Moral Branding and Ethical Consumption: Bibliometric Trends in Value-Based Marketing Approaches

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Article Info

ABSTRACT

This study examines the conceptual framework and thematic progression of research on moral branding and ethical consumerism by a bibliometric analysis of publications indexed in Scopus from 2000 to 2025. The study employs VOSviewer and Biblioshiny to delineate major clusters pertaining to branding, consumer behavior, sustainability, and digital ethics. Results demonstrate a shift from initial psychological and behavioral models to interdisciplinary frameworks that incorporate sustainability and value-driven marketing. The United Kingdom and the United States appear as primary providers, while collaborations from Asia and Europe are becoming more prominent. The research offers theoretical and managerial insights for incorporating moral authenticity, sustainability, and consumer trust into branding initiatives. It additionally suggests a Value–Ethics–Sustainability paradigm as a conceptual framework to direct future inquiries in ethical marketing.
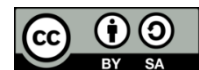
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1. INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, societal expectations have progressively compelled firms to synchronize their operations, communications, and branding strategies with moral and ethical principles. The increasing public apprehension regarding climate change, social inequality, labor rights, and corporate governance has prompted customers to assess not just the functional characteristics of items but also their ethical ramifications. Marketing researchers and

practitioners have developed concepts like ethical marketing, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and value-based branding to highlight transparency, justice, and social impact [1]. Ethical marketing serves as a framework that incorporates moral ideals into every facet of marketing decision-making, establishing morality as a cornerstone for trust and enduring connections.

Moral branding has arisen as a unique and increasingly vital method within this movement. Moral branding denotes a calculated endeavor by corporations to convey moral validity and authenticity within their brand identity, above conventional concepts of compliance or generosity. The process is integrating ethical assertions into a brand's narrative and objectives to align with consumers' intrinsic values [2]. Brands like Patagonia and The Body Shop exemplify ethical enterprises that advocate for sustainability while embodying narratives of justice, empathy, and stewardship. The issue persists in distinguishing genuine moral stances from superficial virtue signaling or "greenwashing," which frequently results in consumer mistrust and distrust [3]. The efficacy of moral branding hinges on consumers' impression of moral congruence, wherein brand ideals authentically align with their personal views and ethics.

The emergence of moral branding coincides with the escalation of ethical consumption, often termed ethical consumerism. Ethical consumption denotes the inclination of consumers to base their purchasing decisions on moral, social, and environmental considerations rather than on price or convenience [4]. Consumers express their preferences through their purchasing decisions by endorsing products and companies that adhere to ideals such as sustainability, fair trade, cruelty-free practices, and the respect for human rights. This customer behavior indicates a transition from material fulfillment to ethical satisfaction, presenting an opportunity for brands to incorporate moral storylines into their value propositions. Ethical consumerism and moral branding establish a symbiotic relationship; ethical consumers want moral brands, while moral brands draw in ethical customers. This connection reconceptualizes marketing not solely as a transaction of goods but as a process of ethical communication within society [5].

Notwithstanding the abundance of research and corporate efforts concerning these subjects, academic discussions on moral branding and ethical consumption continue to be disjointed and in flux. Numerous previous research are constrained to case-based or survey-based methodologies concentrating on certain sectors or market segments. The synthesis regarding the theoretical evolution, collaboration patterns, and intellectual linkages that constitute the field is limited (Martínez-Puertas, García-Lillo, & Díez-Martín, 2025). As a result, there is a lack of clarity regarding the predominant themes, key contributors, and multidisciplinary links that define this research field. For example, whereas research on sustainable branding, consumer ethics, and socially responsible marketing conceptually intersects, their bibliometric relationships have not been extensively examined.

Bibliometric analysis has developed into a systematic and quantitative method for revealing the conceptual framework and dynamics of study domains. It enables researchers to evaluate performance metrics—such as publishing trends, citation influence, and author output—and to illustrate theme networks via co-citation, co-authorship, and keyword co-occurrence mapping (Donthu et al., 2021). Bibliometric evaluations in marketing research have become essential for monitoring developing domains such as digital marketing, content marketing, and social media marketing (Zehra & Kesharwani, 2024). Nevertheless, bibliometric analyses concentrating explicitly on moral branding and ethical consumerism are limited. Martínez-Puertas et al. (2025) observe that, despite the increasing utilization of bibliometric methodologies in marketing, there exists a deficiency in their application to subdomains of ethical or value-based marketing, where moral and social values are the primary conceptions.

