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The Science of Sentiment: Decoding the Success of Emotional Branding in Strategic Marketing

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Abstract

In today's competitive market, brands must do more than meet basic customer needs—they need to emotionally connect with their audiences. Emotional branding helps companies build deeper relationships by appealing to customers' feelings, values, and aspirations. This strategy goes beyond product features, aiming to create trust and loyalty through meaningful experiences. This research explores how brands use different emotions in their marketing to influence consumer behaviour. It looks at key outcomes like trust, satisfaction, loyalty, and repeat purchases. Using descriptive analysis, PRISMA methodology, and real-life case studies from India and globally, the study highlights how emotional branding can drive stronger customer connections and long-term brand success. Finally, the paper introduces a new framework that highlights the importance and role of emotional branding in modern marketing. This framework clarifies how emotional connections can give brands a competitive edge and foster lasting relationships with consumers.

Keywords: Emotional branding, marketing strategy, consumer behavior, trust, loyalty, satisfaction, repurchase intentions, brand competition, case studies, brand love, marketing campaigns, Indian perspective, global perspective.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

In today's world, consumers are more aware than ever of the products they use and the companies they support. As a result, branding has become essential. Businesses now market not only their products but also their values and the experiences they offer. A brand can be defined as a set of tangible and intangible attributes that create awareness, establish identity, and build the reputation of a product, service, person, place, or organization (Sammur-Bonnici, Tanya, 2015). Branding, on the other hand, is the process of giving products and services the power of an established brand. It involves using a name, slogan, symbol, design, sign, or a combination of these elements to identify a company's products or services. Effective branding helps customers distinguish these products from those of competitors (Kotler & Keller, 2015).

In the dynamic and competitive landscape of modern business, the traditional approach to marketing is undergoing a profound transformation. No longer can brands rely solely on functional attributes to captivate consumers and make place in their apathetic hearts; instead, they must navigate a complex terrain where emotional resonance reigns supreme. A scientific approach to achieving this is establishing long term connections through targeting consumer emotions through

various strategic marketing techniques. Here, emotions can be defined as: "[A] mental state of readiness that arises from cognitive appraisal of events or thoughts; has a phenomenological tone; is accompanied by physiological processes, is often expressed physically (e.g., in gesture, posture, facial features); and may result in specific actions to affirm or cope with the emotion, depending on its nature and meaning for the person and the emotion having it." (Bagozzi, Gopiath, and Nyer, 1999).

The shift from traditional marketing techniques has led to the rise of emotional branding—a strategic approach that goes beyond product features to build deep connections with consumers. Emotional branding is the art of connecting brands to people on a personal level, with a strong understanding of their desires, aspirations, and emotions (Gobe, 2001). Many companies across various industries use emotional branding to engage their target audiences and stand out in competitive markets. For example, tech giant Apple leverages emotional branding in its marketing campaigns by focusing on creativity, innovation, and personal empowerment. These themes resonate with consumers' aspirations. Through sleek design, compelling storytelling, and user-focused messaging, Apple has cultivated a loyal fan base that extends beyond its products.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the study is to investigate the pivotal role and success of emotional branding as a strategic marketing tactic through analysis of literature and case studies as well as analyze its various antecedents, strategies and consequences. Furthermore, a new framework is provided to explicitly state the importance and role of EB in marketing.

1.3 Objectives

This research aims to examine the following:-

Objective (a): Analyze Foundational Theories of Emotional Branding

Examine the origin and conceptual development of emotional branding as a marketing strategy, focusing specifically on the theories of Aristotle (emotional appeals in rhetoric) and Marc Gobé (emotional connections in branding), and assess their relevance and application within the advertising and branding industry.

Objective (b): Identify and Assess Emotions Targeted in Branding and Advertising

Systematically identify the primary emotions that brands aim to evoke or manipulate in consumers, drawing on foundational emotion theories (such as those by Ekman and Friesen), and evaluate how these emotions are leveraged in advertising campaigns to influence consumer behavior and decision-making.

Objective (c): Examine Antecedents of Emotional Branding

Investigate the key antecedents—psychological, contextual, and strategic factors—that facilitate the development of emotional connections between consumers and brands, using established research and case studies to clarify how these antecedents shape the effectiveness of emotional branding strategies.

