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## **A REVIEW ON THE CONSUMER PERCEPTION ABOUT MARKETING ETHICS\***

Nneka Chioma EMENNA\*\*  
Burçin KAPLAN\*\*\*

### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to examine the impact of consumer demographic characteristics and marketing mix elements on the consumer perception of marketing ethics. In this study, the review is structured to analyze how demographic characteristics and marketing mix affect how consumers relate to ethics in marketing. This study also focuses on identifying unethical behaviours and uncovers the events that lead to them. In addition, it determines the influence of consumers' demographic characteristics, culture, and sentiments on the perception of marketing ethics. The study tries to determine consumers' reactions to organizational unethical marketing activities. The study reviewed empirical studies that were conducted on the effect of demographic characteristics like age, gender, income, and other demographic variables and consumer perception of the marketing mix which includes price, product, promotion, and place on consumer perception of the marketing ethics, and finally, the study showed that demographic characteristics like gender, nationality, and age have a significant relationship with consumer perception of marketing ethics.

**Keywords:** Ethics, Marketing, Consumer, Perception, Culture.

## **PAZARLAMA ETİĞİ HAKKINDA TÜKETİCİ ALGISINA İLİŞKİN BİR DEĞERLENDİRME**

### **ÖZET**

Bu çalışma, tüketici demografik özelliklerinin ve pazarlama karmaşının tüketicinin pazarlama etiği algısı üzerindeki etkisini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmada inceleme, demografik özelliklerin ve pazarlama karmaşının tüketicilerin pazarlamada etik ile ilişkisini nasıl etkilediğini analiz etmek için yapılandırılmıştır. Aynı zamanda potansiyel riskleri belirlemeye ve suistimallere yol açan olayların varlığını ortaya çıkarmaya odaklanmıştır. Tüketicilerin demografik özelliklerinin, kültürünün ve duygularının pazarlama etiği

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\*\* [nneka.emenna@outlook.com](mailto:nneka.emenna@outlook.com) ORCID: 0000-0003-3065-7786

\*\*\* Asst. Prof., İstanbul Aydın University, Fac. Econ. Adm. Sci., Department of International Trade and Finance, [burcinkaplan@aydin.edu.tr](mailto:burcinkaplan@aydin.edu.tr), ORCID: 0000-0003-4967-8405

algılarındaki etkisini belirler. Araştırma, tüketicilerin örgütsel etik olmayan pazarlama faaliyetlerine tepkilerini belirlemeye çalışmaktadır. Bu çalışma, yaş, cinsiyet, gelir gibi demografik özelliklerin ve diğer demografik değişkenlerin fiyat, ürün, promosyon ve dağıtım içerene pazarlama karmaşasının tüketici algısına etkisi üzerine yapılan ampirik çalışmaları, pazarlama etiğine ilişkin tüketici algısını incelemiş, ve son olarak cinsiyet, milliyet ve yaş gibi demografik özelliklerin tüketicinin pazarlama etiği algısı ile önemli bir ilişkisi olduğu görülmüştür.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Etik, Pazarlama, Tüketici, Algı, Kültür.

## **1. Introduction**

Organizational growth, performance and productivity of an organization are the direct consequence of patronage, sales and product promotion/marketing. Marketing has been seen as one of the most important aspects of every business venture. Businesses go to so much length to showcase various products and services through the use of different marketing techniques, strategy and concepts. The basic aim of going into business is to make a profit which is solely achieved when what an organization produces or rendered are patronized. For the patronage of any item by customers, the visibility of the goods and services should be seen, which in turn increases purchase. Promotion or marketing of goods has been a big part of doing business. Before the invention of the new media, the use of television, the radio and billboards were used by an organization to market and promote their services which try to speak to their target market and lure people to buy their goods and services.

