

ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF CONSUMER HOPE FOR THE BRAND OF HYDRODERM WITH THE MODERATING ROLE OF BRAND CHARISMA

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Abstract

With the expansion of different brands in similar classes of products and the close competition of brand owners in attracting and retaining more customers, the production of ethical brands that are subject to ethical principles in all stages of the process of supply, production, presentation, and sale of products has become one of the most important factors in creating superiority and brand differentiation in expanding customer communication and interaction with the brand. Given the importance of the role of brand ethical value in establishing effective customer relationships with the brand, this study aimed at investigating the predictions and consequences of consumer hope for the brand of Hydroderm with the role of brand charisma. The present study used a survey method to collect data and a correlation method to analyze the data. The statistical population of the study included 327 consumers of Hydroderm cosmetics brands; they were selected using the available sampling method. Information was collected using a Likert-point questionnaire, and data analysis was performed by structural equation modelling. The findings showed that the perceived ethical value of the brand on the obsessive brand passion and harmonious brand passion on consumer hope for the brand had a positive and significant effect. Moreover, obsessive brand passion did not have a significant effect on consumer hope for the brand. In addition, brand charisma mediated the effect of the perceived ethical value of the brand on the harmonious brand passion and obsessive brand passion. Finally, a positive and significant effect was found between consumer hope for brand and brand-customer interaction.

Implications for Central European audience: Since most Central European countries seek to use the social media space to introduce and sell their brands to all parts of the world, including Asian countries, identifying and understanding how the perceived ethical value of the brand affects consumers interaction of with the brand can be a good practical guide to improve their activities with Asian countries that are subject to Islamic and ethical values. The recommendations obtained from the results show that the behavioural, personality, operational values of the brand as well as its responsibility can increase

customers' desire for the brand and maintain their interactive relationship by giving the consumer hope for the brand.

Keywords: brand charisma; consumer hope for a brand; the perceived ethical value of a brand

JEL Classification: M31

Introduction

Ethicality of a brand is considered as a marketing approach in creating and differentiating because to have superior performance and maintain the appropriate quality of products and services among the fierce competition of different brands and providing ethical brand to customers strengthen the communication of the brand with them. It is because the value of a brand is better understood by the customer, and the distinction between the brand and other similar brands will be tangible. As a result, revenue and profit growth will increase at a higher rate than in the past (Kim et al., 2015; Yoganathan et al., 2019). In general, the concept of perceived brand value is a comprehensive factor for reviewing brand products and services. Customers know the relative nature and value of the brand in addition to its price based on perceived brand quality, competitors' offers, opportunity costs, and other factors such as ease of purchase and social and psychological factors of the brand (Luo et al., 2020). During the growth of ethical consumerism, where brand behaviour is under public scrutiny, consumers' ethical understanding of brands plays an important role in their purchasing decisions and long-term interactions with brands (Sudbury-Riley & Kohlbacher, 2016) because it affects brand evaluation and selection (Das et al., 2019). Misuses of a brand can have a negative effect on the consumer's understanding of the brand and customer-brand relationships.

Previous studies have theoretically shown that building an ethical image of the brand in the minds of customers ensures brand-customer interaction and its long-term commitment (Francisco-Maffezzoli et al., 2014). Brand passion, as one of the perceived ethical aspects of the brand, is derived from evaluating the brand's relationship with the customer, which connects the customer's strong connection with the brand and plays a central role in people's identity and customer's cognitive and emotional aspects (Das et al., 2019). Brand passion and achieving the goal of the consumer is not a two-way interaction, but brand passion first creates an internal motivation for customers (Vallerand et al., 2003), then increases the brand's appeal to the customer and perceived ethical value of brand develops. Therefore, it is argued that brand passion can potentially establish a strong emotional connection with the brand (Das et al., 2019) and increase consumer confidence in the brand, and increase its commitment and engagement so to strengthen the brand community.

When a customer buys a brand, the concept of consumer hope for the brand becomes important because the purchase process requires some level of hope in the individual that directs the buyer's behavioural goals in the transaction. As an example, hoping that the product will work according to what is shown and based on the promises made by the brand in advertising can be effective in a customer purchase (Raggio et al., 2014). When

consumer hope is at a high level, it receives outstanding emotional responses from interacting with the brand in question and achieves a positive outcome from achieving its goal. It is necessary to buy the brand again and subsequently increase the consumer's hope and repeat this cycle (Wong et al., 2017). Recent reports have shown that digital brand advertising is growing rapidly (Jami Pour & Taheri, 2020). In 2017, the total global revenue from brand advertising was estimated at US \$228.44 billion, almost 39.1% of which was earned by social media. Forecasts show that this figure will reach \$ 375.80 billion by 2021, of which 49.6 per cent will be generated by brand advertising on social media (Mpiganjira & Maduku, 2019).

On the other hand, in times of crisis, customers need to pay attention to the two concepts of brand personality and moral values that help strengthen the human spirit of the brand, and brands can use these concepts to differentiate customer values. Therefore, two practical strategies in crises are to strengthen the customer-brand relationship between Hydroderm, improve brand personality and observe ethical characteristics. Research literature shows that brands can achieve the most important goal of building a long-term relationship with customers by improving their personality dimensions and also observing ethical principles and values. Due to the increasing ratio of time spent by customers hoping that the experience will have a positive relationship, they will interact with online brands; it is important to address this gap. Hope allows Hydroderm customers to use purchasing problems with the right mindset and practical plan for a successful business experience; this is likely to increase customer satisfaction, brand-customer interaction, and customer intent.

