



## The Effect of Brand Personality and Psychological Ownership of the Brands On Increasing Social Media Engagements of Brands<sup>1</sup>

Marka Kişiliği ve Markayı Psikolojik Sahiplenmenin Markaların Sosyal Medya Etkileşimlerinin Artmasındaki Etkisi

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to investigate the impact of brand personality and brand psychological ownership on enhancing brands' social media engagement. An online survey was distributed to the entire research population via email through Bayburt University's Student Affairs. Furthermore, the survey link was shared in WhatsApp groups to increase participation. Data collected from 408 participants, including Bayburt University staff, current students, and alumni, between April and June 2023, were analyzed using SPSS 24.0. The findings indicate that the sincerity and competence dimensions of brand personality have a significant positive effect on the interest dimension of social media engagement. However, the excitement and ruggedness dimensions of brand personality do not have a significant effect on the interest dimension. Additionally, the excitement dimension of brand personality has a significant positive effect on the support dimension of social media engagement. In conclusion, brand psychological ownership has a significant positive effect on both the support and interest dimensions of brands' social media engagement.

### MAKALE BİLGİSİ

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### ÖZ

Bu araştırmanın amacı marka kişiliği ve markayı psikolojik sahiplenmenin markaların sosyal medya etkileşimlerinin artmasındaki etkisini incelemektir. Araştırmada nicel yöntem kullanılmıştır. Bayburt Üniversitesi Öğrenci İşleri tarafından online anket araştırma evreninin tümüne e-posta yoluyla gönderilmiştir. Ayrıca anketi teşvik etmek amacıyla ile WhatsApp gruplarında anketin linki paylaşılmıştır. Nisan-Haziran 2023 tarihleri arasında, Bayburt Üniversitesi personelleri, aktif ve mezun öğrencilerinden oluşan 408 kişiden toplanan veriler SPSS aracılığıyla analiz edilmiştir. Analiz sonucunda marka kişiliğinin boyutlarından samimiyet ve yeterlilik boyutunun sosyal medya etkileşimlerinin ilgi boyutu üzerinde anlamlı ve pozitif yönde bir etkisinin olduğu bulunmuştur. Marka kişiliğinin heyecan ve sağlamlık boyutlarının ise sosyal medya etkileşimlerinin ilgi boyutu üzerinde anlamlı bir etkisinin olmadığı tespit edilmiştir. Araştırmanın diğer bir sonucuna göre ise marka kişiliğinin heyecan boyutunun sosyal medya etkileşimlerinin destek boyutu üzerinde anlamlı ve pozitif yönde bir etkisinin olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Ayrıca markaları psikolojik sahiplenmenin markaların sosyal medya etkileşimleri boyutları olan destek ve ilgi üzerinde anlamlı pozitif yönde bir etkisinin olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

## 1. Introduction

With the advancement of technology, individuals are increasingly active on social media platforms. As the number of social media users grows, brands have begun to establish their presence on these platforms. Effective social media utilization is crucial for brands to easily reach their target audiences. In this context, individuals learn about brands' activities and information

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through social media. They engage with brands by following their social media accounts. Liking or commenting on brand posts contributes significantly to the formation of social media engagement. Social media users can interact with brands by showing interest, providing support, and contributing to their posts. The interactive nature of social media facilitates easier communication between brands and their target audiences (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Furthermore, brands with high social media engagement stand out from their competitors. Social media engagement also encourages brands to maintain an active presence (Hollebeek et al., 2014). Universities also leverage social media to interact with a broad audience. They promote themselves and share information about their activities on these platforms. Universities engage with their current and prospective audiences through their social media posts. Establishing a distinct personality for universities in branding is essential. Personality traits are a key differentiator for any brand. Just as individuals possess personality traits, so do brands. For instance, individuals may be described as honest, empathetic, and reliable. Similarly, brands can embody these characteristics. A defined brand personality allows consumers to perceive the brand as a living entity. Consequently, brand personality fosters positive associations and influences brand preference.

With a strong brand personality, universities can differentiate themselves in the minds of their target audience. Based on a brand's personality, individuals are inclined to form a connection and engage with it. Therefore, defining the brand personality of universities significantly impacts their interactions with the public. Individuals are more likely to engage with universities that possess a brand personality they identify with or believe accurately reflects them on social media. When individuals adopt a university brand and feel a sense of belonging, psychological ownership develops. This sense of ownership motivates individuals to support the brand through their thoughts and behaviours. Those who feel psychological ownership of a brand actively engage with it on social media. They communicate with the brand by sharing their opinions and creating posts about it. Furthermore, they interact by liking and commenting on brand posts. The psychological ownership individuals feel towards their university fosters positive emotions and encourages positive behaviour.

