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[Stakeholders' perceptions of purpose-driven brands: The case of Nike's "Dream Crazy" advertising campaign

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Abstract

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The present study aims to contribute to the research on stakeholders' perceptions of brands that take a stand on social issues and by doing so, express their social brand purpose. Social brand purpose is at the core of a brand, and it reflects the brand's ideal as well as intent to make people's lives better. To explore how stakeholders perceive stances on social issues that are taken by purpose-driven brands as well as what motives they attribute to such brands, the present study uses the theory of dramatism and the correspondent inference theory. It is designed as a qualitative single-case study that analyzes stakeholders' perceptions of Nike's motives behind the "Dream Crazy" advertising campaign, which they have expressed on Twitter. With the help of the developed theoretical framework as well as pentadic analysis, netnography, and qualitative content analysis, the present research provides an insight both into Nike's motives for taking a stand as well as into how these motives and the stand have been perceived by its stakeholders. The results show that Nike's stakeholders have attributed the company exclusively with internal (or true) motives. In addition, these true motives have appeared to be more complex than the dichotomy of being altruistic or egoistic, as the stakeholders have positively perceived the fact that Nike's revenues have increased after the release of the "Dream Crazy" advertisement.

Keywords: social purpose, brand purpose, motives, perceptions, Nike, Colin Kaepernick

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Introduction

“If your brand is not connected with purpose or is not doing anything to help the world today, it won’t exist in the next five to 10 years.”
(Cannes Lions Global Creativity Report, 2019)

What does it mean for a brand to have a purpose? According to Wheeler (2013) and Urde (2016), it means to know why the brand exists and what difference it makes in the world. As such, brand purpose is sometimes called a brand’s “raison d’être”, that is, a “reason to exist” (Collins & Porras, 1996; Kapferer, 2008; Dowling & Moran, 2012; Kramer, 2017). Making a difference in the world is an important aspect of brand purpose, as an increasing number of consumers expect brands to have a reason for existence that would go beyond profit-making and contribute to social good (Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: In Brands We Trust?, 2019). According to some brand academics and practitioners (see, for instance, Hsu, 2017; Vilá & Bharadwaj, 2017; Kramer, 2017; Kuehlwein & Schaefer, 2017; Everitt, 2018; Annweiler, 2018/2019), stakeholders expect brands to express their stand on pressing social, economic, and environmental issues as well as address these issues by taking actions. In this context, brand purpose transforms into a *social* brand purpose, as companies recognize the demand to make a positive impact on society (Everitt, 2018; Barton et al., 2018).

In a situation where stakeholders expect brands to play a critical part in society, more and more brands turn their purpose into a social one or try to appear as they have one by taking a stand on different social issues. By doing so, these companies make their brand purpose look socially oriented as opposed to profit oriented and therefore, more valuable and meaningful for *society*. However, if there is a gap between a brand’s existing purpose and a social purpose that it is trying to achieve by taking a stand on a particular social issue, there is a risk that the brand might be perceived as self-centered and inauthentic, as stakeholders might attribute this stand with negative egoistic motives (Ellen et al., 2006; Bigné et al., 2012; Mazutis & Slavinski, 2015; Myers et al., 2015). As a result, a campaign intended to show that a brand without a social purpose at its core cares about society, could damage its reputation and lead to substantial profit loss.

Against this backdrop, it could be insightful to explore what motives stakeholders attribute to brands that take a stand on different social issues, especially in the context of having a relevant

and authentic social brand purpose. This context is important to the present study, since the previous research on stakeholders' attribution of motives to and perceptions of the brands that do good has been extensively concentrated on corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities (Ellen et al., 2006; Bigné et al., 2012; Mazutis & Slavinski, 2015; Myers et al., 2015). The perspective of the present study is that social purpose is an intrinsic and indispensable part of a brand and its personality, while the CSR campaigns that the brand engages in might not manifest its brand purpose (Posner, 2007; Hsu, 2017; Neff, 2019). Therefore, by adopting this perspective, the present study aims to cover the existing gap in literature in relation to a brand's social purpose and gain a deeper insight into how it is perceived by stakeholders.

The present study is based on Nike's "Dream Crazy" advertisement featuring and narrated by Colin Kaepernick and released in September 2018 to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the company's "Just Do It" campaign. According to Beer (2019), this advertisement serves as an illustration of how important it is for brands to have a social purpose, take a stand on major social issues, and try to move the world forward. In order to shed light on the necessity of having a social brand purpose for the long-term existence of companies, this research focuses on the motives that Nike's stakeholders have attributed to the stand that the brand has taken by aligning with Colin Kaepernick as well as their perceptions of the campaign. Importantly, for the purposes of the present research, Nike's stakeholders are not specified as specific stakeholder groups, but addressed as a single heterogeneous group represented by a Twitter community.

Aim of research

To explore what motives stakeholders attribute to a brand that has a social purpose and takes a stand on a social issue in order to express this purpose.

Research question

How do stakeholders perceive a brand's stand on a social issue when the stand is motivated by the brand's social purpose?

Relevance to strategic communication

Brand purpose is directly related to the long-term survival of a company and in this sense, it has strategic significance to a company's existence (Kapferer, 2008). According to Zerfass et al. (2018), "Strategic communication encompasses all communication that is substantial for the survival and sustained success of an entity" (p. 493) and thus, communication of a brand's purpose is also essentially strategic. As stakeholders expect brands to have a social purpose, this trend is considerably influencing the way in which brand managers communicate their brand's purpose (Everitt, 2018). When a brand takes a stand on an issue that is relevant to its brand purpose, it might be perceived as consistent and authentic, resulting in successful marketing campaigns (Dowling and Moran, 2012). However, when a brand does not have a social purpose, but wants to express its stance in regard to a social issue, it is necessary to conduct research into the nature of the social issue by doing environmental scanning (Steyn, 1999). In this way, the company receives information on the relevance of the issue to the existing brand purpose as well as consumers' perceptions of the company, their needs and expectations and thus, enables adequate strategic communication management in future (Wiggill, 2009). Eventually, the motives that stakeholders attribute to a brand's stand and the perceptions that they have in regard to the difference that the company is trying to make in the world might have a considerable impact on the reputation of the brand and its future.

Disposition

The present study continues with the *Literature review* chapter that outlines different perspectives on how to define a brand purpose and its social dimension as well as illustrates the previous research on the motives that stakeholders attribute to brands' CSR campaigns. In the *Theoretical framework* chapter, the theory of dramatism and the correspondent inference theories are presented, with a special focus on the concepts that are relevant for the analysis of the phenomenon in question. Subsequently, the *Methodology* chapter presents the design of the study, the details on the applied methods and its limitations as well as collection and analysis of the empirical material. The *Analysis* chapter provides an insight into the categories and subcategories that have been identified during the analysis of the collected material. The *Discussion* chapter presents the interpretation of the empirical data and its possible significance. Finally, the *Conclusion* chapter serves to summarize the main findings of the present study and outline a possible direction for the future research.

Literature review

Both academics and practitioners highlight that it is important for brands to have a social purpose, engage in social responsibility activities, and take a stand on social issues (see, for instance, Mazutis & Slavinski, 2015; Samuel et al., 2018; Kramer, 2017; Everitt, 2018). After reviewing some of the existing literature on the topic at hand, three directions appeared to be worth exploring in detail to gain better understanding of how stakeholders might perceive a brand's motives to take a stand on a social issue. First, such essential concepts as brand purpose, mission, vision, values, promise, and core do not have a respective agreed upon definition within the branding literature. In fact, some of these concepts may stand for the same meaning. For instance, Urde (2016, p. 27) argues that both academics and marketing practitioners use the term "brand essence" when referring to the concept of "brand core." Second, while academia and practice may use similar arguments to justify the reasons and implications for a brand to have a social purpose and publicly express it, there are differing perspectives on its origin. For instance, while some authors argue for an inside-out perspective in establishing a brand's social purpose (Collins & Porras, 1996; Urde, 2013; Yoganathan et al., 2018; Samuel et al., 2018), others highlight the importance of a shared perspective of all the company's stakeholders on a social purpose (Kramer, 2017; Hsu, 2017). Third, the concepts of attributed motives and authenticity represent particular interest to the topic at hand, as authentic motives are considered to play the crucial role in judging whether a brand's stand on a social issue is perceived in a favorable light or not (Ellen et al., 2006; Mazutis & Slavinski, 2015; Hsu, 2017; Everitt, 2018; Yoganathan et al., 2018; Samuel et al., 2018).

The above mentioned three directions will be discussed in the following sections with the aim of demonstrating how a brand's approach to define and communicate its purpose might influence stakeholders' perceptions of it. The last section is particularly insightful, as it focuses specifically on previous studies of stakeholders' perceptions of brands' stances in different contexts.

Brand purpose and its social dimension

In the reviewed literature on strategic brand management, some authors define the purpose of a company or a brand as an answer to questions such as "Why do we exist?" and "What do we

stand for?” (Collins & Porras, 1996; Kapferer, 2008; Hsu, 2017; Kramer, 2017; Annweiler, 2018/2019). These authors regard an organizational purpose as a “raison d’être”, that is, the reason for the very existence of a company or a brand. Importantly, the second question implies that a brand has to stand for something and therefore, it has an ideal to pursue. Collins and Porras (1996) argue that a company’s purpose is about “idealistic motivations for doing the company’s work” and it is “the soul of the brand” (p. 68). As the authors (1996) put it, “Purpose ... gets at the deeper reasons for a company’s existence beyond just making money” (p. 68). In the same vein, Kanter (2011) states that at successful companies, profit is never the ultimate goal. While Collins and Porras (1996) state that a purpose does not necessarily have to be related to bringing the greater good to society, other authors insist on the importance of a brand purpose that contributes to society and strives for a positive change in the world (de Chernatony, 2001; Hsu, 2017; Everitt, 2018). For instance, de Chernatony (2001) argues that a brand purpose “... considers how the world is going to be a better place as a consequence of the brand ...” (p. 35). Therefore, a brand purpose can be defined as an expression of why the brand exists and what ideal it pursues to make the world a better place.

It could be argued that the concept of brand mission and brand promise are endowed with the same meaning as the concept of the brand purpose, or at least they are often used interchangeably (Posner, 2007; Urde, 2013; Kuehlwein & Schaefer, 2017). For instance, Kuehlwein and Schaefer (2017, p. 397) describe a brand’s mission as “... a big idea, often even ideal, a combination of daring vision, self-determination, a socio-ecological perspective” and that it “is often called ‘Purpose’: a socio-eco-political goal at the heart of the brand’s existence” (p. 398). The notion of brand promise seems to overlap with the notion of brand purpose, since the former is defined by Urde (2016, p. 29) as a “declaration specifying what a brand will/will not do or stand for.” In this sense, an expressed brand purpose can indeed be regarded as a promise, as stakeholders might expect a brand to prove that it does stand for what is expressed in the brand’s purpose.

Other concepts that are closely related to brand purpose are brand values, vision, and core. Perspectives on what constitutes brand values appear to be predominantly similar. For instance, Collins and Porras (1996), de Chernatony (2001), and Kapferer (2008) mention that core values have to be unique, true to a brand, long-lasting, and that there has to be only a few of them, preferably between three and five. As for the brand vision, for Collins and Porras (1996, p. 66), it “provides guidance about what core to preserve and what future to stimulate progress

toward.” The authors (1996) argue that a company’s vision consists of core ideology and envisioned future, the former being about the company’s core purpose and core values and the latter comprising “a 10-to-30-year audacious goal plus vivid descriptions of what it will be like to achieve the goal” (p. 73). De Chernatony (2001, p. 33) has a similar perspective, as the author writes that a brand vision is about having a long-term objective, and this vision consists of components such as values, purpose, and future environment (p. 34-36). These concepts are indispensable components of the author’s (2001) model for strategically building brands. In the same vein, Kapferer (2008) places both vision and purpose at the very top of his brand system pyramid, highlighting the paramount importance of these concepts for a brand’s existence. Similarly, one of the nine elements in the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (Figure 1) that was developed by Urde (2013) to offer an overview of the corporate brand identity components is “Mission & Vision” (p. 750), which is considered to be an “internal component” of a company (p. 751). In the center of the Matrix, the author (2013) places the brand core, which is represented by a brand’s promise and core values. According to Urde (2013, p. 758), the brand core is “a set of core values leading up to and supporting a promise” that guides the internal and external branding of a company. Importantly, the matrix is not only designed to provide an overview of the corporate brand identity, but also as an attempt to showcase the possibility to harmonize it, which will be addressed in the following section.

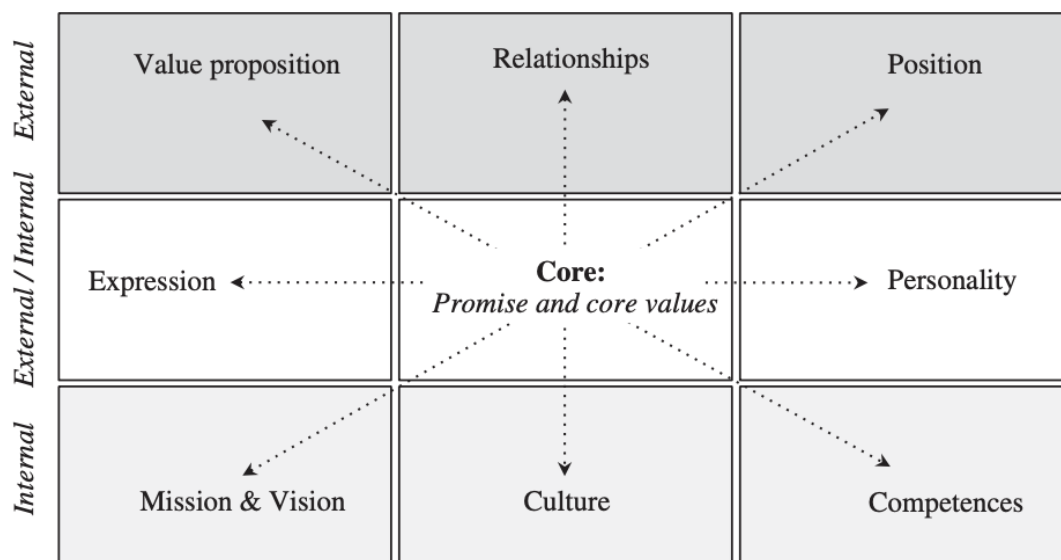


Figure 1: The Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (Urde, 2013, p. 750).