The advent of the new media (social media) in marketing has increased the level to which companies carry out target campaigns without any form of regulation. Ethics in marketing deals with how product marketing is carried out using any type of platform. Ethical business practices have been studied vigorously by different marketing professionals and researchers. Eagle (2009) wrote that ethics focuses on norms, values, standards, and ideas

which guide a group of people, institution and community. These have been seen around the study of marketing ethics and they have been controversial. Laczniak (2012) stated that marketing ethics is the study of how moral standards are applied to decision making when it comes to the marketing of goods and services. It also focuses on the behaviour of marketers and the institution they represent. Marketing ethics is aimed at creating codes of conduct that an organization has to adhere to while promoting its goods and services. In recent times, many marketing campaigns employed by most organizations have been seen to be very deceptive, unethical, and have fallen short of the moral code of marketing practices. The increase in technology has also helped in increasing the scrutiny in ethical marketing and has also given leverage to some marketers to continue in their dubious and deceptive scheme just to make more sales and profit. Social media marketing ethics is becoming the most scrutinized part of the media because of the almost absence of scrutiny in the system. Content creation and product advertisement are quite prevailing in the new media and various unethical practices are prevalent there.

Laczniak (2012) emphasized that ethical issues in marketing have been in existence since the inception of trade. Kumar and Mohktar (2016) stated that issues bordering on ethical marketing practices have become well known and often talked about because of the increasing numbers of consumer complaints. Often, marketers are overzealous when it comes to marketing, and most times they cross the line. Consumer perception when it comes to different marketing practices and ethics has become a topic most marketing managers have tried to invest too many resources in. Some marketing practices instigate consumers to buy while others just irritate very sensitive customers and in turn build negativity in the perception of the customers

towards the product. Consumer perception focuses on how consumers react to product promotion which can be psychological. Some consumers can be referred to as ethical consumers, those consumers who focus on the appropriateness of a marketing campaign, who get tipped off when there are unethical actions concerning marketing or promotional campaigns. There is an increasing lack of trust in the various marketing campaigns, because of the number of deceptions seen by customers. Many marketers invest so much of their promotional funds in creating advert content for products that do not live up to the expectations they created during the marketing campaigns. Limbu et al., (2011) determined that since the internet is becoming the most frequently used platform in product marketing, ethical issues concerning internet usage have prompted serious concerns to consumers perception and the media has created new challenges for marketing professionals and practitioners.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Marketing Ethics**

Eagle (2012) defined ethics as the study of standards of conduct and moral judgment. Ethics is used in resolving conflicting standards or moral judgment. It is a set of rules which is used in deciding what is wrong and what is right. Ethics focuses on norms, values, standards and ideas. Ethics is a wide range of codes that guides people on conduct. It guides people on best practices.

Caner and Banu (2014) defined marketing ethics as an inquiry into the nature and grounds of moral judgment, standards, and rules of conduct, relating to marketing decisions and marketing situations. Kumar and Mokhtar (2016) stated that marketing ethics requires the avoidance of unintended consequences of various marketing activities by taking into

consideration of the various stakeholders and their interest and also considering society. Laczniak (2012) emphasized that marketing ethics is all the principles and values which are used in governing businesses that are engaged in presenting products or services to customers.

Akdogan et al., (2015) emphasized that marketing ethics are the rules governing the conduct of organizational members and the consequences of marketing decisions made when promoting a product. It focuses on the reaction gathered from consumers and ethical bodies when a product is being promoted. Caner and Banu (2014) emphasized that marketing ethics is defined from two broad perspectives. The individual and organizational perspectives:

1. **Individual perspective:** Personal values and moral philosophies are keys when making ethical decisions in marketing. This perspective focuses on honesty, fairness, responsibility, and citizenship. These values help in guiding complex marketing decisions in the context of an organization.
2. **Organizational perspective:** In this perspective, organizational values, codes, and training are necessary for providing consistent and shared approaches when it comes to making ethical decisions.

Laczniak (2012) in his study on ethics in marketing distinguished two forms of marketing ethics. The author outlined that marketing ethics is a sub-set of business ethics and anything associated with business ethics that is inherent in marketing ethics. The author put forward that the two forms of marketing ethics are positive marketing ethics and normative marketing ethics.

1. **Positive Marketing Ethics:** Here, the author looked at marketing ethics from the standpoint of “what is”. For example, the author outlined that tracking the number of violations that deal with

deceptive advertising would be an example of positive marketing ethics.