Objective (d): Evaluate Methods and Outcomes of Emotional Branding through Case Studies

Analyze specific real-world case studies to understand the methods employed by companies in emotional branding, and assess the impact of these strategies on brand engagement, consumer loyalty, and the creation of memorable brand experiences.

Objective (e): Formulate a framework to state the importance and role of EB in marketing

To clearly articulate the significance and function of emotional branding (EB) in modern marketing, the EARTH framework has been formulated.

2 Literature Review

The literature on emotional branding has evolved from foundational theories—such as those by Gobé (2001) and classical influences like Aristotle—to more nuanced, multidimensional frameworks. Recent studies have developed formal measurement tools (e.g., Singla & Gupta's 13-point scale) and highlighted the success of emotional branding in various advertising campaigns, emphasizing its strategic importance in fostering consumer loyalty, trust, and attachment. Empirical research consistently shows that emotional branding can significantly enhance customer loyalty, brand advocacy, and long-term relationships, especially when strategies like storytelling, brand personality, and emotional triggers are employed. Despite these advances, several critical gaps persist in the emotional branding literature.

Research gap-

Lack of Longitudinal Studies: Most research captures emotional branding at a single point in time, failing to track how emotional bonds between consumers and brands evolve over the long term. This limits understanding of the dynamic nature of emotional relationships in branding

Survivorship Bias: The literature tends to focus on successful cases of emotional branding, neglecting failed attempts. This creates an incomplete picture and overlooks potential pitfalls and limitations of emotional branding strategies

Measurement Challenges: While various scales exist, most rely on self-reported data, which may not accurately reflect true emotional responses. There is a need for more objective measures, such as neurological or physiological indicators, to capture the full spectrum of consumer emotions

Cultural and Contextual Limitations: Much of the research is based on Western markets, with insufficient exploration of how emotional branding functions across diverse cultural contexts. Emotional triggers and their effectiveness can vary greatly between cultures, necessitating more cross-cultural studies.

Digital and Social Media Contexts: Although some recent work addresses the role of digital platforms and social media in emotional branding, this area remains underexplored, especially concerning how digital interactions foster or hinder emotional connections.

Ethical and Negative Consequences: There is limited research on the ethical boundaries of emotional branding, particularly regarding manipulation or potential negative effects such as materialism or distorted human relationships. The impact on vulnerable populations and the potential for emotional branding to cross into unethical territory is not well understood.

3 Research Methodology

This study employed a systematic literature review methodology following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines (Moher et al., 2009) to comprehensively examine the role and success of emotional branding as a strategic marketing tactic. The research adopted a qualitative approach, utilizing secondary data sources to conduct descriptive analysis, systematic review, and case study analysis to achieve the stated objectives.

Database Selection- Seven electronic databases were systematically searched to ensure comprehensive coverage of relevant literature: Google Scholar, Scopus, ScienceDirect, Emerald Insight, Springer Link, Wiley Online Library, Taylor & Francis Online. These databases were selected based on their coverage of marketing, consumer behavior, and business management literature, ensuring access to both peer-reviewed academic articles and high-quality book chapters.

Search Terms and Strategy- The search strategy was developed iteratively through pilot searches and consultation with subject matter experts. The following keyword categories were identified: Primary Keywords: Emotional branding, emotions, marketing strategy, consumer behavior. Secondary Keywords: Trust, loyalty, satisfaction, repurchase intentions, brand competition, brand love, marketing campaigns. Geographic Modifiers: Indian perspective, global perspective. Boolean operators (AND, OR) and truncation (*) were used to optimize search sensitivity and specificity. Search strings were adapted for each database's specific syntax requirements.

Search Limitations and Timeframe

Publication Period: January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2024 (16-year span). **Rationale:** This timeframe captures the evolution of emotional branding from its foundational period (post-2008 financial crisis when consumer behavior shifted significantly) to recent developments in digital marketing era. **Language:** English-language publications only. **Rationale:** English is the dominant language in international marketing research, and translation resources were limited for this study. **Publication Types:** Peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and select high-quality conference proceedings.

Operationalization of Criteria- Each criterion was operationalized with specific decision rules: "Emotional branding focus": Studies had to explicitly discuss emotional connections between consumers and brands, not merely mention emotions peripherally. "Sufficient data": Studies needed to provide adequate methodological details or substantive findings relevant to the research objectives.

Screening Protocol - The study selection followed a three-stage process conducted by two independent reviewers (R.S. and S.S.):

Stage 1 - Initial Screening: Title and abstract review using predetermined inclusion/exclusion criteria.

