



Activist Public Relations in the Digital Age

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Abstract

Digital history, which works by using new communication technologies of computers, internet networks and software systems and is an approach to examining and representing the past, has become an indispensable part of human life today. The importance of the concept of activism in the digital age is an undeniable fact in the practice of public relations, which not only empowers individuals, but also leads social change.



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Limitedness

The limitations of the research are limited to the scope of the subject in the light of world literature and data. The research was limited to closely related author and literature topics. Restricted by literature review.

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Ethical Statement

Publication ethics of the relevant regulations of our university; It is a national-based scientific study that aims to ensure that scientific research and publications are carried out in accordance with basic principles such as honesty, openness, objectivity, and respect for the findings and creations of others, and works for the realization of these principles in the field of related sciences.

Abstract

Digital history, which works by using new communication technologies of computers, internet networks and software systems and is an approach to examining and representing the past, has become an indispensable part of human life today. The importance of the concept of activism in the digital age is an undeniable fact in the practice of Public Relations, which not only empowers individuals, but also pioneers social change. According to the Turkish Language Association (2023); Digitization, which has spread around the world with KIA (mass media), has created the chance to carry out many works on devices that surround each other at the same time. Thus, it has revealed that consumers have a brand addiction as a manufacturer. According to Kucur (2020); Activism is the work of groups or groups organized voluntarily in order to solve the problems that threaten the common interests of the members of the group. According to Plessiss (2000); Considering that communication is the interaction of human life, Public Relations is integrated



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with the following meanings: 1: The foundation of freedom, 2: Modern democracy, 3. Innovation, organization, etc., 4: Democratic Society, 5: Existence.

Keywords: Digitalization, Digital Digitalization, Digital Relations

Introduction

It is a fact that the technologies or inventions that have been invented in every age in the history of humanity have been characterized according to their own characteristics and embedded in the said sciences with the help of technology in order to assist various sciences. The formation that occurs as a result of mutual interaction of people such as radio, television, telephone, telegraph, newspaper, magazine, etc. is called 'communication'. According to Aaker (2009), the brand is; are symbols and names that identify the goods and services of one or more sellers and distinguish them from their competitors. When we look at Public Relations, it is a science that helps areas where both visual communication and written communication dominate the brand. According to Weller (2013); software systems, internet networks and computers, which have become indispensable in people's lives, in short, the uses and interpretations of new technology, etc. What has been done is also a part of digital history. In this context, activist public relations have become a part of our lives in the digital age.



In this age, which is called the age of digitalization, 'digital' has spread to every field from economy to politics, from health to communication styles, from health to education (Biricik, p. 3, 2022). It is seen that he uses the concept of generation to recognize the community. Considering this classification, it has been helped by sociologists in the past to classify generations and make quality studies. According to Erdemir (2020); The rapidly developing globalization and the forcing of technology to change their shares in business life reveal that human resources are constantly confronted with new challenges, especially in business management, although the way employees do business and their status in this environment are affected. The smoothest and most accurate way to cope with these challenges is to integrate human resources and technology in the most efficient way and adapt businesses with the latest applications. According to Ojaide (2006); The activist is just like an airplane. The plane landed at exactly the scheduled time in the middle of July and there was no one to greet you. However, you have come after a long time, and it was unusual for you to come quietly. Acquaintances, friends, etc. in the place you visit. there were and you were able to meet them after two days of travel. Kalender, Petekoglu; According to Bayçu, Ergüven, Yılmaz, okay, Göztaş, and Zenginli (2013); The branch of science, which is based on the formation and development of mutual understanding between an institution and its target audience, and which is expressed as a natural result of the institutions or the target audience of the institution approaching each other with sympathy and without prejudice, is called 'Public Relations'. In this study, the following questions will be asked:

What is Activism and Activist?

What does activist public relations mean?

What are the requirements of the digital age?

What is activism like in the digital age?

What is the connection between the digital age and public relations?

How is the digital age and activist public relations?



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Research methodology is considered as a qualitative research feature. This study emphasizes what activism and activist mean in today's digital age and reveals its importance in this context. In this context, it will be evaluated within the framework of 'Public Relations', which is a branch of science. The necessities of the digital age will be examined and how activism is at this point will be revealed. Public relations, not only activism, but also how a bridge is built with the digital age will be examined.