Given the importance of the role of brands in the company's revenue and the emotional impact it has on customers, this study specifically developed and tested a model to examine the impact of psychological mechanisms that lead to positive customer experiences of brand interaction and purchase. So far, most studies have linked brand value perception to brand loyalty and brand performance (Giovanis & Athanasopoulou, 2018), brand satisfaction, brand trust and brand commitment (Fazal-e-Hasan et al., 2018), communication quality (Hallak et al., 2018) and evaluation and selection of the product (MacInnis & De Mello, 2005). Moreover, researches on the variable of hope in organizational behaviour studies have been done more on the hope of employees in performing positive behaviours, and there are very limited researches on consumer hope for the brand, and few studies have examined the psychological and ethical impact of brand value on brand-customer interaction. Therefore, the goal of this study is antecedents and consequences of consumer hope for the brand of Hydroderm with the moderating role of brand charisma.

1 Theoretical foundations of research and hypothesis development

1.1 Perceived ethical value of the brand

Value is defined as the assessment of the total benefits of consuming a product/service over the total costs incurred by the consumer (Walsh et al., 2014). Therefore, measuring the perceived value of a brand is a factor that goes beyond the "price" of a product or service and includes all the factors that create brand value for the consumer (Luo et al., 2020). The main structure of this study was related to the perceived "ethical" value of the

brand, which in the text of this study refers to the ethical image of the brand, which has led to better brand-customer interaction. Brand ethical behaviour is a key strategic force for most business acquisitions in defining, differentiating, enhancing brand value, and maintaining a brand in competitive markets (Das et al., 2019; Mpinganjira & Maduku, 2019). In terms of operations, brand ethics should be tangible so that you can benefit from ethical products and services through production and ethical sales processes (Yoganathan et al., 2019).

Moreover, according to the ethical consequences theory, brand ethical value in society should focus on positive outcomes such as social responsibility, active social interactions, and philanthropic practices (Brunk, 2012) and follow financial laws, labour laws, and environmental rules (Das et al., 2019) so that a brand's unintended consequences do not damage the customer-brand relationship and do not destroy the company's tangible assets (Mpinganjira & Maduku, 2019). Although in early research, the concept of brand value has been considered as a one-dimensional structure (Dodds et al., 1991), in recent research, there has been agreement on the multidimensionality of brand value structure (Leroi-Werelds et al., 2014). Similarly, the most important dimensions of brand ethics value include brand ethical behaviour, brand personality, brand ethical operations (Das et al., 2019; Yoganathan et al., 2019), and brand ethical responsibility (Mpinganjira & Maduku, 2019).

1.1.1 Deontological ethics theory: Brand ethical behaviour, brand personality, and brand ethical operations

Brand Ethical Behavior

Optimal brand behaviour acts as a psychological factor that can affect customer perception of the brand. In line with the deontological ethics of brand theory, it is argued that brand ethics depends on the positive and negative behaviours that are applied to consumers (Mpinganjira & Maduku, 2019). Positive brand behaviour can include behavioural benefits such as honesty, integrity, fairness, transparency, accountability, respect, justice, and commitment, and negative behaviour can include behavioural harassment for consumers. Especially when consumers use brand advertising on social media pages, they are more involved in positive and negative brand behaviours, and their perceptions of the brand and their response to the brand are affected (Das et al., 2019).

Brand Ethical Personality

According to the deontological ethics of brand theory, the moral value of a brand can be perceived if the brand ethical personality is the same as the individual personality attracted to the brand (Das et al., 2019). As managers with autonomous personalities, they pay less attention to brands with friendly and warm personalities but also brands with selfish and conscious personalities (Pinto et al., 2019). Choosing brands that are tailored to the individual's personality is a more ethical choice for the consumer and keeps the consumer from buying the brand as a more ethical brand than buying a regular brand (Salazar et al., 2013). Pinto et al. (2019) also considered brand personality matching with the customer as one of the most important variables influencing brand ethics.

Brand Ethical Operations

Operating value is considered to be the core perceived value of the brand as a brand must have outstanding physically useful functional features (Luo et al., 2020). The ethical value of a brand is first assessed based on the cognitive factors of the brand's products and services (Duman & Mattila, 2005) and depends on both its objective and subjective characteristics. The brand can have the best goals and values in the world, but if it is selling harmful, dangerous, illegal, or toxic products, there is no doubt that the brand will be considered an unethical brand. For example, L'Amazona is a brand of ethical cosmetics that sells 100% natural and vegan products with a focus on zero waste disposal solutions. Even the process of ethical production using appropriate and recyclable raw materials, better packaging, and ethical working conditions should be part of the brand's ethical strategy, and the company's supply and distribution chain should pursue fair trade policies to support all beneficiaries of the company to increase the value-added of the company, its customers and shareholders (Brandingmag¹, 2020).

1.1.2 Consequential ethics theory: Brand Ethical responsibility

Brand Ethical Responsibility

According to consequential ethics, the ethical brand should not harm the public good but should consider and develop the social benefit, as well as sustainably and positively consider social, economic, and environmental responsibilities (Das et al., 2019). Some big brands directly affect government policies and the lives of citizens. Hence, the importance of ethical branding strategy in society is many times greater. Such brands must exercise their power in a way that benefits the public (Brandingmag, 2020). Customers' understanding of the desired consequences of a brand has led to the generalization of confidence in their personal life and social status, and the consumer's emotional responses to the brand have caused them to continue active social interactions with their desired brand (Fazal-e-Hasan et al., 2018; Grohmann & Bodur, 2015).