A bibliometric synthesis can elucidate the conceptual evolution and research trajectory of moral branding and ethical consumption, which are situated at the crossroads of marketing ethics, consumer psychology, and sustainability studies. This study would yield both descriptive statistics and theoretical insights on the evolution of discourse surrounding value-based marketing in relation to broader societal trends. It would identify prominent authors, significant journals, and collaborative networks that have influenced this knowledge base, while also emphasizing underexplored domains such as the digital moralization of brands and cross-cultural differences in ethical consumption [4]. This comprehension is essential for academics striving to develop cumulative theory and for practitioners endeavoring to create genuine moral branding strategies that conform to modern ethical standards.

Moral branding and ethical consumerism have garnered significant attention from scholars and practitioners; nevertheless, current research remains fragmented across several theoretical frameworks and publication outlets. This fragmentation hinders the capacity to track the evolution of the discipline, identify dominant authors and organizations, and recognize enduring conceptual or methodological deficiencies. The absence of integrated bibliometric mapping hinders scientists from recognizing the intellectual foundations and theme clusters that characterize this field of study. Therefore, it is vital to integrate fragmented insights into a unified framework to facilitate cumulative advancement in comprehending value-based marketing grounded in ethics [3], [6]

This study intends to perform a thorough bibliometric analysis of research at the convergence of moral branding, ethical consumerism, and value-driven marketing. This study aims to (1) analyze publication and citation trends over time, (2) identify prominent authors, institutions, journals, and countries, (3) delineate thematic and co-citation networks to uncover intellectual frameworks, (4) emphasize emerging clusters and research frontiers, and (5) pinpoint existing gaps to inform future research. This study enhances theoretical comprehension and aids managerial decision-making in moral and ethical branding strategies by offering a cohesive perspective on the field's development. The primary objective is to cultivate a more integrated and knowledgeable corpus of research that connects ethical marketing theory with practical branding strategies in the context of conscious consumerism [4], [7], [8].

2. METHODS

This study utilizes a bibliometric analysis to systematically delineate and assess the intellectual terrain of research concerning moral branding, ethical consumption, and value-based marketing. Bibliometric analysis is a quantitative approach employed to assess scientific literature via performance measures (including publication output, citation impact, and authorship productivity) and structural linkages (such as co-citation and keyword co-occurrence networks). This strategy enables researchers to discern emerging themes, significant contributors, and research trends within a specific subject [3]. This research aligns with previous studies in marketing bibliometrics [6], [7] by incorporating performance analysis to assess productivity and influence, alongside science mapping to illustrate the intellectual and conceptual framework of the discipline.

The bibliometric data were obtained from the Scopus database, selected for its comprehensive coverage of peer-reviewed journals in business, marketing, management, and social sciences. The search approach encompassed a variety of terms including "moral branding," "ethical consumption," "ethical consumerism," "value-based marketing," and "ethical marketing." Boolean operators and truncations (e.g., "brand AND ethic*") were employed to guarantee comprehensiveness. The inclusion criteria were: (1) articles in English, (2) indexed from 2000 to 2025, and (3) classified under pertinent subject areas such as business, management, economics, and social sciences. To ensure

quality and uniformity, non-academic sources, including conference reports, book reviews, and editorials, were removed [3]. Subsequent to the application of these filters, the dataset was exported in CSV and BibTeX formats for additional analysis.