2. **Normative Marketing Ethics:** This form of ethics focuses on how marketing is meant to operate, which is according to some moral standard or theory. It focuses on moral standards applied to marketing situations which include the usual moral frameworks which are usually applied when evaluating business ethics. Thus, normative marketing practices are defined as ethical practices that emphasize the following;
  - i. Transparency
  - ii. Trustworthiness
  - iii. Organizational actions that are responsible
  - iv. Fairness and integrity towards consumers and stakeholders

Caner and Banu (2014) emphasized that the definition of normative marketing ethics provides certain virtues and values to which marketing practitioners should try to reach. The above definition of normative ethics sought to answer different questions like;

- i. What does transparency entail?
- ii. Does it mean that the place of a trade secret should not be followed?
- iii. What is the full definition of integrity regarding marketing ethics?
- iv. Does the idea of integrity involves organization keeping their promises to their customers or is it bigger than the company/organizational relationship?
- v. What is the exact nature of fairness in business?
- vi. Who decides the overall standard of fairness?

**vii.** Why should stakeholders' interests be taken into consideration?

With these questions, normative marketing ethics tries to put in place proper behaviour in marketing. It strives to give a better definition of the tiny features which make up marketing ethics. For the normative ethical framework to be upheld in an organization, Nill and Schibrowsky (2007) stated that ethical growth requires a managerial emphasis on ethical corporate culture, ethics training programs, and ethical audits. Normative marketing ethics is often used by marketers who frequently engagement in different relationships and cross-cultural activities as it emphasizes the relationship between an organization and its customers (Ferrel and Ferrel, 2006).

Ethical marketing is the overall process by which organizations instigate the interest of consumers towards their goods and services, by building strong customer relationships and also try to create value for all the stakeholders who have stakes in the organization (Rajan, 2016). The author goes further to write that ethical marketing refers to the applications of marketing ethics into marketing practices. Ethical marketing focuses on six sub-section and they include marketing effectiveness, marketing research, marketing dominance, market segmentation, market strategy, and marketing management.

## **2.2 Consumer Perception and Marketing Ethics**

### **2.2.1 Consumer Perception**

Consumer perception focuses on how consumers perceive and act towards a product or service. Vikash and Kumar (2017) stated that consumer perception uses the concept of sensory perception which relates to how

consumers or individuals create various opinions toward various institutions, companies, products, and services.

Limbu et al., (2011) emphasized that consumer perception focuses on the impression, awareness, or consciousness a consumer has towards a firm and what they are offering. A consumer can have a different perception of different products based on different key factors that are not visible to the provider of the service. The place, position, shape, packaging, colour, logo and many more can affect the way consumers look at certain products. Perception of certain products can be dual (positive perception and negative perception). The dual nature might be a factor of the preference of the consumer other than what the company is offering. Perception can be influenced by advertising reviews, public relations, social media, personal experience, customer demographic characteristics, and channels of distribution. Parihar (2014) determined that perception for a consumer starts when a consumer becomes aware based on inherent services. Consumer perception helps a consumer to make certain buying decisions.

Limaye and Paride (2017) outlined that sensation is the process of selecting, organizing, and interpreting perceptions into a meaningful idea. In considering sensation, the use of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch is used for comprehension. According to Hanna and Wozmak (2013) stated that perception is dependent on three important concepts

- i.** Exposure
- ii.** Attention
- iii.** Sensation

According to the researchers, exposure happens when an individual gets open to an environmental stimuli audient, being deliberate or good oriented behaviour. Attention is the allocation of mental capacity to a stimulus or



task. The sensation is the final part of the perception process and it is the response of human sensory receptors to various environmental stimuli and the final transmission of the information gathered to the brain through the nervous system. Based on the definition of consumer perception, environmental stimuli are received through the five senses of the human body which are the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and skin. The organs focus on sensory stimuli which include sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch respectively.

### **2.2.2 Factors Affecting Consumer Perception of Marketing Ethics**

Researchers determined that many factors have been proposed to have impacts on consumer perception of ethical marketing Parihar (2014); Vikash and Kumar (2017); Ladham (2015). Listed below are the following factors.