This research examines the impact of brand personality and psychological ownership on enhancing brands' social media engagement. The study is structured into five sections. The first section explores the concept of social media. The second section delves into the concept of brand personality. The third section provides insights into psychological ownership. The fourth section details the research methodology. The fifth section presents the analysis findings.

## **2. Theoretical Background**

### **2.1. Social Media**

The definition of social media is virtual platforms that allows people to create accounts and share pictures and videos with other people via the internet (Erdinç, 2019; Bat, & Vural, 2015). According to another definition, social media is the environment where people communicate with each other interactively using internet-based technological products (Baruah, 2012). Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and their associated features, serve as primary examples when conceptualizing social media.

Social media is not only limited to individuals, but also effective in helping institutions reach the people they want to reach. Social media is also an effective factor because it is a place where institutions can share information about their personalities and images with other people (Boyacı & Taşkıran, 2019). Social media is also important for brands to reflect their corporate identities in their posts (Yıldırım, 2019).

## 2.2. Social Media Engagements

On any social media platform, engagement is referred as liking posts and commenting on posts by users (Jayasingh, & Venkatesh, 2015). Social media platforms facilitate two-way communication by enabling individuals and businesses to pose questions on specific topics, thereby eliciting varied responses from their followers. The interactive structure of social media is effective in providing this communication (Karaköse, 2020). Thanks to the interactive structure of social media, the communication that brands establish with social media users ensures that users have positive thoughts about the brand (Solak, 2020). Social media platforms offer users the ability to interact in a virtual environment. In this direction, social media is important for brands to deliver their new activities to their target audiences. The interactive structure of social media benefits the brand in terms of understanding the expectations of their target audiences from the brand. Therefore, thanks to engagement, the connection between brands and individuals is more effective (Türten, & Özarslan, 2021).

Social media platforms have an impact on consumers' following and interacting with brands. Consumers' following and purchasing products and services from social media saves their time. The constantly updated structure of social media is important for consumers' interaction with brands (Kaya, 2019). As people connect with brands and interact, people easily learn brand-related information from social media. People recommend the brands they interact with on social media to other people (Minh, & Huong & Ha, 2022). Thanks to the interactive structure of social media, users not only communicate with the brand but also interact with other users. Social media users' sharing of various content about their favorite brands is effective in promoting the brands (Akyüz, 2013). Social media engagement is an effective factor in the changes in communication between consumers and brands (Khan, Yang, Shafi, & Yang, 2019). The interactive nature of social media enables a higher level of communication between both marketers and consumers and between consumers and other consumers (Duffett, 2017).

## 2.3. University Social Media and Brand Personality

The foundations of brand personality were established by Gardner and Levy in 1955. Later, it was researched by Jennifer L. Aaker in 1997 and a lot of research has been done on this concept. (Halifeoğlu, 2016). The characteristics that indicate people's unique feelings, thoughts and behaviors are defined as personality (Özsoy, & Yıldız, 2013). Brand personality has an important effect on how brands reflect themselves among other brands and on determining their place in the market. Brands need to be careful about some issues when choosing their brand personality. Brand personality should be designed according to target audiences (Barış, 2020). In order for brands to have a good brand personality, the targeted audience should be thoroughly researched. It should be well known what the lifestyle of the target audience is like and what values they adopt. In communicating brand personality to other people, the brand's functional and symbolic values forming a good whole and the balance of these two factors have a great effect. (Savaşçı, 2008). While the brands being free, original and young represent symbolic value aspects, features such as being durable express functional values.

Brand personality is effective in consumers' interaction with the brand. Brand personality ensures that the consumer is informed about the brand. Consumers' opinions about the brand are effective in making comments on issues related to the brand (Özgüner, 2017). There are various studies examining the impacts of brand personality on online interaction and university brand perception. Banahene (2019) indicates that brand personality has significant effects on online community engagement and student behavior. For instance, brand personality dimensions such as sincerity and vibrancy are effective in differentiating universities and building brand identity. Additionally, students are more likely to exhibit citizenship behavior when they perceive the university's brand personality as sincere. Universities need to carefully select their brand personalities to meet the expectations of their target audiences and reflect their institutional values.

Cruz & Lee (2014) examined how brand personality shapes online community interaction on Twitter. The findings revealed a significant relationship between brand personality and the intensity of online interaction. This highlights the importance of brands considering brand personality when developing their social media strategies.