Data processing and analysis were performed utilizing VOSviewer (version 1.6.20) and Biblioshiny (R-Studio interface). These instruments were employed to produce co-citation, co-authorship, and keyword co-occurrence maps, elucidating the conceptual framework and thematic progression of the discipline [9]. VOSviewer enabled the visualization of research clusters via bibliometric network mapping, whereas Biblioshiny provided the capability to compute performance indicators, including annual publishing trends, highly cited authors, and prominent journals. The research adhered to the analytical phases proposed by [3] data collecting, data cleansing, performance evaluation, scientific mapping, and interpretation. By incorporating these methodologies, the analysis guarantees methodological openness and replicability, thereby providing a comprehensive picture of the evolution of moral branding and ethical consumption research within the wider framework of value-based marketing.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Keyword Co-Occurrence Network
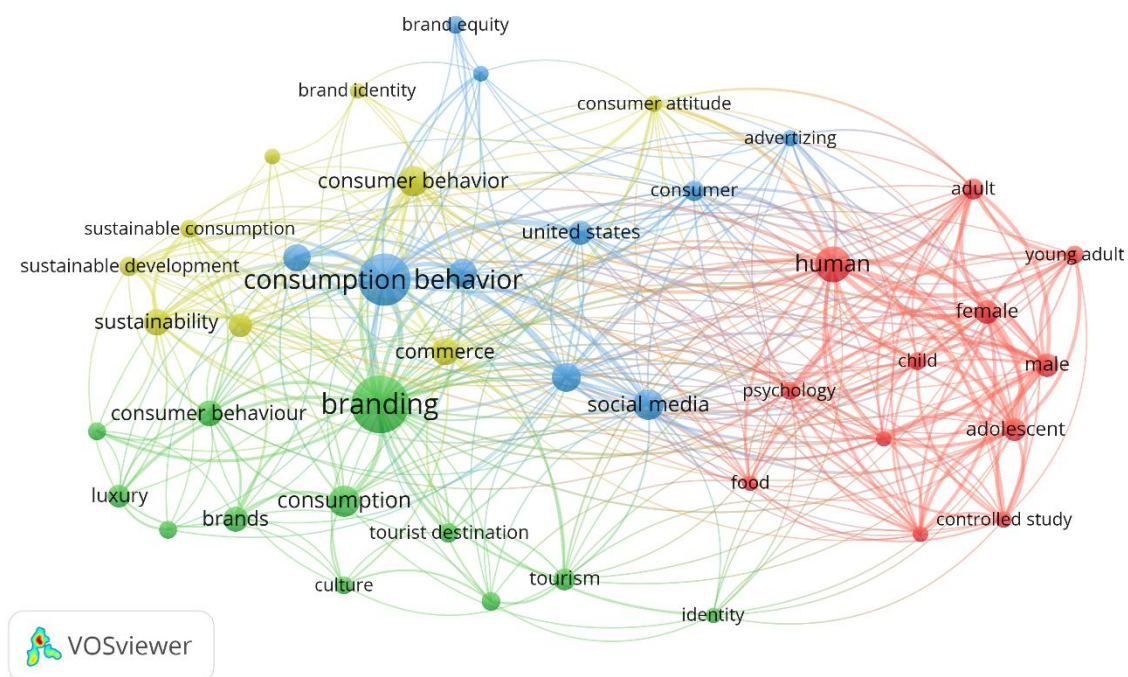
Figure 1. Network Visualization
Source: Data Analysis Result, 2025

Figure 1 The VOSviewer visualization you provided depicts the co-occurrence associations of keywords in the domains of moral branding, ethical consumerism, and value-based marketing. The dimensions of each node represent keyword frequency, whilst the colors denote clusters of related subjects. The network identifies four principal theme clusters that signify interrelated domains of study emphasis.

The blue cluster focuses on "consumption behavior," "consumer behavior," "social media," and "commerce." This group encompasses research on consumer decision-making and behavioral

intentions in digital and commercial environments. It emphasizes the impact of moral and ethical considerations on consumption decisions, especially in online or social media contexts. The association of terms like "advertising" and "consumer attitude" indicates a convergence between behavioral science and marketing communication, highlighting the digitalization of ethical marketing and the emergence of socially conscious consumers who utilize digital platforms to articulate moral preferences.

The green cluster encompasses "branding," "consumer behavior," "culture," "tourism," and "luxury." This group embodies the conception of branding via a moral and cultural lens, illustrating how brands incorporate identity, culture, and sustainability into their storytelling. The association between "tourist destination" and "luxury" signifies an increasing focus on sustainable branding within lifestyle and experiential industries, where ethical storylines (e.g., authenticity, heritage, environmental stewardship) are paramount. This cluster illustrates the role of moral branding as a narrative device for value creation that surpasses product characteristics.

The yellow cluster connects sustainability topics, encompassing "sustainable consumption," "sustainable development," and "sustainability." These nodes are intricately associated with both consumption and branding clusters, indicating that ethical and moral considerations are profoundly intertwined with the sustainability discourse. The connections between these nodes suggest that moral branding frequently intersects with

sustainability marketing, business ethics, and global development initiatives, including the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This research cluster examines the congruence between corporate ethical conduct and sustained environmental and social accountability.

The red cluster, characterized by terms such as "human," "psychology," "adult," "female," "male," and "adolescent," signifies the psychological and demographic aspects of ethical consumption. It illustrates how moral reasoning, identity, and socialization influence ethical decision-making among various age and gender demographics. The prevalence of psychological terminology indicates the discipline's robust basis in behavioral and cognitive theories that elucidate how individuals assimilate moral standards and convert them into consumption behaviors. This cluster contextualizes ethical marketing as a result of psychological, cultural, and social connections.

