stated that they prefer Nike over other brands, and a minority of 13.2% stated that they do not prefer Nike over other brands. A t-test did not provide any statistical evidence of significant differences between genders.

Table 7 Descriptive Analysis of Brand Attitude III

Statement (%)		Yes	No	Indifferent
Do you prefer Nike over other sports brands such as Adidas, Reebok, Puma, etc.?	F	35.03	13.20	51.78
	M	40.00	14.00	46.00
	T	36.50	13.40	49.80

5.1.2 Descriptive Analysis of Impact

Overall, as depicted in Table 8, respondents tended to agree with the statements regarding Nike's impact on the brand activism act. While 32.1% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement "I believe that Nike donates a fair portion of its resources relative to its success," 42.8% agreed to different extents, and 24.7% disagreed with the statement to varying extents. The overall mean for this statement was 4.27. More respondents agreed that "Nike's brand activism has a long-term impact" compared to the previous statement. 63% of respondents agreed with the statement to varying degrees, and 18.4% disagreed to varying extents. The results of this statement presented a mean of 4.70. The final statement regarding impact was "a large monetary commitment appears to have been made to the cause that Nike donates to." This item presented the highest mean of 4.79 within the variable, indicating that, on average, respondents agreed with this statement more than they did with the others.

Results of cross tabulation by gender for the variable impact depicted slight differences in answer structures. Females displayed slightly higher means for all statements. Notably, males disagreed more strongly with the statement "I believe that Nike donates a fair portion of its resources relative to its success" (4.95%) than females (1.52%). According to the results of the t-testing, there were no significant differences in the means within the impact variable.

Table 8 Descriptive Analysis of Impact

Statement (%)		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	M
I believe that Nike donates a fair portion of its resources relative to its success.	F	1.52	10.15	13.20	30.46	24.37	17.77	2.54	4.29
	M	4.95	10.89	9.90	34.65	15.84	16.83	6.93	4.24
	T	2.70	10.40	12.00	32.10	21.40	17.40	4.00	4.27
Nike's brand activism has a long-term impact.	F	2.03	4.57	9.14	19.80	32.99	26.40	5.08	4.77
	M	3.96	8.91	10.89	15.84	26.73	27.72	5.94	4.59
	T	2.70	6.00	9.70	18.70	30.80	26.80	5.40	4.70
A large monetary commitment appears to have been made to the cause that Nike donates to.	F	0.51	2.54	7.11	30.96	28.93	25.89	4.06	4.79
	M	0.99	4.95	8.91	25.74	26.73	27.72	4.95	4.75
	T	0.70	3.30	7.70	29.10	28.10	26.40	4.70	4.79

5.1.3 Descriptive Analysis of Fit

Participants were asked to respond to four statements regarding the fit variable. Respondents predominantly agreed with the first item, “I believe that this act of brand activism fits with the products that Nike sells.” 69.2% agreed with this statement to varying degrees. 16.4% of respondents disagreed with this statement, and the remaining 14.4% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. This statement had a mean of 4.93. Responses followed a similar trend in the second statement, “I believe this act of brand activism fits with Nike’s consumers,” the third statement, “I believe that this act of brand activism is consistent with the company’s identity,” and the fourth statement “I believe that this act of brand activism is complementary to the interests of Nike’s consumers.” The statements had means of 4.93, 5.28, 5.05, and 5.27, respectively. The results are depicted in Table 9.

The cross tabulation by gender indicated that, on average, females believe the act of brand activism to be more fitting with the products that Nike sells, with Nike’s consumers and their interests, and the company’s identity. T-test results revealed that there is a significant difference between females ($M = 5.42, SD = 1.09$) and males ($M = 4.99, SD = 1.36$) in how much they believe the act of brand activism fits with Nike’s consumers, $t(296) = 3.08, p = .002$. Similarly, the t-test revealed that there were differences between females ($M = 5.42, SD = 1.09$) and males ($M = 4.99, SD = 1.29$), $t(296) = 3.0, p = .003$ within the statement that measures how complementary the act of brand activism is with the interest of Nike’s consumers.

Table 9 Descriptive Analysis of Fit

Statements (%)		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	M
I believe that this act of brand activism fits with the products that Nike sells.	F	2.54	3.55	9.14	14.21	27.41	35.03	8.12	4.98
	M	3.96	6.93	7.92	13.86	23.76	35.64	7.92	4.85
	T	3.00	4.70	8.70	14.40	26.10	35.10	8.00	4.93
I believe this act of brand activism fits with Nike's consumers.	F	1.02	0.51	2.54	14.21	24.37	46.19	11.17	5.44
	M	2.97	4.95	3.96	13.86	33.66	33.66	6.93	4.99
	T	1.70	2.00	3.00	14.00	27.80	41.80	9.70	5.28
I believe that this act of brand activism is consistent with the company's identity.	F	1.52	4.06	5.58	11.68	31.47	35.53	10.15	5.15
	M	5.94	4.95	5.94	13.86	24.75	36.63	7.92	4.88
	T	3.00	4.30	5.70	12.70	29.10	35.80	9.40	5.05

I believe that this act of brand activism is complementary to the interests of Nike's consumers.	F	0.51	2.03	1.52	13.71	26.90	44.16	11.17	5.42
	M	0.00	6.93	4.95	19.80	25.74	35.64	6.93	4.99
	T	0.30	3.70	2.70	15.70	26.80	41.10	9.70	5.27

5.1.4 Descriptive Analysis of Self-serving Motives

Six statements were used to measure self-serving motives. Respondents tended to agree with these statements more than they did with the statements within the other variables. With the exception of one statement, over 70% of respondents agreed to all statements to varying extents. These statements generated the highest means, as depicted in Table 10. Within this variable, the statement “Nike will get more customers by taking a brand activism initiative” generated the lowest mean, 5.01. The highest mean, 5.41, was generated by the statement “Nike hopes to increase profits through its brand activism initiative”.

Cross tabulation by gender was used to examine relationships within the data. This revealed that females believe that Nike is participating in brand activism with self-serving motives more strongly than males did. T-tests were conducted to test whether the mean difference between gender and perception of motives is statistically significant. The test for the statement “Nike feels that their customers expect brand activism participation” revealed a statistically significant difference in females ($M = 5.44$, $SD = 1.19$) and males ($M = 5.06$, $SD = 1.31$), $t(296) = 2.53$, $p = .012$. A statistically significant difference was also found in females ($M = 5.48$, $SD = 4.95$) and males ($M = 4.95$, $SD = 1.36$) towards the statement “Nike feels that society in general expects them to have brand activism initiatives,” $t(296) = 3.45$, $p = .001$. Additionally, a statistical significant difference in the means in females ($M = 5.16$, $SD = 4.70$) and males ($M = 4.70$, $SD = 1.57$) was found for the statement “Nike will get more customers by taking a brand activism initiative,” $t(167.07) = 2.56$, $p = .011$. The statement “Nike will keep more of their customers by taking a brand activism initiative” also depicted statistically significant differences in females ($M = 5.34$, $SD = 1.23$) and males ($M = 4.97$, $SD = 1.39$), $t(296) = 2.35$, $p = .019$.

Table 10 Descriptive Analysis of Self-Serving Motives

Statements (%)		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	M
Nike feels that their customers expect brand activism participation.	F	0.00	3.55	2.03	13.20	26.40	37.56	17.26	5.44
	M	1.98	0.00	9.90	20.79	24.75	30.69	11.88	5.06
	T	0.70	2.30	4.70	16.10	25.80	35.10	15.40	5.31
Nike feels that society in general expects them to have brand activism initiatives.	F	0.00	4.06	2.03	10.66	26.90	37.56	18.78	5.48
	M	0.99	2.97	10.89	18.81	32.67	18.81	14.85	4.95
	T	0.30	3.70	5.40	13.40	28.80	31.10	17.40	5.29
Nike will get more customers by taking a brand activism initiative.	F	0.00	3.05	8.63	13.20	32.99	28.43	13.71	5.16
	M	2.97	5.94	14.85	18.81	20.79	24.75	11.88	4.70
	T	1.00	4.00	10.70	15.10	28.80	27.40	13.00	5.01
Nike will keep more of their customers by taking a brand activism initiative.	F	0.00	3.05	6.60	11.17	26.40	38.07	14.72	5.35
	M	0.99	3.96	10.89	17.82	26.73	26.73	12.87	4.97
	T	0.30	3.30	8.40	13.40	26.40	34.10	14.00	5.20
Nike hopes to increase profits through its brand activism initiative.	F	1.52	4.06	4.06	8.63	21.32	36.55	23.86	5.49
	M	1.98	3.96	11.88	10.89	12.87	33.66	24.75	5.29
	T	1.70	4.00	7.00	9.40	18.70	35.50	24.10	5.41
Nike feels that their stockholders expect the company to participate in brand activism.	F	0.00	3.05	3.55	21.32	26.40	29.44	16.24	5.24
	M	0.00	6.93	9.90	13.86	28.71	24.75	15.84	5.02
	T	0.00	4.30	6.00	18.70	27.10	27.80	16.10	5.16

5.1.5 Descriptive Analysis of Authenticity

The respondents' perceived authenticity of the brand activism act was measured through seven items. The seven statements recorded means ranging from 4.14 to 5.12. The statement with the lowest mean was "the brand activism action captures what makes Nike unique to me." The statement with the highest mean was "Nike is standing up for what it believes in." Respondents predominantly agreed with the statements to varying degrees. The results are depicted in Table 11.

Cross tabulation by gender was conducted with the statements to gain insights into gender differences in perceived authenticity. On average, females agreed more strongly with the statements than males and recorded higher means. The highest mean difference was 0.64, recorded for the statement "the brand activism action is in accordance with Nike's values and beliefs." The statement "Nike is concerned about improving the well-being of society" similarly recorded a high mean difference of 0.60, in which females had a mean score of 4.90, and males had a mean score of 4.30. T-tests were conducted

in order to test whether the mean difference between gender and perception of authenticity is statistically significant. A statistically significant difference was found in the statement “Nike’s brand activism act is genuine” between females ($M = 4.85$, $SD = 1.31$) and males ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 1.74$), $t(159.38) = 2.58$, $p = .011$. Similar gender differences were found between females ($M = 4.87$, $SD = 1.19$) and males ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 1.56$) for the statement “the brand activism action preserves what Nike means to me”, $t(161.9) = 3.31$, $p = .001$. The statement “the brand activism action is in accordance with Nike’s values and beliefs” also showed statistically significant differences between females ($M = 5.10$, $SD = 1.15$) and males ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 1.58$), $t(155.94) = 3.61$, $p = .000$. The statement “Nike is being true to itself with this brand activism action” depicted similar differences between females ($M = 4.99$, $SD = 1.23$) and males ($M = 4.40$, $SD = 1.61$), $t(161.56) = 3.26$, $p = .001$. A statistically significant difference in females ($M = 5.26$, $SD = 1.19$) and males ($M = 4.88$, $SD = 1.60$) was also observed in the statement “Nike is standing up for what it believes in”, $t(159.06) = 2.10$, $p = .038$. Finally, the statement “Nike is concerned about improving the well-being of society” revealed statically significant differences between females ($M = 4.90$, $SD = 1.38$) and males ($M = 4.30$, $SD = 1.79$), $t(162.7) = 2.98$, $p = .003$.