In general, brand ethical values affect the quality of products and services, brand pricing policies, brand content and advertising practices, customer relationship, suppliers, the environment, and society (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001). In terms of customer relationship with the brand, customers respond better to brands that look ethical, so large brand owners make large investments to strengthen customers' understanding of the ethical value of the brands they sell (Das et al., 2019). Especially in the online environment of social media, the perception of brand value is strongly influenced by the psychological scope of the customer, predicts the emotional behaviour of customers, and strengthens positive feelings about the brand in customers. Therefore, the emotional experience created by perceiving brand value increases consumer hope for the brand and improves the quality of customer-brand relationships. Fazal-e-Hasan et al. (2018) also showed that the perceived value of the brand increases consumer hope.

On the other hand, a brand's sensory and emotional experiences as a psychological determinant tempt the customer to the brand because they are mentally satisfied with the brand's behavioural value and, therefore, their positive behavioural responses will be more than the brand's intellectual values, and the consumer will naturally harmonize his values

¹ www.brandingmag.com

with the brand's values, in which the personal and social identity of the individual is enhanced (Park et al., 2013). Also, brand ethical behaviour communicates between the current situation and the desired social behaviour of brand-consumer (Vallerand et al., 2003) and enriches brand credibility with internal control in individuals, and stimulates analytical and imaginative thinking. The highlights it creates are more accessible to consumer memory and thus increase obsessive brand passion in customers (Das et al., 2019). Das et al. (2019) also confirmed the role of the perceived ethical value of brand adjustment on harmonious brand passion and obsessive brand passion. Therefore, the following hypotheses are suggested;

H1: The perceived ethical value of a brand has a positive and significant effect on consumer hope for a brand.

H2: The perceived ethical value of a brand has a positive and significant effect on harmonious brand passion

H3: The perceived ethical value of a brand has a positive and significant effect on obsessive brand passion.

1.2 Brand Charisma

Smothers (1993) was the first to claim that brands, as individuals, could have charismatic characteristics and enjoy the same characteristics and behaviours of charismatic human leaders. He described charisma as “the quality that can be attributed to individuals, actions, maps, institutions, symbols, and material objects because of their relationship to ultimate, fundamental, vital, or determining powers”. Brand charisma is a social structure that customers legitimize. Customers who consume charismatic brands believe that charismatic brands have an exceptional quality (Hatch & Schultz, 2013). Lee et al. (2015) summarized the four main dimensions of a charismatic brand in proper communication, power and customer dominance, attractiveness, honesty, and trustworthiness of the brand. Charismatic brands communicate well with their consumers emotionally and have exceptional effects on their self-esteem, self-efficacy, brand recognition, and social identity (Towler, 2003). In other words, charisma also affects customer behaviour. Automatically, consumers are more attracted to brands that have more charisma. All brands like to be seen next to charismatic brands to compete with them; because the presence of emotions leads to sales, and companies must always try to establish an emotional connection between their brand or brands and consumers. Hence:

H4a: Brand Charisma mediates the relationship between the perceived ethical value of a brand and harmonious brand passion.

H4b: Brand Charisma mediates the relationship between the perceived ethical value of a brand and obsessive brand passion.

1.3 Brand Passion

Brand passion is “an emotional and very positive attitude toward a particular brand that leads to emotional attachment and influences brand-related behavioural factors” (Albert et al., 2013). Brand passion includes two types of harmonious brand passion and obsessive brand passion (Swimberghe, et al., 2014). “Harmonious brand passion” is one of the types of brand fascination that customers try to coordinate with the brand to determine their inner

self-esteem and coordinate other aspects of their lifestyle with the brand (Albert et al., 2013). "Obsessive brand passion" determines their social identity and understanding of the sense of social acceptance. Having an obsessive sense of brand passion, the consumer will not be satisfied with buying and using other brands because they will not help them in creating social acceptance. The mechanisms that shape a person's personal and social identity can be guided and controlled by the individual; Harmonious brand passion arises from the brand's independent internalization of the consumer's identity, and obsessive brand passion is derived from the brand's controlled internalization in the consumer's social identity (Das et al., 2019). Brand passion leads to intense emotional attachment to the brand in the long run (Albert et al., 2013). It makes a kind of passive positive emotional tendency to be active (Swimberghe et al., 2014). This increases customer commitment to the brand (Das et al., 2019) and dominates customer feelings and thoughts about the brand, increasing consumer confidence and hope for brand performance in a live social context. It justifies the customer's motivation to minimize distrust and risk buying a brand (Fazal-e-Hasan et al., 2018). Considering the above factors, the following hypotheses were formed;

H5: Harmonious brand passion has a positive and significant effect on consumer hope for a brand.

H6: Obsessive brand passion has a positive and significant effect on consumer hope for a brand.