The network map demonstrates that research on moral branding and ethical consumption is interdisciplinary, incorporating perspectives from marketing, psychology, sustainability studies, and digital communication. The intricate connections among clusters suggest a developing convergence: sustainability narratives shape moral branding, consumer behavior theories elucidate ethical decisions, and digital spaces function as arenas for value signaling. The image highlights a study domain transitioning from fragmented discourse on morality in marketing to a comprehensive framework linking values, identity, and social responsibility within brand strategy and customer behavior.
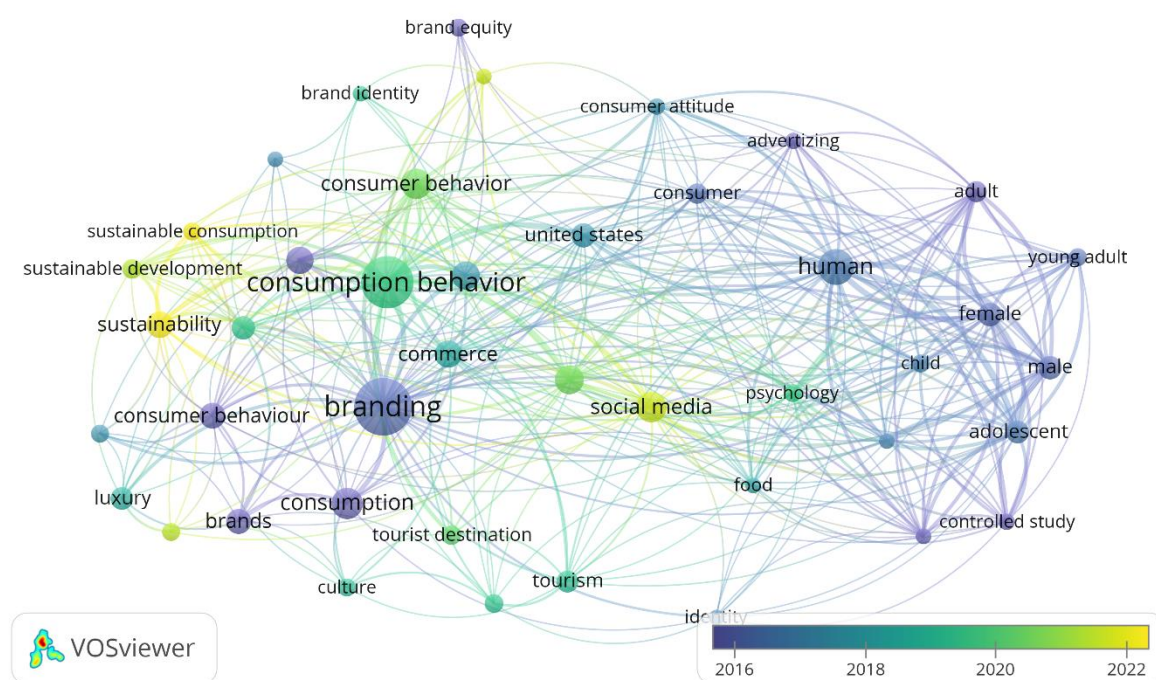
Figure 2. Overlay Visualization
Source: Data Analysis Result, 2025

The overlay visualization from VOSviewer depicts the historical progression of study themes concerning moral branding, ethical consumerism, and value-based marketing from 2016 to 2022. The color gradient—from dark blue (previous years) to yellow (recent years)—illustrates the temporal progression and development of subjects. Preceding studies, depicted in dark blue hues, mostly concentrated on human psychology, gender, and advertising, signifying that the earliest phase of research highlighted psychological and demographic factors influencing consumer behavior. During this period, researchers investigated the impact of moral ideals, gender identity, and cognitive processes on ethical or prosocial consumption, embodying a micro-level behavioral approach grounded in psychology and consumer studies.

As the discipline advanced toward the late 2010s (light green tones), study broadened to encompass subjects such as branding, consumer behavior, social media, and commerce. This change signifies a transition from comprehending individual moral reasoning to examining how brands convey ethical ideals and establish trust in digital and economic environments. The incorporation of social media and consumer attitudes in recent clusters illustrates the centrality of digital communication channels in value-based marketing discourse. This era signifies a conceptual alignment between moral branding and digital ethics, wherein brand authenticity, online transparency, and consumer interaction are increasingly regarded as ethical imperatives rather than just marketing strategies.