Table 11 Descriptive Analysis of Authenticity

Statements (%)		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	M
Nike’s brand activism act is genuine	F	2.03	4.06	7.11	21.83	28.93	30.46	5.58	4.85
	M	9.90	7.92	9.90	19.80	22.77	21.78	7.92	4.35
	T	4.70	5.40	8.00	21.40	26.80	27.40	6.40	4.68
The brand activism action preserves what Nike means to me.	F	0.51	3.05	4.06	35.53	21.83	27.92	7.11	4.87
	M	6.93	6.93	11.88	29.70	18.81	20.79	4.95	4.29
	T	2.70	4.30	6.70	33.40	21.10	25.40	6.40	4.68
The brand activism action captures what makes Nike unique to me.	F	3.55	11.17	8.12	37.06	19.29	16.24	4.57	4.24
	M	10.89	10.89	13.86	26.73	15.84	19.80	1.98	3.93
	T	6.00	11.00	10.00	33.80	18.10	17.40	3.70	4.14
The brand activism action is in accordance with Nike’s values and beliefs.	F	0.51	2.54	4.57	20.30	30.96	33.50	7.61	5.10
	M	6.93	6.93	8.91	23.76	22.77	25.74	4.95	4.46
	T	2.70	4.00	6.00	21.40	28.40	30.80	6.70	4.89
Nike is being true to itself with this brand activism action.	F	0.51	4.06	5.08	22.84	29.44	29.95	8.12	4.99
	M	7.92	8.91	7.92	17.82	27.72	27.72	1.98	4.40
	T	3.00	5.70	6.00	21.40	28.80	29.10	6.00	4.79
Nike is standing up for	F	0.00	3.05	4.57	16.75	27.41	35.53	12.69	5.26

what it believes in.	M	6.93	0.99	8.91	17.82	23.76	28.71	12.87	4.88
	T	2.30	2.30	6.40	17.10	26.10	33.10	12.70	5.12
Nike is concerned about improving the well-being of society.	F	2.03	4.06	8.63	19.80	27.92	27.41	10.15	4.90
	M	11.88	6.93	10.89	18.81	19.80	24.75	6.93	4.30
	T	5.70	5.00	9.40	19.40	25.10	26.40	9.00	4.69

5.2 Removal of Items within the Brand Attitude Variable

The descriptive analysis indicated that some items within the variable brand attitude may be redundant. The response to “I like Nike as a brand” was predominantly positive. In contrast, the results from the descriptive analysis highlighted that numerous respondents do not follow Nike on social media, have not repeatedly purchased Nike products, and are indifferent regarding their preference for Nike over other sports brands. As a result, a cross tabulation was conducted with the four questions and the statement “I like Nike as a brand” to gain further insights. As depicted in Table 12, the cross tabulation revealed that a majority of respondents (207) agree with the statement and do not follow Nike on social media. This suggests that the question regarding following Nike on social media is redundant.

Similar results were found for the question regarding repeat purchases, in which 25% of respondents stated that they agree with the statement to varying degrees but have not repeatedly purchased Nike products. The question concerning the preference of Nike over other sports brands provided similar results, with a majority being indifferent but strongly agreeing to the statement that they like Nike. These results ultimately deemed the following questions redundant: “do you follow Nike on social media?”, “do you own Nike products?”, “have you repeatedly purchased Nike products?” and “do you prefer Nike over other sports brands such as Adidas, Reebok, Puma, etc.?” These items were removed from the survey and are not included in further testing.

Table 12 Cross Tabulation Brand Attitude Variables

Statement		“I like Nike as a brand.”						
		1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00
Do you Follow Nike on Social Media?	Yes	0	0	0	0	9	23	11
	No	5	6	7	31	53	124	30
Do you own Nike products?	Yes	3	4	6	19	54	136	39
	No	2	2	1	12	8	11	2

Have you repeatedly purchased Nike products?	Yes	2	2	3	11	30	109	35
	No	3	4	4	20	32	38	6
Do you prefer Nike over other sports brands such as Adidas, Reebok, Puma, etc.?	Yes	1	0	0	6	12	61	29
	No	1	2	3	6	14	13	1
	Indifferent	3	4	4	19	36	72	11

5.3 Testing of Hypotheses

This section provides results from the testing of the hypotheses. A multiple linear regression analysis was conducted as part of the hypotheses testing. Prerequisites need to be met for this to be conducted, including a linear relationship between the variables which was tested through correlation analyses, normal distribution, no or little multicollinearity tested using the VIF values, and homoscedasticity (Frey, 2018). All prerequisites were fulfilled. These are depicted in Appendix D. Further analyses used for hypotheses testing include t-tests, ANOVA, and mediations.

5.3.1 Correlation Analyses

Correlation analyses were conducted to ensure linearity between the dependent and independent variables and to gain insights into the associations between the dependent and independent variables. Correlation values can range from -1 (expressing a negative relationship) to +1 (expressing a positive relationship). A value of 0 would indicate no relationship between the variables (Hair et al., 1995). The closer the value is to -1 or 1, the stronger the linear correlation is (Odom & Morrow, Jr., 2006). The results of the correlation analyses can be found in Appendix E.

Impact and Perceived Brand Activism Authenticity

A one-tailed test provides more power to detect an effect in one direction by not testing the effect in the other. A one-tailed correlation proved more suitable as the formulated hypothesis predicts a directional relationship. There is a significant and strong positive correlation between the impact of the brand activism initiative and brand activism authenticity ($r=.706$, $p < .05$). This means that with the increased impact of a brand activism initiative, the perceived authenticity of the brand activism act is more likely to increase.

Self-Serving Motives and Perceived Brand Activism Authenticity

A two-tailed correlation was conducted with the variables self-serving motives and perceived brand activism authenticity. The results show a negative correlation between perceived self-serving motives and brand activism authenticity ($r = -.095$, $p > .05$). However, the p-value is 0.1, which is greater than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). It can thus be concluded that there is no statistically significant relationship between self-serving motives and brand activism authenticity.

Fit and Perceived Brand Activism Authenticity

A two-tailed correlation was conducted to test the relationship between the fit and perceived brand activism authenticity. There is a significant positive correlation between the fit of the brand activism initiative and brand activism authenticity ($r = .695$, $p < .05$). This means that with the increased fit of a brand activism initiative, the perceived authenticity of the brand activism act is likely to increase.

Brand Attitude and Perceived Brand Activism Authenticity

Respondents' brand attitude was measured on a 7-Point Likert Scale through the statement "I like Nike as a brand." A two-tailed correlation was conducted to test the relationship between brand attitude and perceived brand activism authenticity. There is a significant positive correlation between the variables ($r = .489$, $p < .05$). This means that with an increasingly positive attitude towards the brand, the perceived authenticity of the brand activism act is more likely to increase.

5.3.2 Multiple Regression

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to test H1, H2, H3, and H4. Specifically, a regression was conducted to assess the relative impact of the independent variables impact, self-serving motives, fit, and brand attitude on the dependent variable, perceived brand activism authenticity. The purpose of this was to examine the strength and direction of the relationships. Computed mean scores of the respective items were applied for the analysis.

The F-Test reveals that the regression model is significant: $F(4,294) = 132.32$, $p < .05$, $n = 299$. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no linear relationship between the predictor variables, brand attitude, self-serving motives, impact, and fit, and the

dependent variable, perceived authenticity, is rejected. F-tests, however, do not guarantee that every independent variable is a statistically significant predictor variable (Mellinger & Hanson, 2017). T-tests must be consulted for the individual coefficients. The t-tests from the results of the multiple regression analysis show that impact ($t = 9.28, p < .05$), fit ($t = 8.95, p < .05$) and brand attitude ($t = 3.68, p < .05$) are statistically significant predictor variables of perceived brand activism authenticity. The dependent variable, self-serving motives, did not have a statistically significant effect on perceived authenticity ($t = -1.534, p > .05$). Three of the four variables influence brand activism authenticity, resulting in the following regression function:

$$\text{Perceived brand activism authenticity} = -.203 + .411 \cdot \text{Impact} + .397 \cdot \text{Fit} + .146 \cdot \text{Brand Attitude}$$

In a multiple regression analysis, the adjusted R^2 value measures the percentage of variability in the dependent variable that is explained by changes in the independent variables (Mellinger & Hanson, 2017). The multiple regression revealed an adjusted R^2 value of .643, meaning that the variables brand attitude, self-serving motives, impact, and fit explain perceived brand activism authenticity by 64.3%. The remaining variability is explained by factors not included in the model. Beta weights indicate the strength of the relationship between the predictor variable and dependent variable and enable a comparison of the predictiveness of the variables (Piedmont, 2014). The results of the multiple regression analysis indicate that impact is the strongest predictor of perceived brand activism authenticity, followed by fit and brand attitude, respectively. The results of the individual coefficient t-tests from the multiple regression are depicted in Table 13, and further results can be found in Appendix F.

Table 13 Individual Coefficient T-test

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.203	.331		-.613	.541
	Impact	.456	.049	.411	9.284	.000
	Motive	-.064	.041	-.054	-1.534	.126
	Fit	.458	.051	.397	8.949	.000
	Brand Attitude	.146	.040	.146	3.677	.000

As a result of the conducted multiple regression analysis, the following can be concluded regarding H1, H2, H3, and H4:

H1: The impact of brand activism initiatives positively influences perceptions of brand activism authenticity.

The results of the multiple regression reveal that impact has a significant, positive influence on perceived brand activism authenticity ($\beta = .411, t = 9.284, p < .05$). As such, H1 is accepted.

H2: Perceived self-serving motives will negatively influence perceptions of brand activism authenticity.

H2, which posits that perceived self-serving motives have a negative impact on perceived brand activism authenticity, is rejected. This is because the test did not show significant effects ($\beta = -.054, t = -1.534, p > .05$).

H3: Fit between the brand activism campaign and the company positively influences perceptions of brand activism authenticity.

The results indicate that fit of the brand activism campaign and the company has a significant, positive influence on perceived brand activism authenticity ($\beta = .397, t = 8.949, p < .05$). Consequently, H3 is accepted.

H4: Brand attitude positively influences perceptions of brand activism authenticity.

The regression results indicate that brand attitude positively influences perceived brand activism authenticity ($\beta = .146, t = 3.677, p < .05$). As such, H4 is accepted.