1.4 Consumer hope for brand

Hope increases a person's willpower to achieve the goal and develops ways to achieve the goal so that they can achieve their goal by replacing the method (Fazal-e-Hasan et al., 2018). In achieving challenging or emergency goals, developing hope in the individual makes it possible to achieve goals (Luthans et al., 2006), and vice versa, if customers lack a sense of hope in the process of achieving the goal, possibly, despite believing in their abilities, fail to achieve their goal (Snyder, 2002). Consumer hope plays an important role in his buying choices (Kim et al., 2012). One of the ways to develop consumer hope is to get brand advertising and product evaluation. If the evaluation results are positive, consumer hope will increase, and the brand will be bought again (Poels & Dewitte, 2008) as it strengthens the customer relationship with the brand and improves the understanding of the brand's performance from the customer's point of view. Fazal-e-Hasan et al. (2018) have shown in their study that consumer hope for brand increases customer confidence, satisfaction, and commitment to online brand shopping. By increasing these factors, which are components of brand-customer relationship quality, brand-customer interaction improves. Given the importance of the role of consumer hope in improving customer interactions with the brand, the leading hypothesis was proposed:

H7: Consumer hope for the brand has a positive and significant effect on brand-customer interaction.

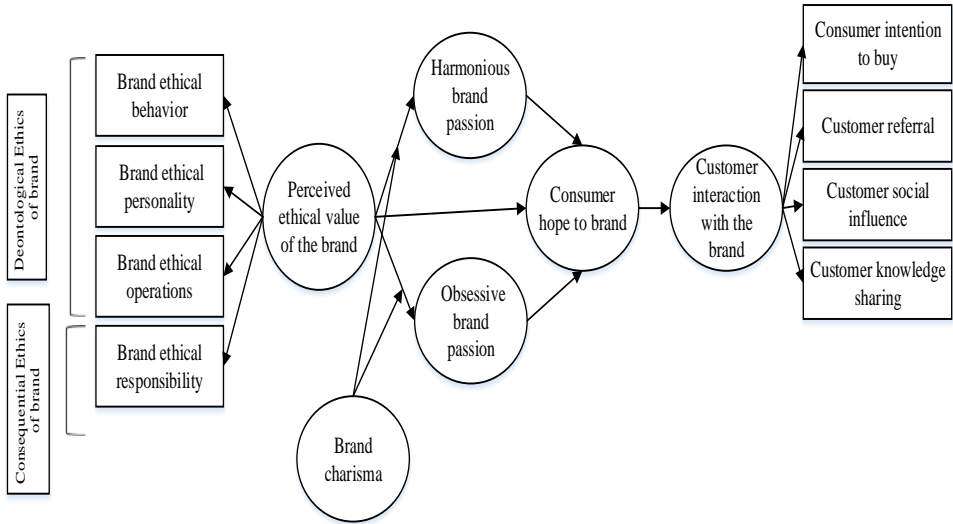
1.5 Brand-customer interaction

Brand-customer interaction is defined as the intensity of consumer engagement with the brand, which involves a level of physical, cognitive, and emotional activity of the customer with the brand (Hollebeek, 2011). Brand-customer interaction goes beyond brand

acquisition and includes non-transactional (communicative and behavioural) and transactional (buying and selling) customer interactions with the company's brand (Pansari & Kumar, 2017) that can indirectly affect marketing results and improve a firm's sales (Kumar & Pansari, 2016). Customers involved in the interaction with the brand are considered to be the cause of the company's revenue growth, and also, the brands that have been deprived of customer interaction are faced with a decrease in revenue growth (Itani et al., 2019). The abstract concept of "customer interaction" includes four main dimensions: customer intent, customer referrals, customer social influence, and customer knowledge and feedback sharing (Kumar & Pansari, 2016). The intention to buy is a kind of brand-customer interaction (Alhosseini Almodarresi et al., 2019). Customers involved with the brand are directly involved in the performance of firms through current and future purchases of the brand (Kumar & Pansari, 2016). Customers who interact with the brand always refer to the physical location of the brand store or online sales space on the brand's virtual pages for their repetitive purchases of the brand, as well as offer products, services, features, and sales conditions to others. Customer social influence is another aspect of brand-customer interaction (Jami Pour et al., 2020). Social influence occurs mainly in the communities to which customers belong, among which online social media is the most important network that attracts many customers, and they can easily influence a large number of users of virtual brand pages. This form of customer interaction is related to the marketing influence strategy, which mainly focuses on persuasion and adaptation in a social environment (Itani et al., 2019).

According to the objectives of the research and the existing theoretical literature, and previous studies, the conceptual model of research is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1 | Conceptual model of research



Source: authors' own elaboration

2 Research methodology

It was an applied descriptive survey study. The statistical population included the consumers of Hydroderm cosmetics brand who buy from this brand in person and online and consider themselves members of Hydroderm brand and are active in cyberspace about examining its products and their experiences in using this brand. Available sampling method was used in this study. A questionnaire consisting of two parts was prepared to collect the data. The first section was related to demographic information with five questions about gender, age, level of education, history of familiarity with the Hydroderm brand, and the degree of use of the Hydroderm brand, and the second section was related to research variables with 40 items in Appendix One. The questionnaire was distributed electronically via email and social media among the statistical population. According to Cochran's formula for an unlimited society with a confidence interval of $\alpha = 0.05$ and a value of $p = q = 0.5$, the sample size was 384 people. The questionnaire was sent to 400 consumers of the brand for more accurate calculations. In the meantime, some questionnaires were removed due to a defect in completing the questions, and only 327 questionnaires were used for analysis and review. The research variables were first extracted from theoretical foundations, and then, based on the opinion of experts and university professors, the face and content validity of the scales was confirmed. Cronbach's alpha value was also calculated to ensure the reliability of the research variables. The results showed that the reliability of the questionnaire was appropriate because all the obtained coefficients were higher than 0.7. SPSS and Smart-PLS software were used to evaluate the reliability and validity of the measurement model (structural validity).

