

NGO Management and Brand Strength with Social Marketing Context: The Cide LAG

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Abstract

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are entities that independently engage with various societal issues. Research into whether these organisations achieve their defined goals and whether they are well-managed is limited. The purpose of the research is to determine whether NGOs are managed effectively/efficiently, whether they create social marketing and brand strength, and also to raise awareness of NGO management, social marketing, and brand strength. The research question is as follows: have NGOs created social marketing and brand strength through effective and efficient management? The research was conducted in the province of Kastamonu, specifically in the districts and villages of Cide, Pınarbasi, and Sempazar, which fall within the operational area of the Cide Local Action Group (LAG) Association, using a convenience sampling method with a questionnaire consisting of 35 questions. Out of the 450 distributed questionnaires, 403 were returned, but only 400 of them were considered for evaluation. Based on the assessment range of arithmetic mean values on a five-point Likert scale, falling within the range of "agree", it is determined that the Cide LAG Association is well-managed in terms of social marketing and brand strength. Accordingly, for NGOs aiming for success, it is recommended that training be provided in civil society, management-organisation, NGO management, social marketing, and brand strength based on the findings of this research.

Key words

NGO management, management, social marketing, brand strength, LEADER approach.

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Introduction

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), also known as civil society organisations, are entities that independently engage with various societal issues, taking on the responsibility of informing and raising awareness within the community. They often operate on a volunteer basis. Research into whether these organisations achieve their defined goals and whether they are well-managed is limited in Turkey (Alyakut, 2013; Polat, 2023). Organised civil society and NGO management culture in Turkey have not developed due to nepotism (favouritism), patronage, and the preservation of the status quo within the existing structure (Bayhan, 2002). Furthermore, marketing research is typically conducted in profit-driven organisations, such as businesses. However, in today's context, every

organisation aspiring for success must engage in effective management as well as marketing and branding efforts, regardless of its founding purpose.

In the study, the management of NGOs is examined from the perspective of organisational integrity rather than traditional marketing methods, and is analysed in terms of social marketing and brand strength. In NGOs, the concept of products and services is not as clearly defined as in businesses; instead, there are expressions defining social impact management, such as "raising awareness, increasing income levels, and ending poverty". In NGOs where there is no product and service competition and the uncertainty/unfulfilled nature of purchase with their costs, managing cost calculation and pricing processes becomes challenging. Academics feel concerns about the compatibility of traditional marketing strategies and brand strength used in businesses for effective and efficient management in NGOs (Czubala, 2016; Donovan and Henley, 2003; Kotler and Zaltman, 1971). Therefore, in NGO management, the concept of "social marketing" has emerged based on the founding philosophy of NGOs. Social marketing is a type of marketing that utilises commercial marketing techniques involving analysis, planning, implementation, and evaluation to influence the behaviour of the target audience. Brand strength, on the other hand, can be defined as the degrees to which a brand is well-known, positively perceived, and considered significant by the target audience (Wymer et al., 2016). From the perspective of social marketing and brand strength in NGOs, managing the functions of planning, organising, directing (guidance administration), coordinating, and controlling through management–organisation (classical, neo-classical, modern, and post-modern management theories) can be considered effective and efficient management. Based on the literature reviews conducted, no studies in the field of NGOs in Turkey have been found on the specified topics.

1. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the research has been established around the topics of NGO and management, social marketing, and brand strength.

1.1 *Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Management*

Civil society refers to a community of individuals who make independent decisions and engage in activities related to society without being under the control of the state (TDK, 2011). In this community, there is no large private sector aiming to make profit, alongside the elements representing the state such as legislation, execution, and judiciary (Polat and Özdemir, 2022). In today's society, civil society is evolving due to various factors such as the desire to rebuild partnerships in communities where solidarity has waned; a sense of inadequacy in the current political system based on representative democracy; blurring ideological distinctions between past left and right views; people's desire to participate in governance with advancing technology; the inability to generate quick solutions to daily life problems; and the expectation for individuals to be more active in the service sector than the government. In societies where individualism is on the rise, individuals come together to establish NGOs to be effective in their areas of interest and influence. Individuals strive to achieve their goals effectively in NGOs they establish through equal voting rights and representation by engaging in dialogue with representatives of the government and local authorities, and by using pressure methods, without being political (Najam, 2000). NGOs do not aim to seize power or control the government (Yerasimos, 2001; Doğan, 2014). While states prioritise "life and property rights" (Hobbes, 1651; Rousseau, 2017; Çaha, 2016; Smith, 2006a) and "security–justice" issues (Çaha, 2016), private enterprises focus on "profit-making," and NGOs focus on "solving societal problems for the benefit of society". NGOs, as defined by Lewis (2001), are organisations operating outside the realm of the state government and large-scale, profit-oriented businesses (Polat and Özdemir, 2022),

consisting of voluntary members of civil society who aim to address societal issues in line with their stated objectives, without seeking profit at the local/national/international level (Kantrowitz, 2016; Cordery et al., 2019). The term "NGO" generally encompasses foundations, associations, unions, federations, confederations, political parties, platforms, communities, clubs, religious organisations, and groups (Çaha, 2011; Franco and Salamon, 2005; Talas, 2011). In democratically developed countries or mature societies, "organisational science" is an important discipline, and the development of other sciences depends on the advancement of organisational culture (Tocqueville, 1862). When a local manager cannot find a non-governmental organisation (NGO) that has come together to plan and work to solve their own problems and ensure development at the local level, the job becomes quite difficult and complex. The absence of NGOs at the local level means that sustainable solutions to problems cannot be found, and resources (economic, social, cultural, and human) cannot be effectively or efficiently utilised, resulting in continued underdevelopment in the region. The presence of organised civil society in all areas related to societal life (such as women, youth, the elderly, children, education, health, disabled individuals, development, culture, environment, tourism, agriculture, and history) within the region signifies the implementation of plans/efforts aimed at progress and development, utilising regional resources efficiently and effectively, and addressing issues with sustainable solutions through a participatory approach.