Universities are also increasingly focusing on creating and managing brand personality. Demir (2010) studied the brand personality of Akdeniz University and found that students did not perceive a distinct brand personality. However, Doğanlı and Bayri (2012) researched the brand personality of Adnan Menderes University and identified a four-factor structure in competency, excitement, tradition, and masculinity. These differences suggest that the perception of university brand personality can vary depending on the context and target audience. Polyorat and Preechapanyakul (2020) emphasized the importance of sincerity and vitality dimensions for university brand personality by examining their effects on brand differentiation and identity in a university in Thailand. Naheen and Elsharnouby (2021) found that students' perception of sincerity increased citizenship and participation behaviors. This highlights the importance of universities focusing on sincerity and promoting student engagement when building their brand personality.

#### 2.4. Psychological Ownership

Psychological ownership is defined as the emotional connection individuals form with an object, institution, or idea. The psychological ownership felt by employees is an effective factor in developing their perspectives on people or events around them and increasing their perception levels. High-level participation allows employees to feel self-sufficiency and have innovative ideas. (Ghafoor, Qureshi, Khan, & Hijazi, 2011). Feeling whole with jobs that allow people to express themselves shows that they have a strong psychological ownership (Brundin, McClatchey, & Melin, 2023). Psychological ownership also has effects on academic staff. Academic staff in institutions that support them can increase their work performance by effectively conducting scientific studies. Supporting academic staff ensures that they feel psychological ownership of the institution they work for (Akçin, 2018). In this direction, psychological ownership is an effective factor in the good work done in educational institutions (Ekinci, 2018).

Psychological ownership, the feeling of possessiveness towards an object, idea, or place, has been shown to have significant impacts across various contexts, including organizational settings, environmental behaviors, and consumer behaviors (She, Li, Xu, & Yang, 2022; Gürüz, 2019). Particularly in educational institutions, the sense of psychological ownership among teachers and academic staff leads to positive outcomes such as improved performance, commitment, and engagement (Başkaya, 2023; Akçin, 2018; Ekinci, 2018; Çetinkaya, 2019; Md-Sidin, Sambasivan, & Muniandy, 2009; Akçin, Erat, Alnıaçık, & Çiftçioglu, 2017).

In the context of universities, the psychological ownership of academic staff and students plays a critical role in the institution's success and student satisfaction (Asatryan, Slevitch, Larzelere, Morosan, & Kwun, 2013). This feeling extends beyond traditional educational processes to digital platforms. Gürüz (2019)'s research demonstrates that consumers' psychological ownership of brands increases social media interactions. This finding is also applicable to the social media strategies of universities. When students, alumni, and other stakeholders psychologically own university social media content, they are more likely to be active and engaged on these platforms. Universities can strengthen this sense of ownership through their social media content and interactions.

The effects of psychological ownership are not limited to direct outcomes. Research has also examined its mediating and moderating roles. For example, organization-based self-esteem has been found to mediate the relationship between perceived support and psychological ownership (Başgüt, 2019). Additionally, psychological ownership has been identified as a moderator in the relationship between openness to organizational change and job stress (Carlson, 2019). These

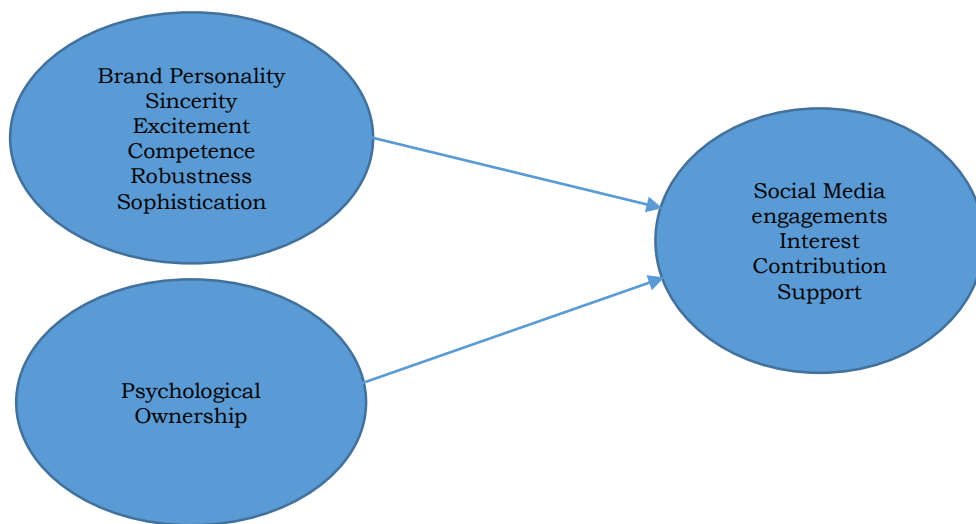
findings highlight the complex relationships that universities should consider when developing their social media strategies.