Stage 2 - Full-text Assessment: Detailed evaluation of potentially relevant studies.

Stage 3 - Final Selection: Consensus-based inclusion of studies meeting all criteria.

Search Results and Selection- Initial Search Results: 150 records identified across all databases- Google Scholar: 65 records, Scopus: 28 records, ScienceDirect: 22 records, Emerald: 15 records, Springer: 12 records, Wiley: 8 records.

Duplicate Removal: 20 duplicate records removed using Mendeley reference manager.

Title/Abstract Screening: 130 unique records screened, 35 excluded based on relevance criteria.

Full-text Assessment: 95 studies assessed for eligibility, 7 additional studies excluded due to: Insufficient focus on emotional branding (n=3), Methodological limitations (n=2), Full-text unavailable (n=2). **Final Selection:** 88 studies included in the systematic review.

Data Extraction and Analysis

Data Extraction Framework– A standardized data extraction form was developed and pilot-tested on 10 studies. The following information was systematically extracted: Study Characteristics: Author(s), publication year, journal/source, Study design and methodology, Sample size and characteristics, Geographic location. Emotional Branding Content: Definition of emotional branding used, Theoretical framework applied, Emotions studied or manipulated, Antecedents examined, Methods/techniques discussed.

Sammut-Bonnici, Tanya. (2015)	Brand	A brand can be defined as a set of tangible and intangible attributes designed to create awareness and identity, and to build the reputation of a product, service, person, place, or organization
Bagozzi, Gopiath, and Nyer (1999)	Emotions	A mental state of readiness that arises from cognitive appraisal of events or thoughts; has a phenomenological tone; is accompanied by physiological processes, is often expressed physically (e.g., in gesture, posture, facial features); and may result in specific actions to affirm or cope with the emotion, depending on its nature and meaning for the person and the emotion having it.
Marc Gobe (2001)	Emotional Branding	Emotional Branding is the art of connecting brands to people at a personal level, with a deep understanding of their desires, aspirations, and emotions.
Carroll & Ahuvia (2006)	Brand love	Brand love can be defined as a deep emotional attachment characterized by feelings of passion, affection, commitment, and connection between consumers and brands.

Table 1: Definitions of Terms related to Emotional Branding

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Empirical Paper, Conceptual, books and book chapters	White papers and conference papers
Examines the various aspects of emotional branding	Studies outside the aspects of branding, emotional branding and its antecedents
Published from 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2024	Papers published outside the selected period of time
Available in Google Scholar, Scopus, ScienceDirect, Emerald, Springer, Wiley Online Library, or Taylor & Francis	Papers published outside the selected databases
Written in the English language	Non-English language papers.

Table 2: Inclusion Exclusion Criteria

Exploratory Phases	Keywords and Exploratory Strings
Keyword Search	Emotional branding, emotions, marketing strategy, consumer behavior, trust, loyalty, satisfaction, repurchase intentions, brand competition, case studies, love, antecedents, marketing campaigns, Indian perspective, global perspective.
Exploratory Strings	Emotional Branding AND Antecedents OR, Consumer repurchasing intention, Consumer behavior AND Emotional branding AND Antecedents, Emotions AND Marketing Campaigns OR Case studies, satisfaction AND Emotional Branding, Emotions AND trust, loyalty AND branding