5.3.3 One-way ANOVA

A one-way ANOVA can be used to better understand group differences in means when comparing three or more independent groups (Mellinger & Hanson, 2017). In order to gain further insights into how brand attitude influences perceived authenticity, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. Brand attitude responses were divided into three groups. Respondents who strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement “I like Nike as a brand” were grouped, respondents who somewhat disagreed, neither agreed nor disagreed, or somewhat agreed with the statement were grouped, and people who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement were grouped. These will be referred to as

groups one, two, and three, respectively. The results of the one-way ANOVA can be found in Appendix G.

Levene's test rejected the null hypothesis of equal variances $F(2,296) = 8.12, p < .05$. The F statistic reveals a statistically significant difference between the group means $F(2,296) = 37.0, p < .05$. Because ANOVA tests do not indicate the whereabouts of the differences and equal variances cannot be assumed, a Games-Howell post-hoc analysis was conducted to investigate which specific group means differ. The analysis revealed a significant difference between the perceived authenticity scores of group three, who showed a stronger affinity to liking the brand, and group one, who indicated that they do not like the brand (2.20, 95%- CI [.637, 3.76]). A significant difference in the perceived authenticity scores was also found between groups three and two, who did not indicate a strong opinion about the brand (.866, 95%- CI [.562, 1.17]).

5.3.4 Mediation Analyses

In order to test hypotheses 4a, 4b, and 4c, which involve calculating a mediation, regression analyses were implemented using PROCESS by Andrew F. Hayes (2018) in SPSS (model 4, bootstrap 5000, confidence interval 95%). The causal-step approach, also known as the Baron and Kenny method, was not implemented because the prerequisites for mediation in this approach are outdated (Hayes, 2017; Nitzl et al., 2016). The study follows the methodology of Hayes (2022), which is in line with the current literature. This approach considers the indirect effects as mediation if the bootstrap confidence interval of the indirect effect does not contain the value zero. The detailed results of the mediation analyses can be found in Appendix H.

Hypothesis 4a: Brand attitude mediates the positive influence that impact has on perceived brand activism authenticity.

H4a examines the mediating effect of brand attitude that explains the relationship between impact and perceived brand activism authenticity. The results of the mediation reveal that impact positively affects brand attitude $a = .459, 95\% [.344; .574]$. The regression of brand attitude on perceived brand activism authenticity, disregarding the mediator, is significant, $b = .237, 95\% [.152; .322]$. Furthermore, the analysis showed a significant indirect effect of impact on perceived brand activism authenticity through brand attitude, $ab = .109, 95\%, [.049; .182]$. Nonetheless, the direct effect of impact on

perceived brand activism is also significant and positively impacts perceived brand activism authenticity, $c' = .675$, 95% [.581; .769]. The total effect is significant ($\beta = .784$, $t = 17.19$, $p < .05$, 95% [.694; .873]). As such, H4a is accepted.

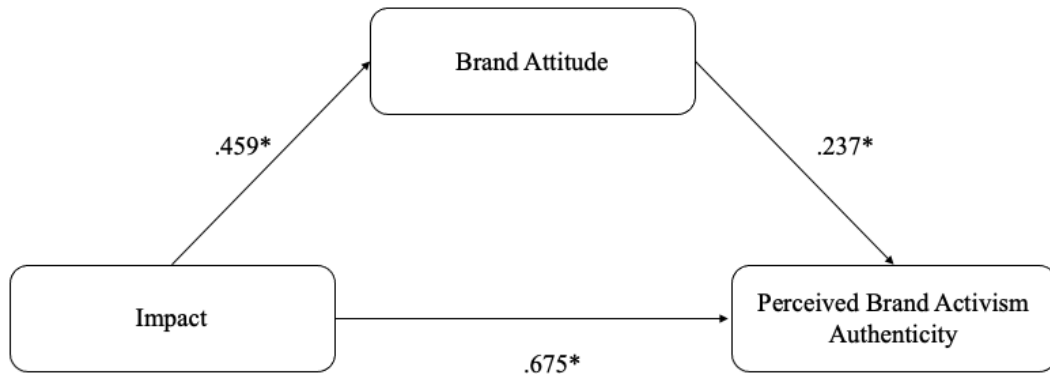


Figure 6 Mediating Effect of Brand Attitude on Impact and Perceived Brand Activism Authenticity

Hypothesis 4b: Brand attitude mediates the negative influence that perceived self-serving motives have on perceived brand activism authenticity.

H4b aimed to examine the mediating effect of brand attitude that explains the relationship between self-serving motives and perceived brand activism authenticity. According to Hayes (2017), the approach that a mediation analysis should only be undertaken when it has been demonstrated that the independent variable and dependent variable are associated is “misguided and outdated” (p. 80). It is his belief that a mediation analysis can be conducted regardless of the presence of causality. As such, while the results of the multiple regression did not indicate a relationship between self-serving motives and perceived brand activism authenticity, a mediation analysis with these variables and brand attitude as the mediator variable was conducted. The mediation analysis results were not statistically significant ($p = .605$). Specifically, they reveal that self-serving motives do not significantly affect brand attitude $a = -.035$, 95% [-.169; .099] (see Figure 7). The regression of brand attitude on perceived brand activism authenticity, disregarding the mediator, is significant, $b = .488$, 95% [.388; .587]. Furthermore, the results of the analysis showed that there is no significant indirect effect of self-serving motives on perceived brand activism authenticity through brand attitude, $ab = -.017$, 95%, [-.087; .047]. The direct effect of self-serving motives

on perceived brand activism is not significant, $c' = -.095$, 95% [-.211; .022]. Furthermore, the total effect is not significant ($\beta = .112$, $t = -1.65$, 95% [-.245; .022]). Thus, the hypothesis that brand attitude has a mediating effect that explains the relationship between self-serving motives and perceived brand activism authenticity is rejected.

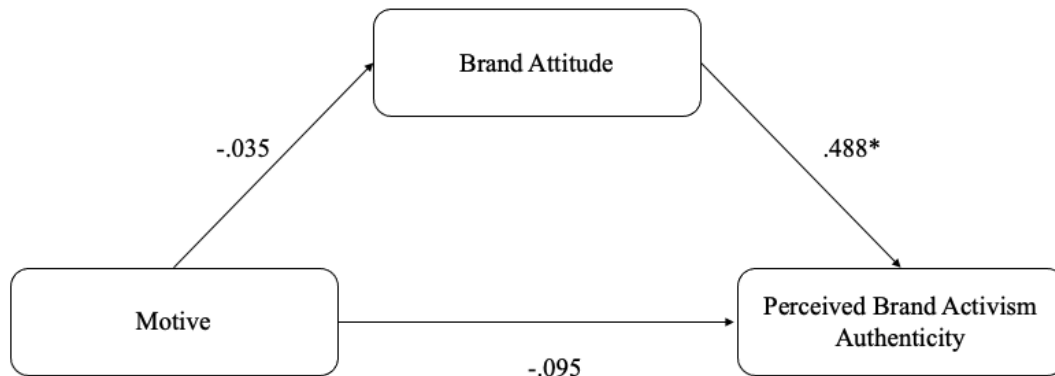


Figure 7 Mediating Effect of Brand Attitude on Self-Serving Motives and Perceived Brand Activism Authenticity

Hypothesis 4c: Brand attitude mediates the positive influence that fit has on perceived brand activism authenticity.

H4c examines the mediating effect of brand attitude that explains the relationship between the fit and perceived brand activism authenticity. The results of the mediation reveal that fit positively affects brand attitude $a = .495$, 95% [.376; .613]. The regression of brand attitude on perceived brand activism authenticity, disregarding the mediator, is significant, $b = .234$, 95% [.146; .321]. The results of the analysis showed a significant indirect effect of fit on perceived brand activism authenticity through brand attitude, $ab = .116$, 95%, [.047; .189]. The direct effect of fit on perceived brand activism is also significant, $c' = .685$, 95% [.585; .786]. The total effect is significant ($\beta = .801$, $t = 16.65$, 95% [.706; .895]). Consequently, H4c is accepted. The results of the mediation are depicted in Figure 8.

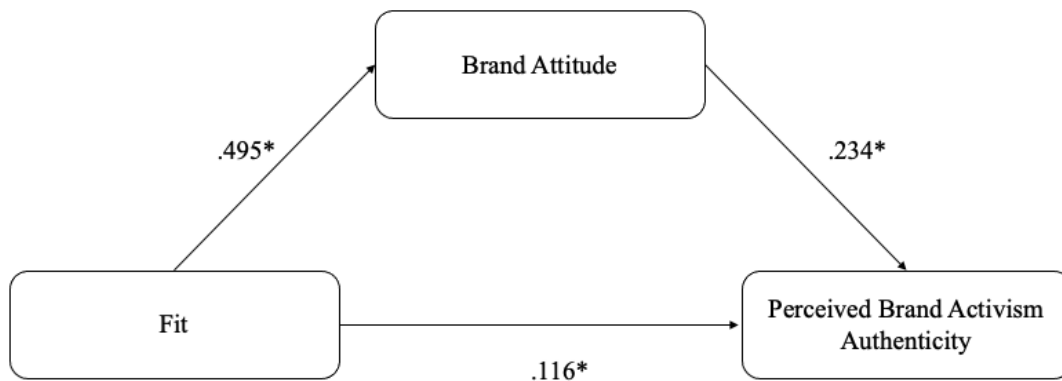


Figure 8 Mediating Effect of Brand Attitude on Fit and Perceived Brand Activism Authenticity

5.3.5 Hypothesis Overview & Conceptual Model

This section provides an overview of the results of the hypothesis testing (see Table 14) and the conceptual model (see Figure 9).

Table 14 Overview of Hypotheses Testing Results

Hypothesis		Result
H1	The impact of brand activism initiatives positively influences perceptions of brand activism authenticity.	Accept
H2	Perceived self-serving motives will negatively influence perceptions of brand activism authenticity.	Reject
H3	Fit between the brand activism campaign and the company positively influences perceptions of brand activism authenticity.	Accept
H4	Brand attitude positively influences perceptions of brand activism authenticity.	Accept
H4a	Brand attitude mediates the positive influence that impact has on perceived brand activism authenticity.	Accept
H4b	Brand attitude mediates the negative influence that perceived self-serving motives have on perceived brand activism authenticity.	Reject
H4c	Brand attitude mediates the positive influence that fit has on perceived brand activism authenticity.	Accept

Conceptual Model

Based on these results, the initial conceptual model can be adapted as follows (see Figure 9).