For these reasons, not only the existence of NGOs but also their activities and efforts are important tangible outcomes that demonstrate societal maturity and skill level. In order for NGOs to achieve the tangible outcomes they have set, it is necessary for the process to be planned, organized, directed (administration), coordinated, and controlled, in other words, to be well managed. NGOs established by individuals or legal entities to represent the interests of all members in achieving the goals set forth at the general assembly meeting, where all members participate, authorize the selection of the board of directors and the supervisory board to achieve the objectives in line with their goals. When members of NGOs encounter a situation that deviates from the set goals and objectives, they may convene an extraordinary general assembly meeting to re-elect the management and supervisory boards or dissolve the NGO. The organized civil society and NGO management culture in Turkey have not developed due to nepotism (favoritism), patronage, and the preservation of the status quo within the existing structure (Bayhan, 2002). In today, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are confronted with management challenges and are lacking effective and efficient governance. (Polat, 2023). Given the scale of the field, research on the problems encountered in NGO management remains inadequate (Alyakut, 2013). In our country, in 2019, NGOs established for local development purposes, namely Local Action Groups (LAGs), were supported for the first time under the European Union (EU) LEADER Approach with one hundred percent grant support. However, research on the management of these NGOs and their activities in social marketing and brand strength is quite limited, both in our country and among EU LAG associations (Polat, 2023).

2.2 Social Marketing

The concept of social marketing was initially introduced by Philip Kotler and Gerald Zaltman in 1971 through their article titled "Social Marketing: An Approach to Planned Social Change." In this seminal work, they elucidated the fundamental principles and applications of social marketing, highlighting how marketing techniques could be harnessed to drive societal transformation. Kotler and Zaltman (1971) delineated social marketing as an approach leveraging marketing strategies to devise effective solutions for pressing social issues. These strategies are geared towards catalyzing positive behavioural changes in individuals and society, ultimately enhancing their quality of life. Accordingly, social marketing utilizes conventional marketing tools to bolster societal well-being across various domains including health, environmental sustainability, social justice, and other

pertinent areas. By spearheading social change initiatives, social marketing significantly contributes to the overall welfare of communities. Building upon this foundational work, subsequent scholars have further refined the conceptualization of social marketing. Kotler and Roberto (1989) characterized social marketing as a "social change management technology" encompassing the design, implementation, and control of programs aimed at fostering the acceptance of social ideas or practices among targeted groups. Andreasen (1995) expounded on social marketing as a comprehensive process involving analysis, planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs intended to influence voluntary behaviours for personal and societal welfare, utilizing methodologies akin to commercial marketing. Kotler, Roberto, and Lee (2002) specified social marketing as the utilization of marketing principles and techniques to effectuate voluntary behavioural changes within target audiences, individuals, groups, or society as a whole, for their collective benefit. Donovan and Henley (2003) further elaborated on social marketing, framing it as the application of marketing concepts and commercial techniques alongside other social change methodologies to facilitate individual behaviour change in alignment with the UN Declaration of Human Rights, as well as to instigate social structural transformations. Smith (2006b) portrayed social marketing as a program management process geared towards influencing human behaviour through consumer-oriented decision-making, thereby yielding increased social dividends. Dann (2010) expanded the concept by defining social marketing as the adaptation and incorporation of commercial marketing activities, organizations, and processes to induce behavioural changes within the target audience, whether temporary or enduring, in pursuit of a social objective.

As seen, the common characteristic of the definitions provided is the use of commercial marketing techniques applied to social domains to "influence" and "mobilize" individuals for addressing societal issues and fostering change. Although social marketing utilizes commercial marketing techniques, the applications in this context are distinct from commercial marketing. Consequently, differentiation in measurement tools used in social marketing is expected. The Market, Offer, Need, People, Organization (MONPO) scale, proposed by Modi and Mishra (2010), is regarded as a highly reliable and accepted scale in social marketing studies. The MONPO acronym, representing the initial letters of Market, Offer, Need, People, and Organization, is considered as the five fundamental elements of social marketing strategy. Market: In social marketing strategy, Market relies on market research and analysis to understand the needs and behaviours of a specific community or target audience. Understanding the target audience and identifying the desired/expected behaviours forms the cornerstone of a successful social marketing campaign. Offer: Social marketing offers involve presenting attractive propositions to induce the target audience to adopt desired behaviours. These offers can manifest in various forms, including rewards, incentives, information, services, or products. Need: A social marketing strategy's success relies on addressing the genuine requirements and desires of the target audience, known as needs. These needs encompass changes aimed at resolving social issues and enhancing the general welfare of society. People: In social marketing, understanding people's thoughts and attitudes is crucial for grasping their motivations and barriers toward behaviour change. Social marketing campaigns strive to deliver effective messages that inspire positive changes in people's behaviours. Organization: Effective organization in social marketing involves establishing a robust organizational structure to plan, implement, and manage campaigns. This entails collaboration among public institutions, NGOs, private sectors, and other stakeholders. NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) are the primary types of organizations operating across all aspects of social marketing. Therefore, the research is conducted in an NGO established at the local level to address societal issues.