Table 3: Exploratory Keywords

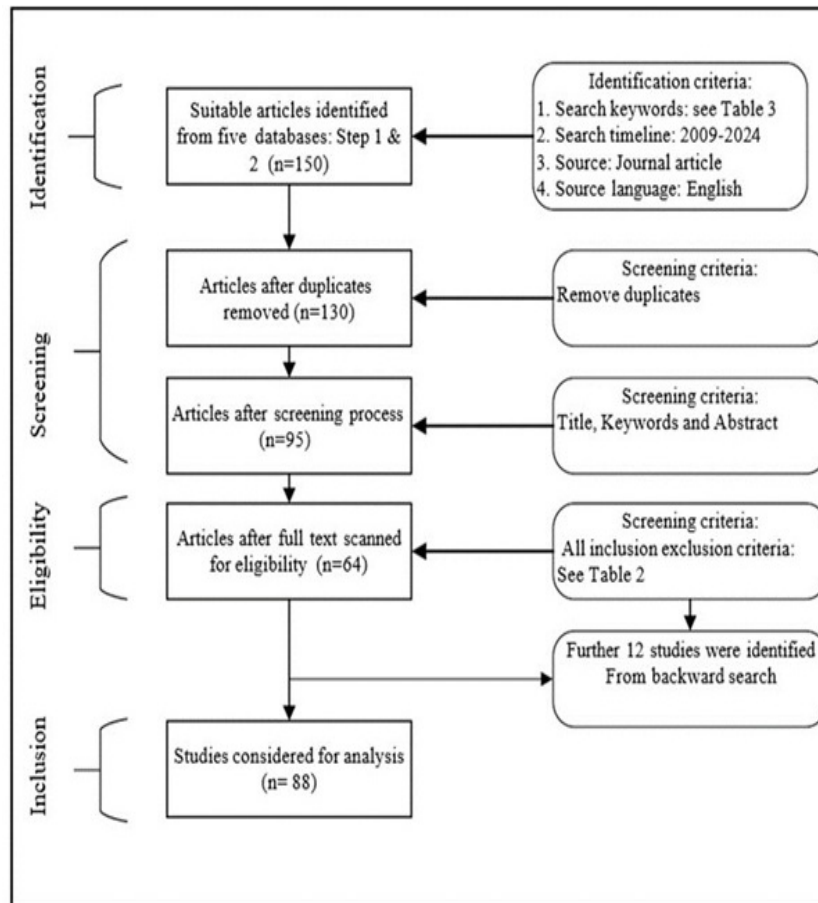


Fig 1: Prisma Analysis

4 Evolution and theories of Emotional Branding

To start analyzing theories related to emotional branding, we look at its evolution. The evolution of emotional branding and similar strategic marketing tactics can be traced back to Aristotle's book of Rhetoric which contained the concept of Three Pillars of Persuasion namely - Ethos, Pathos and Logos. In the context of emotional branding, ethos relates to building customer credibility and trustworthiness. Building a solid reputation and a relationship with the target audience requires matching the values of the brand with social or cultural norms. An excellent example of the application of ethos in emotional branding is Dabur, a well-known consumer goods firm in India. Dabur has built a solid reputation as a reliable name associated with natural and Ayurvedic products over the course of more than a century. Dabur's "Dabur Dant Rakshak" campaign, launched in 2021, highlighting Dabur's line of dental care products as all-natural remedies for dental wellness shows use of ethos. Indian consumers responded favorably to this campaign, sales and market share grew with reiterating consumer trust and improved consumer confidence and loyalty in addition to strengthening Dabur's brand reputation. (Singh, A., & Gupta, R. 2022).

In order to establish deep connections with the brand, pathos in emotional branding entails appealing to consumers' emotions. To elicit strong emotional reactions from the intended audience, it makes use of cultural knowledge, customs, and values. Tanishq, an Indian jewelry company launched campaigns like "Ekavtam" in 2020 that resonated powerfully with Indian consumers by evoking feelings of love, acceptance, and harmony through touching anecdotes and inclusive storytelling. Impact on consumers was great as it promoted a feeling of pride and community among many communities, enhanced its emotional bond with customers and fortified its brand identity by embracing diversity and honoring India's cultural heritage. Because of the campaign's effectiveness, Tanishq's jewelry products have gained more market preference and brand loyalty. (Ranjan, R., & Singh, P. 2021).

Providing logical justifications and supporting data for the brand's message is known as logos in emotional branding. To establish credibility and trust, emotional appeal is important, but it must also be balanced by rational arguments and the advantages of the product. Leading e-commerce site in India, Flipkart has been successful in recent years in using the concept of logos like launching the "The Big Billion Days" campaign. Flipkart encourages customers to make educated purchasing decisions by rationally supporting its brand messaging with explicit discounts, product specs, and value propo-

sitions. It draws customers with appealing offers and builds confidence and trust in its platform by blending emotional appeal with logical message in its advertising. Because of the campaign's effectiveness, Flipkart has been able to maintain its leadership in the Indian e-commerce sector and has seen an increase in sales and revenue. (Smith, J., & Johnson, A. 2020).

Aristotle's Framework Limitations: Cultural Universality Assumption: it assumes ethos, pathos, and logos work uniformly across cultures, ignoring cultural variations in trust-building and emotional expression, **Static Model:** Doesn't account for dynamic, ongoing brand relationships, **Individual vs. Collective Focus:** Limited consideration of social identity theory and group belonging.