In recent years (2020–2022), highlighted in bright yellow, the focus has shifted towards sustainability, sustainable consumption, and sustainable development. This evolution represents a definitive amalgamation of ethical branding with frameworks of environmental and social responsibility, in accordance with global initiatives like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The current research phase embodies a comprehensive worldview that integrates sustainability science with ethical and value-driven marketing, emphasizing the role of corporate ethics, environmental responsibility, and social impact in shaping

contemporary consumer-brand connections. The overlay map illustrates a conceptual progression from personal ethics to systemic sustainability, highlighting the evolution of

moral branding and ethical consumption as essential elements of sustainable marketing research.

Figure 3. Density Visualization
Source: Data Analysis, 2025

The density visualization map generated by VOSviewer delineates the regions of highest research concentration in the domains of moral branding, ethical consumption, and value-based marketing. The color gradient—from dark blue (indicating low density) to bright yellow (indicating high density)—depicts the frequency of co-occurrence of distinct terms in the studied publications. The most prominent areas, based on "consumption behavior" and "branding," signify these as the primary focal points of the literature. This concentration indicates that the majority of research agree on the impact of ethical and moral principles on customer decision-making and the strategic positioning of businesses to fit with such values. The strong connection among these nodes illustrates the amalgamation of consumer psychology and brand management, wherein moral identity, sustainability, and authenticity serve as

fundamental factors influencing consumer trust and loyalty.

Peripheral yet pertinent topics—such as "sustainability," "sustainable consumption," and "social media"—exemplify increasing interdisciplinary interconnections linking ethical marketing to environmental awareness and digital communication. Concurrently, the comparatively moderate density surrounding "human," "psychology," and "consumer attitude" signifies a secondary yet persistent study trajectory focusing on behavioral and demographic analysis. The density map collectively illustrates a well-established study domain with foundational areas in branding and consumption ethics, alongside emerging trends in sustainability and digital consumer behavior. This trend highlights the field's progression from personal moral reasoning to integrated ethical marketing

approaches within digital and sustainability frameworks.
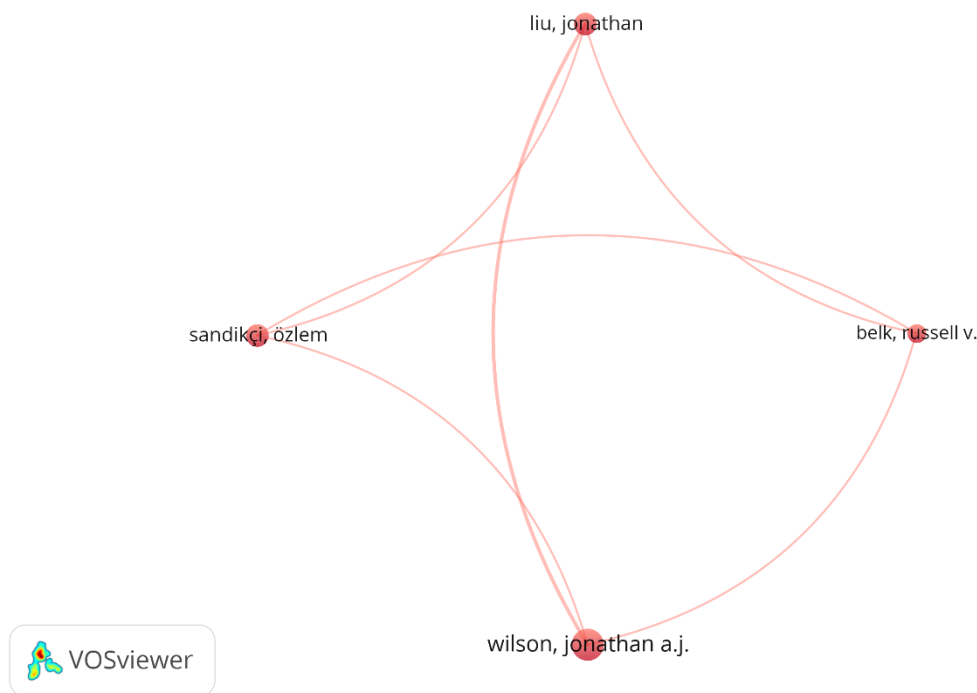
3.2 Co-Authorship Network