In conclusion, effective use of social media platforms by universities is facilitated by strengthening the stakeholders' sense of psychological ownership. This not only increases interactions but also positively impacts the institution's overall reputation and engagement. Universities can build stronger and more meaningful relationships with their stakeholders by shaping their social media strategies accordingly.

### 3. Method

The purpose of this research is to examine the effect of Bayburt University's brand personality and psychological ownership on increasing Bayburt University's social media engagements. The research model showing the relationship between the variables of the research is as shown in Figure1:

**Figure 1: Research Model**



The population of this study comprises Bayburt University staff, current students, and alumni. The survey form sent to all of Bayburt University students and staff via e-mail. From a population of 14 000 521 individuals participated in the survey by completing the form. From a pool of 521 participants, 408 responses, meeting the research criteria, were included in the analysis. The study's findings should be interpreted with caution due to the sample's potential for bias and limited representation of the overall university population.

This research used a survey as a data collection technique. The research survey consists of three sections. The first section includes 11 statements regarding the participants' descriptive information. The second section includes the social media engagements scale consisting of 16 statements with three sub-dimensions, interest (4), contribution (6) and support (6), adapted from the study conducted by Christodoulides & Dabrowski (2016), and the psychological ownership scale consisting of 3 statements adapted from the study conducted by Kumar & Nayak (2018). The third section of the survey includes 42 statements regarding brand personality. The 42 statements regarding brand personality were taken from the research conducted by Nalçakan (2020). The statements in the survey aimed at measuring social media engagements, psychological ownership and brand personality were measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree).

An online survey was distributed to the target population via email through Bayburt University Student Affairs. To enhance participation, the survey link was also shared in WhatsApp



groups. Data collection took place between April and October 2023, yielding 521 responses. Following data screening to identify and remove insincere responses, a final sample of 408 participants was used for analysis.

#### 4. Findings

##### 4.1. Demographics

Table 1 summarizes the demographic data obtained from a sample of 408 participants. Specifically, it details the frequency and percentage distributions of respondents across key demographic variables, such as gender, marital status, age, education level, and income

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants**

		Frequency	%
<b>Gender</b>	Woman	281	68.9
	Man	127	31.1
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married	71	17.4
	Single	337	82.6
<b>Age</b>	18-25	302	74
	26-45	97	23.8
	46-64	9	2.2
<b>Education</b>	Primary	1	0.2
	High School	12	2.9
	University	339	83.1
	Master	34	8.3
	PhD	22	5.4
<b>Income</b>	No income	260	63.7
	8500 TL and below	40	9.8
	8501-15000 TL	32	7.8
	15001-25000 TL	40	9.8
	25001-35000 TL	23	5.6
	35001 TL and above	13	3.2

As seen in Table 1, the majority of the participants (68.9%) are female. The majority of the participants are university students and under the age of 25.

##### 4.2. Factor Analysis

Table 2 summarizes the findings of a factor analysis performed to assess perceptions of Bayburt University's brand personality. Specifically, it presents factor loadings, means, standard deviations, explained variance, Cronbach's alpha, and eigenvalues for the four identified factors: Competence, Excitement, Sincerity, and Ruggedness.

The exploratory factor analysis revealed four distinct dimensions. The first dimension, Competence, accounted for 29.447% of the total variance, with an eigenvalue of 15.885. The factor loadings for the nine items within this dimension ranged from 0.725 to 0.767. The second dimension, Excitement, explained 24.478% of the total variance and had an eigenvalue of 1.474. This dimension consisted of eight items with factor loadings ranging from 0.568 to 0.827. The third dimension, Sincerity, accounted for 14.802% of the total variance, with an eigenvalue of 1.193. The seven items within this dimension exhibited factor loadings between 0.527 and 0.679. The fourth dimension, Ruggedness, explained 6.484% of the total variance and had an eigenvalue of 1.004. This dimension comprised two items with factor loadings ranging from 0.759 to 0.815. Items associated with sophistication (aristocratic, attractive, good-looking, charming, feminine, mild) were excluded from the analysis due to cross-loadings across multiple dimensions and factor loadings

below 0.50. Furthermore, items such as "following the current" (0.663) from Excitement, "free spirited" (0.660) and "contemporary" (0.618) from Competence were excluded due to cross-loadings. Similarly, within the Sincerity dimension, "original" (0.542), "cheerful" (0.556), and "beneficial to its environment" (0.521) were excluded due to cross-loadings. Additionally, "feet down to earth" from Sincerity and "loving the open air and outdoor activities," "European," and "durable" from Ruggedness were removed due to factor loadings below 0.50.