In 2001, renowned marketing and branding authority Marc Gobé introduced the concept of emotional branding and outlined its principles in his influential publication "Emotional Branding: The New Paradigm for Connecting Brands to People." (Carlota Cossio Aparicio, 2021) He based his strategy on using storytelling, symbolism, and sensory experiences to arouse strong feelings in customers and leave a lasting impact. Now we look at the Ten Commandments through an Indian as well as global marketing perspective-

1. *Transition from Consumers to People:* Which talks about how essentially, Consumers buy, people live. It emphasizes the significance of understanding customers as sentient beings with feelings as opposed to just consumers. Globally, people's names were printed on Coca-Cola bottles as part of their well-known "Share a Coke" campaign, which helped to personalize the brand and foster a sense of community and uniqueness.
2. *Transition from Products to Experiences:* Products meet essential requirements, while experiences satisfy aspirations. Pushing for firms to concentrate on developing unique experiences that have an emotional impact on consumers. In USA, Disney Parks provide immersive experiences which enables the guests to engage with well-known characters of the Disney universe.
3. *Transition from Honesty to Trust:* Honesty is considered a fundamental requirement but trust entails a more profound and personal level of engagement. Amul's enduring slogan, "The Taste of India," is a well-known slogan of Indian marketing; it upholds consumer confidence in the product's authenticity and quality while cultivating a devoted following.
4. *Transition from Quality to Preference:* Providing quality on one hand is important but creating a strong preference over other companies has a stronger effect. Customers favor Apple's iPhone for its design, usability, and brand image, and the device continues to have a premium place in the market both in India and worldwide.
5. *Transition from Notoriety to Aspiration:* Brands must aspire to be loved by consumers, eliciting emotional connections that drive loyalty. Tanishq's "Ekavtam" campaign celebrates diversity and inclusivity, fostering aspirations of unity and acceptance.
6. *Transition from Identity to Personality:* Recognition defines identity, while character and charisma shape personality, supporting the creation of unique brand identities that captivate consumers. In India, Fevicol is well-known for its funny and imaginative advertising campaigns that establish a deep emotional bond with viewers. The humorous spirit of Innocent Drinks is evident in its clever packaging and marketing materials in the United Kingdom.
7. *Transition from Function to Feeling:* The practicality of a product pertains to its utilitarian characteristics, whereas sensorial design centres on the holistic experiences it generates. This demonstrates the significance of developing memorable sensory and affective experiences for clients. Lush, the British cosmetics company, offers handmade and ethically sourced beauty products that engage customers' senses with vibrant colours, unique textures, and captivating scents.
8. *Transition from Ubiquity to Presence:* We notice ubiquity, but it's the emotional impact that leaves a lasting impression, stressing the need to build long-lasting emotional connections with customers. Starbucks has become more than just a fixture in people's everyday lives by fostering emotional ties with its patrons via its warm atmosphere, attentive service, and community-focused programs.
9. *Transition from Communication to Dialogue:* Communication is often one-directional, while dialogue is a two-way exchange where both sides share ideas. For brands, this means having honest conversations with customers and truly listening to their feedback and needs. Glossier exemplifies this by emphasizing user-generated content and actively engaging its community in decisions related to new product launches and marketing strategies.
10. *Transition from Service to Connection:* Offering a service isn't just about selling something — it's about recognizing the customer's importance and forming genuine connections beyond a simple transaction. Building strong relationships means understanding, empathizing with, and earning the trust of clients. Amazon focuses heavily on customer satisfaction through fast delivery, easy returns, and personalized recommendations, helping build loyal relationships with customers globally.

Gobé's Framework Limitations: Western-Centric Bias: Despite using Indian examples, the commandments reflect Western individualistic values, **Technology Lag:** Created pre-social media era, lacks consideration of digital emotional engagement, **Measurement Challenges:** Provides transformation goals but limited metrics for success evaluation.

4.1 Critical Assessment of Theoretical Foundations

When comparing depth versus breadth, Aristotle's Pillars offer a broader, more universal framework — three fundamental elements of persuasion that require interpretation across contexts — while Gobé's Commandments are narrower but more actionable, providing ten detailed, marketing-specific transformations grounded in explicit consumer psychology. Essentially, Aristotle lays philosophical groundwork with an implicit understanding of human persuasion, whereas Gobé translates that into direct, practical guidance tailored to modern consumer behaviour.