Figure 4. Author Collaboration Visualization
Source: Data Analysis, 2025

Figure 4 illustrates the co-authorship visualization depicts a modest yet notable collaboration network among prominent researchers engaged in the discourse on moral branding, ethical consumption, and value-driven marketing. The four primary nodes—Russell W. Belk, Jonathan A. J. Wilson, Özlem Sandıkcı, and Jonathan Liu—embody prominent scholars whose contributions are interconnected by common research issues rather than by frequent collaborative publications. The thickness of the connecting lines indicates intellectual proximity and citation co-occurrence, rather than the frequency of direct co-authorship. Belk is acknowledged for his foundational contributions to consumer culture theory and ethical consumption, while Wilson and Liu are noted for their advancements in moral and Islamic branding studies, and Sandıkcı for his integration of cultural and ethical viewpoints in marketing. This visualization indicates that although the field is conceptually linked through these thought leaders, collaboration is constrained and geographically scattered—highlighting opportunities for more cohesive, cross-cultural, and interdisciplinary research partnerships in the moral branding literature.

Figure 5. Affiliation Collaboration Visualization
Source: Data Analysis, 2025

Figure 5 the depiction of institutional collaboration demonstrates a constrained yet geographically varied network of universities engaged in research on moral branding and ethical consumption. The principal links identified—Oxford Brookes Business School, Newcastle Business School, Macquarie University (Sydney), and the University of Stirling—constitute tiny yet interconnected clusters, indicating that cross-institutional collaboration predominantly occurs inside the United Kingdom and Australia. The thickness of the connecting lines signifies that Oxford Brookes and Newcastle Business School has the most robust collaboration link, demonstrating a shared research focus on consumer ethics and branding. Macquarie University functions as a conduit between UK institutions to the University of Stirling, promoting the transcontinental flow of knowledge. The map illustrates that although institutional partnerships in this domain are developing, the collaboration network is fragmented, underscoring the necessity for enhanced international cooperation and interdisciplinary involvement to promote global perspectives on moral and ethical marketing research.
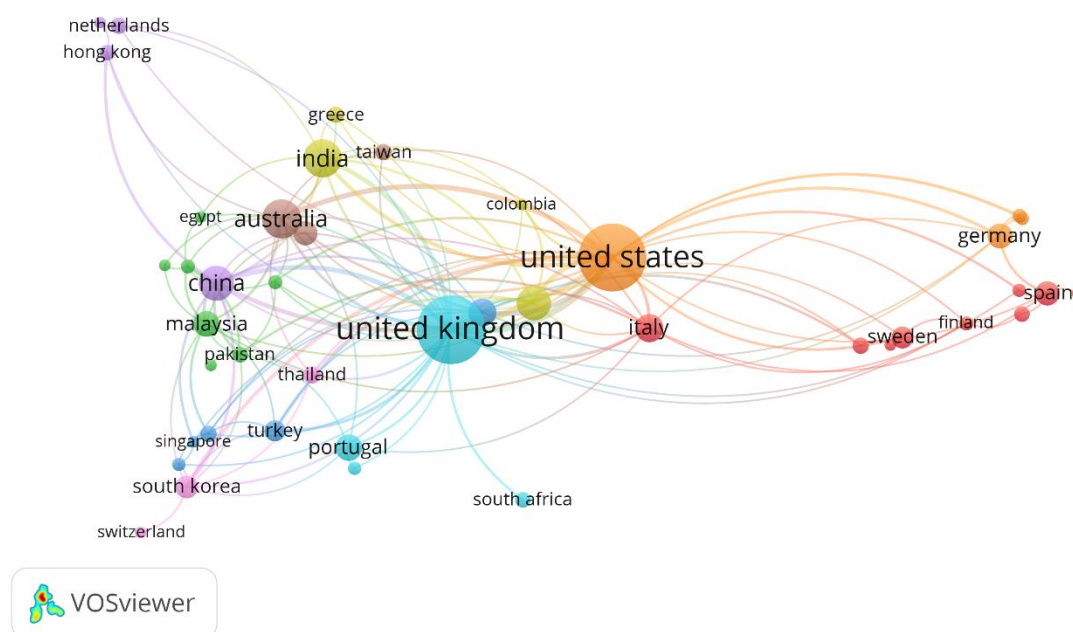
Figure 6. Country Collaboration Visualization
Source: Data Analysis, 2025

Figure 6 the depiction of country collaboration illustrates a globally integrated, yet regionally concentrated, research network in moral branding and ethical consumption. The predominant nodes—the United Kingdom and the United States—occupy pivotal locations, signifying their substantial importance in publication output, citations, and international co-authorship. These two nations serve as the primary centers of knowledge, establishing robust collaborative relationships with Italy, Germany, Spain, Australia, and India. The density and proximity of the ties indicate a vigorous transatlantic relationship, wherein Anglo-American study has significantly influenced the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of ethical marketing research.