3 Research findings

In this study, data analysis was performed by structural equation modelling. The demographic information of the respondents to the research questions of this study was collected in Table 1.

To investigate the confirmatory factor analysis (internal validity), convergent validity and reliability of each of the variables of the conceptual research model; factor loads, average extracted variance (AVE), compound reliability (CR), Cronbach's alpha, and cross-sectional validity (Q2) were calculated, the results of which are given in Table 2.

Table 1 | Demographic information of respondents

Demographic variables		f	F(p)
Gender	Men	93	28/4
	Women	234	71/6
Age	20-30	196	59/9
	31-40	99	30/3
	41-50	24	7/3
	50+	8	2/4
Education level	Diploma	25	7/6
	Ba	147	45
	Ma	140	42/8
	PhD	15	4/6
Acquaintance with Hydroderm Brand	Lower than 2 years	5	1/5
	Between 2 to 4 years	35	10/7
	More than 4 years	287	87/8
The rate of use of Hydroderm brand products	Very high	122	37/3
	High	99	30/3
	Medium	73	22/3
	Low	25	7/6
	Very low	8	2/4
The number of purchases from the Hydroderm brand so far	1 to 3 cases in each three months	98	29/9
	3 to 5 cases in each three months	187	57/2
	More than 5 cases in each three months	42	12/9

Source: authors' own calculation

Table 2 | validity and reliability of conceptual model measurement criteria

Latent variables	Components	Factor loadings (≥ 7/0)	(AVE) (≥ 5/0)	(CR) (≥ 7/0)	Cronbach Alpha (≥ 7/0)	Construct cross-validated (CV-Communality) Q2 (>0)
The perceived ethical value of a brand	Brand ethical behaviour	0/877 0/806 0/881	0/737	0/893	0/821	0/462
	Brand ethical personality	0/884 0/810 0/891	0/743	0/896	0/827	0/470
	Brand ethical operations	0/857 0/880 0/817 0/816	0/711	0/907	0/864	0/506
	Brand ethical responsibility	0/892 0/819 0/891	0/753	0/901	0/835	0/487
Brand passion	Harmonious brand passion	0/888 0/840 0/754 0/875	0/560	0/942	0/933	0/506
	Obsessive brand passion	0/879 0/850 0/783 0/895	0/706	0/905	0/860	0/535

Brand-customer interaction	Consumer intention to buy	0/857 0/836 0/823	0/727	0/914	0/874	0/399
	Customer referral	0/878 0/860 0/895	0/755	0/902	0/837	0/513
	Customer social influence	0/844 0/880 0/909	0/602	0/947	0/939	0/516
	Customer knowledge sharing	0/852 0/798 0/823	0/703	0/876	0/789	0/355
Consumer hope for brand	-	0/845 0/872 0/890	0/770	0/909	0/850	0/490
Brand charisma	-	0/842 0/780 0/836 0/840	0/681	0/895	0/845	0/443

Source: authors' own calculation

According to the results given in Table 4, the validity of the structure and the reliability of each variable in the research were desirable. The factor loads of each of the variables were considered desirable due to being higher than the scale of 0.7 and indicated that the indicators express their main structure well. Also, the convergent validity of the research variables, which represents the average extracted variance (AVE), was acceptable for all latent structures of the research model because all of them were higher than 0.5. The conceptual model of this study had good values in terms of reliability because the allowable value of compound reliability (CR) was higher than 0.7, and also the appropriate amount of Cronbach's alpha was more than 0.7. According to the presented results, all these criteria are appropriate for the proposed model for each of the latent variables. The quality status of the structural model was appropriate concerning the common cross-sectional validity values because all values were greater than zero and were considered very desirable because they were also higher than 0.35.

3.1 Fitness of the structural model of the research

In structural equation modelling, one can rely on model estimates when the model has sufficient fit. The most common indicators for evaluating the structural model in the PLS-SEM method: Evaluation of the goodness of fit criterion (GOF), determination coefficient (R²), and common cross-sectional validity (Q²). The GOF was between zero and one, and values close to one indicate the appropriate quality of the concept model, and values 0.1, 0.25, and 0.36 were considered weak, medium, and strong. The value of the fitness criterion was given in Table 3. According to the obtained value, the conceptual model had a good fit and had a high ability to measure the main variables of the research.