The concept of the brand purpose along with the other mentioned notions are of vital importance for strategic brand management. When a brand’s purpose is defined as to why the

brand exists and, importantly, what it stands for and what positive impact it intends to bring to the world, a social dimension of the brand purpose appears. As such, social purpose is specifically about what positive social impact the brand is delivering to its stakeholders and which social issues it is addressing. To explore this phenomenon further, it could be insightful to analyze how brands become endowed with a social purpose.

Social purpose: discovery versus creation

Two main perspectives that exist in the literature with relation to the process of social purpose creation are, first, that it should be created inside a company and subsequently communicated to the outside world (Collins & Porras, 1996; Annweiler, 2018/2019; Yoganathan et al., 2018) and, second, that it should be a combination of both inside and outside inputs, assuming that a purpose should be compiled collectively by the company and its stakeholders (Bonchek, 2013; Urde, 2013; Hsu, 2017; Kramer, 2017; Yilmazer, 2019). It is worth exploring both views since, when applied, these approaches might have different consequences for how a brand's stand on a social issue is perceived by its stakeholders.

According to the first perspective, which could be called an "inside-out" approach, a company's social purpose and core values should be identified within the company, namely, by employees or top management, and then communicated to the whole company (Collins & Porras, 1996). The authors (1996) emphasize that a company's core ideology, that is, its core purpose and values, cannot be created. Instead, the ideology can only be discovered – "You do not deduce it by looking at the external environment. You understand it by looking inside" (Collins & Porras, 1996, p. 71). Importantly, Collins and Porras (1996) link their argument to the notion of authenticity, explaining that only when held from inside, the company's ideology will be perceived as genuine – "You should not confuse values that you think the company ought to have – but does not – with authentic core values" (p. 71). Similarly, Yoganathan et al. (2018) argue that a company's core values encourage engaging in ethical relationships with stakeholders and thus, in order to realize the "goodness" (p. 68) of a company, one has to analyze its true core values. Annweiler (2018/2019, p. 231-232) mentions the importance of aligning a company on a meaningful purpose before communicating it outside, so that the employees are on the same page and guided by the same roadmap.

According to the second perspective, which could be called a "shared purpose" approach, it is important to consider other stakeholders' needs and wants when defining a brand purpose and

values. Specifically, Urde's (2013) Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (Figure 1), is designed to balance the inside-out and outside-in approaches by combining them into a single approach. The author (2013, p. 750-751) argues that the central component of the Matrix called "Core: Promise and core values" is related to both internal and external dimensions, as it is situated on the intersection of the "Mission & Vision" internal component and the "Position" external component. Thus, according to Urde (2013), the brand core, despite having its roots in the brand's purpose, is designed with the external stakeholders in mind, as it should appeal to them and represent a competitive advantage against other brands. Similarly, Hsu (2017, p. 390) argues that brands should strive to be relevant and create a shared purpose by concentrating "on a real human need that your target consumers care about." In the same vein, Kramer (2017) argues in favor of a "shared and aligned purpose" (p. 3) and describes purpose-driven brands as the ones that embrace "a multi-stakeholder brand management approach" (p. 7), while at the same time highlighting that a real purpose should work from within a company. In the article "Purpose is Good. Shared Purpose is Better", Bonchek (2013) writes about a shared purpose in a participative sense, as he argues that a brand's purpose is not about bringing good to stakeholders but rather doing good together with them. Yilmazer (2018, p. 339) explores the "advertising for good" that "brings social causes into the spotlight" and argues that this kind of advertising blurs the distinction between marketing and corporate communication, since by employing "advertising for good", a brand defines its internal values and its external stakeholders who have the same values.

While a social purpose within the second perspective is argued to be more relevant to all the concerned stakeholders of a brand, the first one mentions a social purpose of a brand as more authentic when communicated to the stakeholders, since the social purpose is lived through inside a company. It could be assumed that a brand with an authentic social purpose would be ultimately able to appeal to a relevant target audience, while a brand that is trying to align a shared purpose could more easily become subjected to the criticism of not being authentic and exploiting social issues. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the differences between discovering and creating a social purpose, as it considerably affects the stakeholder's perceptions of the authenticity of the brand's behavior.

Social purpose: attribution of motives and authenticity

Both academics and practitioners within the fields of brand management and marketing refer to the notion of authenticity when arguing for or against the successfulness of a brand's efforts to take a stand on a social issue (Wheeler, 2013; Everitt, 2018; Yilmazer, 2019). As Everitt (2018, p. 222) puts it, "The cost of operating with no social purpose, and for marketers, failing to communicate social purpose in a clear and authentic way, is a disconnect with the consumer that ultimately leads to a negative impact on the bottom line." Banet-Weiser (2012) argues that the concept of authenticity is rather difficult to define and describes it in terms of the opposition commercial-noncommercial. In her book, the author (2012) states that when someone or something is perceived as authentic, it is due to the fact that this person or thing is perceived as noncommercial. To illustrate her point, Banet-Weiser (2012) draws on the works of social theorists and argues that for individuals, to be authentic means to correspond to the inner self, while the outer self is merely a "performance" (p. 10). When applied to brands, this perspective could mean that brands are regarded as authentic if they express the true, inner characteristics of the brand personality (Aaker, 1997). In particular, when taking a stand on a social issue, that is, when expressing a brand's social purpose. As Banet-Weiser (2012) describes, modern branding and advertising strategies strive to create such messages that would be perceived by stakeholders as "distinctly noncommercial, and therefore authentic" (p. 11).

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and cause-related marketing that includes advertising are the most recurring in the literature concepts in relation to brands' efforts to make a positive difference in society and be perceived as authentic (Ellen et al., 2006; Dowling & Moran, 2012; Mazutis & Slavinski, 2015; Myers et al., 2015; Bigné et al., 2012). For instance, Ellen et al. (2006) argue that stakeholders tend to attribute more than one motive to a company's decision to engage in CSR efforts and thus, their perceptions appear to be rather complex. As such, stakeholders do not just view the company's motives as either reflecting its authentic social concerns or being intended to increase profits. Ellen et al. (2006, p. 147, 154) define four types of motives that stakeholders might attribute to a company's CSR efforts, namely, values-driven and stakeholder-driven that correspond to other-serving motives, as well as egoistic and strategic that correspond to self-serving motives. Specifically, values-driven and strategic motives are perceived positively, while stakeholder-driven and egoistic motives are perceived negatively. Interestingly, the authors (2006) provide empirical evidence that those stakeholders who attribute both self-centered (egoistic) and other-centered (altruistic) motives to a company,

namely, strategic and value-driven motives, have better perceptions of this company than those who attribute exclusively self-centered or other-centered motives.

The importance of a brand's motivations is recognized in the study by Bigné et al. (2012), who show empirical support for their hypothesis that when stakeholders perceive a brand's motivations as altruistic, they will tend to perceive this brand's CSR efforts more positively. In addition, Bigné et al. (2012) provide empirical evidence for the direct and positive influence of altruistic attributions of brand motivations on brand credibility. Furthermore, according to the research by Mazutis and Slawinski (2015), if a company plans to engage in activities that are intended to demonstrate its CSR, these activities will be perceived as more authentic when linked to the company's purpose and values (p. 141). The authors (2015) argue that those brands that link their CSR activities with their purpose and values make a long-term commitment in doing so. In this way, the company's stakeholders will be less skeptical toward the brand's motivations and their authenticity, as they will consider them to be "other-serving" instead of "self-serving" (Myers, 2015, p. 268). In contrast, those brands that support CSR activities that are generic or irrelevant to their purpose risk being accused of being inauthentic (Mazutis & Slavinski, 2015; Myers, 2015) and of jumping on the bandwagon (Urde, 2013; Hsu, 2017; Everitt, 2018; Mamuric, 2019).

Importantly, in the reviewed literature on social purpose, some practitioners strive to differentiate a brand's social purpose from the concept of CSR (see, for instance, Posner, 2007; Hsu, 2017; Neff, 2019). While not necessarily arguing against CSR communication, which Christensen et al. (2013) define as ultimately aspirational and able to change a company for the better, the critics of the CSR approach are specifically opposed to its practices. For instance, in the article "Purpose Isn't Cause Marketing – How to Know the Difference", Neff (2019) emphasizes the absence of strategic approach in those brands that confuse purpose with cause-related marketing by arguing that "if it starts in marketing, stays in marketing, becomes a slogan, a tagline, a nice campaign, it's going to die." Similarly, Hsu (2017, p. 374) explains that purpose is greater than corporate social responsibility and purpose-driven marketing, since "... it is an essential principle rooted in a brand." In this sense, being perceived as altruistic and authentic means not to "link" (Mazutis & Slavinski, 2015, p. 144) and "built in" (Dowling & Moran, 2012, p. 26) CSR activities into a brand's core, but rather to have a social purpose and values as the core. According to Wheeler (2013, p. 34), to be authentic for a brand means to be consistent with what the brand is and what it stands for. Therefore, it means to stay true to the

brand's purpose, especially its social dimension, that is, trying to make a difference in the world.

In conclusion, the above discussed three directions provide a bigger picture on the topic of stakeholders' perceptions of a brand that expresses its stand on a social issue. As such, these sections outline the most important aspects of the present study such as brand purpose, a social dimension of brand purpose, an inside-out perspective on its expression, its difference from the CSR activities, and attribution of motives that might be authentic/inauthentic as well as altruistic/egoistic. In this regard, the present study aims to contribute to the existing knowledge on what motives stakeholders attribute to a brand's decision to take a stand on a social issue. Specifically, it focuses on how stakeholders perceive a brand's stand on a social issue in a context when this stand is motivated by the brand social purpose, which is inherent in its core rather than resides within its CSR.

Theoretical framework

For the purpose of the present study, two theoretical approaches have been chosen. First, the dramatism theory looks at a brand's stand on a social issue as a dramatic event and try to expose the brand's true motives behind this social action. Second, the attribution theory examines how stakeholders perceive the brand's true motives and subsequently, its stand on a social issue. Thus, the combination of the two theories presents a more complete picture, which is necessary when exploring the interplay of a brand's social purpose, its stand on a social issue, and how it is perceived by the stakeholders.

Dramatism theory

According to Prasad (2018), Kenneth Burke is considered to be the father of the theory of dramatism (occasionally referred to as rhetorical analysis), which he presented in the works "A grammar of motives" (1945) and "A rhetoric of motives" (1950). Burke (1945, p. xv) develops the theory of dramatism by asking, "What is involved, when we say what people are doing and why they are doing it?", that is, his concern is how thoughts and language that one uses to describe and explain the actions of others result in attribution of motives. According to Burke (1945), people make sense of life in the constant process of interpretation of one's own actions and the actions of others and by communicating these interpretations through language. The author (1945, p. xxii) offers to analyze human motives with the help of the method that he calls "dramatism", arguing that in dramatic perspective, language and thought are considered as modes of action. As such, drama is "the symbolic process through which we interpret and enact our social worlds" (Prasad, 2018, p. 55). The sensemaking process takes on a "dramatic form (with a plot, script, and principal characters)" (Prasad, 2018, p. 55), that is, a form of dramatic narration or storytelling. Importantly, this process of sensemaking through dramatic storytelling is simultaneously an identity-building process, that is, people use stories to explain their own actions as well as the actions of others (Prasad, 2018). As Overington (1977) argues, for Burke, drama is not a metaphor, rather it is a way to look at the social world, where each social action is "essentially dramatic" (p. 142).

One of the central concepts within the dramatistic tradition is a *motive*, which, according to Burke (1945), is an interpretation and reasoning for the actions of others. As Overington (1977)

describes, for Burke, motive is a “verbal justification or explanation” (p. 134) of one’s actions, which implies the importance of the rhetoric, language, and connotations that one uses to explain their behavior. Importantly, motives do not exist in isolation, but are influenced by specific interests that a storyteller has at the moment of narration as well as by the broader socio-cultural environment (Prasad, 2018). If several explanations are used to make a story appear as convincing, they are called “*vocabularies of motive*” (Prasad, 2018, p. 56). As Prasad (2018) argues, the ultimate objective of dramatism is to unveil a drama and, thus, understand any social situation or action by “revealing the pattern of motives and interests behind them.” Interestingly, dramatism is not only a theoretical framework, but also a method that “addresses the empirical questions of how persons explain their actions to themselves and others, what the cultural and social structural influences on these interpretations might be, and what effect connotational links among the explanatory (motivational) terms might have on these explanations, and hence on action itself” (Overington, 1977, p. 133).

Pentad is another important concept within the theory of dramatism, as, according to Burke (1945, 1950) it is the basis for the process of investigating motives behind a drama. As Burke (1945, p. xv) describes, in rhetorical analysis the pentad is represented by the following five elements: the *act* that represents an event or incident of interest and corresponds to the question of “What happened?”; the *scene* that refers to the situation or context in which the incident has occurred and corresponds to the question of “In what sort of situation did it happen?”; the *agent* that corresponds to the question of “Who has performed the act?”; the *agency* that refers to the means or instruments that have been used by the agent; and the *purpose* that, according to Prasad (2018, p. 57), represents “the intentions and desires” of the agent. It is important to note that purpose and motive stand for different meanings (Foss, 2009). According to Foss (2009), purpose is the reason for an actor to act, as it is presented to the audience by the rhetor. In turn, motive is the explanation for the rhetor’s action itself, that is, why they chose to tell a story in this particular way (Foss, 2009).

To understand the motives behind any social happening, it is important to analyze the elements of the pentad in relation to each other. This is done by examining the *ratio* or correspondence between the terms (Burke, 1945). To analyze a relationship through a ratio means to pair two of the pentadic elements to see how one of them shapes understanding of the other (Foss, 2009). According to Burke (1945), neither the act nor the agent can exist without the scene and thus, he considers the scene-act and scene-agent ratios to be rather important. The author (1945, p.

3) argues that, “It is a principle of drama that the nature of acts and agents should be consistent with the nature of the scene.” With the help of the pentad and by revealing the ratios and identifying the dominant term in the pentad, a rhetorical critic can analyze human actions and shed light on the process of attribution of motives (Burke, 1945; Overington, 1977; Prasad, 2018). According to Prasad (2018, p. 58), “this kind of analysis is intended to reveal the nature of the play that is being performed” and thus, the motives behind it.