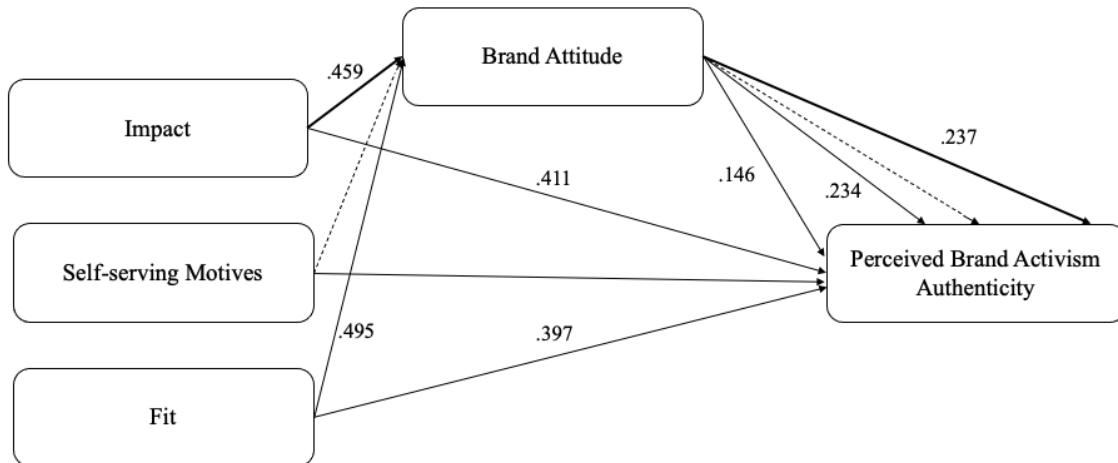


Figure 9 Revised Conceptual Model

5.4 Quality Criteria

There are requirements that data and reports must meet for the research to be considered quality scientific research. For quantitative research, the quality criteria are objectivity, reliability, and validity (Hussy et al., 2013). This section focuses on the quality criteria of the research.

5.4.1 Objectivity

A scientific test is objective when test results are independent of situational testing conditions. This criterion is necessary to meet further quality criteria (Hussy et al., 2013). The three types of objectivity are objectivity during data collection, objectivity during evaluation, and objectivity during interpretation. Objectivity during data influence the results (Moosbrugger & Kelava, 2007). This can be achieved through the use of computer-based tests, as this reduces the interaction between the administrator and the respondent. As the survey was conducted online, this criterion is fulfilled. Objectivity during evaluation requires that different researchers achieve the same results during data evaluation. The use of pre-defined answers and the absence of open-ended

questions leads to objectivity during evaluation (Moosbrugger & Kelava, 2007). Thus, this criterion was fulfilled. A high degree of objectivity exists during interpretation when the results are interpreted the same way by different researchers (Rammstedt, 2010, p. 242). While using a Likert scale limits the scope of the interpretation of the results, objectivity of interpretation cannot be established, as a further researcher would have to interpret the results.

5.4.2 Reliability

Reliability is defined as the extent to which repeated measurements of an attitude object lead to the same values (Baur & Blasius, 2014) and is concerned with the stability of a measuring instrument (Albers et al., 2009). Cronbach's Alpha is a commonly used measure of reliability (Hair et al., 1995) measuring a scale's internal consistency (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The internal consistency is expressed as a number between 0 and 1, where a higher score indicates higher scale reliability. A Cronbach's Alpha scale above 0.70 is generally considered an acceptable level of reliability, and values above 0.80 are considered good (Taber, 2018; Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

The reliability of the items is depicted in Table 15. The variables impact, fit, motive, and authenticity had Cronbach's alpha scales above 0.70, which are representative of an acceptable internal consistency of the respective scales. Consequentially, no items were removed from the measurement. It is, however, notable that brand attitude could not be measured for item reliability because it consists of one item.

Table 15 Item Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
Impact	.749	.750	3
Fit	.814	.815	4
Motive	.864	.866	6
Authenticity	.932	.933	7

5.4.3 Validity

Validity refers to the accuracy and precision of a measurement instrument. It tests whether a measuring instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Himme, 2007). Validity is ensured in the case of this study because the questions asked were adapted from previous studies (Döring & Bortz, 2016, p. 344). Furthermore, the use of multi-item scales is deemed to be a valid measuring scale (Hussy et al., 2013, p. 77). This study employed a 7-point Likert scale, thus adding to the validity of the measurement instrument. It is, however, notable that a high validity cannot be confirmed as the questionnaire was conducted online (Hussy et al., 2013, p. 75). This reduces validity because the experimenter does not have control over the conditions in which respondents complete the survey.

6. Discussion

The objective of this paper was to gain insights into what makes brand activism perceived as authentic among millennials by examining various antecedents of authenticity. The findings of the quantitative analysis provided support for three antecedents. This chapter presents the results of the data analysis in more detail and compares them with existing research results.

6.1 Impact and Perceived Brand Activism Authenticity

Research in brand activism shows that the impact of a brand activism initiative contributes to its perceived authenticity (Mirzaei et al., 2022). This is reflected in the context of CSR authenticity in research conducted by Alhouti et al. (2016) and Joo et al. (2019). The results of this study are in line with those of the aforementioned researchers, as it was found that the impact of brand activism initiatives positively influences brand activism authenticity. This was tested through a multiple regression, which revealed that impact has a significant, positive influence on perceived brand activism authenticity ($\beta = .411, t = 9.284, p < .05$).

The correlation analysis demonstrates that impact and authenticity correlate positively. This suggests that increased perceptions of the impact lead to increased perceptions of authenticity among millennials and vice versa. Furthermore, the regression analysis results indicate that impact has the strongest influence on perceived brand activism authenticity, highlighting the importance of making an impact. This emphasizes the importance of making a long-term impact on a cause for the brand activism act to be perceived as authentic. It can thus be inferred that initiatives such as changing a company logo to rainbow colors for pride month in support of the LGBTQ+ community, which as a stand-alone act arguably does not have a long-term impact, may be perceived as inauthentic.

According to the literature, brand activism can take various forms and does not have to include donating to the cause (Shetty et al., 2019, Mirzaei et al., 2022). However, the results indicate that consumers value the monetary impact of brand activism initiatives, specifically that a large monetary commitment is made and that companies donate what is perceived to be a fair portion relative to its success. This implies that if a company makes a monetary contribution to the cause, it should be a significant commitment and

should be a fair donation in relation to its success. It can therefore be concluded that because consumers consider the impact to be an important antecedent of authenticity, it is essential that they are informed about the impact that the initiative has.

6.2 Self-Serving Motives and Perceived Brand Activism Authenticity

Literature on the topic of brand activism authenticity found perceptions of corrupt motivations to be the strongest barrier of authenticity (Mirzaei et al., 2022). In the context of CSR authenticity, however, the existing research did not reach a consensus regarding the negative influence of self-serving motives on perceived authenticity. A majority of research found that perceived self-serving motives negatively impact CSR authenticity (Beckman & Colwell, 2009; Jeon & An, 2019; Joo et al., 2019). In contrast, Alhouti et al. (2016) found that self-serving motives did not significantly affect CSR authenticity in their research. The findings of this study, that self-serving motives, which include participating in brand activism due to stockholder and customer expectations, as well as profit-seeking motives, do not influence brand activism authenticity, replicate the results of Alhouti et al. (2016). This was tested through a multiple regression ($\beta = -.054, t = -1.534, p > .05$).

While the hypothesis that perceived self-serving motives negatively impacts perceptions of brand activism authenticity was not supported, there are some inferences that can be made from the findings. Firstly, this could imply that consumers accept that participating in brand activism does not solely have to be driven by a company's values and, in turn, does not significantly affect the perceived authenticity. A large number of respondents strongly agreed that Nike feels that their customers and society expect brand activism participation. This is reflective of literature regarding company expectations of brand activism, which states that millennials expect brands to contribute to the communities they serve and global issues (Sarkar & Kotler, 2018). Because millennials have these expectations of brands, it is understandable that they believe that the company recognizes these expectations and consequently also participates in satisfying them.

Additionally, almost 75% of respondents agreed with the statement "Nike will keep more of their customers by taking a brand activism initiative," and over 69% of respondents agreed with the statement "Nike will get more customers by taking a brand

activism initiative,” to varying degrees. The responses to these questions relate to the findings of the empirical investigation conducted by Shetty et al. (2019), who found that millennials prefer to purchase from a brand if it supports a cause or purpose and will continue to do so if it benefits a cause or people in need. If millennials prefer to purchase from a brand that participates in brand activism, participation will arguably lead to the retention of customers and the acquisition of new customers.

The response to the above statements could also provide explanations regarding the high agreement to the statement “Nike hopes to increase profits through its brand activism initiative.” One explanation for this could be that, by definition, commercial brands have profit-seeking motivations. Consequently, participation in brand activism is at risk of being perceived as profit-seeking (Mirzaei et al., 2022). Literature also supports that brand activism participation can lead to increased profits because millennials are willing to pay a price premium for brands that partake (Shetty et al., 2019). Thus, if companies can retain consumers, acquire new consumers, and increase prices by participating in brand activism, this could arguably lead to increased profits and may not influence perceived authenticity.

6.3 Fit and Perceived Brand Activism Authenticity

According to previous literature on brand activism authenticity, a high fit between the initiative and the brand is essential for authenticity perception (Mirzaei et al., 2022). Similar findings were made in the context of CSR authenticity. Specifically, Alhouti et al. (2016), Beckman & Colwell (2009), and Joo et al. (2019) found that fit positively influences CSR authenticity. Multiple regression was conducted to test whether brand activism authenticity is positively influenced by fit in this study. The results showed that the fit between the brand activism campaign and the company positively influences perceptions of brand activism authenticity ($\beta = .397$, $t = 8.949$, $p < .05$). This is in accordance with the findings of Mirzaei et al. (2022), Alhouti et al. (2016), and Joo et al. (2019).

The results of the correlation analysis highlighted that fit and brand activism authenticity correlate positively ($r = .695$, $p < .05$). The correlation analysis showed that fit correlates the strongest with brand activism authenticity. This shows the importance of ensuring that the act in which brands participate fits with the products that they sell,

that it fits with consumers, that it is consistent with the company's identity and that the act is complementary to the interests of the consumers, as an increase in fit leads to an increase in perceived authenticity. The positive relationship between the two variables indicates that a lack of fit decreases perceived authenticity. The finding that respondents were concerned with the alignment of their values with those of brands is reflected in the 5WPR consumer report (2020).

6.4 Brand Attitude and Perceived Brand Activism Authenticity

To the best of the author's knowledge, no previous research has been conducted on whether brand attitude influences brand activism authenticity. However, prior research has indicated that brand attitude is useful in predicting behaviors (Ramesh et al., 2019). As such, an objective of this paper was to investigate whether favorable brand attitudes influence perceived brand activism authenticity. The results of the multiple regression show that brand attitude significantly affects perceptions of brand activism authenticity ($\beta = .146, t = 3.677, p < .05$). This implies that, as with predicting other behavior, brand attitude is useful in predicting behaviors towards brand activism initiatives.

The result of the correlation analysis ($r = .489, p < .05$) indicates that brand attitude and perceived brand activism authenticity are positively correlated. This illustrates that a more favorable brand attitude leads to a more authentic perception of brand activism. This was further supported by the one-way ANOVA employed to identify differences in millennials who have a favorable attitude toward the brand, an indifferent attitude toward the brand, and a negative attitude toward the brand. What can be inferred from the results of this analysis is that millennials who like a brand are likely to perceive brand activism initiatives as authentic. Similarly, they may be less likely to question the authenticity of an initiative than people who dislike the brand.