- Gender
- Demographic characteristics
- Marketing mix

### **Demographic Characteristics and Consumer Perception of Marketing Ethics**

The use of demographic characteristics and factors in consumer perception of marketing ethics has been considered by so many authors in consumer perception of marketing ethics. Demography is the human population, size, structure, distribution over space, socio-economic characteristics, households and families, migration, labour force, and educational status. Arto and Taru (2016) determined that so many studies have linked age as a significant predictor of consumers' ethical belief. The authors found out that the age of individual increases or decreases the likelihood of accepting unethical marketing behaviour. The explanation of the result shows that the younger

demography tends to be more unethical than other age groups and older consumers are more idealized. Lee and Jin (2019) found out that older consumers tend to be more ethical in their purchasing choices in comparison to younger consumers. Calabrese et al., (2016) studied the influence of gender difference in customer expectations and perception of responsible corporate conduct. The analysis made use of 908 participants in 12 banks in Italy. The result of the study showed that there is a small difference in the expectation between men and women. Women tend to show a higher average value in comparison to men. The result also shows that age differences increases or decreases the way females react to ethical value. Young females show the highest average ethical value expectations. Based on the following result it is obvious that age plays a crucial role in how a consumer perceives ethical marketing practices. Aito and Taru (2016) found out that higher income is associated with approval of unethical marketing practices and actions. Lee and Jin (2019) wrote that people with higher income groups are very likely to accept unethical marketing behaviour since most times unethical actions lead to an increase in income and a decrease in the amount which will be spent in paying for goods and services. People in the lowest income group are less likely to engage in unethical marketing practices. Walsh and Mitchell (2004) reached different result and they found out that people in the lowest income group might engage in unethical marketing practices to gain some little profit.

The educational level of consumers is another predictor of ethical behaviour. Arto and Taru (2016) wrote that more educated people are likely to reject unethical marketing activities than those who are less educated. Lee and Jin (2019) wrote that people with a higher level of education will be less tolerant of questionable customer activities than those who are at lower educational

levels. Empirical research results based on the level of education and tolerance to unethical marketing practices are diverse. Walsh and Mitchell (2004) wrote that those who have attained more formal education are more accepting of questionable behaviours. Based on information processing in regards to ethical behaviour, less educated consumers have a smaller information processing capacity. They take in information by digging deep even if the information is fraudulent. More educated demography can process information and the way by which they view complex problems and issues becomes different.

Rajah and Venaktaraman (2019) emphasized that location is also a factor in consumer perception of ethical marketing. They outlined that consumers who live in developed or urban communities have a less ethical dilemma in making buying decisions in comparison to rural consumers. Other important demographic characteristics that affect consumer perception include living status, work experience and organizational factors.

Another study was carried out in Finland to analyze the views of the consumer about ethics in business and trade. The study made use of a survey of about 713 Finnish consumers. The result of the study showed that even if the respondent considered business ethics as important, their behaviour towards buying does not reflect attitude (Parihar, 2014). The result was due to results that consumers were uncertain about the organization that practices ethical rules in production.

The place of gender difference (male and female) has been studied by different researchers to check how consumers relate and perceive marketing ethics. Robert and Antione (2011) in their study found out that women are more sensitive to ethics than men. The author determined that men and women process information differently. They emphasized that men are

selective in processing information while women use greater detailed elaboration. Ladhari (2015) stated that men are more ethically pragmatic than women. The result of their study further implied that women are generally more sensitive when it comes to ethical issues when compared to men. Various studies about ethical differences between the genders have concluded that men are more interested in moral equality issues which include rights and fairness; while women are focused on nurturing others, compassion, and sympathy. In consumer perception, female consumers take into consideration ethical factors before making purchases. They are detailed oriented and they focus on the minutest of details (Parihar, 2014).

Calabrese et al., (2016) stated that gender has been seen to influence consumers' moral orientation and outcome of decisions. Parihar (2014) determined that there is increased ethical awareness, sensitivity, and increased responsibility in women in comparison to men. Other studies have shown that gender differences between men and women do not always influence consumers ethically when it comes to perception. Parihar (2014) emphasized that sometimes, male reasoning when it comes to ethicality comes from the place of justice, while it comes from a place of care when relating to females.

### **2.2.3 Marketing Mix and Consumer Perception of Ethical Marketing**

Lee and Jin (2019) stated that the four elements of the marketing mix are important predictors of consumer perception of marketing ethics.