Drawing on the works of Burke, Bormann (1982) adds another concept to the theory of dramatism, namely, the concept of the shared fantasies. According to Bormann (1982), the process of sharing fantasies “is closely connected to motivation and is an important means for people to create their social realities” (p. 289). According to Prasad (2018), it is important to identify a shared fantasy behind a dramatic social performance, as it could shed light into the motives behind this performance. Therefore, with the help of dramatism one can not only unveil the drama that is unfolding in a social event, but also discover the motives, interests, and fantasies behind this drama. As Prasad (2018, p. 59) argues, this tradition is different from other interpretive traditions because of its focus “on the role of interests (motives) that shape the contours of a plot or storyline.”

Applying the dramatism theory to the study at hand enables thorough analysis of a brand’s stand on a social issue in terms of its motives as well as relevance and dramatic effect of this action. Importantly, to realize the theory’s full potential, it is necessary to analyze not only actors and their performances, but also the audience’s reaction (Prasad, 2018). Therefore, to gain a better understanding of how the audience perceives the motives of the actors in the drama, the correspondent inference theory has been chosen as an additional theoretical framework.

Correspondent inference theory

Prior to describing the correspondent inference theory, it is important to outline a broader theory within which it has originated, namely, the attribution theory. According to Kelley (1973), “attribution theory is a theory about how people make causal explanations, about how they answer questions beginning with ‘why?’” (p. 107). Similar to the dramatism theory, the attribution theory deals with the process through which people make sense of the world. However, as it has been developed predominantly by social psychologists, its focus is on “the cognitive processes involved when an individual assigns an observable event to its underlying

cause(s)” (Smith & Hunt, 1978, p. 149) and on behavioral effects of these processes (Smith & Hunt, 1978; Mizerski et al., 1979). The attribution theory is not a single solid theory, but rather is a set of several theories and conceptualizations (Sparkman & Locander, 1980), which are concerned with how people explain for themselves their own actions as well as the actions of others. Fritz Heider is considered to be the father of the attribution theory, as he has created the concept of *perceived causality* and focused on how people understand and explain for themselves their perceptions of the others (Jones & Davis, 1965; Kelley, 1973; Mizerski et al., 1979; Sparkman & Locander, 1980).

Within the framework of the attribution theory, the correspondent inference theory is particularly insightful to the present study. This theory has been developed by Jones and Davis (1965) to explore inferences that people make about other people to explain for themselves the actions of others. The major focus of this theory is *person-perception* in contrast to *object-perception*, as it is primarily concerned with beliefs about personality traits or motives and not with an object’s characteristics, such as product performance (Davis & Jones, 1965; Mizerski et al., 1979). In this sense, for the purpose of the present study, a brand is regarded as a person and therefore, the notion of brand anthropomorphism is the basis of this research. According to Jones and Davis (1965), a person who observes (a perceiver) behavior of another person (an actor) tries to find a “sufficient reason” (p. 220) that would explain why the person acted in the first place and why the act was performed in that particular way. For a perceiver to come up with a sufficient reason for the actor’s behavior, they use available information or make assumptions about the links between the actor’s personality (or, as Jones and Davis (1965, p. 220) put it, “stable individual dispositions”) and the action that they performed. Thus, the correspondent inference theory describes inferences about the person, whose actions are being observed, that is, the actor’s motives to act in a particular way in *correspondence* with their personality (Jones & Davis, 1965).

Among the central concepts within this theory are *intentions* and *dispositions*. As Jones and Davis (1965, p. 224) explain, “To infer that the action occurred for X reason is to specify the actor’s intention and, indirectly, an underlying disposition. Both intentions and dispositions are attributes of the person.” The link between a particular intention or disposition of an actor and a particular act is called by the authors an *attribute-effect linkage* (p. 224). The correspondence itself is a result of an actor possessing an extreme or “unusual in its strength or intensity” (p. 264) characteristic, that is, the one that is otherwise average for an average person (Jones &

Davis, 1965). As the authors explain, when the perceiver is certain that the actor possesses an extreme characteristic, this characteristic is perceived as a sufficient reason for the actor to act the way they did. In this sense, the perceiver's certainty is the level of correspondence of their inference (Jones & Davis, 1965). In other words, when a perceiver is certain that an actor has a particular extreme trait, which makes them act in a particular way, the perceiver considers their inferences about the trait and the act to be higher in correspondence.

Other important concepts within this theory are *internal causes* and *external causes* (Jones & Harris, 1967). Internal causes reflect the true motives of an actor based on their inner characteristics, for instance, kindness. In turn, external causes reflect the external motives based on a situation or circumstances, for instance, risks. As Jones and Harris (1967) explain, when a person expresses an opinion, this opinion might or might not correspond to the "underlying attitude" (p. 1) of this person, that is, their true motive. According to the authors, when this person is attributed with an internal cause, this means that their opinion is correspondent with their underlying attitude. On the other hand, when one perceives that this person's attitude is not correspondent with their opinion, they will be attributed with an external cause, that is, perceived as being, for instance, forced to express the opinion. As Jones and Harris (1967, p. 1) argue, "... a person will be perceived to hold attitudes that correspond with his opinion statements when the statements seem to have been freely offered and not coerced by situational pressures." In other words, to be perceived as truthful and motivated from within, this person has to appear as truly believing in what they say. Interestingly, according to Kelley (1978), the process of attribution of favorable characteristics or motives can be increased if the actor's action involves some sort of sacrifice or is perceived to be difficult. According to Mizerski et al. (1979), the process of attribution results in a "cognitive output" (p. 130), as a person who is inferring the correspondence between the motives and the behavior of a person that they are observing, eventually form a strong belief about this person's attitude and can subsequently act in accordance with this belief.

In addition, according to Jones and Davis (1965), the attribution of true motives is more likely when the observed behavior was not expected, that is, its prior probability was low. As Smith and Hunt (1978, p. 151) explain, "Since the actor selected "abnormal" behavior in the situation, s/he must strongly hold the underlying disposition." In contrast, if the actor's behavior is normal and expected, the observing person will infer that this behavior was of high probability. Thus, there is nothing much to say about the true motives of the actor, as they behave in a

manner similar to others. Smith and Hunt (1978, p. 151) apply this argument to the sphere of advertising, claiming that brands that advertise their product as absolutely flawless (“non-varied product claims”) fall into the pattern of other brands that make the same claims. In this sense, whenever advertisers present their product in this light, consumers perceive this behavior as typical (having high prior probability), since, like most advertisers, they want to promote and sell their product (Smith & Hunt, 1978). However, whenever advertisers claim that their product is not absolutely perfect and has some insignificant flaws (“varied product claims”), this behavior is perceived as unusual (having low probability) and seems to be “contrary to the sales goals” (Smith & Hunt, 1978, p. 151). As a result, according to the theory, consumers infer that this advertiser does not behave like the others, and so this behavior is more likely to be attributed to their internal motives of being truthful and honest (Smith & Hunt, 1978). Smith and Hunt (1978) argue that if there is a correspondence between motives and behavior and if the actor has been attributed with a quality of truthfulness, they will be perceived as credible.

Since, according to Smith and Hunt (1978), advertisements evoke attributional processes, it could be insightful to apply the theoretical framework of correspondent inference theory to the situation when a brand expresses a stand on a social issue, that is, performs a “behavioral event” (Sparkman & Locander, 1980, p. 219). Specifically, to explore whether stakeholders attribute this stand to either the actual purpose of the brand (internal cause) or to the brand’s desire to appear good because there is currently a trend to do so (external cause).

Methodology

The present chapter describes the ontological and epistemological positions chosen to explore how stakeholders perceive a brand's stand on a social issue when the stand is motivated by the brand's social purpose, as well as the methods that have been used to collect and analyze the empirical material.

Research philosophy

The present study is a reflective research, as it is based on interpretation and reflection, which means that a researcher cannot be separated from their study, but instead is present in it by interpreting "reality" in a form of empirical material, and this interpretation reflects their personality (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018). The research question of the present study is as follows: *How do stakeholders perceive a brand's stand on a social issue when the stand is motivated by the brand's social purpose?* The formulation of the research question supposes that interpretation will take place on two occasions in the present study. First, an interpretation of whether a brand that takes a stand on a social issue is motivated by its social purpose and second, an interpretation of how this brand's stakeholders perceive its stand. The chosen theories are also interpretative in nature, and each corresponds to the mentioned occasion. The theory of dramatism uses the concept of drama to examine how a rhetor constructs and presents reality by saying what an agent is doing and why (Burke, 1945). Analysis of a rhetorical situation or drama provides, in turn, an opportunity to interpret a rhetor's true motives behind the drama. The correspondent inference theory provides an insight into how people perceive and make sense of the actions of others through the concepts of internal and external causes and thus, offers a means for a researcher to interpret these perceptions (Jones & Davis, 1965).

Given the nature of the research question as well as the chosen theoretical framework, the present study is conducted in the interpretative paradigm, with social constructionism as the epistemological position. According to this paradigm, reality does not exist per se, but instead resides in human consciousness and thus, people get to "know" the world and understand "reality" in the process of constant interpretation and social construction (Prasad, 2018). Accordingly, social constructivists are preoccupied with attempts to research how reality is socially constructed (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018).

Research design

According to Flyvbjerg (2006) and Klopper (2008), the choice of the research design is directed by the research problem. In addition, as Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2018) argue, methods should be consistent with theory, as theoretical concepts and assumptions determine how the object of study is interpreted and represented. Since the aim of the present study and its research question are stated as an attempt to explore stakeholders' perceptions of a brand's stand on a social issue when this stand is motivated by the brand's social purpose, the research design of the present study is qualitative, explorative, and contextual. Specifically, the qualitative nature of this study provides an opportunity to uncover and interpret the dramas that exist behind the attempts of a brand to publicly express its concern with a particular social issue. Its explorative nature offers a deeper insight into how stakeholders perceive a brand that takes a stand on a social issue as well as its underlying motives to do so. The contextual nature of this study reflects the importance of the context, in which the phenomenon in question occurs, as a researcher should always keep in mind the uniqueness of interactions and experiences that they are studying (Kozinets, 2015).

The present research is designed as an in-depth single-case study. As Flyvbjerg (2006) states, single-case studies are often subjected to criticism, as this kind of research does not allow for generalization. However, the aim of the present study is not to produce the kind of knowledge that could be generalized, but rather that could serve as a guidance for analyzing similar cases. In addition, Flyvbjerg (2006, p. 229) argues that an individual case study helps to clarify "... the deeper causes behind a given problem and its consequences...", instead of merely describing the symptoms of the problem and its frequency. In the present study, selection is purposeful, as it is information-oriented and intended to discover such a case that would be information-rich (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Among the strategies for case selection, Flyvbjerg (2006, p. 229-230) mentions a "critical case", which has strategic importance to the general problem in question and presupposes some transferability of the gained knowledge. Therefore, in the process of case selection, the main guidance was that the case had to be information-rich and critical, in a sense that its analysis would produce such knowledge that could be strategically important to the problem in question as well as transferable to some extent to other cases.

I have chosen Nike's "Dream Crazy" advertising campaign featuring Colin Kaepernick as the case of the present study. This case corresponds to the above-mentioned characteristics of a

critical case for three reasons. First, it is information-rich, as the campaign has received much attention and reaction both from media and stakeholders all over the world (LaVito, 2018). Second, it has strategic importance to the general problem of appearing unauthentic and failing to express a stand on a social issue in a credible way, since in the present case, Nike's support for Colin Kaepernick is a manifestation of the brand's purpose. Third, the knowledge gained from the analysis of the case could be transferred to other cases of brands taking a stand on different social issues in the format of guidance. Therefore, Nike's "Dream Crazy" advertisement is a critical case that could shed light on how stakeholders perceive a brand's stand on a social issue when the stand is motivated by the brand's social purpose.

The method of pentadic analysis has been used to analyze Nike's "Dream Crazy" advertising campaign as a drama (rhetorical situation), where the brand communicates its stand on particular social issues. As it was mentioned in the discussion about the theory of dramatism, this approach of interpreting "reality" can additionally serve as a method to study human relations and motives behind different social actions (Overington, 1977). According to Fox (2002), dramatisitic method can be used for a wide range of purposes in the field of communication, and it is particularly useful for understanding a rhetorical situation in all its complexity as opposed to a single text, since five pentadic elements exceed the scope of a text by capturing the context in which the situation has occurred. Pentadic analysis enables a researcher to capture the motive of the rhetor to construct a rhetorical situation in a particular way by analyzing each of the five key elements and determining the dominant one. The method of dramatism or pentadic analysis, according to Burke (1945), can appear as an oversimplification of a given situation because of its design. However, Burke (1945, p. xvi) argues that the method provides a researcher "... with a kind of simplicity that can be developed into considerable complexity, and yet can be discovered beneath its elaborations." Therefore, this seeming weakness of the method could be turned into its strength if the drama is analyzed and interpreted thoroughly and in depth.

Netnography has been used in the present study to collect attributions and interpretations of Nike's motives that the brand's stakeholders expressed when they reacted to the "Dream Crazy" advertising campaign, or drama. According to the inventor of the method, Kozinets (2015), "Netnography is about obtaining cultural understandings of human experience from online social interaction and content, and representing them as a form of research" (p. 18). This method is "... naturalistic, immersive, contextually-driven, and observational..." (Kozinets,

2012, p. 39), which makes it suitable for exploring and interpreting stakeholder's experiences that are expressed online. Netnography originated as a method used exclusively in the field of consumer research (Kozinets, 2002), which makes the application of this method especially relevant to the present study, as its aim is to explore how Nike's stakeholders have reacted to the "Dream Crazy" advertising campaign. In addition, one of this method's strengths is that it helps to reveal some unexpected insights, as people on the Internet tend to communicate and share their opinions more freely, since they can do so anonymously (Kozinets, 2015). At the same time, the fact that in some cases, a researcher cannot be certain that they select data from a real person and not from a fake account could be regarded as a drawback of the method. However, it could be mitigated with a thorough analysis of the account that is used for data collection.