6.5 The Mediating Effect of Brand Attitude

While research has found that brand attitude has a mediating influence in other contexts, no previous literature has investigated whether brand attitude has a mediating role on brand activism authenticity. It was hypothesized that impact will positively affect brand activism authenticity and that brand attitude will mediate this relationship. Analyzing the indirect effects, results reveal that brand attitude significantly mediates the relationship between impact and brand activism authenticity, $ab = .109, 95\%, [.05; .18]$.

It was also hypothesized that fit will positively affect brand activism authenticity and that brand attitude will mediate this relationship. The indirect effects show that brand attitude significantly mediates the relationship between fit and brand activism authenticity, $ab = .116$, 95%, [.047; .189]. This indicates that the relationship between impact and brand activism authenticity and fit and brand activism authenticity can be explained by brand attitude. What can be inferred from this is that millennials will perceive the impact and fit of brand activism initiatives to be more authentic because they have a positive attitude towards the brand. This highlights the importance of brand attitude in forming opinions of authenticity. Nevertheless, the effect of impact and fit still contribute to perceived brand activism authenticity beyond what is accounted for by brand attitude. These findings are reflective of the theory that attitude is a mediating response to a stimulus (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

6.6 Gender Differences in Perceived Brand Activism Authenticity

While no previous research had been conducted on the gender differences in perceived brand activism authenticity, this study investigated whether there were any differences between millennial males and females and their perception of brand activism authenticity. The results of the cross tabulation and t-tests indicated that within the millennial generation, males are generally more skeptical of brand activism initiatives than females. What can be inferred from this is that males belonging to the millennial generation may require more evidence of impact and fit in order to perceive brand activism initiatives as authentic.

7. Conclusion and Implications

This section presents a conclusion of the study as well as the implications that it has for academia and managers.

7.1 Conclusion

Brand activism is gaining traction, and millennials expect brands to help solve society's problems. Considering the backlash that brand activism can have when it is perceived as inauthentic, the spending power and the size of the millennial generation, as well as the lack of research on the topic of brand activism authenticity among millennials, it was the goal of this study to fill this gap in research. Specifically, this paper aimed to answer the question: what makes brand activism authentic amongst millennials? The absence of quantitative research on the topic of brand activism authenticity led to the adaptation of a study on the topic of CSR authenticity, which can be justified as qualitative research on the matter borrowed antecedents from CSR and because brand activism is an evolution of CSR.

The data was collected through an online survey, of which a total of 299 valid survey responses were collected. Various tests such as t-tests, correlation analyses, multiple regression, mediation analyses, and one-way ANOVA were employed to determine what antecedents make brand activism authentic among millennials. Three of the four tested antecedents of authenticity proved to influence millennials' perceptions of brand activism authenticity, namely impact, fit, and brand attitude. Self-serving motives were not found to influence brand activism authenticity.

These findings bridge a gap in the current state of research concerning the perceived authenticity of brand activism among millennials. Academic implications are presented in the following section. The findings also serve practical purposes. A deeper understanding of what makes brand activism authentic among millennials can help managers to participate in brand activism in a way that is perceived as authentic. This is crucial because it will help companies avoid backlash. Further elaborations on the managerial implications follow in section 7.3.

7.2 Academic Implications

This study has several academic implications. While brand activism is gaining traction and is increasingly present in society today, the available research on the topic is limited. The available research on the authenticity of brand activism is even more limited, and to the best of the author's knowledge, no prior quantitative research has been conducted on the topic. Taking a quantitative approach to determine antecedents of brand activism authenticity, this paper contributes to the emerging research stream of brand activism authenticity. The results of the study found several statistically significant relationships between brand activism authenticity and its antecedents, providing a basis for future research on the topic.

While the hypothesized antecedents of brand activism authenticity of fit, impact, and self-serving motives had previously been identified as antecedents of authenticity within qualitative research on brand activism and quantitative research in the context of CSR, brand attitude had not previously been tested as an antecedent of authenticity. The findings of this study reveal that brand attitude has a significant effect on perceived brand activism authenticity. This study also found that brand attitude mediates the relationship between impact and perceived brand activism authenticity and fit and perceived brand activism authenticity. This finding could be relevant for research on the topic of authenticity in different contexts.

This study additionally has implications for research on the perception of authenticity. With the exception of brand attitude, the hypothesized antecedents of perceived authenticity of brand activism were suggested in other contexts. For example, Mirzaei et al. (2022) borrowed the following antecedents of brand activism authenticity: impact, fit, and motives from research conducted on CSR authenticity. This study adapted a construct used for measuring the impact of these antecedents on CSR authenticity to measure brand activism authenticity. The results suggest that the antecedents of CSR authenticity can be applied to brand activism and could be valid in other contexts. This could indicate that antecedents of authenticity are not specific to their context and could be applied to other domains, which could be helpful in future research streams.

7.3 Managerial Recommendations

The findings of this study have numerous managerial implications. Firstly, the findings suggest that millennials' perceived authenticity of brand activism is positively related to impact, fit, and brand attitude. Consequently, managers can make efforts to improve the consumers' perceptions of these antecedents to increase their perceptions of the authenticity of brand activism initiatives. In order to improve the perception of the initiative's impact, the brand must communicate what they do to support the cause. Furthermore, if a brand decides to make a financial contribution as part of its initiative, managers should consider whether the contribution is perceived to make an impact relative to its size and profits.

Considering the repercussions that brand activism can have, the values that the brand represents through its act of brand activism must be complementary to those of a majority of its customers while simultaneously ensuring their consistency with the company's identity and the products it sells. Because brand activism is concerned with sensitive, divisive topics that evoke emotional responses, some consumers will inevitably feel alienated if they do not feel that their values are aligned with the brands. Before engaging in brand activism, managers should aim to gain a holistic understanding of their consumers and values and consider whom they may alienate by participating. Therefore, brands should continuously make efforts to choose issues that matter to their customers so that they can be considered when deciding on a brand activism initiative to participate in. One approach to gaining insights into what issues consumers are concerned with is through conducting surveys.

The results of the findings regarding gender differences in perceptions of brand activism authenticity also have implications for brands. The findings indicate that within the millennial generation, males are more skeptical of brand activism than females. As authentic brand activism can have numerous benefits, and inauthentic brand activism can lead to backlash and alienation, companies with a predominantly male customer base or target group consisting of millennials should consider whether participating is appropriate.

8. Limitations and Future Research

While the empirical findings of this study are relevant, caution should be taken when generalizing the findings, as some limitations have been observed. This chapter discusses these limitations and proposes various future research directions.

Firstly, the findings of this study and of the factors that influence millennials' perception of authenticity are limited to one case. This inherently limits the generalizability of the findings. Respondents were confronted with one brand, and while the data collection showed that a majority were familiar with the brand, respondents did not have information about another brand activism initiative for comparison. Future research could present respondents with multiple campaigns to determine if the importance of antecedents of authenticity vary according to the brand.

An additional limitation is that the research focuses on two categories of brand activism. Nike's "For Once, Don't Do It" campaign was aired in support of the BLM movement, which can be categorized as social and political. However, Kotler and Sarkar (2018) refer to four additional categories of brand activism: workplace, environmental, legal, and economic. While the general nature of the brand activism act should not differ, in that the company is making a statement on a controversial issue, the importance of these antecedents may vary in different contexts. Future research could investigate whether these antecedents apply to other categories.

A further limitation of the study is the lack of previous research on brand activism authenticity. While two brand activism authenticity frameworks have been developed, these are limited to qualitative research. Consequently, a framework that measures CSR authenticity was adapted to brand activism authenticity and implemented to conduct primary research. While brand activism is an evolution of CSR and the results of the study show that impact, fit, and brand attitude influence millennials' perceived authenticity of brand activism, it is possible that other antecedents also have an influence. Future research could investigate the significance of other factors that influence perceived brand activism authenticity.

Furthermore, a methodological limitation exists within the questionnaire. Three items within the brand attitude variable were deemed to be redundant and were consequently removed. As a result, only one item was included in the brand attitude variable, which excluded the possibility of conducting an internal reliability test. Future research could take a different approach to measuring brand attitude and its significance in perceived brand activism authenticity.

This research provides a solid foundation for further research in the context of millennials' perception of the authenticity of brand activism. Nonetheless, further potential areas of future research could include but are not limited to generational and cultural differences in perceived brand activism authenticity and differences in perceived brand activism authenticity based on whether a financial contribution is made.

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10. Appendix

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Appendix A: Declaration of Authorship

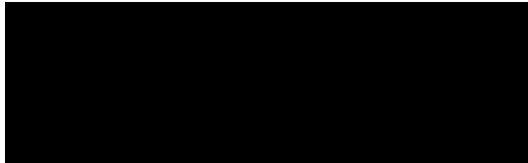
"I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work, that it has been created by me without the help of others, using only the sources referenced, and that I will not supply any copies of this thesis to any third parties without written permission by the head of this degree program."

At the same time, all rights to this thesis are hereby assigned to ZHAW Zurich University of Applied Sciences, except for the right to be identified as its author.

Last name/first name of student

Mueller Carmen

Student's signature



Appendix B: Questionnaire

Hello, thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey as part of a Master's Degree Thesis at the Zurich University of Applied Sciences. This survey is concerned with the topic of perceived authenticity of brand activism in millennials (born between 1980-2000) and takes between 4-6 minutes to complete.

Please consider the following information before continuing:

- This survey is aimed at respondents between the ages of 22 and 42, if you are younger/older there is no need to participate in this survey.
- Survey responses will remain anonymous.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at muellca9@students.zhaw.ch.

Thank you in advance, your help is greatly appreciated!

Carmen Müller

Are you familiar with the brand Nike?

Yes

No



What is your age?

< 22
22 - 26
27 - 31
32 - 36
37 - 42
> 42



Gender

Male

Female

Non-binary / third gender

Prefer not to say

What is your highest completed or ongoing level of education?

Secondary Education

Bachelor's Degree

Master's Degree

PHD

Other

What is your nationality?