- 1. Product:** Siham (2013) wrote that many marketing executives face so many ethical dilemmas relating to the planning and application of product strategies. Information on the product label and packaging are important devious practices that are carried out by marketers. Lee

and Jin (2019) found out that many marketers promote harmful products that are designed poorly and lack the quality which is labelled on the products. Other unethical practices include the decline of recalling of products even though the product is problematic and inadequate in terms of guarantee which is related to the product. Anantha (2012) stated that consumer perception of an imitated brand or fake can be positive especially if the imitated brand is of low price and almost the same quality in comparison with the original brand.

2. **Price:** Ethically, the price of products must be equal or proportional to the benefit which is received by the consumers (Siham, 2013). Ethical concerns when it comes to price can be seen in price reduction, and price misleading is considered deceitful. Other unethical price structure includes predatory pricing which aims to have a monopolistic position, discriminatory pricing, and pricing application of product (Lee and Jin, 2019).
3. **Promotion:** Lee and Jin (2019) wrote that ethical issues in marketing are focused on advertising and personal selling. Advertising is the biggest platform where marketers use unethical means to promote their products. Siham (2013) emphasized that ethical marketing practices via advertisement includes autonomous advertising messages, preconceived advertising messages, advertising messages, and agent (consumer relationship). Others include overstating the feature of a product and the performance of the product which is contrary to the content of the product. The exaggeration of product attributes sales promotion, contests, games, advertisement invasiveness, and the use of online spams in an online advertisement (Amantha, 2012). Akdogan et al., (2016) studied the way consumers

perceive the regular media marketing campaign ethically using demographic features as key elements. In the research, 391 bank customers were used. The result of the study shows that consumers consider social marketing campaigns as an effort focused on increasing sales. Consumers with higher education see the content in social marketing as more ethically problematic and finally, there is a disparity between the perceptions of ethical marketing between the male and female respondents. Limaye and Paride (2017) carried out a study on consumer perception of the ethics of using children in the advertisement and promotion of products. Using 900 respondents and a structured questionnaire in the study, the authors argued that there are more benefits of using children in marketing promotion because of lowered cost. The consumer considers both benefit and cost factor, and there wasn't any relationship between benefit and cost factor responses. Limbu et al., (2011) studied the effect of consumer's perception towards ethical action of online vendors on website satisfaction and loyalty using 220 students as respondents, the study found out that non-deception, fulfilment and security are significant predictions of website satisfaction. A study on ethical marketing practices by organizations, from the consumer point of view, was carried out in Malaysia by Kumar and Mohktar (2016). The study aimed at investigating consumers' perception of marketers' commitment to ethical practices. The results show that product fairness and price fairness are positively correlated to the attitudes of shoppers towards firms who resort to ethical practices.

- 4. Place:** Consumers can be manipulated, using subtle marketing techniques in distribution channels and outlets. Lee and Jin (2019)

determined that ethical consumers can be seen in product segmentation, targeting, and product positioning. Direct marketing, supply, channel management, invasion of privacy, and intrusion are ethical actions that could be worrisome.

#### **2.2.4 Marketing Ethics Theories**

In this part of the study, the theories focused on marketing ethics will be discussed in detailed. The theories which will be studied are as follows;

- i.** The general theory of marketing ethics
- ii.** The utilitarian theory of marketing ethics
- iii.** Deontological theory of marketing ethics
- iv.** Virtue ethics theory

The general theory of marketing ethics is also called the H-V model which stands for the Hunt and Vitell model. Also, Vermillion et al., (2002) determined that the general theory of ethics is a process. As a process, the different stages of the model can be explained and understood as means or methods of operation. The theory sees ethics as a reasoned action approach. Vermillion et al., (2002) determined that ethical decisions are considered to be deliberate in a rational and subjectively calculated manner and they are based on behavioural norms and relevant influencing considerations.