2.3 Brand Strength

Social marketing involves implementing marketing strategies aimed at creating awareness about social issues and encouraging desired behavioural changes to enhance societal welfare and promote social change. While social marketing shares similarities with traditional marketing strategies, its primary objective is to improve the well-being and welfare of society, necessitating a different perspective. The concept of branding is also crucial in social marketing, akin to its significance in commercial marketing (French and Gordon, 2015). Brand strength plays an important role in building credibility and reputation in social marketing campaigns. The support of a well-known and trusted brand helps in effectively conveying campaign messages and goals to the target audience. This is important for encouraging desired behaviour changes, as people tend to respond more positively to brands, they trust and respect (Donovan and Henley, 2003). The potential of a strong brand to reach the target audience with social marketing messages is higher. Moreover, it has broader access to advertising and communication channels, which increases the visibility of social marketing campaigns. Reaching more people increases the potential to achieve the desired behaviour change. The prestige and appeal behind a strong brand increase interest in social marketing activities and lead to higher participation. Participation in social marketing activities is a crucial step for behaviour change, and brand strength can help people approach such activities more positively (Kotler et al., 2002). Brand strength can represent specific values and norms within society. A strong brand not only provides support to social marketing messages but also reinforces the perception that a particular behaviour is socially accepted or desired. This can enhance the effectiveness of social marketing campaigns. The efforts of strong brands in social responsibility and sustainability further enhance the credibility of social marketing campaigns. When a brand contributes to society and demonstrates environmental sensitivity, people perceive the brand more positively and are more willing to respond to social marketing messages (Lefebvre, 2013). Numerous studies have shown that positive marketing outcomes positively influence brand strength (Aaker, 1991; Srivastava and Shocker, 1991; Keller, 1993; Yoo et al., 2000; Keller, 2009; Gorska-Warsewicz, 2023). Therefore, there is a direct relationship between social marketing and brand strength. Consequently, it is important to research how NGOs build brand strength in the areas they serve.

The purpose of the research is to determine whether NGOs are managed effectively/efficiently, whether they create social marketing and brand strength, and to raise awareness on NGO management, social marketing, and brand strength. The research main question: have NGOs created social marketing and brand strength through effective and efficient management? In line with this purpose, the following research sub questions have been asked: 1) Does the Cide LAG Association implement as an effective application providing a source of donation orientation from social marketing sub-headings, inter-organizational communication coordination within the institution, volunteer acquisition beneficiary orientation, and peer orientation relationship building, with good NGO management and social marketing? 2) Does the Cide LAG Association implement as an effective application providing brand familiarity, brand attractiveness, and brand attitude from brand strength sub-headings, with good NGO management?

3. Methodology of the Research

Research data was collected through face-to-face interviews conducted by interviewers using convenience sampling survey method. The collected data was uploaded to Microsoft Excel and SPSS 19.0 programs for analysis; Cronbach's Alpha test was conducted first to measure the reliability of the scale, followed by frequency distributions, median, central tendency techniques, and factor analysis related to demographic characteristics were utilized in the analysis process.

The research was conducted between January and April 2023 in the districts and villages of Kastamonu province, Cide, Pinarbasi, and Senpazar, which are within the region of the Cide Local Action Group (LAG) Association, using the convenience sampling survey method. The Cide LAG Association was selected by the researchers because it is a successful association operating in three different districts (Cide, Senpazar, and Pinarbasi) and received full grant support for the first time in 2019 under the European Union (EU) LEADER Approach in our country (Polat, 2023). The population of Cide is 22.179, Senpazar is 4.268, and Pinarbasi is 5.787. The total population of these districts is 32.234 (Kastabil, 2022). With a main population of 50.000 (+/-) a 5% sampling error ($p=0.5$; $q=0.5$), at least 381 samples are required for a 95% sampling accuracy (Singh and Masuku, 2014). Therefore, 450 surveys were distributed, 403 of which were returned, but only 400 were evaluated. The demographic characteristics section of the survey form, consisting of 13 questions, was prepared by the researchers based on comprehensive literature review findings, while 13 questions related to social marketing (Modi and Mishra, 2010) and nine (9) questions related to brand strength (Wymer et al., 2016) were adapted to the field, resulting in a total of 35 questions.

As a result of the analysis, it was found that the scale, which obtained a value of 0.978, has a highly reliable Cronbach's Alpha. According to the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett Tests (KMO=0.941, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity= 13518.467, $df= 231$, p (sig)=0.000), the results indicate that the KMO value allows for factor analysis of the data, and the Bartlett test result suggests high correlations among variables and that the data are derived from a multivariate normal distribution. Communalities represent the amount of variance shared by a variable with other variables in a factor analysis. A factor loading value of 0.5 or higher is expected in the analysis. The factor loading values for the 22 questions ranged from at least 0.746 to a maximum of 0.922 for all questions (Karagoz, 2021).

4. Results

The research findings are evaluated under two main headings: findings related to demographic characteristics and findings related to the research questions. The survey was conducted in the districts and villages of Cide, Senpazar, and Pinarbasi within the scope of the Cide LAG Association. The participation status from the districts of Cide, Senpazar, and Pinarbasi is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Participation status in the survey according to residing district, residing place, and gender.