Switzerland

France

Italy

United Kingdom

United States

Germany

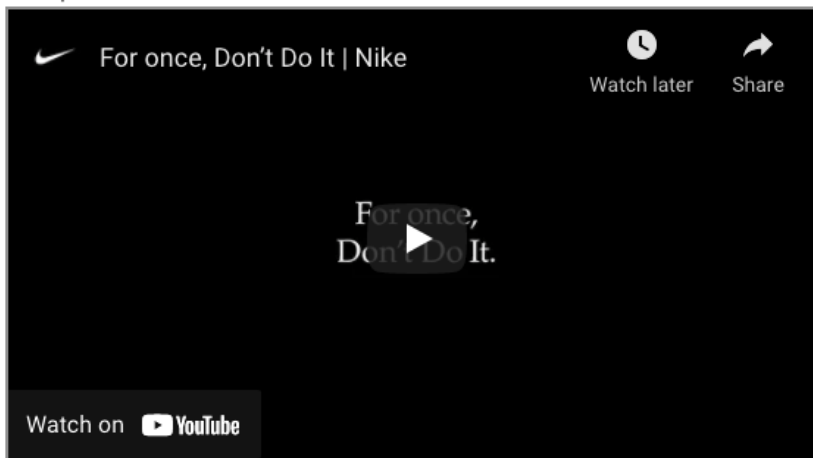
Other

Kindly read this information carefully.

Brand activism is when a brand takes a public stance on a socio-political issue with the desire to promote or impede improvements in society. Taking a stance on a socio-political issue includes making a statement and can, but does not require, actions such as making a donation to the cause.

The information below provides details about a brand activism campaign conducted by Nike and will be followed by a few statements about the brand and the campaign. You will be asked how much you agree or disagree with the statements and will not be tested on the information provided below.

In May 2020, in response to police brutality towards the black community in the United States, Nike released the 60-second video advertisement "For Once, Don't Do It". Using an inverse of their famous slogan "Just Do It", Nike takes a stance, and encourages people not to be silent about racism and social justice, supporting the anti-police brutality against black people around the US. Kindly watch the video below before proceeding to the questions.



This advertisement was followed by an announcement of a commitment of \$40 million over four years to support the Black community in the United States, focusing on investing in and "supporting organizations that put social justice, education and addressing racial inequality in America at the center of their work."

For the purpose of the survey, the brand activism act refers to the statement and the donation.

Kindly respond to the question below.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I like Nike as a brand.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Kindly respond to the questions below.

	Yes	No
Do you own Nike products?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you follow Nike on social media?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have you repeatedly purchased Nike products?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Yes	Indifferent	No
Do you prefer Nike over other sports brands such as Adidas, Reebok, Puma etc.?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Kindly respond to the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I believe that Nike donates a fair portion of its resources relative to its success.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nike's brand activism has a long-term impact.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A large monetary commitment appears to have been made to the cause that Nike donates to.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Kindly respond to the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I believe that this act of brand activism fits with the products that Nike sells.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe this act of brand activism fits with Nike's consumers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe that this act of brand activism is consistent with the company's identity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe that this act of brand activism is complementary to the interests of Nike's consumers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Kindly respond to the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Nike's brand activism act is genuine.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The brand activism action preserves what Nike means to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The brand activism action captures what makes Nike unique to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The brand activism action is in accordance with Nike's values and beliefs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nike is being true to itself with this brand activism action.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nike is standing up for what it believes in.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nike is concerned about improving the well-being of society.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Kindly respond to the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Nike feels that their customers expect brand activism participation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nike feels that society in general expects them to have brand activism initiatives.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nike will get more customers by taking a brand activism initiative.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nike will keep more of their customers by taking a brand activism initiative.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nike hopes to increase profits through its brand activism initiative.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nike feels that their stockholders expect the company to participate in brand activism.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Appendix C: T-test*Independent Samples Test*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Impact_01	Equal variances assumed	1.629	0.203	0.329	296	0.742	0.057	0.173	-0.283	0.397
	Equal variances not assumed			0.313	177.338	0.754	0.057	0.181	-0.301	0.414
Impact_02	Equal variances assumed	6.144	0.014	1.009	296	0.314	0.172	0.171	-0.164	0.509
	Equal variances not assumed			0.956	174.860	0.340	0.172	0.180	-0.184	0.528
Impact_03	Equal variances assumed	2.106	0.148	0.271	296	0.786	0.039	0.145	-0.247	0.325
	Equal variances not assumed			0.261	181.340	0.795	0.039	0.151	-0.259	0.338
Fit_01	Equal variances assumed	2.508	0.114	0.727	296	0.468	0.128	0.176	-0.219	0.475
	Equal variances not assumed			0.702	183.450	0.484	0.128	0.183	-0.232	0.489
Fit_02	Equal variances assumed	1.045	0.308	3.079	296	0.002	0.446	0.145	0.161	0.732
	Equal variances not assumed			2.865	166.758	0.005	0.446	0.156	0.139	0.754
Fit_03	Equal variances assumed	4.424	0.036	1.554	296	0.121	0.266	0.171	-0.071	0.603

	Equal variances not assumed			1.464	172.113	0.145	0.266	0.182	-0.093	0.625
Fit_04	Equal variances assumed	2.404	0.122	3.000	296	0.003	0.426	0.142	0.147	0.706
	Equal variances not assumed			2.839	174.114	0.005	0.426	0.150	0.130	0.722
Authenticity_01	Equal variances assumed	15.283	0.000	2.819	296	0.005	0.506	0.180	0.153	0.860
	Equal variances not assumed			2.575	159.380	0.011	0.506	0.197	0.118	0.895
Authenticity_02	Equal variances assumed	7.850	0.005	3.604	296	0.000	0.586	0.163	0.266	0.906
	Equal variances not assumed			3.313	161.907	0.001	0.586	0.177	0.237	0.935
Authenticity_03	Equal variances assumed	3.209	0.074	1.696	296	0.091	0.313	0.185	-0.050	0.676
	Equal variances not assumed			1.623	179.107	0.106	0.313	0.193	-0.068	0.694
Authenticity_04	Equal variances assumed	17.091	0.000	3.982	296	0.000	0.641	0.161	0.324	0.958
	Equal variances not assumed			3.605	155.937	0.000	0.641	0.178	0.290	0.992
Authenticity_05	Equal variances assumed	14.787	0.000	3.546	296	0.000	0.594	0.167	0.264	0.923
	Equal variances not assumed			3.258	161.560	0.001	0.594	0.182	0.234	0.954
Authenticity_06	Equal variances assumed	7.783	0.006	2.297	296	0.022	0.378	0.164	0.054	0.701
	Equal variances not assumed			2.097	159.057	0.038	0.378	0.180	0.022	0.733
Authenticity_07	Equal variances assumed	14.209	0.000	3.231	296	0.001	0.607	0.188	0.237	0.976

	Equal variances not assumed			2.977	162.713	0.003	0.607	0.204	0.204	1.009
Motive_01	Equal variances assumed	0.819	0.366	2.538	296	0.012	0.382	0.151	0.086	0.679
	Equal variances not assumed			2.459	185.271	0.015	0.382	0.155	0.076	0.689
Motive_02	Equal variances assumed	0.648	0.422	3.448	296	0.001	0.532	0.154	0.228	0.835
	Equal variances not assumed			3.318	181.926	0.001	0.532	0.160	0.216	0.848
Motive_03	Equal variances assumed	11.494	0.001	2.750	296	0.006	0.459	0.167	0.131	0.788
	Equal variances not assumed			2.560	167.071	0.011	0.459	0.179	0.105	0.814
Motive_04	Equal variances assumed	1.074	0.301	2.351	296	0.019	0.370	0.157	0.060	0.679
	Equal variances not assumed			2.260	181.521	0.025	0.370	0.164	0.047	0.693
Motive_05	Equal variances assumed	5.031	0.026	1.146	296	0.253	0.205	0.179	-0.147	0.558
	Equal variances not assumed			1.099	180.191	0.273	0.205	0.187	-0.163	0.574
Motive_06	Equal variances assumed	1.050	0.306	1.401	296	0.162	0.224	0.160	-0.091	0.538
	Equal variances not assumed			1.335	177.152	0.184	0.224	0.168	-0.107	0.555
Impact01_Mean	Equal variances assumed	1.629	0.203	0.329	296	0.742	0.057	0.173	-0.283	0.397
	Equal variances not assumed			0.313	177.338	0.754	0.057	0.181	-0.301	0.414
Likee_01	Equal variances	12.533	0.000	2.233	296	0.026	0.327	0.146	0.039	0.615

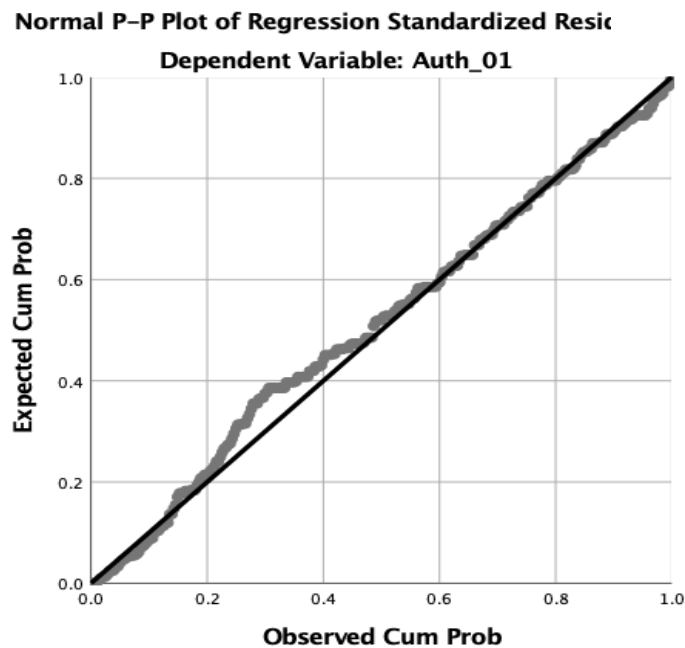
	assumed Equal variances not assumed			2.031	157.667	0.044	0.327	0.161	0.009	0.645
NikeProdu cts	Equal variances assumed	0.664	0.416	- 0.410	296	0.682	-0.017	0.041	-0.097	0.064
	Equal variances not assumed			- 0.402	191.871	0.688	-0.017	0.042	-0.099	0.065
FollowNik e	Equal variances assumed	5.498	0.020	1.192	296	0.234	0.051	0.043	-0.033	0.136
	Equal variances not assumed			1.139	178.526	0.256	0.051	0.045	-0.038	0.140
RepPurcha se	Equal variances assumed	0.136	0.713	- 0.187	296	0.852	-0.011	0.059	-0.127	0.105
	Equal variances not assumed			- 0.186	200.157	0.852	-0.011	0.059	-0.127	0.105
NikePref	Equal variances assumed	0.005	0.944	0.949	295	0.343	0.108	0.113	-0.115	0.330
	Equal variances not assumed			0.945	196.970	0.346	0.108	0.114	-0.117	0.332

Appendix D: Prerequisites for a Regression Analysis

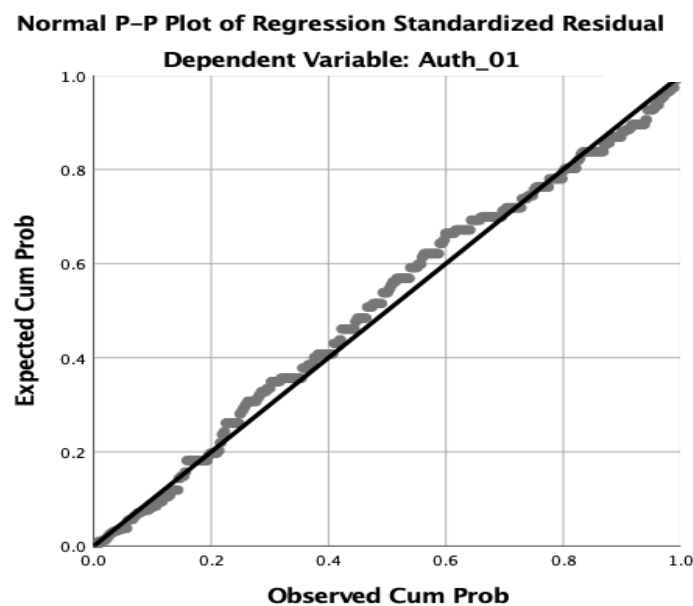
1. Testing for Normal Distribution

Linear regression requires that the residuals of the regression are normally distributed. This can be tested through the use of a P-Plot. As depicted in the P-Plots below, the data follows the normality line. The normality criterion is therefore fulfilled.