Emerging nations like China, Malaysia, Turkey, and South Korea demonstrate increasing contributions from Asia, especially in consumer ethics and sustainable branding. Their affiliations with the UK and Australia signify cross-regional academic collaborations that are broadening the field beyond Western viewpoints. European countries, such as Germany,

Sweden, and Spain, have unique yet interrelated clusters that emphasize sustainability and corporate social responsibility topics. The picture illustrates a multi-centered, hierarchically organized research landscape, predominantly led by Western academic institutions, albeit progressively diversified through Asian and cross-continental collaboration. This trend highlights the global significance of moral branding as a cohesive framework connecting ethics, culture, and consumer behavior in international marketing research.

3.3 Citation Analysis

To comprehend the intellectual underpinnings and developing dialogue around moral branding, ethical consumerism, and value-driven marketing, it is essential to analyze the most significant and frequently referenced works that have influenced this multidisciplinary domain. The subsequent table delineates ten significant publications that jointly chart the convergence of branding, culture, sustainability, and consumer identity. Covering the period from 2003 to 2020, these studies elucidate how businesses create

meaning, convey values, and interact with consumers via moral, cultural, and social narratives. This bibliometric analysis examines citation trends and topic focuses, illustrating the shift in branding scholarship from conventional product differentiation to purpose-driven, socially responsible, and ethically based marketing tactics.

Table 1. Top Cited Research

Citations	Authors and year	Title
1853	Schau, H.J., Muñiz Jr., A.M., Arnould, E.J. (2009)	How brand community practices create value
1154	Young, J.H., Nunes, J.C., Drèze, X. (2010)	Signaling status with luxury goods: The role of brand prominence
707	Pickett-Baker, J., Ozaki, R. (2008)	Pro-environmental products: Marketing influence on consumer purchase decision
638	Evans, G. (2003)	Hard-Branding the cultural city-from Prado to Prada
593	Eckhardt, G.M., Houston, M.B., Jiang, B., ... Rindfleisch, A., Zervas, G. (2019)	Marketing in the Sharing Economy
527	Brough, A.R., Wilkie, J.E.B., Ma, J., Isaac, M.S., Gal, D. (2016)	The green-feminine stereotype and its effect on sustainable consumption
503	Vredenburg, J., Kapitan, S., Spry, A., Kemper, J.A. (2020)	Brands Taking a Stand: Authentic Brand Activism or Woke Washing?
453	Jalilvand, M.R., Samiei, N. (2012)	The effect of electronic word of mouth on brand image and purchase intention: An empirical study in the automobile industry in Iran
448	Hearn, A. (2008)	'Meat, mask, burden': Probing the contours of the branded 'self'
443	Wilson, J.A.J., Liu, J. (2010)	Shaping the Halal into a brand?

Source: Scopus, 2025

The bibliometric data presented reveals significant scholarly contributions that have greatly impacted the study of moral and ethical branding. The highly referenced article by [10] with 1,853 citations, is a seminal piece that examines how brand community practices generate value through shared rituals, moral accountability, and collective identity, establishing a basis for comprehending brand-consumer co-creation within ethical and social contexts. Young, Nunes, and Drèze (2010) enhance this discussion by analyzing status signaling via luxury items, demonstrating how brand prominence communicates symbolic and moral aspects of consumer identity in hierarchical cultures.

[11] together with [12] expand branding discourse into sustainability, examining the impact of green marketing and gendered perspectives of environmentalism on consumer behavior and identity development. Evans (2003) and Hearn (2008) provide cultural analyses that contextualize branding as a cultural and performative process, wherein both cities and individuals are transformed into branded entities that embody moral, aesthetic, and ideological ideals.

Recent studies, including [13] and [14] highlight the increasing conflict between genuine brand activism and woke washing amidst social responsibility and heightened digital consumer awareness. [15] empirically examined electronic word of mouth, whereas [16] investigated Halal branding, demonstrating how ethical, cultural, and religious settings influence brand trust and legitimacy in global marketplaces. These significant studies delineate the intellectual progression of moral branding, from its cultural and communal origins to its contemporary expressions in sustainability, activism, and ethical consumerism, underscoring the growing importance of moral value creation in modern marketing theory and practice.