**Table 2: Exploratory Factor Analysis Results on Brand Personalities**

	Factor Loading	Mean	Standard Deviation	Explained Variance	Cronbach's Alpha	Eigenvalue
<b>Competence</b>				29.447	0.971	15.885
Successful	0.767	3.26	1.23			
Makes you feel safe around you	0.764	3.3	1.32			
Reliable	0.761	3.46	1.31			
Hardworking	0.761	3.33	1.26			
Professional	0.758	3.03	1.28			
Technology savvy	0.731	3.09	1.27			
Intelligent	0.728	3.17	1.26			
Leader spirit	0.727	3.04	1.23			
Self-confident	0.725	3.21	1.30			
<b>Excitement</b>				24.478	0.938	1.474
Cool	0.827	2.72	1.23			
Follows fashion and trends	0.749	2.84	1.21			
Live	0.734	3.03	1.28			
Excited	0.683	3.08	1.25			
Wide world of imagination	0.675	2.97	1.26			
Unique	0.657	2.7	1.21			
Brave	0.599	3.19	1.23			
Young	0.568	3.34	1.33			
<b>Sincerity</b>				14.802	0.907	1.193
Sincere	0.679	3.49	1.17			
Townspeople	0.655	3.32	1.19			
Genuine	0.651	3.37	1.16			
Honest	0.637	3.35	1.19			
Emotional	0.607	3.16	1.16			
Friendly	0.598	3.32	1.21			
Family-oriented	0.527	3.26	1.27			
<b>Robustness</b>				6.484	0.621	1.004
Harsh	0.815	2.86	1.17			
Masculine	0.759	2.83	1.17			

Note: KMO: 0.973 Approx. Chi-Square: 10812.45 df: 325 Sig.: 0.000

The exploratory factor analysis yielded three distinct dimensions. It is shown in Table 3. The first dimension, Support, accounted for 35.362% of the total variance, with an eigenvalue of 6.199. The six items comprising this dimension exhibited factor loadings ranging from 0.839 to 0.890. The second dimension, Interest, explained 22.285% of the total variance and had an eigenvalue of 2.751. The four items within this dimension showed factor loadings between 0.731 and 0.822. The third dimension, Psychological Ownership, accounted for 19.933% of the total variance, with an eigenvalue of 1.136. The three items within this dimension had factor loadings ranging from 0.825 to 0.893. Items from the Contribution dimension, specifically "I comment on videos about Bayburt University," "I comment on posts about Bayburt University," "I comment on pictures/graphics about Bayburt University," "I share posts about Bayburt University," and "I like pictures/graphics about Bayburt University," were excluded due to factor loadings below 0.50.

**Table 3: Exploratory Factor Analysis Results on Social Media engagements and Psychological Ownership**

	Factor Loading	Mean	Standard Deviation	Explained Variance	Cronbach's Alpha	Eigenvalue
<b>Support</b>				35.362	0.939	6.199
I start sharing about Bayburt University on social networking sites.	0.890	1.92	1.01			
I publish videos showing Bayburt University	0.863	1.89	1.00			
I start posts about Bayburt University on blogs	0.856	1.9	0.96			
I write articles about Bayburt University on forums.	0.853	1.91	0.96			
I share pictures/graphics about Bayburt University	0.847	2	1.08			
I write reviews about Bayburt University	0.839	1.87	0.93			
<b>Interest</b>				22.285	0.859	2.751
I watch pictures/graphics about Bayburt University.	0.822	2.94	1.31			
I read articles about Bayburt University on social media.	0.815	3.17	1.36			
I read fan pages about Bayburt University on social networking sites.	0.807	2.59	1.24			
I follow blogs about Bayburt University.	0.731	2.82	1.30			
<b>Psychological Ownership</b>				19.933	0.929	1.136
The connection I have with Bayburt University gives me a sense of ownership.	0.893	2.78	1.37			
I feel personal ownership for Bayburt University.	0.887	2.78	1.36			
Bayburt University is a part of my life.	0.825	2.87	1.36			

### 4.3. Correlation Analysis

Table 4 presents the correlation matrix for the seven factors, detailing the means and standard deviations for each factor, alongside the correlation coefficients between all factor pairs.