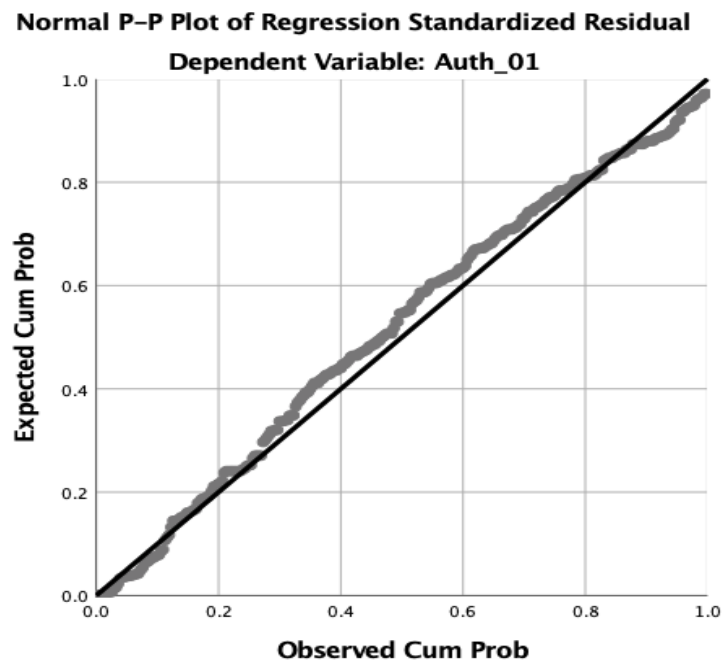
1.1 Normal Distribution Impact



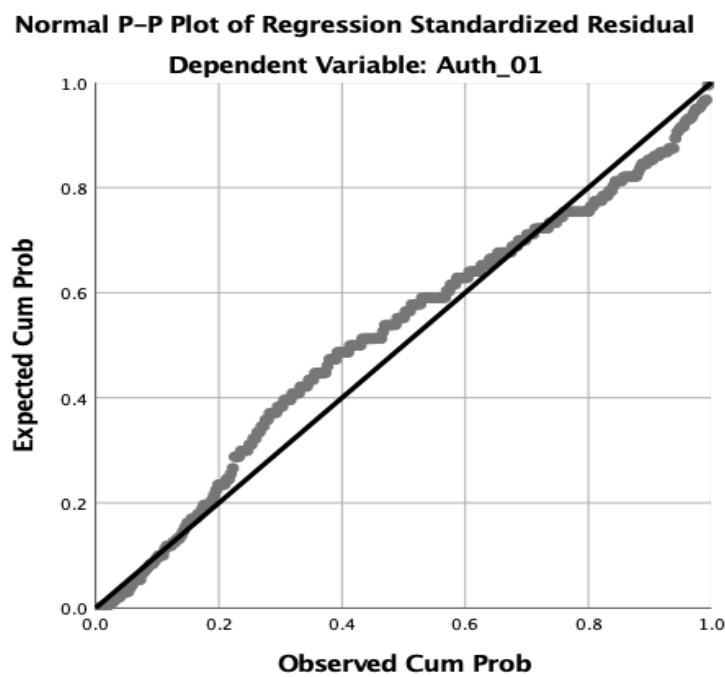
1.2 Normal Distribution Brand Attitude



1.3 Normal Distribution Motive

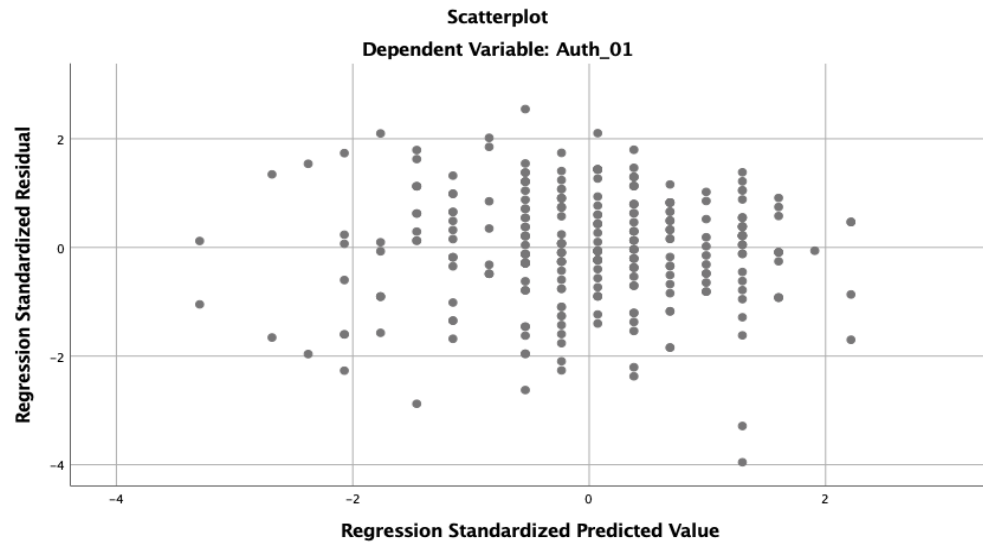


1.4 Normal Distribution Fit

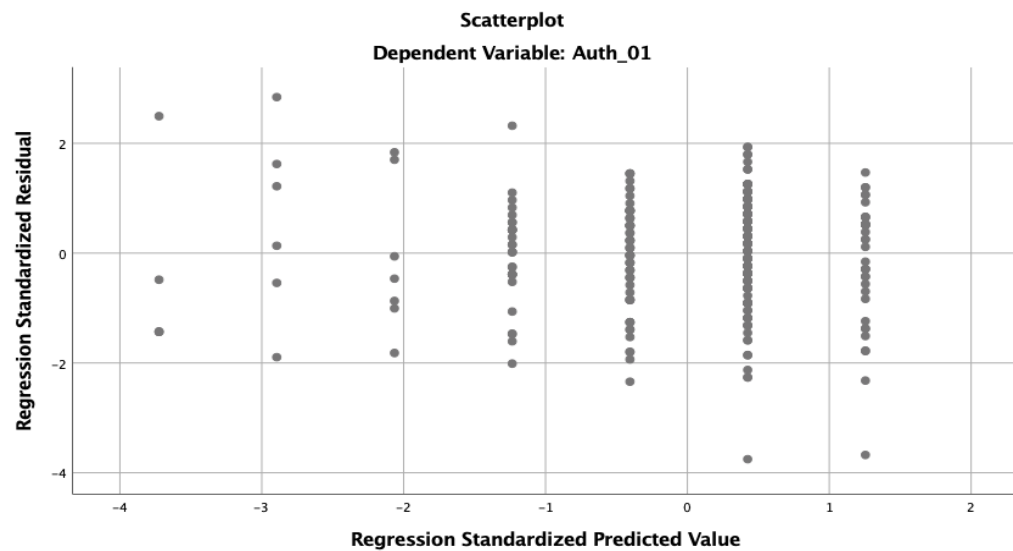


2. Testing for Homoscedasticity

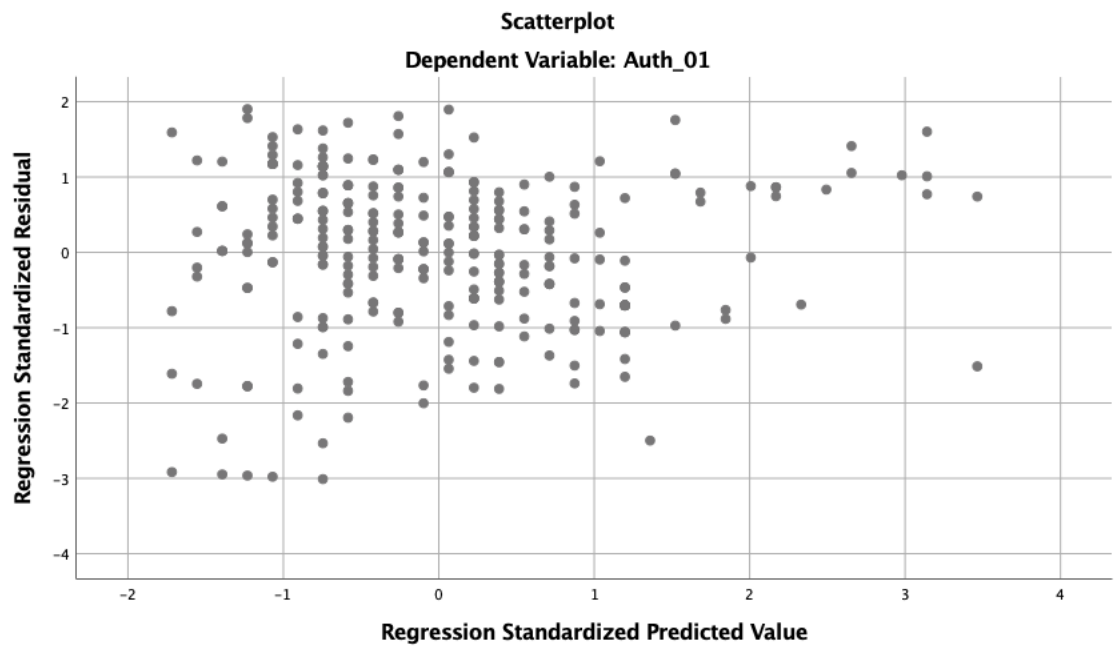
2.1 Homoscedasticity Impact



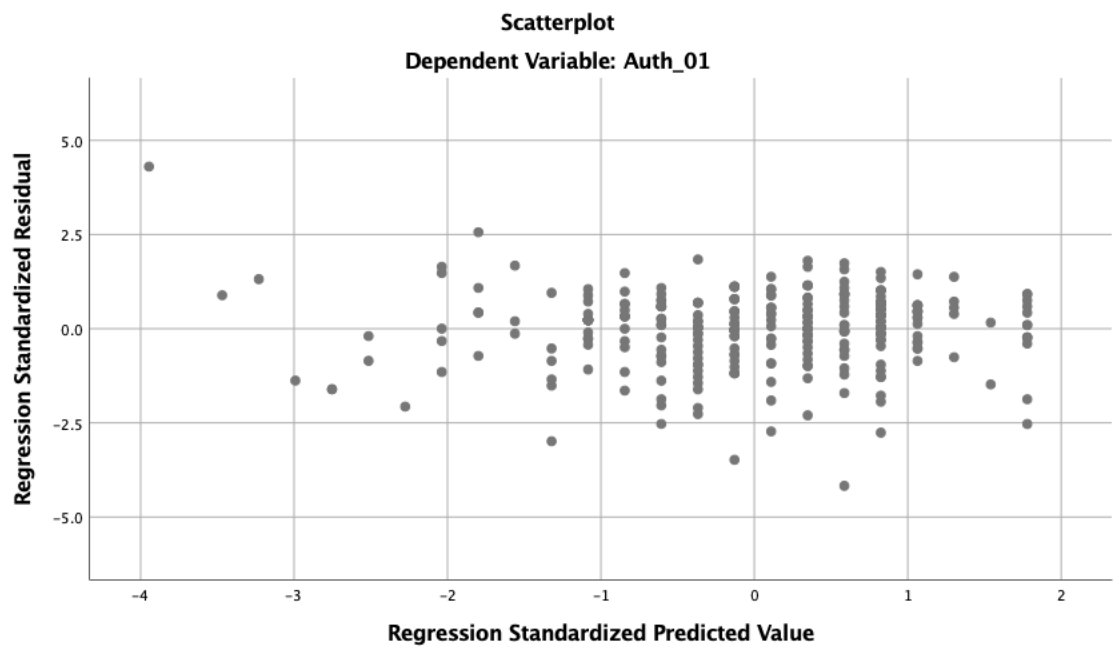
2.2 Homoscedasticity Brand Attitude



2.3 Homoscedasticity Motive



2.4 Homoscedasticity Fit



3. Absence of Multicollinearity

Both, linear and multiple linear regressions assume that there is no or little multicollinearity in the data. Multicollinearity is not considered a problem if the variance inflation factors (VIF) are below 10 (Ross & Willson, 2018). As depicted below, all VIF values are under 10, thus confirming the absence of multicollinearity.

3.1 Impact

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.114	.215		5.187	.000		
	Impact	.783	.046	.706	17.197	.000	1.000	1.000

3.2 Brand Attitude

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.021	.285		7.089	.000		
	Brand Attitude	.490	.051	.489	9.656	.000	1.000	1.000

3.3 Motive

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	5.294	.361		14.649	.000		
	Motive	-.112	.068	-.095	-1.649	.100	1.000	1.000

3.4 Fit

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.598	.252		2.374	.018		
	Fit	.801	.048	.695	16.648	.000	1.000	1.000

Appendix E: Correlation Analyses

Correlation: Impact and Perceived Brand Activism Authenticity

Correlations

		Authenticity	Impact
Authenticity	Pearson Correlation	1	.706**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
	N	299	299
Impact	Pearson Correlation	.706**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
	N	299	299

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Correlation: Self-Serving Motives and Perceived Brand Activism Authenticity

Correlations

		Authenticity	Motive
Authenticity	Pearson Correlation	1	-.095
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.100
	N	299	299
Motive	Pearson Correlation	-.095	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.100	
	N	299	299

Correlation: Fit and Perceived Brand Activism Authenticity

Correlations

		Authenticity	Fit
Authenticity	Pearson Correlation	1	.695**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	299	299
Fit	Pearson Correlation	.695**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	299	299

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlation: Brand Attitude and Perceived Brand Activism Authenticity

Correlations

		Authenticity	Brand Attitude
Authenticity	Pearson Correlation	1	.489**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	299	299
Brand Attitude	Pearson Correlation	.489**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	299	299

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Appendix F: Multiple Regression*Variables Entered/Removed^a*

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Brand Attitude, Motive, Impact, Fit		. Enter

a. Dependent Variable: Authenticity

b. All requested variables entered.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.802 ^a	.643	.638	.72661

a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Attitude, Motive, Impact, Fit

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	279.427	4	69.857	132.316	.000 ^b
	Residual	155.219	294	.528		
	Total	434.646	298			

a. Dependent Variable: Authenticity

b. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Attitude, Motive, Impact, Fit

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.203	.331		-.613	.541
	Impact	.456	.049	.411	9.284	.000
	Motive	-.064	.041	-.054	-1.534	.126
	Fit	.458	.051	.397	8.949	.000
	Brand Attitude	.146	.040	.146	3.677	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Authenticit

Appendix G: One-Way Anova**Oneway***Descriptives*

Authent.	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min	Max
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1.00	11	2.88	1.88	0.57	1.62	4.15	1.00	6.00
2.00	100	4.21	1.04	0.10	4.01	4.42	1.57	6.43
3.00	188	5.08	1.05	0.08	4.93	5.23	1.00	7.00
Total	299	4.71	1.21	0.07	4.57	4.85	1.00	7.00

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Authenticity	Based on Mean	8.124	2	296	0.000
	Based on Median	6.706	2	296	0.001
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	6.706	2	275.582	0.001
	Based on trimmed mean	7.905	2	296	0.000

ANOVA

Authenticity

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	86.993	2	43.497	37.034	0.000
Within Groups	347.653	296	1.175		
Total	434.646	298			

**Post Hoc
Tests**

Multiple Comparisons
 Dependent Variable: Authenticity

Games-Howell

(I) Groups

		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1.00	2.00	-1.33117	0.57650	0.098	-2.8952	0.2329
	3.00	-2.19667*	0.57228	0.008	-3.7564	0.6370
2.00	1.00	1.33117	0.57650	0.098	-0.2329	2.8952
	3.00	-.86550*	0.12877	0.000	-1.1695	0.5615
3.00	1.00	2.19667*	0.57228	0.008	0.6370	3.7564
	2.00	.86550*	0.12877	0.000	0.5615	1.1695

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Appendix H: Mediation

1. Mediation of Brand Attitude on Impact & Authenticity

Model : 4

Y : Authenticity

X : Impact

M : Brand Attitude

Sample

Size: 299

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

Brand Attitude

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.4145	.1718	1.2066	61.6094	1.0000	297.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.3834	.2756	12.2771	.0000	2.8411	3.9258