Table 3 | Investigating the fitness of the structural model

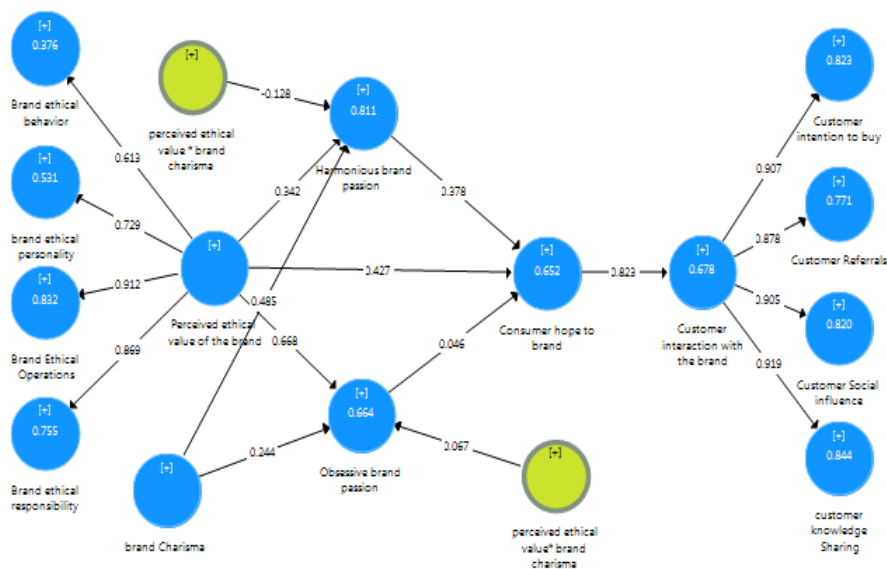
(GOF)	Acceptable interval	Result
0/395	Weak $\geq 0/1$; Average $\geq 0/25$; Strong $\geq 0/36$	Accepted

Source: authors' own calculation

3.2 Results of path analysis and hypothesis testing of the research model

Smart PIS3 software was used, which measured the structural equation modelling using the partial least squares method to analyze the data. Figure 2 shows the output of the software in estimating the path coefficients and the determination coefficients (R²). Table 4 summarizes the results of path analysis and causal relationships between research variables.

Figure 2 | Analysis of path coefficients and research model determination coefficients



Source: authors' own calculation

Table 4 | Results of the path coefficient and significance of the hypothesis test

H	Path analysis	Coefficient path (β)	T-value	sig
H1	Perceived ethical value of brand → consumer hope for brand	0/427	2/396	***
H2	Perceived ethical value of brand → harmonious brand passion	0/432	3/794	***
H3	Perceived ethical value of brand → obsessive brand passion	0/668	4/756	***
H4a	Perceived ethical value of brand → brand charisma → harmonious brand passion	- 0/128	3/045	***
H4b	Perceived ethical value of brand → brand charisma → Obsessive brand passion	0/067	1/245	unsupported
H5	Harmonious brand passion → consumer hope for brand	0/378	2/241	***
H6	Obsessive brand passion → consumer hope for brand	0/046	0/329	unsupported
H7	Consumer hope for brand → brand-customer interaction	0/823	17/265	***

Source: authors' own calculation

According to the findings of the hypothesis test and the significant coefficients of the conceptual model given in Table 6, all hypotheses except 4b and 6 have been confirmed at 95% confidence level as the absolute value of the statistic t for each of these structures was greater than its critical value (96 1.96) and the p-value between the relationships of those variables was less than 0.05.

Conclusions and suggestions

Given that brand owners are competing to increase their brand value for customers with other competitors in the industry, exposure to a brand's ethical and managerial characteristics, including the brand's beneficial and ethical products, honest and transparent customer engagement, respect for consumer rights, commitment to social responsibilities for people's health, and even the environment, can be important factors to distinguish between brand growth. So, today the value of a brand based on customer perceptions is evaluated by the brand's cognitive factors. The more positive the customer perception about the brand's ethical value, the higher the brand-customer interaction, the amount of brand purchase, and positive word-of-mouth. Given the importance of the impact of these relationships, this study examined the impact of the perceived ethical value of the brand on brand-customer interaction, which specifically considers the consumer community of the Hydroderm brand. The results of data analysis showed that out of 7 claimed hypotheses, five hypotheses were confirmed and statistically acceptable and significant, but hypothesis 4b and hypothesis 6 were rejected due to the lack of significance of its path coefficient. In the first hypothesis testing, the positive and significant effect of the perceived ethical value of the brand variable on consumer hope with path coefficient (0.427) and t-value (2.396) has been confirmed, which was consistent with the findings of Fazal-e-Hasan et al. (2018), which examined the effect of price perceived value, quality perceived value, emotional perceived value, and brand perceived social value on consumer hope. Understanding the ethical value of a brand can increase the consumer hope for the brand's advantage, so that, if the customer realizes that a brand has an ethical commitment to the health and well-being of consumers, it is made according to his tastes and responsibilities

and takes its responsibilities in the long run, consumer hope for the brand's products enhances, and the customer optimistically buys the brand's products to achieve its goals. Therefore, it is recommended that Hydroderm brand owners provide useful products, transparency, and honesty with customers, fair prices, accountability to customers, respect for their tastes, minimize waste products for the environment and accept the commitment to ethical responsibilities and communicate them to customers through social media advertising.

In the second hypothesis, the positive and significant effect of the perceived ethical value of the brand variable on the harmonious brand passion with a path coefficient (0.432) and the highest value of T (3.397) has been confirmed. The results of examining this hypothesis were similar to the results of Das et al.'s (2019) research, which examined the brand's sensory, emotional, behavioural, and intellectual experience on the harmonious brand passion with the mediating role of perceived ethical value. Therefore, when customers realize that the brand has ethical characteristics, they gain a deep desire for the brand, which leads to an increase in the customer's emotional attachment to the brand. Customers who are passionate about the brand try to harmonize with the brand and somehow internalize the brand, and even are willing to harmonize their interests with the brand to determine their identity. According to the above, it is suggested that the owners of Hydroderm brand ask the customers to take photographs of the process of improving their health using Hydroderm brand products and, after completing the full consumption period, share them in the pages of Hydroderm brand. They can share the good experiences and characteristics gained through the use of the brand with other users, and by doing so, show how committed and honest the brand has been to its promises. On the other hand, the company should encourage other consumers by sending cash gifts or discounts to them. Demonstration of how the products are consumed and the improvement process by customers is more credible to the public. Hence the other consumers get passionate to purchase from the company.