Literatures



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The digital revolution, which is noted as the needs of the customers, is taken to mean effectively getting the job done on the unmet needs of the customers. According to Milliyet Newspaper (2021); The Latin word 'digital' means 'electronic, automatic'. In short, every tool and device that is not mechanical but works automatically is called 'digital'. Education, entrepreneurship, marketing etc. Digital, which makes itself felt frequently in fields, leaves its mark in the age we live in. According to Schallmo and Tidd (2021); In our age, the complexity of society is increasing rapidly, and it is a necessity for businesses to want to create new processes and approach innovation. Firms resort to methods of innovation in this regard. At this point, it is thought that digitalization is a necessity. So, the age is the digital age and the necessity is digitality. According to Aksu and Dalkılıç (2019); It is thought that digital technologies, industries and professions are expanding on the scale of skills in line with the demand ability and increasing the demand for different skills. 20th century late and 21st century. In the digital age, which was formed in the beginning, the solutions of the problems of the enterprises and so on. With the emergence of activism dominated by efforts, businesses, the solution of these problems, etc. He turned into an activist personality. On the one hand, rapidly developing and advancing digitalization, on the other hand, a string of requirements envisaged by the age lived in. These requirements are; benefiting from the developing and advancing technology of the enterprise, more production, fast working automation, providing more customer satisfaction, etc. can be listed as Digitization, which also facilitates communication, has given its name to the present day as the digital age. Public relations According to Sriramesh, Zerfass and Kim (2013); It explains how institutions and organizations have a value to society and the public, and how this theory can be applied in a holistic sense and is interested in how to include 'ethics' in its role. Public relations, which does not limit all these issues to digital media but works with all other communication channels, has taken its place like other sciences in today's digital age in an activist sense.

Activist Public Relations justification in the Digital Age

The return of the new age has been 'digitalization'. This age, which we call the digital age, has brought it to a higher level in many sciences. This digital age, which brings with it the concept of activism, has once again revealed the importance of the science of Public Relations. That is, while businesses are looking for solutions to their problems, activists have started to turn to

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public relations. The rationale for this study is; where the digital age and activist public relations stand in business life. In enterprises, according to Eroğlu and Taşdelen (2020); In the digital age we live in, it is revealed that communication is the source of information processing and digital media that makes use of interactive communication is a whole with communication networks.



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Activism and PR in the digital age

In the digital age, businesses are trying to solve their own problems through activism. Public relations have become a part of businesses. From this point of view, the aim of this study is what activism means to public relations, which is a science in the digital age, and how the connections between them are formed. According to Köseoğlu (2023); The field, which is the art of agreement, narration and understanding, which brings meanings in a common framework and provides focus in this process, is called 'Communication'. From the past to the present, it has shortened the distances, provided easier communication to people, and later added the Internet to television, radio, telephone, telegraph and newspaper. Therefore, from past to present, the phenomenon of communication has spread to the digital environment as a result of reflecting itself in internet technology. Thus, the name of the age we live in is called the 'digital age'. According to Aytar (2019); organizational management seems to be affected by technology. Television, radio, internet etc. The components of technology appear on the agenda with different issues in organizational management and emphasize the importance of innovations. The extent and scope of the positive and negative effects of technology has not been explained much and no explanation has been made. Although the technology used in the organizational context offers advantages in terms of efficiency and productivity, the process and effects of technology application should be seriously monitored. From this point of view, this is exactly the problem of this research.

Results

Public relations are a 'social science' of administration, which uses its expression to ensure the respect and understanding of the public and finds it in practices and policies with which it relates to the public. The most distinctive feature of today's digital age on businesses is activism. According to Pickard and Yang (2017); With the discovery of strategies and media activism to change the structure of the media system together with the communication technologies, it is seen that there is a close connection between the 'activists' and the spread of digitalization in the field of public relations, as well as the discovery of media activism (p. 1). In short, it is seen that the digital age and activism are very important for businesses to find these new searches with the help of public relations science.



public relations in the digital age

(2014) has a long history in the field of social sciences. A feature display is made that shows less structuring, does not use predetermined classifications and categories by the researcher, and offers an open-ended and more natural style. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2003); Observation, which is used to describe the behavior that occurs in any institution or environment in detail, is a tool used to collect institutional and social data. According to Garipağaoğlu (2001); In this research, observation (p.13) which makes use of evaluations by going to places where the event occurred and continues in a broad sense; It is an unstructured observation.