Impact	.4587	.0584	7.8492	.0000	.3437	.5737

Standardized coefficients

coeff

Impact .4145

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

Authenticity

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.7385	.5453	.6676	177.5134	2.0000	296.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	.3118	.2517	1.2389	.2164	-.1835	.8072
Impact	.6747	.0478	14.1236	.0000	.5806	.7687
Brand Attitude	.2372	.0432	5.4961	.0000	.1523	.3222

Standardized coefficients

coeff

Impact .6082

Brand Attitude .2367

***** TOTAL EFFECT MODEL *****

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

Authenticity

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.7064	.4989	.7333	295.7369	1.0000	297.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	1.1144	.2148	5.1874	.0000	.6916	1.5372
Impact	.7835	.0456	17.1970	.0000	.6938	.8731

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
Impact	.7064

***** TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Total effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c_ps	c_cs
.7835	.0456	17.1970	.0000	.6938	.8731	.6487	.7064

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c'_ps	c'_cs
.6747	.0478	14.1236	.0000	.5806	.7687	.5586	.6082

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Brand Attitude	.1088	.0338	.0487	.1824

Partially standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Brand Attitude	.0901	.0267	.0410	.1473

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Brand Attitude	.0981	.0299	.0444	.1625

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

5000

2. Mediation of Brand Attitude on Fit and Authenticity

Model : 4

Y : Authenticity

X : Fit

M : Brand Attitude

Sample

Size: 299

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

Brand Attitude

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.4303	.1852	1.1871	67.5047	1.0000	297.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	2.9476	.3156	9.3398	.0000	2.3265	3.5686
Fit_avg	.4947	.0602	8.2161	.0000	.3762	.6132

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
Fit	.4303

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

Authenticity

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.7259	.5269	.6947	164.8504	2.0000	296.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	-.0898	.2746	-.3270	.7439	-.6302	.4506
Fit	.6850	.0510	13.4239	.0000	.5846	.7855
Brand Attitude	.2335	.0444	5.2600	.0000	.1461	.3208

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
Fit	.5945
Brand Attitude	.2330

***** TOTAL EFFECT MODEL *****

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

Authenticity

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.6948	.4827	.7570	277.1488	1.0000	297.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	.5984	.2520	2.3744	.0182	.1024	1.0944
Fit	.8005	.0481	16.6478	.0000	.7059	.8952

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
Fit	.6948

***** TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Total effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c_ps	c_cs
.8005	.0481	16.6478	.0000	.7059	.8952	.6629	.6948

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c'_ps	c'_cs
.6850	.0510	13.4239	.0000	.5846	.7855	.5672	.5945

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Brand Attitude	.1155	.0362	.0473	.1893

Partially standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Brand Attitude	.0956	.0286	.0405	.1536

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Brand Attitude	.1003	.0295	.0429	.1597

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

3. Mediation of Brand Attitude on Motive and Authenticity

Model : 4

Y : Authenticity

X : Motive

M : Brand Attitude

Sample

Size: 299

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

Brand Attitude

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.0300	.0009	1.4556	.2683	1.0000	297.0000	.6049

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	5.6723	.3621	15.6647	.0000	4.9597	6.3850
Motive	-.0352	.0679	-.5180	.6049	-.1688	.0985

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
Motive	-.0300

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

Authenticity

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.4954	.2454	1.1080	48.1381	2.0000	296.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	2.5294	.4269	5.9244	.0000	1.6891	3.3696
Motive	-.0946	.0593	-1.5967	.1114	-.2113	.0220
Brand Attitude	.4875	.0506	9.6289	.0000	.3878	.5871

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
Motive	-.0807
Brand Attitude	.4864

***** TOTAL EFFECT MODEL *****

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

Authenticity

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.0953	.0091	1.4502	2.7202	1.0000	297.0000	.1001

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	5.2944	.3614	14.6485	.0000	4.5832	6.0057
Motive	-.1118	.0678	-1.6493	.1001	-.2452	.0216

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
Motive	-.0953

***** TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Total effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c_ps	c_cs
	.0678	-1.6493	.1001	-.2452	.0216	-.0926	-.0953

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c'_ps	c'_cs
	.0593	-1.5967	.1114	-.2113	.0220	-.0784	-.0807

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Brand Attitude	-.0171	.0337	-.0868	.0466

Partially standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Brand Attitude	-.0142	.0277	-.0700	.0391

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Brand Attitude	-.0146	.0285	-.0729	.0399