4.2 Emotional Branding as a Tool for Marketing Strategy

The twenty-first century has seen a significant change in marketing as consumers' preferences and habits evolve. Data research conducted in 2012 by the UK-based Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA) revealed that advertising efforts with a major emotional content focus outperformed campaigns with a rational content concentration by around double (31% vs. 16%). With the new branding, businesses shift their focus to a more modern and holistic approach, prioritising customer relationships over product-centric thinking. In the market, desires take precedence over needs, and a modern product must appeal to the senses and emotions alongside its functional utility.

When making purchasing decisions, consumers face difficulties due to an unending stream of information, while the market is simultaneously flooded with comparable goods of essentially the same calibre. Ultimately, customers make decisions based on their own preferences and sentiments. Kotler and Keller (2012, 185) assert that customer responses are mostly emotional with only passing references to cognition and reason. Brands can arouse a variety of emotions, including pride, confidence, and enthusiasm, making emotional branding advantageous. The challenge lies in steering emotional reactions in a manner compatible with the brand — businesses that fall short will only sell commodities.

Morrison & Crane (2007) state that creating an emotional branding experience can help companies stand out. The main crux lies in basing strategies on the "emotional share" of the market rather than actual market share. By concentrating on long-term feelings, businesses can establish a true emotional bond that inspires commitment and loyalty. Companies that use this tactic will stand out as consumers remain emotionally connected to them, ultimately gaining a unique, competitive position in the minds of their audience.

4.3 How Companies Leverage Emotions in Branding and Advertising

Emotions are leveraged by companies in branding and advertising through their psychological impact on consumer decision-making. While emotions, moods, and attitudes are often conflated, their distinction lies in their origins. Emotions arise from judgments about one's well-being or a particular situation, resulting from a fusion of bodily sensations with cognitive interpretations. When consumers engage with a brand, they undergo a spectrum of emotions crucial for embedding brands in their memory. Research identifies two main categories of emotions: hedonic and self-conscious. Self-conscious emotions, like guilt and pride, are more deliberate and often stem from individuals' beliefs about how they are perceived by others. Hedonic emotions, by contrast, arise naturally from intrinsic activities such as pleasure, excitement, or cheerfulness. Throughout the consumption process, consumers typically experience pleasant hedonic feelings, which marketers aim to evoke and transfer to consumers (Ding and Tseng, 2015).

Paul Ekman and Wallace V. Friesen's groundbreaking 1972 research identified six basic emotions — disgust, anger, fear, happiness, sadness, and surprise — that serve as the building blocks of human experience and have a significant impact on advertising and marketing. **Disgust**, associated with aversion and repulsiveness, can draw attention to unwanted behaviors. Mumbai Metro's "Dumb Ways to Die" advertisement portrayed cartoon figures acting recklessly near trains in a lighthearted yet unsettling manner, making viewers feel repulsed and encouraging safer behavior (Tan & Weinberg, 2014). **Anger** is a potent emotion that motivates consumers to take action or drive change. Ariel's "Share the Load" campaign showed women questioning the unfair distribution of domestic tasks, prompting viewers to reevaluate gender norms and advocate for equality in their own homes (Haque, Rahman & Rahman, 2017). **Fear** draws attention to possible risks and encourages protective action. The Breakthrough "Bell Bajao" campaign used strong visuals and compelling narration to urge bystanders to intervene and address domestic abuse, leveraging fear to inspire collective responsibility (Adhikari & Datta, 2018). **Happiness**, a universally desired emotion, helps establish favorable connections with a product or brand. Cadbury Dairy Milk's "Dilkhush Reporter" campaign featured a joyful reporter spreading happiness in line with the brand's motto "Kuch Meetha Ho Jaye." By associating the product with joy, the campaign successfully raised brand affinity and emotional resonance among consumers (Basu & Pal, 2016). **Sadness** can generate deep sympathy and understanding. Google India's "Vande Mataram" campaign told the moving story of a grandfather separated from his family during the 1947 partition of India. The campaign evoked nostalgia and sorrow while highlighting technology's power to preserve family histories and reconnect loved ones — effectively communicating Google's brand proposition of connection and memory (Mahanandia, 2016). **Surprise** captures attention and creates memorable experiences. Coca-Cola's "Share a Coke" campaign replaced the brand's logo on bottles with popular names and phrases, sparking delight and encouraging consumers to share and engage with the brand in unexpected, personalized ways (Kaur & Jain, 2015).