Model Review

In this study, point shooting method (to hit the target) and multiple correlation (the relationship between one variable and two or more variables) method were used, and three countries were observed. The reason for this is to approach activist public relations in the digital age from a different perspective, based on the precise and reliable information about the digital age, activism and public relations, the connection between them and the necessity of the digital age, presented by experts in the field. According to Aksu (2019); Social connections are advancing not only as places where people can chat, but also as platforms where people can hone their creativity. It is possible to reach masses of customers and gain potential customers with advertisements and posts on social media. According to Aslaner (2019); In today's capitalist societies, consumption has been one of the activities that ensure the continuity and functioning of the existing system. Especially in the 1980s implemented in Turkey, with the technological developments, globalization process and neo-liberal policies, the understanding of consumption-oriented society came to the fore, and it also necessitated the creation of a new consumer type. Turkey has been affected by this conjunctural situation and has become the first consumers of the consumption culture of the X generation, who are between the new and the old times. The Y generation, on the other hand, has emerged as consumers who live with digital disruptions and where consumption reflects itself on their life practices. The shopping practices of the Y and X generations have also affected their purchasing behaviors. However, the hedonic and rational values of shopping have ceased to be an



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offline activity and have become an online activity as well. According to Çalışır Diker, Türkal (2023); After 2000, the number of agencies that can do international public relations in communication and information technologies has increased and digital public relations applications have come to the fore. Public relations media and tools have improved in virtual environments. For example, e-mails, virtual newsletters, e-bulletins, social media and websites have started to be used. Customer/consumer movements are now regulated and monitored in the virtual environment. Internal communication has become more active with digital tools. Digital public relations practices have also digitized public relations agencies. According to Duhe (2007); In 2004, Scotpigs Ltd Farms participated in many meetings with the Scottish executive branch of the deposed government of Scotland. The meetings culminated in updating Scotland's animal welfare. The coalition used the internet as a tool to gather support. There is an e-protest link on the organization's website. Animal advocates ask visitors to select contact information and one or more protests. Law enforcement sends a campaign letter for visitors. Such non-profit campaigns are a variant of astroturf lobbying. He uses a variant of these campaigns to make animal advocates appear to be efforts from the general public rather than from the establishment with public relations campaigns for animal rights, thus creating an illusion of public support. This lobbyist is found out of order by its critics. The leader of the US Senate, Harry Reid, has proposed a new lobbying reform that addresses this lobbying and secret coalitions. But the reaction of the defenders of animals will be in astroturf lobbying, the variant will be well-intentioned, not evil. Thus, the aim of animal advocates is to make it easier to protest. People with strong feelings and views on animal rights can make their voices heard more easily.

Argument

On the one hand, digitalization, on the other hand, the effect of activism on businesses is discussed today, on the other hand, how much public relations, which is a department in businesses, benefits from these areas are examined. According to Işık and Akdağ (2011); Public relations, which has passed through communication strategy methods, has been drawn with new concepts. However, in order to explain the impact of both digitalization and activism in terms of businesses, first of all, the meanings of digital age, activism and public relations should be known very well. In addition, it is foreseen to know how the digital age connects both activism and public relations and to better understand its impact on businesses.



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Research Strategy

According to Köktürk (2021); A person who feels the obligations of the society in which he lives should not only know the past and the present, but should make a note of always rethinking. The most important component of the digital age is the mind, and businesses are focused on rational activism. According to Tuten (2020); The movement of the digital revolution together with marketing has been handled in terms of the relations of the customers whose needs have not been met in the strategy for years, when looked at in terms of the things to be done about the marketing. In this sense, first of all, help from the public relations department should be sought in order to solve the unmet needs of the customers in question. Public relations will prefer activism as a solution.



Digitalization, which is one of the innovation methods of businesses trying to become a brand, has left its mark on our day since it was born. The rapidly spreading and growing need of digitalization of the age emerges as everything electronic. In short, when our age is considered, digitalization is called the 'digital age'. In this era, businesses have sought a method to solve their problems. The method in this age is 'activism' and businesses are activism. Along with public relations, which is a part of communication, the phenomenon of digital age and activist public relations has emerged. According to Han (2014); For two years, I compared activism organizations with weaker records and organizations with strong ones, conducted field experiments and observed their behavior. I'm tired of going through the outlines of organizations to understand what makes the activism of some organizations and other organizations well produced. Is it about communication, the people they hire, or a charismatic leader? or their ability to target novices, or their messaging, or they're not just luck. According to Koçyiğit (2017); digital media and internet are among the inaccuracies in public relations. But public relations, new media are more global, two-way, interactive and strategically, dialogically or symmetrically socially responsible. Many public relations professionals thus use digital media, new media, as a means of conveying messages to the public in general, not as a strategic tool to incorporate public information and public relations into an organizational decision-making process. In order to use digital media correctly, public relations professionals need to position practitioners as management, behavioral and strategic, not an interpretative, symbolic element of public relations. Digital media and strategic public relations act in line with this understanding. According to Scott (2022); In the 90s, when public relations and web marketing were in demand, my team and I reached the buyer via the web using direct content for online publishing and created such a strategy on marketing. This marketing strategy we created on the web has returned us as more sales.

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