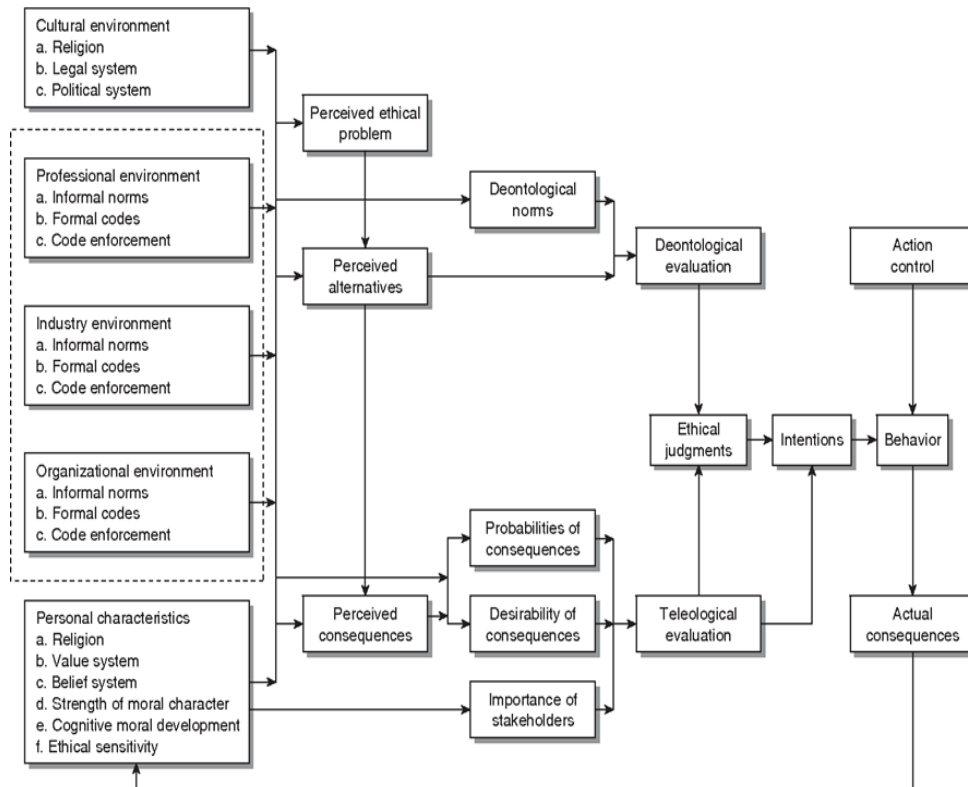
Hunt and Vitell (2006) examined that the H-V model draws both the deontological and teleological ethical traditional moral philosophy. The author stated that the H-V model focuses on addressing situations where an individual confronts an issue which he or she perceives as having an ethical content. The perception of the issue instigates certain triggers. In the deontological process, the individual focuses on the rightness and wrongness

of the behaviour. The process involves the comparison of alternative behaviours with a set of predestined deontological norms. The teleological evaluation focuses on the consequences, desirability, probability, and importance of the actions. The result of the teleological process will focus on the relative goodness versus badness that is brought about by each alternative. Hunt and Vitell (2006) further implied that the core of the model states that the ethical judgments of an individual are a function of the deontological evaluation and individual teleological evaluation.

Furthermore, the theory proposes that ethical judgment can sometimes differ from intention because the teleological evaluation can also affect intentions. The theory shows that when behaviour and intention are inconsistent with ethical judgment, there will be a feeling of guilt. This explains why two individuals will carry out an ethical action but only one person will feel guilty. The other person will not because the actions are consistent with his or her ethical belief. Ethical decision making can be influenced by so many characteristics. Hunt and Vitell (2006) stated that several personal characteristics affect ethical actions and they include;

- i.** Religion
- ii.** Value system
- iii.** Individual belief system
- iv.** Strength of moral character
- v.** Cognitive moral development
- vi.** Ethical sensitivity





**Figure 1.1:** General theory of marketing ethics. Source: **Hunt, S.D and Vitell, S.J** (2006). The general theory of marketing ethics: A revision and three questions. *Journal of macro marketing*, 26(2); pp. 143-153.