Inhabited District			Place of Residence				Total	District Percent	Total Percent
			Village	District	Province	Out-of-Province			
Cide	Female	Count	13	70	0	1	84	47.5	57.1
		Percent	15.5	83.3	0	1.2	100		
	Male	Count	39	53	0	1	93	52.5	36.8
		Percent	41.9	57	0	1.1	100		
	Total	Count	52	123	0	2	177	100	44.2
		Percent	29.4	69.5	0	1.1	100		
Senpazar	Female	Count	9	15	0	0	24	36.7	16.3
		Percent	37.5	62.5	0	0	100		
	Male	Count	7	35	0	0	42	63.6	16.6
		Percent	16.7	83.3	0	0	100		
	Total	Count	16	50	0	0	66	100	16.5
		Percent	24.2	75.8	0	0	100		
Pinarbasi	Female	Count	11	19	3	0	33	22.9	22.5
		Percent	33.3	57.6	9.1	0	100		
	Male	Count	20	90	0	1	111	77.1	43.9
		Percent	18	81.1	0	0.9	100		

Inhabited District		Place of Residence				Total	District Percent	Total Percent
			Village	District	Province	Out-of-Province		
Other	Total	Count	31	109	3	1	144	100
		Percent	21.5	75.7	2.1	0.7	100	
	Female	Count	1	0	3	2	6	46.2
		Percent	16.7	0	50	33.3	100	
	Male	Count	0	0	3	4	7	53.8
		Percent	0	0	42.9	57.1	100	
	Total	Count	1	0	6	6	13	100
		Percent	7.7	0	46.2	46.2	100	
	Female	Count	34	104	6	3	147	0
		Percent	23.1	70.7	4.1	2	100	
Total	Male	Count	66	178	3	6	253	0
		Percent	26.1	70.4	1.2	2.4	100	
	Total	Count	100	282	9	9	400	100
		Percent	25	70.5	2.3	2.3	100	

Source: data output.

The survey included a total of 177 participants from Cide district, consisting of 84 women and 93 men; from Senpazar district, there were 66 participants, including 24 women and 42 men; from Pinarbasi district, there were 144 participants, with 33 women and 111 men; additionally, 13 participants, 6 women and 7 men, were from other unspecified locations. Overall, there were 400 participants, comprising 147 women (36.8%) and 253 men (63.2%). Regarding the locations, 100 participants (25%) were from villages in the specified districts, including 34 women and 66 men; 282 participants (70.7%) were from district centers, with 104 women and 178 men; 9 participants (2.3%) were from the provincial center, including 6 women and 3 men; and 9 participants (2.3%) were from outside the province, with 3 women and 6 men. Overall, participation was received from various locations associated with the LAG association.

The evaluation of responses to the survey questions was based on the intervals provided in Table 1. It was assumed that the intervals were equal, and a score range of 0.80 was calculated for arithmetic means (Score Range = (Highest Value – Lowest Value)/5 = (5 – 1)/5 = 4/5 = 0.80) (Pimentel, 2010). According to this calculation, the assessment range for arithmetic means is provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Evaluation Range of Arithmetic Averages According to the 5-Point Likert Scale.

Scale	Options
1.000-1.800	Strongly disagree
1.801-2.600	Disagree
2.601-3.400	Undecide
3.401-4.200	Agree
4.201-5.000	Totally agree

Source: developed by the authors.

According to the research findings, the averages of opinions regarding social marketing and brand strength, along with the standard deviations showing how far the data in this group are concentrated from the average, are presented in Table-3. Additionally, the average participation rates for the relevant opinions are provided in Table-4.

Table 3. Averages and Standard Deviations of Opinions on Social Marketing and Brand Strength.

Questions Number	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Q14	3.89	0.790	400
Q15	3.89	0.808	400
Q16	3.94	0.826	400
Q17	4.11	1.021	400
Q18	3.97	0.825	400
Q19	4.09	1.046	400
Q20	3.90	0.851	400
Q21	3.98	0.799	400
Q22	3.97	0.836	400
Q23	3.99	0.796	400
Q24	4.05	0.847	400
Q25	4.01	0.839	400
Q26	4.05	0.880	400
Q27	3.72	1.057	400
Q28	3.58	1.010	400
Q29	3.68	0.984	400
Q30	3.76	0.943	400
Q31	3.83	0.915	400
Q32	3.82	0.937	400
Q33	3.97	0.938	400
Q34	3.96	0.914	400
Q35	3.98	0.926	400

Source: data output.

The participation levels for opinions related to social marketing are as follows (Table 4):

(1) Participation level for donor-oriented views on resource generation (SM1): minimum 3.89 (Q14), maximum 3.94 (Q16), and overall average 3.904. This ratio indicates agreement with the views, in other words, the association implements donor-oriented resource generation under the subheading of social marketing.

Table 4. Views on Social Marketing and Brand Strength

Expressions Used in the Survey	Mean
SM- Views on Social Marketing	3.983
SM1- Fundraising donor orientation questions (questions 14, 15, 16)	3.904
SM2- Questions on communication and coordination between the institutional bodies of the association (questions 17, 18, 19)	4.056
SM3- Relationship building peer orientation questions (questions 20, 21, 22, 23)	3.960
SM4- Voluntary earning beneficiary orientation questions (questions 24, 25, 26)	4.036
BS-Insights on Brand Strength	3.811
BS1- Brand familiarity questions (questions 27, 28, 29)	3.662
BS2- Brand attention grabbing questions (questions 30, 31, 32)	3.802
BS3- Brand attitude questions (questions 33, 34, 35)	3.969

Source: data output.

(2) Participation level for inter-organizational communication and coordination-oriented views (SM2): minimum 3.97 (Q18), maximum 4.11 (Q17), and overall average 4.05. This ratio indicates

agreement with the views, signifying that the association implements inter-organizational communication and coordination under the subheading of social marketing.