**Table 4: Correlation Analysis Findings**

	Mean	Std. Dev.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.Competence	3.21	1.15	1						
2.Excitement	2.98	1.04	0.856**	1					
3. Sincerity	3.32	0.96	0.794**	0.765**	1				
4. Robustness	2.84	1.001	0.435**	0.427**	0.416**	1			
5. Support	1.91	0.87	0.172**	0.236**	0.111*	0.098*	1		
6. Interest	2.88	1.09	0.461**	0.387**	0.460**	0.215**	0.332**	1	
7.Psychological Ownership	2.81	1.28	0.432**	0.368**	0.396**	0.194**	0.358**	0.587**	1

Note: \*\*p<0.01; \*p<0.05

According to Table 4, competence (3.21) and Sincerity (3.32) exhibit the highest mean values, while Support (1.91) demonstrates the lowest. The table also illustrates the correlations between the variables. For instance, there is a strong positive correlation (0.856\*\*) between Competence and Excitement, indicating that these two variables tend to increase together. Similarly, a robust positive



correlation (0.587\*\*) is observed between Psychological Ownership and Interest. The double asterisk (\*\*) in the table denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, and the single asterisk (\*) signifies statistical significance at the 5% level.

#### 4.4. Regression Analysis

The Table 5 presents the results of a multiple linear regression analysis, examining the impact of various independent variables (Competence, Excitement, Sincerity, and Robustness) on the dependent variable, Interest.

**Table 5: Regression Analysis on the Effect of Brand Personality on Interest**

	B	Std. Dev.	$\beta$	t	p	F	R <sup>2</sup>
Const.	1.147	0.187		6.122	0.000	31.886*	0.240
Competence	0.324	0.088	0.340	3.66	0.000		
Excitement	-0.126	0.092	-0.121	-1.378	0.169		
Sincerity	0.322	0.085	0.282	3.782	0.000		
Robustness	0.001	0.053	0.001	0.012	0.991		
Dependent Variable: Interest							

Note: \*p < 0.05 Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>:0.233

The model demonstrates a statistically significant overall fit ( $F = 31.886$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), explaining 24% of the variance in Interest ( $R^2 = 0.240$ ). Among the predictors, Competence ( $\beta = 0.340$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and Sincerity ( $\beta = 0.282$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) show significant positive relationships with Interest, indicating that higher levels of these attributes are associated with increased Interest. Conversely, Excitement exhibits a negative relationship ( $\beta = -0.121$ ), although not statistically significant ( $p = 0.169$ ). Robustness shows a very weak and non-significant effect ( $\beta = 0.001$ ,  $p = 0.991$ ). The constant term (1.147) is statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), suggesting a baseline level of Interest when all predictors are zero. In summary, Competence and Sincerity are key drivers of Interest in this model.

The Table 6 displays the results of a multiple linear regression analysis, examining the impact of four independent variables (Competence, Excitement, Sincerity, and Robustness) on the dependent variable, Support.

**Table 6: Regression Analysis on the Effect of Brand Personality on Support**

	B	Std.Dev.	$\beta$	t	p	F	R <sup>2</sup>
Const.	1.497	0.165		9.065	0.000	7.294*	0.068
Competence	-0.025	0.078	-0.032	-0.315	0.753		
Excitement	0.315	0.081	0.379	3.898	0.000		
Sincerity	-0.145	0.075	-0.160	-1.936	0.054		
Robustness	0.015	0.047	0.017	0.321	0.748		
Dependent Variable: Support							

Note: \*p < 0.05; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>:0.058

The overall model fit is statistically significant ( $F = 7.294$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), though it explains a relatively small portion of the variance in Support ( $R^2 = 0.068$ ). Among the predictors, Excitement exhibits a significant positive relationship with Support ( $\beta = 0.379$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that higher levels of Excitement are associated with increased Support. Sincerity shows a negative relationship ( $\beta = -0.160$ ), approaching statistical significance ( $p = 0.054$ ). Competence and Robustness do not demonstrate significant effects ( $p > 0.05$ ). The constant term (1.497) is statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), suggesting a baseline level of Support when all predictors are zero. In summary, Excitement is the primary driver of Support in this model.

The Table 7 presents the results of a simple linear regression analysis, examining the impact of Psychological Ownership on Interest.