### The Utilitarian Theory of Marketing Ethics

The Utilitarian theory was proposed by Bentham. He noted that it is better to seek the satisfaction of a larger group which includes the satisfaction of the greatest number. Kickpatrick (2010) and Hunt and Vitell (2006) emphasized that there are one and only one ultimate right-making characteristics and it is the comparative value of what will be or intended to be brought into being. The utilitarian or teleological framework stated that marketing decision-makers make ethical choices based on whether or not the consequences of their behaviours are best for all the affected social groups. Kim and Kim (2016) wrote that the utilitarian based ethical value focuses on the increase

of personal and social utility in a purpose-based life. It focuses on satisfying the majority. Nantel and Weeks (1996) determined that marketing actions are utilitarian by nature because marketing focuses on satisfying the needs and wants of consumers (greater number) through the process of exchange. The foundation of the utilitarian approach is focused on ethical concern. Marketing is only ethical if it maximizes the greatest number of positive impact for the greatest number of people while at the same time, focuses on minimizing negative impact to the smallest number (Nantel and Weeks, 1996).

Hunt and Vitell (2006) stated that the utilitarian theory focuses on four different constructs and they are as follows;

1. The perceived uniqueness of each alternative for various stakeholder groups
2. The probability that each consequence will occur in each group
3. The desirability or undesirability of each consequence
4. The importance of each group

The teleological theory focuses on beliefs about the relative goodness versus badness which is brought about by each decision made.

### **Deontological Theory of Marketing Ethics**

These theories postulate that an individual ethical judgment focuses on the total of goodness versus badness which is likely to be produced by each alternative (Hunt and Vitell, 2006). Alternatives are the other actions taken when an individual perceives any ethical difficulty in a marketing situation. The theory focuses on the rightness and wrongness of each action carried out (alternatives). In the deontological perspective, alternative behaviours are compared with a set of predestined deontological norms. The norms include;

1. General beliefs about honesty, stealing, cheating, and treating people fairly
2. Issue-specific beliefs about deceptive advertising, product safety, sales kickbacks, the confidentiality of data, respondent anonymity, and interviewer dishonesty.

Hunt and Vitell (2006) determined that deontological norms include both hyper-norms and local norms.

### **Virtue Ethics Theory**

Virtue ethics in marketing was introduced by Williams and Murphy in 1990. Virtue ethics is most times together with relationship marketing. Murphy et al., (2007) emphasized that virtue is defined as a set of good habits. Oswald et al., (2006) wrote that virtue can be seen in several qualities and they include;

1. Virtue is a character trait. Something that is always there, under all circumstances.
2. Virtue is an acquired trait. It is not inherited.
3. All virtues need training.
4. Virtue means good character.
5. Virtue always leads to happiness.

The virtue ethics theory focuses on the individual and the organization, and not on the problems. Oswald et al., (2006) further implied that virtue is learned and practised. It can be learned by imitating the ethical behaviour of mentors or elders. The theory states that practitioners of virtue ethics succeed by seeking balance in their lives. The theory puts so much emphasis on the character of the individual as the key element in ethical thinking rather than rules about the acts.

Virtue ethics is categorized as moral virtues and intellectual virtues. Moral virtues focus on prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperament while intellectual virtues include theoretical and practical wisdom (Murphy et al., 2007).

### **3. Conclusion**

The study aims to find the impact of consumer demographic characteristics and consumer perception of the marketing mix, on consumer perception of marketing ethics. The objective of the study is to analyze how demographic characteristics and marketing mix affects how consumers relate to ethics in marketing. It focuses on identifying the potential risks of misconduct, determines the influence of consumers' demographic characteristics, culture, and sentiments on the perception of marketing ethics and examine consumers reactions to some unethical organizational activities.

Marketing ethics is an inquiry into the nature and grounds of moral judgment, standards and rules of conduct relating to marketing decisions and marketing situations. It focuses on principles and standards which help in defining acceptable marketing conducts. Marketing ethics goes beyond rules and regulations; it focuses on marketing issues which helps in building long-term marketing relationships. Marketing ethics requires the avoidance of unintended consequences of various marketing activities employed by taking into consideration of the various stakeholders and their interest and also considering the society. Ethical marketing refers to the applications of marketing ethics into marketing practices. Ethical marketing focuses on six sub-section and they include marketing effectiveness, marketing research, marketing dominance, market segmentation, market strategy and marketing management.

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