(3) Participation level for peer-oriented views on relationship building (SM3): minimum 3.90 (Q20), maximum 3.99 (Q23), and overall average 3.96. This ratio indicates agreement with the views, implying the association implements peer-oriented relationship building under the subheading of social marketing.

(4) Participation level for beneficiary-oriented views on volunteer recruitment (SM4): minimum 4.01 (Q25), maximum 4.05 (Q26), and overall average 4.03. This ratio indicates agreement with the views, meaning the association implements beneficiary-oriented volunteer recruitment under the subheading of social marketing.

The participation levels for opinions related to brand strength are as follows (Table-4):

(1) Participation level for views expressing brand familiarity (BS1): minimum 3.58 (Q28), maximum 3.72 (Q27), and overall average 3.66. This ratio indicates agreement with the views, meaning the association achieves brand familiarity under the subheading of brand strength.

(2) Participation level for views expressing brand attractiveness (BS2): minimum 3.76 (Q30), maximum 3.83 (Q31), and overall average 3.80. This ratio indicates agreement with the views, implying the association achieves brand attractiveness under the subheading of brand strength.

(3) Participation level for views expressing brand attitude (BS3): minimum 3.96 (Q34), maximum 3.98 (Q35), and overall average 3.97. This ratio indicates agreement with the views, signifying that the association implements brand attitude under the subheading of brand strength.

The survey participants' demographics, types of residence (village, district, province, outside the province), including their districts of residence (Cide, Senpazar, Pinarbasi, other), birth years, education status (graduate), monthly income status, occupations (item a-f) with One way-ANOVA-Test and gender, internet usage status, smartphone usage, continuous high-speed internet connection from home, participation in LEADER Approach (Local Development) training, participation in NGO and management training, membership status in the LAG association (item g-l), with T-Test along with the main and subheadings related to social marketing and brand strength, have been examined via SPSS and presented in Table A1 in Annex A.

In this study, two different methods were employed for multiple comparisons in one-way ANOVA tests (items a-f). For items with a homogeneity test p-value > 0.005 , Scheffe's test was applied. This test controls the alpha error rate and does not assume equal group sizes. For items with a homogeneity test p-value < 0.005 , Tamhane's T-test was used, which simultaneously compares k means pairwise using a common error approach in the case of heterogeneous group variances. Significant differences were evaluated as $p < 0.05$ in one-way ANOVA and T-tests, and $p > 0.005$ was considered non-significant (Karagoz, 2021). In the main headings of social marketing and brand strength, the following subjects are examined (Table A1 in Annex A):

- a. The fact that the survey participants live in the village, district, province, and outside the province does not create significant differences in the SM1, SM3, SM4, SM and BS1, BS2, BS3, BS dimensions. However, in the SM2-questions on communication and coordination between the institutional bodies of the association sub-dimension, it is seen that those living in the village have significant differences in their perceptions compared to those living in the district.
- b. Survey participants residing in Cide, Senpazar, Pinarbasi, and other locations create a significant difference in the perception levels regarding the management, social marketing (SM1, SM2, SM3, SM) and brand strength (BP1, BP2, BP3, BP) conducted by the association. Residents of Cide have a perception level significantly higher than the average regarding the

activities conducted by the association and the perception of social marketing and brand strength headings, the perception of residents in Senpazar district is lower than the other.

- c. The birth years of the survey participants do not create significant differences in the SM1, SM2, SM3, SM4, SM and BS2, BS3 dimensions. However, in the BS1– brand familiarity questions sub-dimension and the BS- insights on brand strength main dimension, those born between 1966-1979 perceive the activities at a higher level compared to those born between 1945–1965.
- d. The educational status of the survey participants does not create significant differences in the SM1-fundraising donor orientation questions and BS3-brand attitude questions dimensions. However, the fact that the participants are primary school, secondary school, high school, and bachelor-above graduates creates a significant difference among themselves in the management and social marketing and brand strength main and sub-dimensions (except SM1 and BS3) carried out by the association. Bachelor-above, and primary school graduates perceive the activities carried out at a higher level compared to secondary school and high school graduates.
- e. The monthly income status of the survey participants does not create significant differences in the SM1, SM2, SM3, SM4, SM and BS1, BS2, BS3, BS dimensions.
- f. The occupations of the survey participants do not create significant differences in the SM2-questions on communication and coordination between the institutional bodies of the association and BS3-Brand attitude questions dimensions. The fact that the occupations of the survey participants are farmer, tradesman, public employee, worker, and retired creates significant differences in the management and social marketing and brand strength main and sub-dimensions (except SM2 and BS3) carried out by the association. The perception of the activities carried out by the association and the brand strength title of those whose occupation is farmer and public employee is higher than that of the retirees. The perception of the social marketing title of the activities carried out by the association of those whose occupation is public employee is higher than that of workers and retired.
- g. The gender of the survey participants does not create significant difference in the SM2-questions on communication and coordination between the institutional bodies of the association dimension. The perception of female regarding the activities carried out by the association, social marketing (except SM2) and brand strength is higher than that of male.
- h. The fact that the survey participants use the internet and smartphones, have uninterrupted internet access from home, and receive EU LEADER training and NGO and management training creates a significant difference in the SM1, SM2, SM3, SM4, SM and BS1, BS2, BS3, BS dimensions. Those who use the internet and smartphones, have uninterrupted internet access from home, and have received EU LEADER training, NGO and NGO management training have a higher perception of the activities carried out by the association, social marketing and brand strength compared to those who do not.
- i. The fact that the survey participants are members of the LAG or not does not create significant differences in the SM1, SM2, SM3, SM4, SM and BS1, BS2, BS3, BS dimensions.