In the study of the third hypothesis, the effect of the perceived ethical value of the brand on the obsessive brand passion with path coefficient (0.668) and t-value (4.756) was positive and significant. These results are similar to the findings of a study by Das et al. (2019), who examined brand experience on obsessive brand passion with the mediating role of the perceived ethical value of the brand. The theoretical interpretation of this finding stated that the ethical value of the brand strengthens the customer's sense of satisfaction and confidence in his correct choice. Choosing an ethical brand expands the brand's advantage in one's mind because it will be accompanied by the pleasure of meeting one's inner personal needs that have little to do to buy the product, and one realizes that the brand's ethical character and behaviour are similar to theirs and represents his coherent inner self. Therefore, by choosing an ethical brand, one tries to express one's desired inner identity. Choosing this type of brand creates a kind of obsession for the customer, which over time becomes an involuntary and automatic choice that is always in the mind of the customer at the time of purchase and without thinking about other brands; obsession with the brand stands out so that it will not be satisfied without choosing it. Therefore, it is suggested that the owners of Hydroderm brand should increase the passion of customers to follow the brand, their motivation, and internal goals of buying and by following the purchase path or their comments, suggestions, interests, and tastes found on websites, or following their final

purchases, they can be closer to their attitudes, personalities, and lifestyles with credit cards provided by the company itself.

Examining the fourth hypothesis, the results showed that the brand charisma variable had a significant mediating role on the relationship between the perceived ethical value of a brand and the harmonious brand passion but did not mediate the relationship between the perceived ethical value of a brand and obsessive brand passion. Charisma brands are typically accepted by customers because of their ability to influence customers and are not necessarily ethical brands, and sometimes even have very high prices that force customers to spend a lot of money to buy their products. For this reason, the ethicality of a brand may in some cases, reduce the importance and effectiveness of a brand and remove its charisma from the customer's perspective. Therefore, the role of brand charisma in this hypothesis may, in some cases, have reverse or neutral results.

In the fifth hypothesis, the positive and significant effect of harmonious brand passion on consumer hope with path coefficient (0.378) and t-value (2.241) has been confirmed. According to the results, the studies of Fazal-e-Hasan et al. (2018), which showed that the customer's positive perception of the brand has a positive effect on consumer hope, was also confirmed. The findings indicated that the customer's desire to harmonize with the brand is due to the expression of his identity through the purchase of that brand. This, over time, increases the customer's positive attitude towards the brand and the desire to maintain a long-term relationship with the brand among more customers. Developing this strong relationship with the brand grows the sense of dependence, commitment, and loyalty to the brand because the customers always hope for the positive results and benefits that the brand creates and hope that he/she can achieve the goals with that brand. According to the theoretical interpretation, it is suggested that Hydroderm brand owners have a free consultation plan for skin and hair health for customers, whether in the form of face-to-face visits in pharmacies or online on the virtual pages of the Hydroderm brand. They should get customers to join the Hydroderm Customer Club to present their problems and enjoy special gifts and free consulting services. In this way, the company can carefully identify customers' skin problems and diseases and, according to their wishes, need and taking into account other skin and pharmaceutical care that he avoids, offer him a product that is appropriate and compatible with his/her conditions and lifestyle. In all honesty, the customer benefits from the advantage and improvement that can be a Hydroderm product for him/her.

In the sixth hypothesis, the positive and significant effect of obsessive brand passion variable on the consumer hope variable with the lowest value of the path coefficient in the path model (0.46) and the lowest value of t-value (0.329) was rejected. Theoretical interpretation of the results showed that the customer is obsessed with a brand by trying to express his social identity among other people, even if he does not hope to improve his situation and will be deprived of the benefits of other brands by choosing that brand and is not willing to compromise his social identity in the eyes of others. Customer's obsessive choice does not increase consumer hope for the benefits of the brand and only validates the buyer's social identity, among others. The customer has shown with his obsessive choice that he has full knowledge and awareness of the function of the brand, and hope for its benefits cannot be an effective factor in choosing his obsession. Therefore, to understand the subtle differences about the background and consequences of obsessive

brand passion, customers are advised to consider the features that increase the customer's sense of belonging to the Hydroderm brand and the results of advertisements and slogans. Observe brand ads that give products a different personality and identity, and observe the behavioural/cognitive characteristics of loyal consumers that are consistent with the brand's personality so that they can connect to the brand and consumer structures that cause customer obsession. It will be possible to discover the behavioural consequences of obsessive customers to the brand by conducting more marketing research.