Qualitative content analysis (QCA) has been used to analyze and describe the meaning of the qualitative empirical material that represents the motives that Nike's stakeholders have attributed to the brand's stand on a social injustice issue. According to Schreier (2012), the method of QCA is especially valuable when a researcher needs to interpret rich data in order to understand it and therefore, this method allows for constructing meaning. QCA, according to May (2011), is based on the idea that text is produced with regard to a specific social context and thus, this approach views the author of the text as "a self-conscious actor addressing an audience under particular circumstances" (p. 221). The author argues that, in the process of interpreting and analyzing a text, it is necessary that an analyst tries to understand the context in which this text was produced. However, as Schreier (2012) argues, QCA enables a researcher to describe the meaning of empirical material only from a specific perspective as compared to, for instance, hermeneutic circle that allows to approach material in a holistic way. "With QCA, your research question specifies the angle from which you examine your data" (Schreier, 2012, p. 4), and it should be noted that the perspective of the present study is the one of Nike's stakeholders. In accordance with the goals of QCA, the present study focuses on selected aspects of the collected material, specifically, on how stakeholders have perceived Nike's underlying motives to express its stand on the issue of social injustice by featuring Colin Kaepernick as the face of the "Dream Crazy" advertising campaign.

Data collection

To get an overview of the dramatic situation that was created by Nike in the form of its “Dream Crazy” advertising campaign and thus, provide some background information about Nike as a rhetor and identify five key elements of the pentad, I used some of the publications that gave publicity to the campaign online. I have purposefully opted for online versions of renowned and reputable publications which, according to Glader (2017), are known for following high ethical standards and providing readers with facts. These online publications are The New York Times, The New Yorker, The Atlantic, Reuters, The Guardian, and Forbes. Majority of the magazines are American, as I wanted to gain a perspective that would correspond to the national feelings. Although this approach has helped me to capture “zeitgeist”, that is, the societal spirit before and after the drama unveiled, it should be noted that it has its drawback, as the connotations of the words used by the authors could have influenced the way I perceived the content. However, I tried to mitigate this effect by opting for articles with neutral wording and focusing on facts instead of opinions.

To collect stakeholders’ perceptions of Nike’s motives, I followed an indexing stage of netnography (Kozinets, 2015, p. 97). Specifically, this stage represents an indexing data collection strategy that encourages the collection of small, but carefully selected high quality data that relate directly to the focus and research question of the study (Kozinets, 2015). The type of data that was collected for the present study is archival data (Kozinets, 2015, p. 165), as it was found and collected without me co-creating it or participating in discussions. I chose Twitter as a field site, since this social networking service corresponds to the factors that Kozinets (2015, p. 168-169) defines as important selection guidelines. As such, Twitter is an appropriate data collection site for the present study, as it is relevant to my research question (Nike’s stakeholders share their opinions there), active (they do so regularly), interactive (they reply to each other’s tweets), substantial (they use hashtags as well as (re)tweet and reply to other’s tweets), heterogenic (they represent, for instance, different demographics), rich in data (for instance, Colin Kaepernick’s tweet of the campaign’s poster with his face received 43700 replies) and finally, it is experiential (as a researcher, I can engage in discussions, too).

Twitter is particularly useful when searching for archival data, as it offers the option of advanced search. I used it to indicate particular keywords, hashtags, and date periods that are relevant to the study. Specifically, I would describe the whole process of data selection as

iterative, as I went from using the feature of advanced search to find tweets that would contain keywords “Nike”, “Colin Kaepernick”, “purpose” and hashtags #JustDoIt, #StandForSomething, #BoycottNike to the specific search within the replies to Donald Trump’s tweet “What was Nike thinking?”, which he tweeted on September 7, 2018. This tweet appeared to be a goldmine for data selection, as it provided me with an opportunity to explore how Nike’s stakeholders motivated for themselves the brand’s decision to make Colin Kaepernick the face of the new campaign and thus, make a statement.

Importantly, it was decided to use the term “stakeholders”, as in this particular study, it was impossible to find out whether an author of a selected tweet belonged to any particular Nike’s stakeholder group. Since the term “stakeholder” represents those who can affect or are affected by a company, it seems to be suitable in the present study, as the tweets expressing support or disapproval for Nike’s campaign have contained promises to respectively buy or boycott Nike’s products. In addition, when selecting tweets, I tried to pay specific attention to those tweeted from the verified accounts with a blue verified badge, which is a feature that proves authenticity of an account of public interest.

As for the timeframe, September 3, 2018 is considered to be the start of the situation, as Colin Kaepernick, a former quarterback who has started to kneel on the field during the anthem to protest against social injustice, racism, and police brutality, and consequently was not signed by any of the football teams, tweeted one of the posters of the “Dream Crazy” advertising campaign. This poster features a black-and-white photograph of Colin’s face with a copy “Believe in something, even if it means sacrificing everything.” It was retweeted by Nike, and on September 4, 2018, the brand published a video advertisement called “Dream Crazy”, which was narrated by Colin Kaepernick. The online articles that I reviewed are dated between September 3 and September 19, 2018, with the majority dated either September 4 or September 5, 2018. In addition, one of the most important sources for empirical data is the text of the “Dream Crazy” video as well as Nike’s website, as both represent the rhetor’s role in the development of the situation. In accordance with the unfolding of the drama, I searched the tweets that were posted in the period between September 3 and September 19, 2018 to obtain an overall picture of stakeholders’ sentiments. Particular attention was given to the tweets posted from the start of the campaign on September 3 to September 8, 2018, as by that day it was reported that Nike online sales grew 31% (“Nike Online Sales Grew 31% Over Labor Day Weekend & Kaepernick Ad Campaign”, 2018). A total number of 116 tweets was collected to

explore how Nike's stakeholders perceive the brand's decision to take a stand on a social injustice issue.

Data analysis

I have started by analyzing the data related specifically to Nike and its purpose, as it is the brand that is considered as the rhetor and whose perspective is used to identify the five elements of the "Dream Crazy" advertising campaign, which is regarded as a drama or rhetorical situation in the present study. The aim of this analysis was to support the case with some contextual information, so that the drama is described and presented in its full complexity and the rhetor's motives are uncovered. The data collected during the review of the online media coverage of Nike's advertising campaign was conceptualized in accordance with the concepts from the theory of dramatism, namely, the five key elements of the dramastistic pentad, which are the scene, the act, the agent, the agency, and the purpose. During the stage of analysis, according to Foss (2009), it is important to discover the "dominant term", which is the most important one within the five elements, as it is "the one through which everything else happens" (p. 372). The dominant term is discovered through the process of pairing the elements of the pentad, that is, establishing ratios such as act-scene, agent-scene, and others (Foss, 2009; Prasad, 2017). The questions that Foss (2009) suggests to examine the ratio between a pair of pentadic elements are the following: "Does the first term in the ratio require that the second term be a certain way?" and "Is there something in the first term that determines the nature of the second term in this ratio?" (p. 361). As Foss (2009) argues, when a researcher finds this term, they can interpret and understand the motive for the construction of a dramatic situation. After labeling the key elements of the pentad in accordance with the collected empirical data, I did not include the process of applying the ratios to discover the dominant element in the analysis section, as Foss (2009, p. 363) suggests that it is the work "behind the scenes", which should not be included in the presentation of the analysis. Thus, in this study, I present the first part of the analysis that is aimed to uncover Nike's motives behind initiating the "Dream Crazy" advertising drama in the form of dramastistic pentad, which is based on Burke's (1945) theory of human motivation and dramatism.

Collected tweets have been analyzed following the steps of the qualitative content analysis as described by Schreier (2012). Specifically, I designed a coding frame that consisted of the categories and subcategories representing the aspects of the tweets that were the focus of the

present study (see Appendix I). The strategy used for structuring the empirical material into the coding frame was a mix of concept-driven (based on the theoretical framework) and data-driven (based on the material) strategies, as the former was used to create categories and the latter was used to create subcategories (Schreier, 2012, p. 89-90). For instance, the concept of the motives' perception from the correspondent inference theory by Davis and Jones (1965) was used to create a category "Motives to take a stand". Next, 116 units of analysis represented by the collected tweets were divided into the units of coding, that is, those parts of the units of analysis that were meaningfully interpreted with respect to the categories and that fit within only one subcategory (Schreier, 2012, p. 131). The units of analysis were divided into units of coding in regard to the themes that were conceptualized on the basis of the research question and the coding frame. For instance, "Attitude toward Colin Kaepernick as a public figure" was one of the themes. Subsequently, the units of coding were numbered and tested with the help of trial coding. Finally, during the main analysis phase, the units of coding that appeared to be larger than the units of analysis, as one tweet could have several themes, were transformed to the level of the units of analysis with the help of a matrix (Schreier, 2012, p. 208). The results of the completed qualitative content analysis are presented in a qualitative style using continuous text and indicating some of the important frequencies and relations between the categories that were spotted during the data analysis.

Analysis

The present chapter provides a bigger picture of Nike's "Dream Crazy" advertising drama by uncovering the motives behind the brand's stand ("Motives") as well as presenting how Nike's stakeholders have perceived it ("Perceptions"). As such, these sections correspond to the aspects of the research question of the present study, namely, to the case when a stand is motivated by a brand's purpose, and how this stand is perceived by the brand's stakeholders in that case.

Motives: Pentadic Analysis of Nike's "Dream Crazy" advertising drama

In September 2018, Nike released a "Dream Crazy" advertising campaign that was created by the independent advertising agency Wieden+Kennedy to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the brand's slogan "Just Do It" ("Nike: Dream Crazy", n.d.). The advertisement features some of the most renowned and inspirational athletes in the world, including those who at some point of their life have faced various obstacles, but continued their fight and strived for positive social change ("Nike's New Just Do It Campaign", n.d.; "Nike's 'Dream Crazy' advert starring Colin Kaepernick wins Emmy", 2019). Importantly, the advertisement features Colin Kaepernick, a famous football player who has started the kneeling protest as a stand against racism, social injustice, and police brutality. According to the Nike's website ("Nike's New Just Do It Campaign", n.d.), the keynote of the advertisement is that "All leverage the power of sport to move the world forward", serving as a source of inspiration for "...everyone who has crazy dreams and goals that may seem unsurmountable."

In the chosen case, Nike is considered to be a rhetor, that is, someone who uses rhetoric in order to achieve a particular goal or effect. According to Foss (2009), the way someone is describing and presenting a situation indicates how this person perceives the situation, what choices they consider to be available to them, and what actions they deem appropriate to take. Thus, the rhetor's choice of wording plays an important role in understanding their motives to act in a particular way (Foss, 2009). Uncovering motives with the help of the pentadic analysis provides an insight into why the story was narrated in the first place, that is, what are the motives behind the rhetoric. In the present case, Nike is not literally the rhetor, as the video advertisement was narrated by the drama's agent Colin Kaepernick. However, the

advertisement was created at Nike's request and it has served as a platform for presenting a particular point of view on the situation, not least due to the text of the advertisement that was written by Wieden+Kennedy. In this sense, Nike is a rhetor or director of the drama, and it is the brand's motives that are to be uncovered through the pentadic analysis.

As the focus of this study is on the brands that express a stand on a social issue that is motivated by the brand's purpose, it is necessary to provide some details about Nike's brand purpose. According to the company's website, Nike is moved by the purpose, which is "... to unite the world through sport to create a healthy planet, active communities and an equal playing field for all" ("Nike Purpose", n.d.). Thus, the social dimension of the company's purpose is clearly stated as the reason for Nike's existence. In addition, the company has a mission to "Bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete* in the world. *If you have a body, you are an athlete" ("About Nike", n.d.). Another core component of the brand is its slogan "Just Do It" that was created by Wieden+Kennedy in 1988 and which turned the brand into an iconic one (Conlon et al., 2015). According to Conlon (2015), who was Nike's Director of Brand Planning and Marketing Insights at the time, this was achieved as the company managed to realize its deep brand purpose. Specifically, Nike had an understanding of the underlying social issues and tensions that needed to be resolved, and in relation to which it manifested the very reason for its existence and therefore, found a way to address a consumer need that no other brand had previously met (Conlon et al., 2015). According to the Conlon (2015), "Just Do It" has become a means for Nike to position its brand purpose and communicate like a brand that has a soul. As the author (2015, para. 12) describes, after the launch of "Just Do It" campaign, Nike's sales skyrocketed and the brand "truly stepped into its role as one of the world's premiere iconic and soulful brands." Importantly, throughout its advertising campaigns, Nike used the slogan as a source of inspiration, trying to attract attention to the current social issues, featuring the athletes that were overcoming obstacles related to these issues, and encouraging the rebellious attitude to do what one believed was right (Bella, 2018). As Smart (2005, p. 109) puts it, "Nike sought to sign sporting figures who were more than winners, more than just players. They had to possess something more, signify something more, and that something more was a 'special attitude'."

Key elements of the pentad

Agent

According to Burke (1945), an agent is the main character of the situation that is presented by the rhetor.

Nike chose Colin Kaepernick, a former quarterback of the National Football League (NFL), to be the face of the advertising campaign and the narrator of the “Dream Crazy” video advertisement. As such, he became an agent in the drama and thus, his personality is important to the analysis of the company’s motives. One of the advertisement’s main slogans, “Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything”, which is written on the advertisement featuring Colin Kaepernick, refers to the football player’s protests against racism, police brutality, and social injustice (Cobb, 2018). Kaepernick started to protest in 2016 by kneeling during the national anthem that was played before the start of the games (“Colin Kaepernick becomes the face of Nike's Just Do It campaign”, 2018). The form of the protest appeared to be highly controversial and polarizing, as there were mainly two perspectives about it. While some athletes and fans praised Colin Kaepernick for expressing his stand and trying to make a difference, others, including President Donald Trump and some other political conservatives condemned the protest as an unpatriotic gesture of disrespect toward the American flag and the military (Draper & Belson, 2018). In 2017, the football player became a free agent, but was not signed by any of the NFL's 32 teams. Eventually, Kaepernick filed a lawsuit against the NFL, claiming that its owners colluded against him to prevent him from playing in the league because of his kneeling protest (Edelman, 2017). By doing so, Kaepernick has surrounded himself with an additional narrative of being David who fights against Goliath represented by the NFL, that is, filing a lawsuit against someone who is substantially more powerful than himself. Therefore, it could be argued that the agent of Nike’s “Dream Crazy” drama is not only a famous athlete, but rather an athlete who has become an icon and a people’s hero by protesting against pressing social issues and jeopardizing his career (Hunt, 2018; Draper & Belson, 2018; Aziz, 2018; Morris & Wortham, 2019).

Act

The act, according to Burke (1945), is what the rhetor presents as the major action or behavior of the agent.