**Table 7: Regression Analysis Regarding the Effect of Psychological Ownership on Interest**

	B	Std. Dev.	β	t	p	F	R <sup>2</sup>
Cons.	1.468	0.106		13.806	0.000	213.988*	0.345
Psychologic Ownership	0.503	0.034	0.587	14.628	0.000		
Dependent Variable: Interest							

Note: \*p<0.05; Adjusted R2:0.344

The model demonstrates a statistically significant overall fit ( $F = 213.988$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), explaining 34.5% of the variance in Interest ( $R^2 = 0.345$ , Adjusted R2: 0.344). Psychological Ownership shows a significant positive relationship with Interest ( $\beta = 0.587$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that higher levels of Psychological Ownership are associated with increased Interest. The constant term (1.468) is statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), suggesting a baseline level of Interest when Psychological Ownership is zero. In summary, Psychological Ownership is a strong predictor of Interest in this model.

The Table 8 presents the results of a simple linear regression analysis, examining the impact of Psychological Ownership on Support.

**Table 8: Regression Analysis of the Effect of Psychological Ownership on Support**

	B	Std. Dev.	β	t	p	F	R²
Cons.	1.233	0.098		12.627	0.000	59.672*	0.128
Psychologic Ownership	0.244	0.032	0.358	7.725	0.000		
Dependent Variable: Support							

Note: \*p<0.05

The model demonstrates a statistically significant overall fit ( $F = 59.672$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), explaining 12.8% of the variance in Support ( $R^2 = 0.128$ ). Psychological Ownership shows a significant positive relationship with Support ( $\beta = 0.358$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that higher levels of Psychological Ownership are associated with increased Support. The constant term (1.233) is statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), suggesting a baseline level of Support when Psychological Ownership is zero. In summary, Psychological Ownership is a significant predictor of Support in this model, although it explains a relatively modest portion of the variance.

#### 4.5. Cluster Analysis

Clustering analysis of university brand personalities enables institutions to align with target audience preferences, gaining a competitive edge by identifying unique brand attributes (Aaker, 1997; Porter, 1985). This approach enhances brand image and reputation by ensuring the brand personality reflects the university's values and mission (Keller, 1993). Moreover, it facilitates the development of effective communication strategies tailored to different target audience segments, improving overall brand visibility and engagement (Kotler & Keller, 2016). The aim of conducting a clustering analysis of Bayburt University's brand personality is to investigate how to effectively communicate the institution's unique identity and foster stronger connections with its stakeholders, such as students, alumni, and academic staff.

**Table 9: Cluster Analysis Findings**

Cluster	1	2	3
Dimension	214 (52.5%)	125 (30.6%)	69 (16.9%)
Values			
Age	18-25 (100.0%)	26-45 (76.8%)	18-25 (98.6%)
Income	No Income (81.3%)	25.001 – 35.000 TL (32.0%)	No Income (95.7%)
Sincerity	3.74	3.37	1.99
Sufficiency	3.70	3.25	1.64
Marital Status	Single (100.0%)	Married (56.0%)	Single (98.6%)
Excitement	3.36	3.06	1.72
Robustness	3.07	3.02	1.87
Interest	3.20	2.88	1.90
Gender	Female (86.0%)	Male (60.8%)	Female (69.6%)
Psychologic Ownership	2.98	3.15	1.70
Support	2.00	1.93	1.65

Note: \*Two step clustering

The three clusters formed as a result of the cluster analysis are as seen in Table 9. All of the people in the first cluster are in the 18-25 (100%) age group. 81.3% of the people in the first cluster are people with no income. 86% of the people in the first cluster are females. The marital status of all of the people in the first cluster (100%) is single. The people in the first cluster are people who perceive Bayburt University as sincere. It is seen in the table that the interest (3.20) and support (2.00) levels of people who perceive Bayburt University as sincere are high in Bayburt University. The majority of the people in the second cluster are in the 26-45 (76.8%) age group. The income level in the second cluster is between 15001-25000 (32%) TL. The people in the second cluster, unlike the people in the other groups, have higher income participants. 60.8% of the people in the second cluster are men. 56% of the people in the second cluster are married. It is seen that the people in the second cluster feel a high level of psychological ownership (3.15) towards Bayburt University.

The third cluster consists of 69.6% females. The majority of the third cluster consists of single people (98.6%). 95.7% of the third cluster consists of people without income. The third cluster does not indicate a distinctive brand personality from the brand personality dimensions of Bayburt University. In this respect, it is seen that the levels of interest, support and psychological ownership are low.