Conclusion

This study is one of the first field research studies conducted in Turkey on NGO management, social marketing in NGOs, and brand power in NGOs, which are areas that are not well-managed and have a very limited number of field research studies. In this respect, it is highly valuable. Cide LAG association generally operates within the scope of NGO management, brand strength, and social marketing contexts as indicated in the research questions. In other words, it generally accomplishes successful NGO management.

There are differing perceptions among various groups regarding the success of activities carried out by the association. Residents in villages, compared to those in towns, those in towns compared to those in cities, women compared to men, internet users compared to non-users, smartphone users compared to non-users, those with uninterrupted high-speed internet connection at home compared to those without, and tend to perceive the activities conducted by the association as more or less successful based on their demographic characteristics. Residents in villages and towns, who generally have fewer social, cultural, infrastructure, and economic opportunities, may perceive even the smallest activity to have a greater impact. Furthermore, these findings are significant when examining social entrepreneurship aiming to solve unresolved societal issues and socio-cultural environments. According to Hofstede's cultural analysis, Turkish society is considered to be highly collectivist and emphasizes femininity (Robbins and Judge, 2013). Thus, situations that may be negative in terms of entrepreneurship tend to have a positive impact on solving societal issues (Dan, 2019; Polat and Ozdemir, 2022).

While the success level of the NGO is perceived to be higher in the Cide district, it is observed to be below average in the Senpazar district. The headquarters of the LAG association is located in Cide. The association is actively open during office hours and provides free project consultancy to the local community in addition to its own activities. The findings indicate that the association demonstrates successful activities in Cide. However, the same level of success is not observed in the Senpazar district.

Individuals with bachelor and above education degrees perceive the NGO to be more successful compared to individuals with other education levels. It is more challenging to persuade individuals with a questioning and critical thinking perspective gained through bachelor education. The majority of the population living in the villages are primary school graduates, and they are directly affected by the activities carried out. While individuals with this level of education find the association successful, they perceive it to be less successful compared to others.

Farmers and public servants perceive the NGO to be more successful compared to other occupational groups. The fact that farmers and public servants perceive the association to be more successful may be attributed to the higher awareness of these groups about the activities carried out. In other words, it can be concluded that the LEADER Approach projects and implementations, which constitute a multi-sectoral local development program, cover other sectors to a lesser extent.

Those who have not received EU LEADER training or NGO management training perceive the NGO to be less successful. NGO managers and residents living in the local communities should have knowledge in NGO management and addressing unresolved societal issues (Polat and Ozdemir, 2022).

NGOs can create social marketing and brand strength through effective and efficient management by doing the following:

NGOs should disseminate their successful practices to groups that have received negative results by developing different methods and approaches.

NGOs operating in rural areas should increase their activities in villages or focus primarily on activities in villages to create a greater impact in a short period.

To publicize NGO activities and events, emphasis should be placed on on-site digital literacy training for those who do not use the internet. Additionally, efforts should be made to provide access to the internet or high-speed, uninterrupted internet connections in areas where residents do not have internet access. Until this is achieved, traditional media such as printed posters and monthly newsletters should be utilized.

Practices should be developed to encourage everyone to become members of the LAG association, or activities aimed at members should be extended to residents in the region.

The LAG association should replicate the management model implemented in Cide in other districts. This includes planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling the association's activities.

NGO activities and events should be planned and implemented with consideration for the educational levels of the population, adopting a participatory approach. Tailored approaches should be implemented to appeal to each educational group.

Activities aimed at recruiting donors from the high-income group in the region should be carried out.

The LEADER Approach projects and implementations, which constitute a multi-sectoral local development program, should be expanded to encompass other sectors.

Training sessions on NGO, NGO management, EU LEADER Approach, social marketing, and brand strength should be conducted in the region, both face-to-face and online (via live remote sessions), planned to include all segments of society, and delivered by academic experts in the field to facilitate learning.

Civil society is the fundamental source that constitutes organizations such as the state, businesses, and NGOs. The more mature the civil society is, the better all the organizations in that society are managed. In high schools and universities, education on NGOs, NGO management, social entrepreneurship, social marketing, and brand power in NGOs should be added to the curriculum, and academics should conduct more scientific research on these topics. Additionally, the management department should not be a sub-discipline under the business administration department, but rather a separate main discipline with sub-disciplines of public administration, business management, and NGO management. Research on the mentioned topics should be conducted by academics.

Like in other marketing practices, social marketing also needs to segment its members into various relevant categories and conduct tailored marketing communication. As seen in this study, the demographic segmentation method that the mentioned non-profit organization could utilize has been established as a fundamental starting point for them. For instance, individuals with bachelor and above degrees are thought to have a more questioning and analytical thinking tendency compared to others. Therefore, social marketing content targeting these individuals is expected to be customized to appeal more to their interests. For individuals who do not use the internet, do not have internet access at home, or have yet to use mobile smart devices, relevant social marketing content can be simultaneously delivered through online and offline channels based on their media consumption habits. The involvement of other groups in the high value obtained by groups already familiar with the non-profit organization's activities, such as farmers and public servants, in terms of social marketing and brand strength, can only be achieved through a holistic social marketing communication strategy that further highlights the organization's overall brand strength.