In the “Dream Crazy” video, Colin Kaepernick is not shown during any of his kneeling protests but standing and facing the Flag of the United States instead (Macleod, 2019). However, the fact that he is the face of the campaign as well as the references to his protest and to some other

athletes who have overcome obstacles on their way to success, establish a clear connection between sport and trying to transcend being an athlete into being someone who has a purpose to make the society better and is fighting for it. For instance, the words “Don’t become the best basketball player on the planet. Be bigger than basketball” are narrated on the background of the video footage of LeBron James opening a public elementary *I Promise School* funded by the LeBron James Family Foundation and designed for at-risk children (Barca, 2018). In general sense, the act that is performed by Colin Kaepernick in the “Dream Crazy” drama is encouraging Nike’s target audience to be themselves, dream crazy, become the greatest athletes they could be, and believe in something they do no matter what the consequences are.

Agency

Burke (1945) describes the agency as the rhetor’s presentation of the means that have been used by the agent to act in a particular way.

It appears that in “Dream Crazy”, the agency of Colin Kaepernick to encourage and inspire Nike’s target audience comes from his courage to protest and his commitment to be a world-class athlete. In addition, he is committed to his personal belief in a better American society, that is, to his role as a civil activist. Another theme for his agency could be sacrifice. Specifically, the advertisement’s line “Believe in something, even if it means sacrificing everything” refers to the fact that Kaepernick could not play football since he started his kneeling protest, as the NFL would not sign him. Therefore, courage, commitment, and sacrifice are considered to be the agency in the present case.

Scene

Scene is defined as the environment in which the agent performs their act (Burke, 1945).

In the present case, the scene where the action takes place is clear, as Colin Kaepernick fights against issues present in the modern American society such as injustice, racism, and police brutality. In the “Dream Crazy” video, the rhetoric approaches these themes in an indirect way, for instance, by mentioning those athletes that have faced the challenges and, particularly, by being narrated by someone who symbolizes the fight against the mentioned issues. Importantly, the rhetor’s choice of a divisive and controversial agent as a protagonist may reflect the scene

itself, representing the divisiveness of the American society. Specifically, as it was mentioned previously, Kaepernick's kneeling protests have made some people, including Donald Trump, who is a divisive figure himself and who argued that those who did not stand up to the anthem should be fired, question Kaepernick's and his supporters' patriotism (Draper et al., 2018). This, in turn, has questioned on a broader scale how freedom of speech and expression functions in the contemporary American society. In their article "*Colin Kaepernick 'Dream Crazy' Ad Wins Nike an Emmy*", Draper and Creswell (2019) quote David Hollander, an assistant at Preston Robert Tisch Institute for Global Sport of New York University, who has said that "All of the best advertising is reflective of the zeitgeist of the times, and the zeitgeist of today is a divided America."

Purpose

The purpose is the rhetor's presentation of what the agent is willing to accomplish by performing the act, that is, the rhetor's perception of the agent's intentions (Burke, 1945).

It could be argued that in Nike's "Dream Crazy" advertisement video, Colin Kaepernick's purpose is to inspire and encourage the target audience of the brand as well as bring Nike's stakeholders' attention to the social injustice issues that Kaepernick protests against.

A summary of the key elements of the pentad is presented in the following table:

Scene	Divided American society, where particular social issues are present.
Agent	Colin Kaepernick.
Act	Colin Kaepernick encourages Nike's target audience to not only be the greatest athletes ever, but to believe in something bigger than themselves, and try to make a difference in society, even if it requires some sacrifices.
Agency	Courage, commitment, and sacrifice.
Purpose	To inspire and bring attention to current social issues.

Table 1: The key elements of the pentadic analysis of Nike's "Dream Crazy" advertisement.

The dominant element of the pentad

After applying the ratios, it could be argued that the dominant element of the pentad is the agent. In Nike's "Dream Crazy" advertising drama, Colin Kaepernick influences the scene, as he is trying to change it by protesting against those social issues that he himself suffers from.

In addition, it is his personality as well as the speculations about the form of his protest that make the American society to some extent even more polarized. However, this ratio was particularly difficult to identify, as it is the scene that makes the former quarterback to engage in activism. Eventually, it has been decided that the agent had primacy over the scene, as in Nike's video advertisement, the focus is not on the social issues per se, but rather on how any athlete is able to change the situation for the better by truly believing in their purpose. In this sense, the agent is more important than the scene because the agent is able to change the scene for the better, and the rhetor is supportive of this. In the agent-act ratio, Colin Kaepernick's personality, specifically, the fact that he is an activist for the rights of people of color and has made multiple donations to the organizations that help, for instance, the victims of police brutality, makes the nature of the act look authentic and credible. Next, Kaepernick's agency to act, that is, him being courageous and committed to his belief to such an extent that he is ready to sacrifice his career and impose himself to criticism and accusations of being unpatriotic, naturally originates from his personality. Finally, in the agent-purpose ration, the agent is dominant, as Kaepernick's purpose originates both from his personality and experience of the social injustice issues as well as his belief that a peaceful protest is the right thing to do. Therefore, in the "Dream Crazy" drama, Colin Kaepernick is the most important figure to Nike in manifesting its brand purpose.

According to Burke (1945), identification of the dominant term in the dramatic pentad sheds light on the philosophical system of the rhetor that they have been guided by when constructing the situation's presentation. Importantly, the way in which the rhetor presents a particular situation corresponds to his perception of "reality" and what lines of conduct the rhetor perceives as appropriate (Foss, 2009). As Burke (1945) argues, if the agent appears to be the dominant element, the corresponding philosophy is idealism. It concentrates on the inherent properties of the agent and operates with such terms as "ego", "consciousness", "spirit", and "will" (Burke, 1945, p. 171). In line with the philosophy of idealism, "reality" exists only in ideas, perceptions, and experiences of people, and thus, individuality is of vital importance. Therefore, in Nike's reality, one single person is perfectly able to make a difference in the world and make a positive change by having a particular purpose and using the power of sport to serve it.

It may be claimed that in the present drama, Nike's choice to feature Colin Kaepernick and make him the narrator of the "Dream Crazy" video means that Nike takes a stand for Colin

Kaepernick's commitment to protest against the social injustice issues. The company has not simply featured the former quarterback, but actually let him narrate the video, thus providing Kaepernick with a platform to speak up and encourage the audience to "Believe in something, even if it means sacrificing everything." This strategy has allowed Nike to not only publicly express its stand on the social issues, but also manifest its support for the athletes that use the power of sport to make the world a better place and inspire their stakeholders to follow the example in an authentic and credible way. As such, this drama completely reflects Nike's brand purpose, which is to inspire their target audience to believe in something bigger and reassure their stakeholders that sport can move the world forward, especially when it comes to creating "... an equal playing field for all" in its broader, societal sense ("Nike Purpose", n.d.).

Importantly, this case is consistent with Nike's actions that preceded the release of the "Dream Crazy" advertisement. Specifically, in the beginning of the kneeling protests, when Trump reacted on Twitter by urging the NFL owners to fire those players who did not stand to the anthem, Nike stated the following: "Nike supports athletes and their right to freedom of expression on issues that are of great importance to our society" (Astor, 2017). Therefore, for Nike, having Colin Kaepernick, who has become an icon, as the face of the new advertising campaign was a way to reiterate the company's previous statement as well as its purposefulness, which could be considered as the rhetor's motives behind the drama.

Perceptions: QCA of Nike's stakeholders' perceptions of the "Dream Crazy" advertising drama

According to Schreier (2012), if the main goal of a researcher is to explore or describe their study in certain aspects and with the help of data-driven categories, the coding frame that has emerged during the QCA could itself be the most important finding. Since the aim of the present study is to explore how stakeholders perceive a brand that takes a stand on a social issue, when this issue is motivated by the brand's purpose, the coding frame (see Appendix I), specifically, both its concept-driven categories and data-driven subcategories, has been used as a basis for the present analysis. Thus, the present analysis consists of the categories and subcategories of the coding frame that are presented as themes and followed by examples from the empirical material.

Taking a stand: Internal versus external causes

In the coding frame, this category is named “Motives to take a stand” and consists of two concept-driven subcategories, namely, internal causes and external causes, which are important concepts within the correspondent inference theory. According to Jones and Harris (1967), when a person is attributed with an internal cause, it means that their motive is true, as it is based on the inner characteristics of the person. Conversely, when a person is attributed with an external cause, it means that their motive may not be true in respect to the inner characteristics, but instead come from external circumstances, for instance, situational pressure to act in a particular way (Jones & Harris, 1967). Analysis of the present category represents one of the most striking findings of the study, as none of the analyzed units of coding suggested that Nike was forced, or constrained, to make Colin Kaepernick the face of its new advertising campaign and thus, take a stand on the issue of social injustice. Therefore, it may be claimed that Nike’s motives to do so were perceived by Nike’s stakeholders as the company’s true motives in each of the analyzed cases.

@johnpavlovitz: “1. They believe in personal freedom. 2. They believe black lives matter. 3. They want to increase their sales 31 percent. 4. They want us to see how racists burn shoes as fast as crosses. 5. They know you're always on the wrong side of history and humanity. #YouLoseAgainDonnie.”

The data possibly suggests that Nike’s stakeholders establish the attribute-effect linkage between Nike’s intentions and dispositions, meaning that they perceive Nike’s characteristics as corresponding to the act that the company has committed (Jones & Davis, 1965). Therefore, despite the fact that Nike’s intentions were perceived differently by the stakeholders, in each case the stakeholders have connected these intentions to Nike’s underlying dispositions, that is, its brand personality. Importantly, Nike’s stakeholders have expressed differing opinions about the true motives of the company, but that does not deny the fact that they perceive these motives as true. Rather, they have attributed these true motives to different inner characteristics of Nike’s brand personality, which is the next category of the coding frame.

Motives: Positive versus negative perceptions

This category concerns specifically the types of true motives that Nike’s stakeholders have attributed to the company’s decision to take a stand on the issue of social injustice. Within the

category, the motives have been additionally categorized based on whether the stakeholders have perceived it as positive, negative or unclear. The “positive-negative” dichotomy is particularly important to the analysis of the present case, as it has appeared to be highly polarized according to the analysis of the empirical data. As such, no tweets could be found that expressed an unclear opinion about the “Dream Crazy” campaign, but rather strong opinions for or against it. On the general level, the material has been considered as relevant to the category whenever a stakeholder has expressed their view on why Nike has decided to partner with Colin Kaepernick and thus, align the company with his personality and values. In addition, as it was mentioned in the Methodology section, the tweet by Donald Trump, “What was Nike thinking?” has served as a primary source for data collection, as in their replies to this tweet, Nike’s stakeholders have articulated their perceptions of Nike’s motives behind the action.

@The_UnSilent_: “That they could... Grow a movement. Lift up a champion @Kaepernick7. Spotlight social injustice. Get rid of racist customers. Empower the youth. Troll you @realDonaldTrump. And STILL increase their sales 31%. @Nike #JustDoIt.”

As for the “*Positive stakeholders' perceptions of Nike's motives*”, the category consists of six subcategories, each representing a data-driven theme that has been recurring throughout the collected material.

The subcategory “*Support Colin Kaepernick*” has been outlined based on the tweets that have identified Nike’s willingness to support what Colin Kaepernick stands for as a civil activist to be the main motive of the company behind the campaign. Importantly, this subcategory has second to the highest coding frequency within the category (see Figure 2).

@theautismdad: “I feel even better about my new @Nike #airmax now. It's like every step I take, I'm supporting a company, who's supporting someone trying to make the world a better place. I can live with that...”

The subcategory “*Stand up against Trump*” corresponds to the stakeholders' perceptions that Nike has been motivated by the desire to confront Donald Trump, who has publicly criticized the kneeling protest and demanded the NFL to suspend the protesters, including Colin Kaepernick.

@danablankenhorn: “@Nike saw numbers showing clearly that standing up to bullies is good business.”

The subcategory “*Make a political statement*” represents the belief of the stakeholders that Nike has taken a stand because the company wanted to make a political statement against racism, social injustice, police brutality, and for peaceful protest. This subcategory is different from the motive to support Colin Kaepernick, since stakeholders are certain that Nike cares about the American society and thus, the motive to make a political statement transcends the motive to support the former quarterback and his values. Importantly, this subcategory has appeared to be the one with the highest coding frequency within the category (see Figure 2).

@IndigoGRITS: “@Nike was thinking this was a good way to support the right of Americans to free speech. About how to inspire millions of Americans, individuals and corporations, to #justdoit, do the right thing. They put someone with moral clarity who did the right thing as the spokesperson.”

The subcategory “*Earn support of the target audience*” reflects the perceptions that Nike has been motivated to take a stand in order to appeal more to their target audience. According to this perception, by stating that they stand together with Colin Kaepernick, Nike has purposefully alienated those stakeholders that have been opposed to the kneeling protest and the issues of social injustice, racism, and police brutality.

@SteveKinholt: “Unlike you, Nike execs are honest and smart. Orders rose 27% after your tweet. You see, two-thirds of their customers are under 35, and it's an ethnically diverse group. These are the same group who will drive you out of office and make America great again.”

The subcategory “*Improve bottom line*” has been identified based on the positive perceptions of both Nike’s stand and the fact that it has subsequently turned out to be successful business-wise, as the company’s online sales has increased 31%. The news about the surge has appeared frequently within the tweets of the present category.

@Hannahsoco: “I’m guessing they were thinking about how they could stand up for something they believe in while also profiting off of it. sales jumped 31% since the ad dropped...”

The subcategory “*Miscellaneous/Unclear*” has emerged as a combination of those perceptions that have appeared to be not very common or, to some extent, unclear. Despite the fact that such perceptions have been united under the present category, each of them represents a case that could deserve further detailed analysis.

@VNL: “Y’all thought @Nike was going to drop a commercial and leave it at that? Just the tip of the iceberg of their #justdoit storytelling.”

@DJPhillthy: “They were probably thinking that they would get plenty of free advertising from all the conservative snowflakes triggered by them using Kap as a spokesperson. Low and behold, the snowflake in chief #justdidit #Nike.”