Practical Implications

This bibliometric study's findings provide several practical insights for practitioners, legislators, and marketing strategists. The prevalence of issues like consumption behavior, branding, sustainability, and social media suggests that effective marketing tactics must transcend just transactional value to highlight moral resonance and ethical authenticity. Companies are urged to include ethical themes into brand positioning—such as transparency, fairness, diversity, and environmental stewardship—to enhance consumer trust and loyalty. Furthermore, the increasing convergence of social media and ethical consumerism indicates that digital platforms function as significant venues for moral signaling and public responsibility. Brands that adeptly utilize social media to convey their ethical commitments might bolster interaction with conscientious consumers while alleviating suspicions regarding "greenwashing."

From a policy standpoint, the robust connection between sustainable consumption and ethical marketing highlights the necessity of establishing regulatory frameworks that encourage truthful labeling, responsible advertising, and responsibility for sustainability assertions. Policymakers and advocacy organizations can utilize these findings to develop awareness campaigns and certification systems that promote consumer decisions aligned with their values. This study underscores the necessity for educational institutions and practitioners to develop ethics-focused marketing courses that integrate behavioral insights with sustainability principles, equipping future marketers to function responsibly in a value-oriented economy.

Theoretical Contributions

This study theoretically enhances the comprehension of moral branding and ethical consumption by delineating their development within the overarching context of value-based marketing. This research use bibliometric performance analysis and science mapping to elucidate the evolution of moral and ethical ideals from marginal issues to central notions in marketing theory. The co-occurrence networks and temporal analyses indicate that moral branding has transitioned from initial behavioral models focused on moral cognition (pre-2016) to modern frameworks prioritizing sustainability, social identity, and digital ethics (post-2020). This trajectory enhances the ethical dimension in marketing research, demonstrating how moral values function as strategic assets that affect consumer–brand interactions and organizational legitimacy.

This study enhances the literature by offering a conceptual synthesis that integrates three hitherto disparate domains: (1) moral branding, (2) ethical consumption, and (3) sustainability-driven marketing. The visualization maps illustrate that these issues constitute an interconnected trio influencing contemporary consumer thought, hence endorsing the development of a Value–Ethics–Sustainability (VES) paradigm in marketing. The bibliometric method substantiates the theoretical significance of interdisciplinarity—connecting consumer psychology, business ethics, and sustainability studies—and provides a systematic framework for future researchers to investigate moral identity, cultural impact, and digital moralization within branding contexts.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Notwithstanding its thorough methodology, this study possesses multiple shortcomings that present avenues for future research. The bibliometric data were obtained solely from the Scopus database, which, while comprehensive, may omit pertinent publications indexed in alternative repositories like Web of Science or Google Scholar. Enhancing database coverage may yield a more comprehensive depiction of the domain. Secondly, whereas bibliometric study quantifies publication trends and citation frameworks, it fails to delve into the qualitative intricacies of moral reasoning, cultural variances, and emotional dynamics that underpin ethical consumption. Subsequent research may enhance bibliometric mapping by including systematic literature reviews or qualitative meta-syntheses to encompass these interpretive aspects.

The study's temporal scope (2000–2025) offers insight into contemporary advancements but may inadequately encompass pre-millennial core beliefs in moral philosophy or consumer ethics. Incorporating established conceptual frameworks could provide a more thorough context for the evolution of moral branding. Ultimately, co-authorship and institutional networks are notably dispersed, indicating a necessity for enhanced global and interdisciplinary collaborations that integrate Western and non-Western viewpoints. Future research should broaden cross-cultural comparative investigations and examine the varying functions of moral branding across economic systems, digital cultures, and sustainability frameworks. Rectifying these constraints would enhance the theoretical rigor and global inclusivity of moral branding and ethical consumption research.

4. CONCLUSION

This study offers a thorough bibliometric analysis of the developing nexus among moral branding, ethical consumerism, and value-driven marketing. The findings indicate that research in this area has evolved from disjointed behavioral and ethical investigations into a more cohesive and interdisciplinary arena that links sustainability, consumer psychology, and digital ethics. Prominent subjects include branding, consumer behavior, sustainability, and social media illustrate the theoretical alignment of ethical and strategic marketing viewpoints. The collaborative networks underscore the preeminence of Western scholarship, primarily from the United Kingdom and the United States, alongside burgeoning contributions from Asia and Europe.

This research emphasizes the necessity of integrating ethical and moral values into the foundation of branding and marketing strategies. This study advances value-driven marketing paradigms by mapping intellectual trends, identifying key contributors, and providing future research directions that match organizational purpose with societal well-being and sustainable consumer practices.

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