#### 4. Conclusion

Psychological ownership of universities provides positive results for universities. People feeling like they belong to the university affects their positive behaviors about the university. The use of social media is an effective factor in the formation of the institutional image of universities (Awang, 2010). Social media allows universities to easily make important announcements and reminders. In this direction, effective communication is provided with social media (Gümüş, Türkel, & Şen, 2015). People follow the social media platforms of the university they feel psychological ownership of with interest. In addition, these people also have positive behaviors that support the university's social media accounts. People who feel psychological ownership have behaviors such as liking, commenting or creating content about the university that increase the social media engagement of universities. In this context, this research investigates the effect of brand personality and psychological ownership on increasing the social media engagements brands. Bayburt University personnel, active and graduate students participated in the research.

The research shows that university social media is used for more than just communication; it's also a key part of how universities manage themselves. It was concluded that sincerity and competence dimensions of Bayburt University's brand personality have a significant and positive

effect on the interest dimension of Bayburt University's social media engagements. It was found that excitement and robustness dimensions of Bayburt University's brand personality do not have a significant effect on the interest dimension of social media engagements. It was concluded that the excitement dimension of Bayburt University's brand personality dimensions has a significant and positive effect on the support dimension of social media engagements. It was found that sincerity, competence and robustness dimensions of brand personality do not have a significant effect on the support dimension of social media engagements. According to the research results, it was found that some dimensions of Bayburt University's brand personality have an effect on Bayburt University's social media engagements while some do not. In this direction, it was found that Bayburt University's brand personality has a partial effect on Bayburt University's social media engagements.

The present study confirms that psychological ownership significantly enhances social media engagement with Bayburt University, aligning with broader literature. Gürüz (2019) similarly found a positive link between consumer psychological ownership and brand social media interactions, where strong ownership correlated with increased likes and comments. This aligns with findings from Md-Sidin et al. (2009), which demonstrated a positive relationship between psychological ownership, work commitment, and performance among Malaysian university faculty. Furthermore, Asatryan et al. (2013) reported that psychological ownership positively influenced student satisfaction and commitment. These consistent findings across diverse contexts—consumers, faculty, and students—suggest that psychological ownership fosters active engagement and supportive behaviors. The observed positive impact of psychological ownership on Bayburt University's social media interest and support dimensions reinforces these established trends, indicating that cultivating a sense of ownership among stakeholders is crucial for enhancing university social media engagement.

The findings of this study underscore the critical role of social media engagement in contemporary university communication and brand perception. Neglecting social media platforms significantly impedes a university's ability to connect with both prospective and current students, as evidenced by the diminished perception of institutional activity (Constantinides & Stagno, 2012). This research highlights the necessity for universities to adopt strategic social media practices, including consistent and visually engaging content, and timely posting, to maintain visibility and foster student participation (Peruta & Shields, 2018). The cluster analysis reveals that a sincere brand personality is strongly associated with heightened student interest and support for Bayburt University, aligning with previous research demonstrating that perceived sincerity fosters citizenship behavior and university identification (Naheen & Elsharnouby, 2021). This suggests that cultivating a genuine and approachable online presence is paramount for universities aiming to build strong relationships with their student communities.

Furthermore, the study identifies distinct demographic factors influencing student engagement and perception. The second cluster, characterized by older individuals with higher income levels, exhibits a stronger sense of psychological ownership towards Bayburt University. This suggests that age and socioeconomic status may play a significant role in shaping student-university relationships, warranting further investigation into how these factors influence engagement strategies. Conversely, the third cluster, which did not identify a distinctive brand personality, displayed low levels of interest, support, and psychological ownership. This underscores the importance of a clearly defined and communicated brand personality in fostering meaningful connections with students. The variability in cluster characteristics emphasizes the need for universities to adopt a segmented approach to social media strategy, tailoring content and engagement tactics to different demographic groups.

Finally, the study reveals specific brand personality dimensions that significantly influence social media engagement. The excitement dimension positively impacts support, while sincerity and

competence drive interest. These findings provide valuable insights into the specific aspects of brand personality that universities should emphasize to enhance their online presence and student interaction. The alignment of these results with existing literature reinforces the importance of brand personality in shaping student engagement and highlights the need for universities to strategically leverage social media to cultivate positive perceptions and foster strong relationships with their student communities. Future research could explore the long-term effects of these strategies and investigate the specific content types that resonate most effectively with different student demographics.

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