A summary of the above discussion of stakeholders’ positive perceptions is depicted in the following figure:

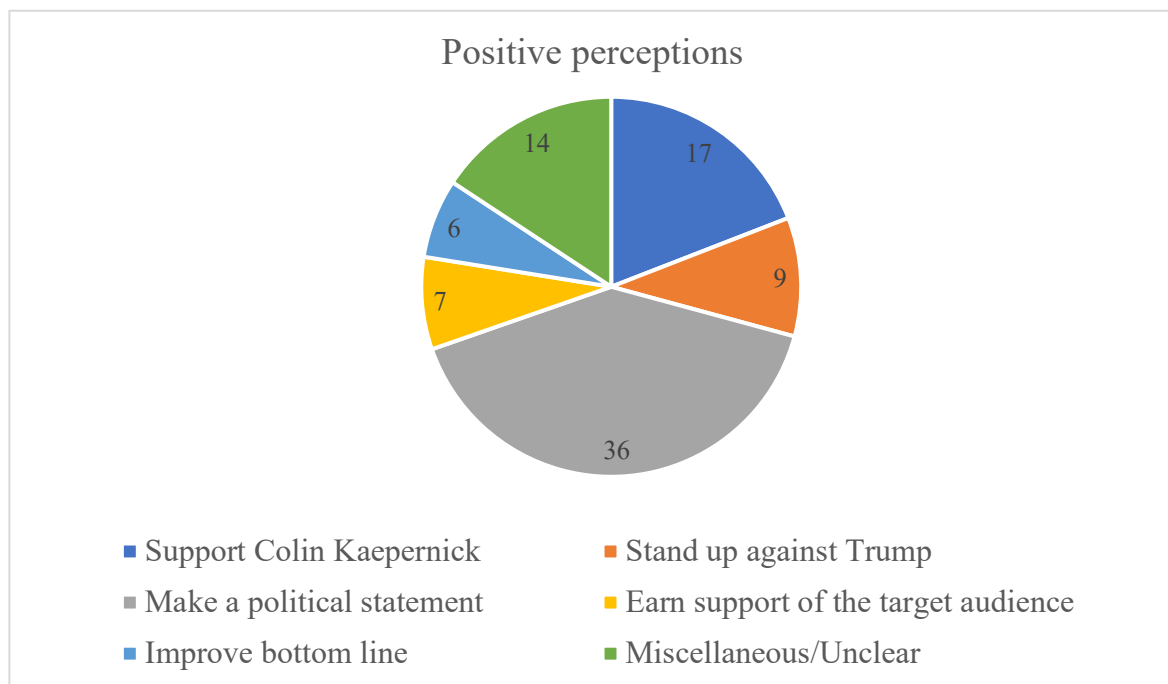


Figure 2: Number of tweets where respective positive stakeholders’ perceptions of Nike’s motives have been identified.

The “*Negative stakeholders’ perceptions of Nike’s motives*” category consists of five subcategories, each representing a data-driven theme that has been recurring throughout the collected material.

The subcategory “*Divide the country*” has been identified based on the tweets that reflected the intention to divide the country by partnering with controversial Colin Kaepernick as Nike’s motive. This theme has been mentioned fewer times compared to the other subcategories. However, it could indicate that those stakeholders that have negative perceptions of the kneeling protest, believe that Nike’s campaign has intended to polarize the situation in the country to an even greater extent.

@DrMartyFox: “Today's Feel Good Story: College Of The Ozarks DROPS @NIKE Over #ColinKaepernick For All Athletic Uniforms. College President: NIKE Is Promoting Division And DISRESPECT For #America #BoycottNike.”

The subcategory “*Show disrespect*” has emerged during the analysis of the tweets, whose authors believe that Nike’s motive to release the campaign was to show disrespect toward the military, the anthem, the police, the presidency, and the country. These aspects have been united under one subcategory, as they relate to the same motive of acting disrespectfully toward America, specifically, toward its symbols and institutions. The present subcategory has the highest coding frequency within the category (see Figure 3).

@JessieJaneDuff: “As a Marine & supporter of law enforcement, it sickens me to see @Nike's ads on my timeline promoting #Kaepernick's self-absorbed "sacrifice". What an insult to all of the men & women who died in the line of duty & never came home to their families. They sacrificed EVERYTHING.”

The subcategory “*Increase profits*” has been identified based on the stakeholders’ perceptions that Nike’s motive has originated from the company’s desire to exclusively increase its profits and not to contribute to the betterment of society. This theme has been coded fewer times compared to the other subcategories within the category. However, it is important to showcase the data that suggests the feeling of cynicism that has been present within Nike’s stakeholders’ negative perceptions.

@TheSleeper2000: “Clearly what it all boils down to is marketing. The room of men/women who made the choice to market for Colin Kaepernick were only thinking it would boost their sales or else they never would have been a part of it. #BoycottNike.”

The subcategory “*Interfere with politics*” has emerged from the perceptions that Nike wanted to get involved in politics, which certain stakeholders of the company have perceived as inappropriate. Similar to the subcategory “Increase profits”, the present theme has not emerged as frequently as the rest of the subcategories, but it demonstrates an interesting perspective that business and politics should not be mixed.

@Tabnotic: “I thought Nike was about athletics... I purchased Nike for athletic purposes for my family and my children but never again. This was a huge mistake!!!! My family will not represent such filth. #BoycottNike #JustDontDoIt #NIKEtakesAkneeNoMoreNIKEforMe #Nike.”

The subcategory “Unclear/Miscellaneous”, similar to the one within the “Positive stakeholders' perceptions of Nike’s motives” category, consists of the tweets that express the perceptions that are either uncommon or unclear in relation to the reason why Nike has decided to take a stand, but it is clear from the context that their perceptions are negative. The present subcategory is next to the most frequent one, which could be due to the fact that Nike’s stakeholders that have expressed their negative perceptions, were not unanimous when attributing a particular motive to the company. In addition, it could be claimed that they have tended to express their negative opinion without supporting it with arguments.

@toddstarnes: “So @Nike prefers that American patriots shop somewhere else.”

@ERCostello: “A guy with a multi-million dollar endorsement deal is “sacrificing everything,” while @nike Asian factory workers literally collapse on the job? #BoycottNike should be a progressive social-justice cause.”

A summary of the above discussion of stakeholders’ negative perceptions is depicted in the following figure:

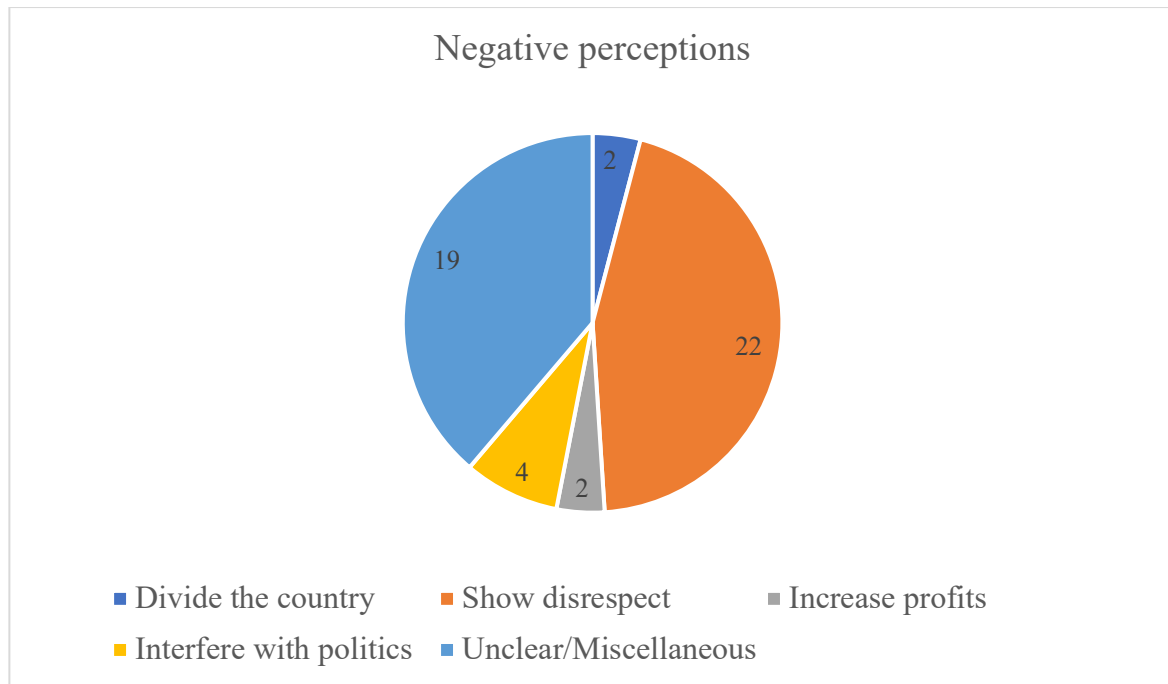


Figure 3: Number of tweets where respective negative stakeholders' perceptions of Nike's motives have been identified.

Reasons why stakeholders' perceptions are positive

The present category serves as a deeper look into why Nike's stakeholders perceive the company's motives to release the "Dream Crazy" advertising campaign with Colin Kaepernick as positive. The focus of this category lies on the reasoning that the company's stakeholders use when they describe Nike's intentions and dispositions. Ten subcategories have been identified within the category, each corresponding to the main reason why a stakeholder supports Nike. Importantly, these subcategories are directly related to the subcategories within the "Positive stakeholders' perceptions of Nike's motives", as they represent a more detailed analysis of the perceptions that have been already analyzed in that category.

The subcategory "*Nike supports the First amendment of the US Constitution*" is directly related to the subcategory "Make a political statement", as it is considered as one of the aspects of Nike's political statement. The positive perception that Nike supports the First Amendment of the US Constitution, namely, the freedom of expression and peaceful protest, has the highest coding frequency within the category (see Figure 4).

@GeorgeEarthling: “I APPLAUD @NIKE! As a 25 year military veteran, I would like EVERYONE to know that we served so that YOU ARE ALL FREE. And that freedom includes #TakeAKnee. If you aren't free to protest, then I wasted my adult life defending a meaningless document. Anything else isn't freedom.”

The subcategory “*Nike fights against racism and social injustice*”, similar to the previous subcategory, can be regarded as a specific positive perception of the “Make a political statement” subcategory. Some of the stakeholders have perceived Nike’s campaign as a political statement against social injustice, rather than the one in favor of the First Amendment. Within the analyzed empirical material, the themes of social injustice and racism tended to be addressed together and thus, they are united under one subcategory.

@paulosophia: “Never should standing up to racism, misogyny, and xenophobia be considered “hating.” Standing up to hate is never hate. #JustDoIt @Nike.”

The subcategory “*Nike does the right thing*” has emerged based on those tweets, whose authors felt positive about Nike’s stand because they perceived it to be morally right. They have frequently used such phrases as “do the right thing” and “stand on the right side of history.”

@BryanDawsonUSA: “@Nike stock at an all-time high. Looks like Nike #JustDidIt Proves that, eventually, it pays to be on the right side of history. Thanks for taking a principled stand... on the side of justice. #JustDoIt #BLM @Kaepernick7.”

The subcategory “*Colin Kaepernick is a hero*” is second to the most frequent one and is directly related to the subcategory “Support Colin Kaepernick”, as those stakeholders who have attributed Nike with a motive of supporting the former quarterback have positive perceptions of the campaign. Specifically, they believe that Colin Kaepernick is a hero, as he has risked his career by starting the kneeling protest and standing up for what he believes in. Interestingly, within the analyzed tweets, this theme has been sometimes expressed by comparing Colin Kaepernick with some other famous civil rights activists, for instance, Rosa Parks.

@earthlinggirl: “I own more Nike gear than one person needs but all I want to do right now is go out and buy more. I have nothing but mad love and respect for Colin Kaepernick. Brilliant partnership decision. You both have the support of myself and millions like me. #JustDoIt.”

The subcategory “*Kneeling protest is not about disrespect toward America*” has emerged as some of Nike’s stakeholders reason their support for the brand’s stand by arguing that the kneeling protest is about fight against racism, social injustice, and police brutality as opposed to the narrative that it is a gesture of disrespect toward the military, the anthem, and America in general.

@GeneralClark: “I don't see kneeling as disrespect for our armed forces or veterans. It is a statement about the discrimination, prejudices, and injustices that still age American Society. @Nike & @Kaepernick7 are on the right side of history. #TakeAKnee.”

The subcategory “*Nike is always supportive of great athletes*” does not have high coding frequency within the category, but still represents an important theme, as it is connected with Nike’s brand purpose. Specifically, those stakeholders that expressed positive perceptions of Nike’s stand argue that the company is consistent in its support for athletes.

@LokiShams: “@nike is doing what it's always done, supporting AMAZING and accomplished athletes.”

The subcategory “*Dislike of Donald Trump*” has emerged during the analysis of the tweets written as replies to his question of what Nike was thinking. In the present subcategory, it appears that negative perceptions of Donald Trump as a President and public figure resulted in positive perceptions of Nike’s stand. It could be argued that such perceptions are not only about disliking Donald Trump. Rather, dislike of Donald Trump has amplified existing support for Nike’s stand.

@MurrayInc101: “@Nike were showing the world that they support humanity, struggle, determination, inclusion not only in sport but life & most importantly that they deplore racism - the exact opposite of what you stand for you racist buffoon. Tnk u Nike & @Kaepernick7 @serenawilliams #JustDoIt.”

The subcategory “*Nike is smart*” is related to the subcategory “*Improve bottom line*”, as in the present subcategory, the stakeholders not only share their perceptions of Nike’s motives, but also emphasize the fact that the surge of Nike’s online sales has proved that the company’s stand has been strategic. Interestingly, the fact that this stand, to some extent, has been a strategic move contributes to the positive perceptions of the company instead of belittling its

good intentions. This could be explained by the fact that these stakeholders attribute Nike with a true motive of positive contribution to society in the first place.

@ChrisLutolf: “Unlike you, @Nike WAS thinking ahead of coming to its ad decision, namely

- strategically, which you have no f--king inkling of,
- economically, which you don't have the faintest idea about, and
- morally, which term is not even part of your infantile vocabulary.

Next question.”

The subcategory “*Nike is willing to take a risk*” has emerged based on the analysis of the tweets, whose authors perceive Nike’s advertisement as the company’s readiness to risk financially while taking a stand on what they believe is right. Importantly, such a perception has connection to the correspondent inference theory, as according to Kelley (1978), a person is likely to attribute someone with positive motives, if their action is risky or involves sacrificing something. In the present subcategory, the stakeholders’ perceptions of Nike’s motives have been positive, as they believed that Nike could have suffered losses as a result of the campaign.

@raech317: “They're doing the right thing. I'll explain since you don't know what that is... @Nike is willing to take a risk because their monetary risk of loss is recoverable, while the risk of loss for a black man during a routine traffic stop is not. #JustDoIt #thoughtyouwereabusinessman.”

The subcategory “*Unclear/Miscellaneous*” has emerged as some of the analyzed tweets appeared to either have a unique reasoning behind their authors’ support for Nike’s stand or lack in arguments. However, the majority of such tweets could be summarized to the positive effect of Nike being a source of inspiration for its stakeholders.

