

---

# Synthesis of Brand Ethicality

Priya Nainwad

---

**U**nderstanding and drawing information from the articles of *Brunk 2010-2011*, *Singh 2012*, *Sierra 2015*, *Marvorick 2015*, *Iglesias 2017*, *Brunk 2012*, *Yoganathan 2018*, *Das 2018* and exploring the profound impact of consumer perception on brand ethicality, this abstract introduces a comprehensive examination of this critical relationship. It sets a deeper analysis of the implications for businesses navigating this ethical landscape, emphasizing the importance of aligning with consumer values to establish trust and foster lasting relationships.

## INDRODUCTION

In today's world, consumers play a crucial role in shaping the reputation of brands based on their ethical behavior. Brand ethicality, which refers to how a brand acts responsibly and in an ethical manner, is at the forefront of consumer consciousness. What really matters is how consumers perceive a brand's ethical conduct. When they believe a brand is doing the right thing, it can make them feel more positive about buying their products or services. On the other hand, if they think a brand is not acting ethically, it might deter them from supporting them. The modern consumer is well-informed and socially conscious. Consumers want to support brands that align with their values and ethics. This connection between brand ethicality and how consumers perceive it holds significant importance in today's business landscape.

This literature review delves into the multifaceted landscape of brand ethicality, exploring the origins of ethical company and brand perceptions from a consumer perspective and its impact on consumer behavior. It identifies three dimensions that influence consumer perceived ethicality, with a particular focus on the moderating and mediating role of personal interest. Moving further, the scope of this literature review expands to analyze the effects of customer perceived ethicality in the context of corporate services brands, demonstrating its positive and indirect impact on customer loyalty. Moreover, this review explores the fascinating concept of brand passion and its interaction with perceived brand ethicality. This literature review undertakes a comprehensive journey to uncover the complexities of brand ethicality, its origins, its impact on consumer behavior, and its interplay.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

In today's global marketplace, the ethical dimension of a brand's identity has become increasingly significant. The perception of a brand's ethicality by consumers not only influences their purchasing decisions but also plays a crucial role in shaping their long-term relationships with a brand. According to *Brunk 2010* Emerging from consumer interviews, the taxonomy delineates six domains and multiple sub-domains relating to the impact corporate behavior has on

- Consumers

- Environment
- Business community
- Local community and Economy
- Oversea community
- Employees

The study suggests that companies/brands seeking to enhance their ethical reputation among consumers should pay attention to the diverse and complex sources of consumer perceived ethicality (CPE) of their business behavior. By addressing these issues and communicating their efforts transparently to consumers, companies/brands can build trust and credibility with consumers and enhance their ethical reputation.

Followed by Brunk stating in his 2012 research that examines the impact of ethical and unethical business practices on consumers' perceptions of a company's ethicality. The research suggests that certain practices have a negative effect on consumers' perceptions, while others can have a positive impact. The ultimate goal is to achieve positive consumer perceived ethicality. In addition to this, in study of *Seirra 2015* the influence of customer perceived ethicality on corporate brand equity in the services sector is discussed.

According to the study, customer perceived ethicality has a positive effect on brand equity in the services sector. The study suggests that a company's ethical and socially responsible behavior is linked with its brand equity. This research focuses on the effect of customer perceived ethicality of a brand on brand equity in the services sector. The study suggests that portraying societal and ethical commitments at a corporate level is important to remain competitive and improve reputation. The study also highlights the challenges in providing a consistent high-quality customer experience across all brand-customer interactions and touch-points. In research by *Singh 2012* A theoretical framework is developed and tested to answer a research question about the relationship between perceived ethicality of a brand, brand trust, brand affect, and brand loyalty. The study collected data from 4,027 Spanish consumers across 45 product categories in the fast moving consumer goods sector. The results suggest a positive relationship between perceived ethicality of a brand and both brand trust and brand affect. Brand affect also positively influences brand trust. Brand trust and brand affect both show a positive relation with brand loyalty. Most

of the above researches on business ethics in corporate brand management focuses on goods/products contexts, but the article by *Markovic 2015* examines the effects of customer perceived ethicality in the context of corporate services brands. The study's results have several implications for corporate brand strategy. **First**, the results suggest that customer perceived ethicality of a corporate services brand has a positive impact on customer loyalty. This means that brands should prioritize ethical behavior and portray their ethical commitment during interactions with customers. **Second**, the study found that customer affective commitment and customer perceived quality mediate the relationship between customer perceived ethicality and customer loyalty. This implies that brands should focus on building strong emotional connections with customers and delivering high-quality services. **Third**, the study highlights the importance of employee empathy in enhancing the impact of customer perceived ethicality on both customer affective commitment and customer perceived quality.

The research by *Das 2018* examines the impact of perceived brand ethicality on brand passion and brand commitment. The study finds evidence of a mediated-moderation effect, where the moderating power of perceived brand ethicality is eliminated in the presence of the full mediator, brand passion. The study also finds the effects of perceived brand ethicality at play. The results suggest that brand experience leads to brand commitment through the mediating role of brand passion, and that perceived brand ethicality strengthens this relationship. The findings have theoretical contributions and implications for brand managers.

*Yoganathan 2018* highlights the efficacy of multi-sensory marketing in fostering ethical consumption online. 1. Ethically congruent visual and auditory cues, as well as a tactile priming statement, positively influence consumers' willingness to pay (WTP) for an ethical brand online. 2. The effects of visual and auditory cues are mediated by Consumer Perceived Brand Ethicality (CPBE) for consumers with high altruistic and biospheric value orientation (ALTBIO). 3. Tactile priming has a significant effect only for consumers with high Need for Touch (NfT).

4. The interaction between the three cues (visual, auditory, and tactile) has a positive effect on WTP irrespective of CPBE, ALTBIO, and NfT.

5. The findings illustrate the efficacy of multi-sensory marketing in fostering sensible consumption online for the mass-market and specific segments by creating an experiential customer judgment-context.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the examination of brand ethicality and its impact on consumer perceptions underscores its critical role in the modern marketplace. The insights provided by this literature review emphasize the necessity for companies to address diverse sources of consumer perceived ethicality to enhance trust and credibility. These insights have implications for brand strategy, emphasizing the importance of building emotional connections, delivering quality services, and maintaining an ethical image. Moreover, the research highlights the role of brand passion in driving commitment, with perceived brand ethicality playing a significant part. Additionally, the study on multisensory marketing demonstrates its potential in promoting ethical brand consumption online. In an era of heightened consumer consciousness, ethical behavior remains a linchpin in establishing enduring brand-consumer relationships.