In many studies, there is a general consensus among experts that for the success and memorability of a brand, it should be present in at least three different channels capable of conducting brand communication. Integrated Marketing Communications is a strategic approach that emphasizes the importance of a consistent message across various channels. This approach helps reinforce the brand message, making it more memorable. Research by Belch and Belch (2018) in their book "Advertising and Promotion: An Integrated Marketing Communications Perspective" highlights the effectiveness of using multiple channels to create a unified brand message. Also consumers interact with brands across various touchpoints, including social media, websites, emails, and physical stores. Multi-channel campaigns can improve brand recall and drive better marketing outcomes (Nielsen, 2016; Alba and Chattopadhyay, 1986). The study notes that brands using multiple channels see a higher impact on consumers' purchase decisions. Research published in the Journal of Advertising Research

by Naik and Raman (2003) discusses the concept of cross-media synergy, where the combined effect of multiple media channels can enhance the overall impact on consumers. Their findings suggest that brands present across various channels can achieve higher effectiveness compared to single-channel campaigns. If the non-profit organization invests in enhancing its brand strength, it can influence and garner support from more people. This means the organization can disseminate its work to a wider audience.

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Annex A

Table A1. Comparison of Independents Variable in Terms of Opinions on Social Marketing and Brand Strength and Sub-Headings with One Way Anova Test and T-Test.

a. Place of Residence	n	SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM	BS1	BS2	BS3	BS
F (3, 396)		1.625	3.650	0.839	0.671	1.763	0.780	1.302	0.999	1.090
p		0.183	0.013*	0.473	0.570	0.154	0.506	0.273	0.393	0.353
Test of Homogeneity		0.065	0.018	0.001	0.012	0.005	0.000	0.002	0.007	0.000
Mean Difference (I-J)		-	1,2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Village ¹	100	4.043	4.260	4.040	4.117	4.115	3.770	3.940	4.053	3.921
District ²	Mean 282	3.861	4.002	3.935	4.010	3.952	3.624	3.752	3.933	3.770
Province ³	9	3.705	3.519	3.722	3.852	3.699	3.482	3.667	3.815	3.654
Out-of Province ⁴	9	3.926	3.963	4.083	4.185	4.039	3.852	4.000	4.333	4.062
b. Inhabited District	n	SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM	BS1	BS2	BS3	BS
F (3, 396)		79.768	53.208	59.255	82.034	89.152	59.174	73.785	65.042	78.199
p		0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
Test of Homogeneity		0.156	0.000	0.015	0.001	0.001	0.004	0.179	0.058	0.201
Mean Difference (I-J)		1,2,3,4	1,2,3,4	1,2,3	1,2,3,4	1,2,3	1,2,3,4	1,2,3,4	1,2,3,4	1,2,3,4
Cide ¹	177	4.396	4.544	4.418	4.582	4.485	4.211	4.373	4.522	4.369
Senpazar ²	Mean 66	3.177	3.460	3.405	3.333	3.344	2.778	3.025	3.172	2.992
Pınarbasi ³	144	3.637	3.785	3.648	3.690	3.690	3.394	3.454	3.664	3.504
Other ⁴	13	3.872	3.410	4.000	4.026	3.827	3.667	3.846	3.872	3.795
c. Years of Birth	n	SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM	BS1	BS2	BS3	BS
F (4, 395)		3.088	1.454	2.909	1.773	1.276	5.428	2.601	2.150	3.062
p		0.016*	0.216	0.021*	0.031*	0.044*	0.000*	0.011*	0.034*	0.003*
Test of Homogeneity		0.569	0.066	0.830	0.917	0.985	0.963	0.596	0.309	0.460
Mean Difference (I-J)		-	-	-	-	-	2,3	-	-	2,3
1944 before ¹	11	3.727	4.030	3.841	3.940	3.881	3.3939	3.364	3.546	3.434
1945-1965 ²	99	3.808	4.084	3.806	3.892	3.890	3.3502	3.653	3.838	3.614
1966-1979 ³	Mean 127	4.076	4.087	4.112	4.194	4.117	3.9580	4.011	4.129	4.032
1980-1999 ⁴	132	3.796	3.942	3.903	3.960	3.900	3.629	3.740	3.904	3.758
2000 after ⁵	31	4.032	4.323	4.113	4.215	4.171	3.688	3.850	4.161	3.900
d. Education Status (Graduate)	n	SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM	BS1	BS2	BS3	BS
F (4, 395)		3.050	6.320	3.939	4.776	5.162	2.467	3.683	2.405	3.089
p		0.017*	0.000*	0.004*	0.001*	0.000*	0.044*	0.006*	0.049*	0.016*