@BigdaddyJimmyV: “Dear @Nike Never cared about your shoes before & never even owned a pair. Headed to the store today to get a pair for the first time. Thank you for showing that ideas are more important than how many points you score or how high you jump...”

@Prof_Malhotra: “Watched the latest @Nike commercial featuring #ColinKaepernick. I feel like burning the shoes I own so I can purchase a Nike pair instead.”

A summary of the above discussion of stakeholders’ reasons for their positive perceptions is depicted in the following figure:

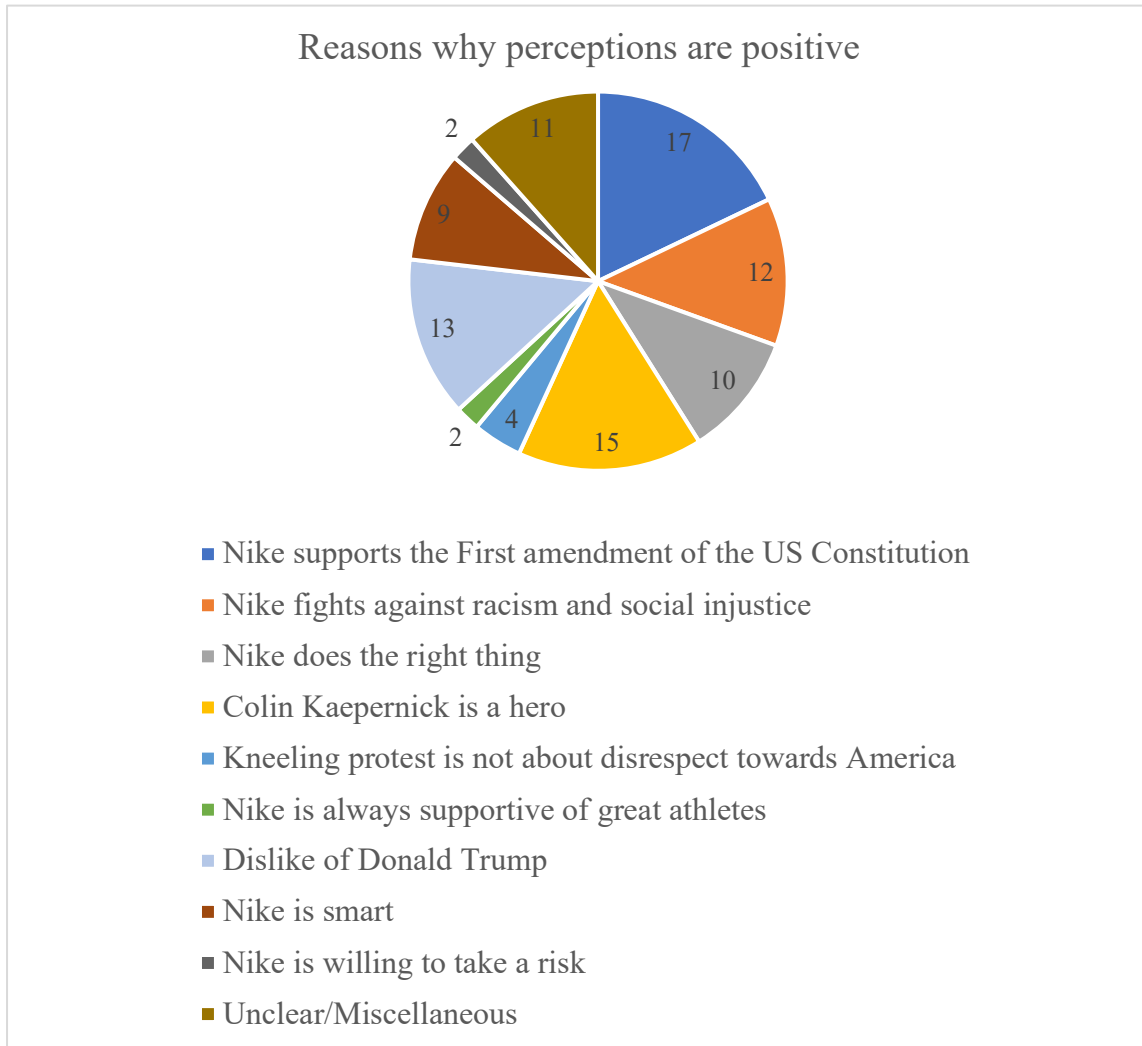


Figure 4: Number of tweets where Nike’s stakeholders have explained respective reasons for why they have positive perceptions.

Reasons why stakeholders’ perceptions are negative

Similar to the previous category, this one is designed to provide a deeper insight into the reasons why Nike’s stakeholders have negative perceptions of the company’s motives. The category consists of five subcategories that highlight the details of the negative perceptions.

The subcategory “*Colin Kaepernick is unpatriotic*” has the highest coding frequency within the category, which indicates that the majority of the negative perceptions of the campaign originate from negative perceptions of Colin Kaepernick as a public figure (see Figure 5). Specifically, this subcategory is directly related to the subcategory “Show disrespect”, as Nike’s stakeholders have transferred their perceptions of the kneeling protest as a gesture of disrespect onto Nike’s advertising campaign. Interestingly, they have done so despite the fact that in the advertisement video, Colin Kaepernick does not kneel, but instead looks at the American flag while standing.

@unscriptedmike: “So, Nike signs Colin Kaepernick. This is an endorsement of take-a-knee. An endorsement of disrespect for the Anthem. Disrespect for the flag. They’ll deny. It is. Why would they do this? They know how we think about this issue. Disrespect for the presidency. Disrespect for us.”

The subcategory “*Colin Kaepernick has not sacrificed anything*” similarly emphasizes the influence of the personality of the former quarterback on negative perceptions of the campaign. However, in the present subcategory, the stakeholders have been particularly concentrated on the fact that losing a career is not a sacrifice as compared to the military who have sacrificed their lives for America. Moreover, the majority of these stakeholders have considered the word “sacrifice” as inappropriate and offending in the context of the kneeling protest.

@RealKyleMorris: There are 325.7 million people in America. Nike chose Colin Kaepernick. Thousands of men and women serving in our armed forces are sacrificing it all for the country they love and believe in. Where are their contracts, @Nike? This is saddening.”

The subcategory “*Nike’s labor practices*” does not have direct connection to the “Dream Crazy” advertising campaign and Nike’s stand. Nevertheless, it has been frequently mentioned in the tweets encouraging to boycott Nike and implying that the company is hypocritical. In addition, sometimes the label “sweatshop” has been used without any direct connection to the campaign, but rather to cast a negative light on Nike.

@JWKeady: “#Nike’s sweatshop workers are physically, verbally, sexually & psychologically abused; paid poverty wages; cheated of overtime pay; paid less than

minimum wage; denied the right to organize; but it's @Kaepernick7's in a commercial that makes you ban @Nike?"

The subcategory "*Nike has chosen politics over sport*" is closely related to the subcategory "Interfering with politics", as the stakeholders who expressed their perception of Nike's motive to take a stand as a desire to make a political statement have had negative perceptions not so much about the stand per se, but rather about the fact that Nike has decided to do so in the first place.

@altrobertalt: "@Nike you will pay for your choice here. To pick politics over sports is not only a big mistake for your image, it will also cost your stock - down 3% on opening. Can you afford this? #BoycottNike #BoycottNikejustdoit #BoycottKaepernick."

The subcategory "*Unclear/Miscellaneous*", similar to the other identical subcategories, consists of the tweets that have been difficult to categorize or that have expressed some unique perspectives on why Nike's motive should be perceived in the negative light. Interestingly, this subcategory is second to the one with the highest frequency of coding that could suggest that those Nike's stakeholders who have perceived the campaign negatively, in fact had differing opinions to do so in the majority of the cases. In addition, among the negative perceptions, there happen to be ones that could be regarded as "mud-slinging", since such tweets lacked reasoning.

@realDonaldTrump: "Just like the NFL, whose ratings have gone WAY DOWN, Nike is getting absolutely killed with anger and boycotts. I wonder if they had any idea that it would be this way? As far as the NFL is concerned, I just find it hard to watch, and always will, until they stand for the FLAG!"

@WilkowMajority: "The good news about @Nike and @Kaepernick7 is that once a social movement become commoditized, it becomes a style product and all style products crest in value, then are cast aside and go out of style. Just ask the hippies..... #Nike #ColinKaepernick."

A summary of the above discussion of stakeholders' reasons for their negative perceptions is depicted in the following figure:

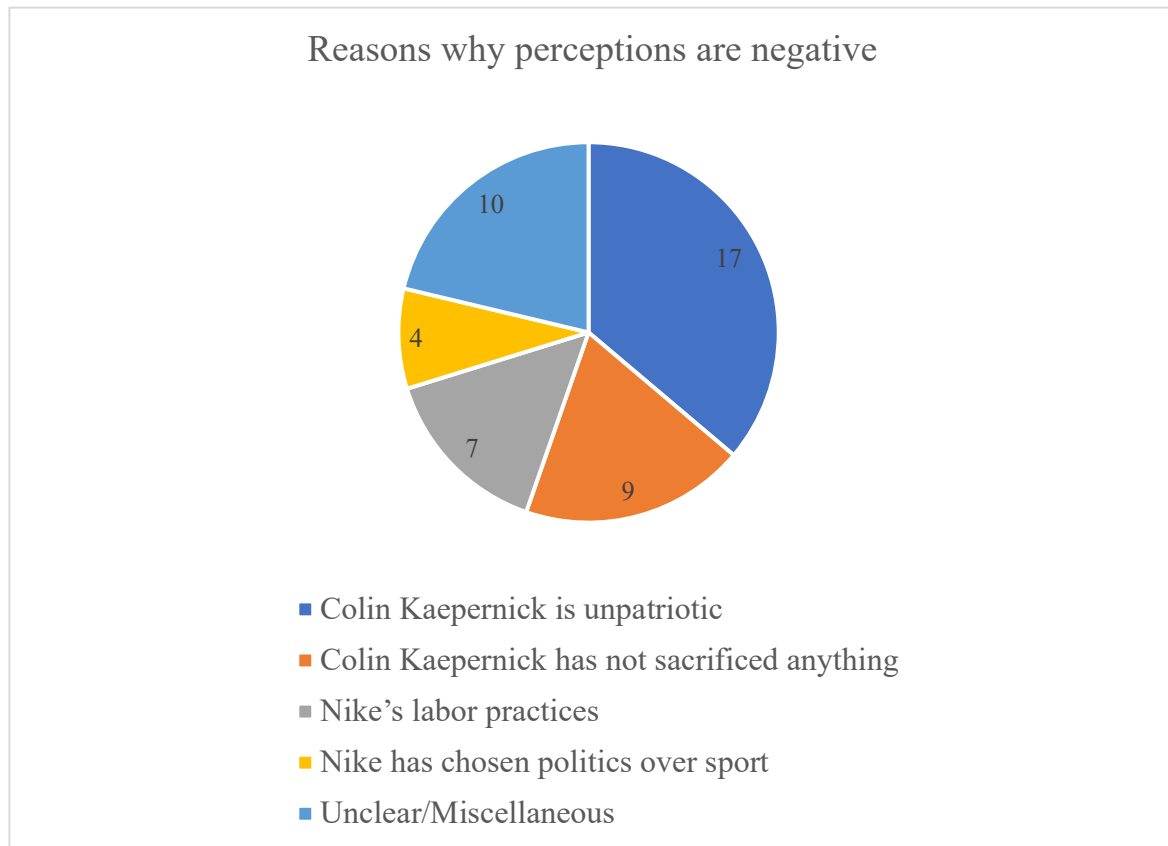


Figure 5: Number of tweets where Nike's stakeholders have explained respective reasons for why they have negative perceptions.

Attitude toward Nike's campaign

The last category in the coding frame represents an overall stakeholders' sentiment of Nike's stand. It consists of two data-driven subcategories that showcase how the stakeholders' perceptions have transformed into actions with regard to the company and its products.

The subcategory "*Support Nike*" has emerged based on the positive true motives that have been attributed to Nike by its stakeholders and thus, have been perceived in a positive light. Such hashtags as #JustDoIt, #ImWithKap, and #TakeAKnee have been frequently used by those stakeholders who have supported Nike and tweeted about buying Nike products.

@PaulaInTulsaOK: "Thinking about spreading love & harmony. #IStandWithKap #TakeAKnee. @Nike (PS: I am going shopping today. For Nikes. #swoosh)."

The subcategory “Boycott Nike” corresponds to the tweets whose authors have perceived Nike’s true motives as negative and thus, have expressed their negative perceptions of the stand. Within this subcategory, the two most frequently used hashtags are #BoycottNike and #BoycottNikeJustDoIt. The tweets containing one of these hashtags or both of them have been usually accompanied by a stakeholder’s promise to stop buying Nike products.

@FiveRights: “#JustDoIt @Nike. You have chosen to reward US-hater Kaepernick. You have effectively said FU to America. I will never buy another Nike product again.”

In summary, Nike’s stakeholders have perceived its stand on the social issues expressed in partnership with Colin Kaepernick as the company’s true motive. While not doubting authenticity of Nike’s intention, the stakeholders have tweeted polarized opinions in relation to the nature of this intention. Specifically, they have expressed different perceptions of whether the company’s motive has been positive, such as to make a political statement, or negative, such as to show disrespect toward American symbols and institutions. Interpretation of these and others important findings will be discussed in the next chapter of the present study.

Discussion

The aim of the present study is to explore what motives stakeholders attribute to a brand that has a social purpose and takes a stand on a social issue in order to express this purpose. The case of Nike's "Dream Crazy" advertising campaign has been used to explore how the company's stakeholders have perceived its decision to align with Colin Kaepernick and by doing so, take a stand on the issues of social injustice, racism, and police brutality. As it has been argued in the previous chapter, Nike's purpose has a social dimension, which is relevant to the company's desire to express its stand on the mentioned social issues and therefore, this case has proved to be valuable and insightful in trying to answer the research question of the present study, which is *How do stakeholders perceive a brand's stand on a social issue when the stand is motivated by the brand's social purpose?* In the following sections, I present the interpretation of the collected empirical material as well as highlight the contribution of this study's findings in relation to the literature review and theoretical framework discussed in the previous chapters.