In the seventh hypothesis test, the positive and significant effect of consumer hope on brand-customer interaction variable with path coefficient (0.823) and t-value (17.265) has been confirmed, which was in line with the results of Fazal-e-Hasan et al. (2018) as they found the positive impact of consumer hope on brand trust, brand satisfaction and customer commitment to the brand. Consumers who hope for the benefits of a brand to improve their situation will increase their relationship with that brand and interact more with the brand. Hopeful customers for a brand have enough confidence in the promised benefits of that brand, are satisfied with the use and benefit of the brand, and if the chosen brand responds to customer expectations and turns the consumer's hope into reality, long-term customer loyalty and commitment to the brand will be achieved. The customer will continue to buy from the brand and, with positive word-of-mouth advertising, will refer the brand to other customers and will be effective in influencing the purchase decision of others with effective social influence. Due to the strong relationship between consumer hope and their interaction with the brand, it is recommended that Hydroderm brand owners commit to the promises made during the promotion and sale of products, realize the announced benefits of the Hydroderm brand to customers, and make customers hope for positive results in the future use of Hydroderm products. The customer's expectation of the benefit of a brand is a positive expectation of causal events, which depends on the fulfilment of the brand's promises and the achievement of its goals.

This research, like any other study, has limitations that show potential ways for further research. The proposed conceptual model was based on data collected from Hydroderm brand customers. Therefore, generalizations to other businesses or a country with a specific background are limited. Therefore, future studies can examine the conceptual model in various other brands, including; The food and healthcare industry, where the ethics of a brand is a vital factor in choosing a brand, or overcome this limitation by examining the conceptual model in a high-quality foreign brand. The cross-sectional nature of research data collection was another limitation that diminishes the generality of the current study, so it is suggested that a longitudinal research project should be considered to link perceived ethical value of the brand, brand passion, consumer hope for the brand, and brand-customer interaction in the long run. Using the analysis of variance method, we can simultaneously analyze and review customer feedback on two or more selected brands and compare their current status with each other. Due to the increasing growth of online sales of products by virtual stores, the ethics of managing the process of supplying, introducing, and selling products will be very effective in loyalty and improving the customer's relationship with the store brand, so it is recommended that the model of consumers' opinions about the brand in virtual spaces should be tested and the quality of ethical services of these online stores and its relationship with the level of customer interaction with them should be considered. Using controllable variables such as consumer desire, expectation, and

optimism about the brand that overlaps with the consumer hope for a brand variable can provide new insights into the impact of variables.

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Appendix 1| Questionnaire

Research variable	Indicator	Items	Reference
Perceived ethical value of brand	Brand ethical behavior	Honesty of the Hydroderm brand with customers	(Bee & Dalakas, 2015) (Yoganathan et al., 2019) (Mpinganjira & Maduku, 2019) (Das et al., 2019) Christie et al., 2008)
		The Hydroderm brand respecting for customers	
		Commitment of the Hydroderm brand to maintain the health of customers' skin and hair	
	Brand ethical personality	Good compatibility of Hydroderm brand with customer tastes	
		The similarity of the character of the Hydroderm brand with the personality of the customers	
		Expressing the personal and social identity of the customer among others by choosing the Hydroderm brand	
	Brand ethical operations	Hygiene of raw materials forming the products of Hydroderm brand with the approval of the pharmaceutical health system	
		Heath of the final product	
		The fair price of Hydroderm brand products	
	Brand ethical responsibility	Principles and subordination of standards to the production process of Hydroderm products	
		Having legal licenses for production and adhering to the other rights of consumers	
		Having the social responsibility towards consumers	
Brand passion	Harmonious brand passion	Lack of damage in the long-term use of Hydroderm brand products for consumers	(Das et al., 2019) (Swimberghe et al., 2014)
		Gaining different experiences in skincare by harmonizing with Hydroderm brand products	
		Discovering better treatment methods by harmonizing yourself with the Hydroderm brand, which causes double interest and enthusiasm for the brand	
		Getting good skin and beauty features by harmonizing yourself with the Hydroderm brand	
	Obsessive brand passion	Hydroderm brand products are compatible with other skincare products	
		Keeping the Hydroderm brand in mind when buying a product	
		Emotional dependence on the Hydroderm brand	
		Obsession with the Hydroderm brand products and non-use of other brands	
brand-customer interaction	Consumer intention to buy	Customer dissatisfaction with any brand other than the Hydroderm brand	(Itani et al., 2019) (Pansari & Kumar, 2017)
		Continue to buy from Hydroderm brand in the future	
		Getting value by buying products of the Hydroderm brand	
	Customer referral	The feeling of customer satisfaction with buying Hydroderm brand	
		Advertising by customers among other people	
		Referring the Hydroderm brand to other friends and acquaintances	
	Customer social influence	Introducing Hydroderm brand products and services to others	
		Informing others about the experience of using the Hydroderm brand	
		Informing others about the benefits and values of	

		the Hydroderm brand	
		Customer Discussion on Different Media-Operating Systems as a Member of the Hydroderm Brand Fan Community	
	Customer knowledge sharing	Feedback from the experience of using the Hydroderm brand to the seller company	
		Providing suggestions for improving and expanding the performance of Hydroderm brand products/services to the seller company	
Consumer hope for brand	-	Providing advice on the new Hydroderm brand product/service to the seller	(Fazal-e-Hasan et al., 2018)
		Customer hopes for the benefits of the Hydroderm brand for skin health	
		Customer hopes to achieve the health and skin health goals they pursue using the Hydroderm brand	
Brand charisma	-	Customer Hope for Skin Health Improvement Using Hydroderm Brand	(Semaan et al., 2019) (Lee et al., 2015)
		Hydroderm brand attraction for customers	
		Hydroderm brand mastery and power over customer selection	
		Appropriate communication between Hydroderm brand and customers	
		Hydroderm brand trust for customers	

Source: authors