Test of Homogeneity		0.098	0.184	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.013	0.000
Mean Difference (I-J)		-	1,2,3,5	1,2,3,5	1,2,3,5	1,2,3,5	1,2,3,5	1,2,5	-	1,2,3,5
Primary ¹	122	4.019	4.254	4.035	4.123	4.108	3.740	3.937	4.052	3.910
Secondary ²	54	3.642	3.728	3.653	3.661	3.671	3.340	3.451	3.679	3.490
High School ³	121	3.865	3.926	3.946	4.072	3.952	3.697	3.760	3.989	3.815
Associate ⁴	34	3.794	3.873	3.838	3.833	3.835	3.480	3.686	3.784	3.650
Bachelor&above ⁵	69	4.029	4.275	4.152	4.217	4.169	3.807	3.971	4.106	3.961
e. Monthly Income Status		SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM	BS1	BS2	BS3	BS
F (3. 396)		2.249	1.695	2.066	2.862	1.931	2.256	0.338	1.950	1.497
p		0.082	0.167	0.104	0.037*	0.124	0.081	0.798	0.121	0.215
Test of Homogeneity		0.182	0.023	0.057	0.350	0.352	0.157	0.068	0.007	0.010
Mean Difference (I-J)		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1-8500	144	3.796	4.093	3.856	3.898	3.911	3.514	3.762	3.852	3.709
8501-17000	208	3.981	4.040	4.022	4.123	4.042	3.761	3.829	4.058	3.883
17001-25500	45	3.933	4.074	4.044	4.119	4.043	3.719	3.837	3.978	3.844
25501 above	3	3.333	3.000	3.417	3.444	3.299	3.11	3.444	3.333	3.296
f. Occupations		SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM	BS1	BS2	BS3	BS
F (9. 390)		4.271	3.151	6.092	4.467	5.056	7.034	4.356	3.327	5.296
p		0.000*	0.001*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.001*	0.000*
Test of Homogeneity		0.079	0.062	0.299	0.524	0.450	0.119	0.335	0.515	0.144
Mean Difference (I-J)		4,5,9	-	2,4,5,9	4,9	4,5,9	1,2,4,5,9	4,9	-	1,4,9
Farmer ¹	27	4.247	4.432	4.333	4.444	4.364	4.259	4.284	4.432	4.325
Tradesmen ²	71	3.793	3.991	3.828	3.995	3.902	3.502	3.662	3.944	3.703
Housewife ³	50	3.900	3.893	3.990	4.067	3.963	3.773	3.933	4.060	3.922
Public Employee ⁴	68	4.279	4.343	4.397	4.392	4.353	4.216	4.181	4.275	4.224
Worker ⁵	68	3.696	3.985	3.783	3.887	3.838	3.534	3.642	3.833	3.670
Unemployed ⁶	7	3.529	3.857	3.536	3.619	3.634	3.143	3.143	3.619	3.302
Business Person ⁷	9	3.630	3.444	3.556	3.482	3.528	3.333	3.333	3.444	3.370
Student ⁸	21	4.095	4.381	4.131	4.175	4.195	3.746	3.889	4.079	3.905
Retired ⁹	70	3.738	3.910	3.700	3.752	3.775	3.214	3.562	3.676	3.484
Other ¹⁰	9	3.926	3.815	4.111	4.185	4.009	3.333	3.741	3.815	3.630
g. Gender	n	SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM	BS1	BS2	BS3	BS
t		2.853	1.921	3.048	3.282	3.115	4.193	4.273	4.122	4.441
p		0.005*	0.055	0.002*	0.001*	0.002*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
Mean Difference		0.223	0.168	0.238	0.275	0.226	0.418	0.384	0.382	0.393
Female	147	4.045	4.161	4.111	4.211	4.130	3.923	4.045	4.211	4.060
Male	253	3.822	3.993	3.873	3.935	3.903	3.511	3.661	3.829	3.667
h. Internet Usage Status		SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM	BS1	BS2	BS3	BS
t		5.814	4.875	6.507	6.723	6.621	5.666	6.300	7.096	6.780
p		0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
Mean Difference		0.607	0.569	0.669	0.742	0.646	0.721	0.676	0.771	0.723
Yes	342	3.992	4.137	4.057	4.144	4.081	3.767	3.901	4.081	3.916
No	58	3.385	3.569	3.388	3.402	3.432	3.046	3.224	3.310	3.194
i. Using a Smart Cell Phone		SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM	BS1	BS2	BS3	BS
t		5.950	5.150	6.623	6.565	6.730	6.083	6.989	5.983	7.233
p		0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
Mean Difference		0.625	0.603	0.685	0.732	0.661	0.704	0.690	0.748	0.714
Yes	343	3.993	4.141	4.058	4.141	4.083	3.763	3.901	4.076	3.913
No	57	3.368	3.538	3.373	3.409	3.422	3.058	3.211	3.328	3.199
j. Uninterrupted Internet Connection at Home		SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM	BS1	BS2	BS3	BS
t		4.923	5.933	5.912	5.669	6.237	5.535	6.187	5.896	6.346
p		0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
Mean Difference		0.413	0.542	0.487	0.505	0.487	0.551	0.560	0.583	0.565
Yes	293	4.015	4.200	4.090	4.172	4.119	3.810	3.952	4.1251	3.963
No	107	3.601	3.657	3.603	3.667	3.632	3.259	3.393	3.5421	3.398
k. LEADER Training		SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM	BS1	BS2	BS3	BS
t		13.737	9.548	13.34	11.823	12.92	17.035	15.92	13.641	16.24

p			0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
Mean Difference			1.032	0.859	0.985	0.898	0.943	1.366	1.201	1.026
Yes	Mean	72	4.750	4.759	4.767	4.773	4.762	4.782	4.787	4.810
No		328	3.719	3.900	3.783	3.875	3.819	3.417	3.586	3.785
l. Training on NGO and Management			SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM	BS1	BS2	BS3
t			11.431	7.378	11.83	11.216	10.88	14.57	13.93	11.349
p			0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
Mean Difference			0.937	0.721	0.909	0.846	0.853	1.2468	1.116	0.956
Yes	Mean	83	4.647	4.627	4.681	4.707	4.666	4.651	4.687	4.727
No		317	3.710	3.905	3.771	3.861	3.809	3.404	3.571	3.771
m. LAG Association Membership			SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM	BS1	BS2	BS3
t			0.631	-0.379	0.384	0.617	0.296	1.459	0.725	0.757
p			0.528	0.710	0.701	0.538	0.768	0.145	0.469	0.449
Mean Difference			0.120	-0.105	0.073	0.126	0.053	0.348	0.161	0.170
Yes	Mean	17	4.020	3.961	4.029	4.157	4.042	4.000	3.961	4.137
No		382	3.900	4.066	3.957	4.031	3.989	3.652	3.800	3.967

Source: data output.

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