Nike's motives through the lenses of dramatism

According to Burke (1945), the rhetoric and the way in which a rhetor presents a situation reflect their perception of reality and indicate what choices of action the rhetor seems as available or appropriate. In the "Dream Crazy" advertisement video, with the help of rhetoric and visual imagery, Colin Kaepernick is presented by Nike as one of the world's most renowned athletes who is actually not only a great football player, but also a person that is trying to improve society and change the world for the better. Importantly, he does so through sport, as he uses a football field as a platform to protest against the social issues that are currently present in American society. In this sense, he transcends being an athlete into being an athlete with a purpose that is much bigger than, for instance, winning a game. As such, Colin Kaepernick is consistent with what Smart (2015) defines as an athlete with a special attitude, which is exactly the type of an athlete that Nike is known for partnering with (Draper et al., 2018). In addition, Kaepernick reflects the societal spirit of modern America, characterized by divisiveness, which is the scene of the present drama. This divisiveness, to a great extent, results from polarized opinions about the presidency of Donald Trump. His determined opposition toward the kneeling protest and the way the NFL has been dealing with it could

have contributed to the fact that Colin Kaepernick has been perceived as the people's hero. When analyzed from the dramatic angle, it may be argued that the way in which Nike presents Colin Kaepernick as well as the wording that is used throughout the campaign, namely, the word "sacrifice", indicate that the brand is ready and willing to support him in his fight for the betterment of society. Kaepernick is supported in particular, by being provided with such an influential and wide-reaching platform as the one of Nike. Therefore, Nike has constructed such a reality, in which Kaepernick is acknowledged as a hero, and the company is supportive of him and his desire to improve the world. Specifically, because he does so through the power of sport, as in this way, he is completely relevant to the brand's social purpose.

With the help of the pentadic analysis, it has been discovered that Colin Kaepernick, the agent in the "Dream Crazy" drama, is the dominant element of this rhetorical situation. As it has been mentioned in the previous chapter, if the agent appears to be the dominant element in the pentad, the rhetor's philosophy is idealism, which celebrates the spirit of the agent and their ability to influence the scene. This could mean that Nike is not only supportive of the athlete, but also uses his personality, purpose, and ideals to inspire its stakeholders to follow their dreams and be ready for possible sacrifice on the way to achieving these dreams. In this way, Colin Kaepernick is not only relevant to the brand's purpose statement, which is "... to unite the world through sport to create a healthy planet, active communities and an equal playing field for all" ("Nike Purpose", n.d.), but also to Nike's mission to inspire athletes all over the world ("About Nike", n.d.). Therefore, Nike's motive behind the drama, which has been identified as to reiterate and amplify the company's support for purposefulness, seems to be both authentic and consistent in regard to the brand's social purpose as well as previous partnerships with the athletes that contribute to society and serve as role models.

As for Bormann's (1982) concept of shared fantasy, it could be claimed that the one behind Nike's "Dream Crazy" advertising drama is to constantly try to be "more than just". For instance, by supporting Colin Kaepernick who is more than just an athlete – he is also a civil rights activist, – Nike proves to be more than just a company – it is a company that is driven by a purpose beyond making profits. In this sense, both Kaepernick and Nike appear as idealists, as they believe that one person can contribute to society and that sport, when it is "more than just sport" is one of the ways to achieve this. Moreover, it may be claimed that it is Colin Kaepernick's personality that amplifies purposefulness of Nike's brand personality. In this sense, the contribution of the present study to the theory of dramatism is that in branding,

the agent might not only be the one through whose lenses the rhetor presents a situation, but also someone who can be identified with the rhetor. Therefore, the agent of the drama, who is also the brand's partner, should be chosen with great care, as the personality of the agent could significantly contribute to the way the drama is perceived along with the rhetoric and the way the drama is presented.

Perceptions of Nike's motives through the lenses of correspondent inference theory

Divisiveness of American society could be regarded as both the backdrop of the drama, but also the consequence of how polarized the stakeholders' perceptions of Nike's motives have appeared to be. The kneeling protest, the public figure of Colin Kaepernick, and thus, the "Dream Crazy" advertising campaign are controversial because of the symbol that Kaepernick has used to start his protest. As it has been mentioned in the previous chapter, he started to kneel during the national anthem of the USA, which has been played before every football game. Donald Trump as well as some other conservative politicians and their supporters have interpreted and framed this protest as disrespectful toward America, because the national anthem is endowed with patriotic symbolism. In their opinion, Colin Kaepernick has proved himself to be unpatriotic and disrespectful toward American society. This approach to interpret Kaepernick's stand could be defined as a "*how*-approach", as it is focused on *how* he has been protesting against the social issues of injustice, racism, and police brutality. The other approach could be defined as the one of *what* he has been protesting, which emphasizes the social issues that are present in American society. Nike has approached the situation from this "*what*-perspective", as the brand portrays Colin Kaepernick as a brave and purposeful athlete. It could be argued that the reason why in the "Dream Crazy" video advertisement Kaepernick is standing and facing the American flag, another important national symbol, is to highlight that the kneeling protest is not about Kaepernick being unpatriotic, but about him believing in something important and sacrificing his career for these beliefs. Therefore, these two angles and subsequent narratives, from which the kneeling protest and the personality of Colin Kaepernick have been regarded could have resulted in polarized perceptions of the campaign.

When adapting the correspondent inference theory to branding, it could be argued that a brand's motive to take a stand on a social issue is regarded as the true one, when this brand's stand comes from its personality and is not forced upon (Jones & Harris, 1967). In this regard, one

of the most important findings of the present study is that, according to the analyzed empirical material, Nike's stakeholders have perceived the brand's stand as its true and thus, authentic motive in all cases. It may be argued that the reason for this could be the fact that the stand has come from the brand's social purpose, which is necessarily an inner characteristic of the brand (Collins & Porras, 1996) and thus, it has been attributed to the brand's inner cause as opposed to the external cause (Jones & Harris, 1967). This finding could contribute to the research on stakeholders' perceptions of brands' motives to express their stance on social issues, as it shows that having a social brand purpose could ensure authenticity by serving as an inner cause of the brand to act.

In addition, in line with the argument of Jones and Davis (1965), whenever someone is attributed with an extreme trait and acts in an extreme way, the observer of the act would think of this act and the actor's trait as highly correspondent. When applied to the case in question, it could be argued that Nike is perceived as a brand that does not play safe and takes the risk, which therefore makes its risky decision to make a statement by supporting Colin Kaepernick look highly correspondent with this trait. Furthermore, together with the risk, this action has involved some sacrifice, as the brand has supported the athlete despite the fact that the "how-approach" has portrayed Kaepernick as unpatriotic and thus, has alienated some conservative stakeholders of Nike. This fact could have contributed to the positive perceptions of Nike's stand from its supportive stakeholders, as according to Kelley's (1973) finding, when an action involves loss or sacrifice, the actor is likely to be attributed with positive motives. Therefore, it could be claimed that perceptions of authentic and positive motives of Nike to take a stand have resulted from the company's social brand purpose, absence of coercion, corresponding extreme trait of being brave, and readiness to sacrifice at least one group of their stakeholders.

Interestingly, the most frequent positive perception of Nike's motives has appeared to be to "*Make a political statement*", while among the reasons for this positive perception, "*Nike supports the First amendment of the US Constitution*" has been the most recurring subcategory. This finding could illustrate the subtleness of Nike's "Dream Crazy" advertising drama, where there has not been any direct mentions of the social issues per se, but the stakeholders have perceived the brand's support for Colin Kaepernick as Nike's public statement of being against social injustice, racism, police brutality, and even Donald Trump himself. This partnership has been regarded as a stand for the freedom of speech and the right of all Americans to peacefully protest. In this sense, Nike's stand receives an additional nuance of not only supporting the

athlete who is protesting against social issues, but essentially, supporting his very right to protest. Consequently, this narrative has appeared as an opposition to the narrative of Nike and Kaepernick being unpatriotic.

Another interesting finding of the present study is that the attribution of oppositional self-serving (or egoistic) and other-serving (or altruistic) motives that have been studied, among others, by Bigné et al. (2012), Mazutis and Slawinski (2015), and Myers (2015) in relation to brands' CSR campaigns, has appeared to be complex, as in the case with the study by Ellen et al. (2006). Specifically, Nike's motive to "*Improve bottom line*" and related perception that "*Nike is smart*" have not been attributed to the brand's self-serving (egoistic) motives. Instead, the related empirical material has highlighted that although Nike's stand has been strategic, it still intended to do the right thing. Some stakeholders have emphasized that making good and contributing to society could be beneficial for a company's bottom line and that they have perceived Nike's surge in online sales with great enthusiasm. This finding possibly suggests that the attribution of motives could be more nuanced and dependent on specific context in the situations when a brand's stand is motivated by its social brand purpose. As Collins and Porras (1994) argue, visionary companies avoid "the tyranny of the or" (p. 48) and do not choose between being profitable *or* purposeful. Instead, they follow the philosophy of pragmatic idealism, according to which these companies pursue both its brand purpose *and* profit (Collins and Porras, 1994, p. 48). In line with this argument, it could be suggested that even though the philosophy of Nike as the rhetor has been identified as idealism, it is still a for-profit company, which alters this philosophy into pragmatic idealism without casting any negative light on the company. Therefore, brands that take a stand on social issues when this stand is motivated by their social purpose could be perceived in positive light as other-serving and profiting at the same time.

Conclusion

While brand purpose could be regarded as the answer to the question of why a particular brand exists, the social dimension of the brand's purpose offers an insight into what positive changes this brand is willing to bring to society, endowing its reason for existence with the real social value. It could be argued that a brand's social purpose warrants it with an opportunity to take a stand on the relevant social issue without being afraid to be perceived as exploiting the social issue in order to appear socially meaningful. While there are several perspectives on how a brand formulates its social purpose, the angle of the present study is the one that it should be discovered within the company and adjusted to the social progress through time, so that it is still relevant and consistent, instead of being created exclusively "on demand".

As for the perceptions that stakeholders express in respect to a brand's decision to take a stand on a social issue, when this issue is relevant to this brand's social purpose, the case of Nike's "Dream Crazy" advertising campaign has demonstrated that it could be perceived as exclusively authentic. Specifically, when motivated by the social purpose, the brand's stand is attributed with an inner cause, that is, it is believed to be the brand's true motive. This could be the principle distinction with the common CSR campaigns, which are frequently questioned in respect of their relevance to a company's purpose and values and thus, may appear as lacking authenticity and consistency. Moreover, social brand purpose could help to avoid the dichotomy of self- and other-serving motives, as in Nike's case, since it seems reasonable that a brand, which strives to make a positive impact on society is eventually appreciated by its customers in the form of the increased purchases.

Ultimately, taking a stand on a social issue is about doing the right thing, which has been frequently mentioned by Nike's stakeholders in relation to the company's decision to make Colin Kaepernick the face of the "Dream Crazy" advertising campaign. This decision resulted in considerable increase of profits, praise, and popularity for the brand. Furthermore, together with the advertising agency Wieden+Kennedy, Nike won the Outstanding Commercial Award during the Creative Arts Emmy celebration in 2019. Thus, this case demonstrates how communicating the brand's social purpose is strategically important to the company's identity and success. Interestingly, despite being an iconic brand, Nike's record as a company is not flawless, as it has been significantly criticized for its labor practices. Although this issue has

not had direct relevance to the stance that the brand has expressed in relation to the issues of social injustice, it has been brought up by those stakeholders who expressed their negative perceptions of Nike's motives. In this light, it could be insightful for future research to explore how social brand purpose is perceived by a brand's stakeholders against the backdrop of this brand's reputation, specifically, whether the brand's reputation influences the way the stakeholders perceive its stand on a particular social issue.

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Appendix I: Coding Frame

1. Motives to take a stand

- 1) Internal causes
- 2) External causes

Description: A unit of coding belongs within this category if a stakeholder expresses their interpretation of the correspondence between Nike's stand and its "underlying attitude" or brand personality.

Example: A stakeholder mentions that Nike has taken a stand because it was forced to do so as opposed to actually be willing to express its stance.

2. Stakeholders' perceptions of Nike's motives

- 1) Positive
 - i. Support Colin Kaepernick
 - ii. Stand up against Trump
 - iii. Make a political statement
 - iv. Earn support of the target audience
 - v. Improve bottom line
 - vi. Unclear/Miscellaneous
- 2) Negative
 - i. Divide the country
 - ii. Show disrespect
 - iii. Increase profits
 - iv. Interfere with politics
 - v. Unclear/Miscellaneous
- 3) Unclear

Description: A unit of coding belongs within this category if a stakeholder expresses their perception of Nike's motives in a positive, negative, or unclear light, without necessarily reasoning their opinion.

Example: “Probably that a person shouldn’t have their job taken away for exercising their right to peacefully protest. That’s my guess as to what @Nike was thinking.”

3. Reasons why stakeholders’ perceptions are positive

- 1) Nike supports the First amendment of the US Constitution
- 2) Nike fights against racism and social injustice
- 3) Nike does the right thing
- 4) Colin Kaepernick is a hero
- 5) Kneeling protest is not about disrespect toward America
- 6) Nike is always supportive of great athletes
- 7) Dislike of Donald Trump
- 8) Nike is smart
- 9) Nike is willing to take a risk
- 10) Unclear/Miscellaneous

Description: A unit of coding belongs within this category if a stakeholder expresses their perception of Nike’s motives in a positive light and provides some reasoning for why it is positive.

Example: “1. They believe in personal freedom. 2. They believe black lives matter. 3. They want to increase their sales 31%. 4. They want us to see how racists burn shoes as fast as crosses. 5. They know you’re always on the right side of history and humanity. #YouLoseAgainDonnie.”

4. Reasons why stakeholders’ perceptions are negative

- 1) Colin Kaepernick is unpatriotic
- 2) Colin Kaepernick has not sacrificed anything
- 3) Nike’s labor practices
- 4) Nike has chosen politics over sport
- 5) Unclear/Miscellaneous

Description: A unit of coding belongs within this category if a stakeholder expresses their perception of Nike’s motives in a negative light and provides some reasoning for why it is negative.

Example: “Nike’s campaign centers around a guy who donates to organizations named after cop killers. I’m not a big boycott guy, but damn this deserves one. #BoycottNike.”

5. Attitude toward Nike’s campaign

- 1) Support Nike
- 2) Boycott Nike

Description: A unit of coding belongs within this category if a stakeholder expresses their actions with regard to Nike products and/or campaign.

Example: “I will never purchase another pair of @Nike again because they hired @Kaepernick7.”