Beyond these six emotions, **love** represents another powerful force in consumer-brand relationships. Carroll and Ahuvia's (2006) research explored love as a deep emotional attachment encompassing passion, affection, commitment, and a desire for connection. The study identified key components of brand love — including passion, attachment, and a sense of belonging — that support the development of strong brand loyalty. Factors influencing this love include brand identity, values, image, reputation, product quality, and the overall consumer-brand experience. Favorable experiences, consistent interactions, and shared ideals cultivate emotional connection, while aligning brand values with consumers' own increases loyalty and engagement. Superior product features also play a critical role in shaping consumer emotions. Grisaffe and Nguyen (2010) found that products perceived as offering superior quality, functionality, design, and innovation are evaluated more positively than competitors'. When customers are satisfied, they tend to experience positive emotions such as joy, excitement, and fulfillment, which in turn strengthen their emotional connection with the brand. These emotions help explain why satisfied consumers are more likely to recommend a brand, remain loyal, and pay a premium for it.

Pleasure — the feel-good emotion arising from joy, contentment, or fulfillment — and **excitement** — the intense rush from anticipation and high-energy moments — both significantly influence how people connect with brands. When a brand evokes either of these responses, it stands out from competitors, builds loyalty, and encourages word-of-mouth advocacy. Research confirms that both emotions positively influence customer satisfaction, loyalty, and the likelihood of positive brand recommendations (Orth, Limon & Rose, 2010; Singla & Gupta, 2019). By understanding and strategically leveraging these emotions, companies can create more compelling and memorable experiences for consumers, ultimately driving brand affinity, loyalty, and advocacy.

4.4 Antecedents and Effects of Emotional Branding

The antecedents of Emotional Branding refer to the factors or conditions that precede and contribute to the development of emotional connections between consumers and brands. Understanding these antecedents is essential for marketers seeking to foster emotional engagement and loyalty among their target audience. *Brand Loyalty* serves as a foundation for emotional branding by creating emotional bonds between customers and brands. When consumers develop deep emotional attachments to a company, they are more likely to display loyal behaviors such as repeat purchases and favorable word-of-mouth. Brand trust further moderates this relationship — the effect of emotional brand attachment on loyalty is stronger when consumers perceive the brand as trustworthy. *Brand Association* refers to consumer perceptions of a brand's personality traits, values, and qualities. Positive associations — such as perceptions of quality, dependability, and prestige — lead to more favorable brand attitudes and emotional responses. For instance, consumers who associate a brand with innovation or social responsibility are more likely to feel favorably toward it (Yoo & Donthu, 2001). *Perceived Quality* plays a significant role, as brands perceived to offer superior quality foster stronger consumer trust and emotional attachment. Higher perceived quality is directly linked to greater loyalty and satisfaction (Santos & Amaro, 2018; Behl & Singh, 2015). *Brand Personality* encompasses human traits linked to a brand across five dimensions — sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness. Consumers forge deeper emotional bonds with brands that mirror their own self-perception or aspirational identity. Marketers reinforce this by aligning brand personality with relatable celebrity associations (Aaker, 1997). *Brand Passion* represents a deep emotional attachment combined with commitment and advocacy. Influenced by brand identification, community, and engagement, brand passion drives favorable outcomes including loyalty, positive word-of-mouth, and willingness to pay a premium (Muñiz & Schau, 2011). *Brand Relationships* encompass the connections consumers develop with a brand over time. Brands that evoke strong affection are more likely to cultivate close, enduring consumer relationships. *Brand Equity* encompasses consumer attitudes, associations, and perceptions — contributes to stronger emotional brand attachment. Brands with established equity are perceived more positively and evoke deeper emotional connections (Lee & Kim, 2019). *Brand Awareness* denotes the degree to which consumers recognize a brand. Higher awareness leads to stronger emotional connections, as consumers have formed associations and memories over time. It also contributes to the formation of consumer loyalty, which includes emotional elements (MacInnis, Park & Priester, 2009; Rizley & Richards, 2008). Ultimately, companies that prioritize emotional branding and invest in genuine consumer connections stand to gain increased retention, enhanced brand reputation, and a sustainable competitive edge in today's dynamic marketplace.

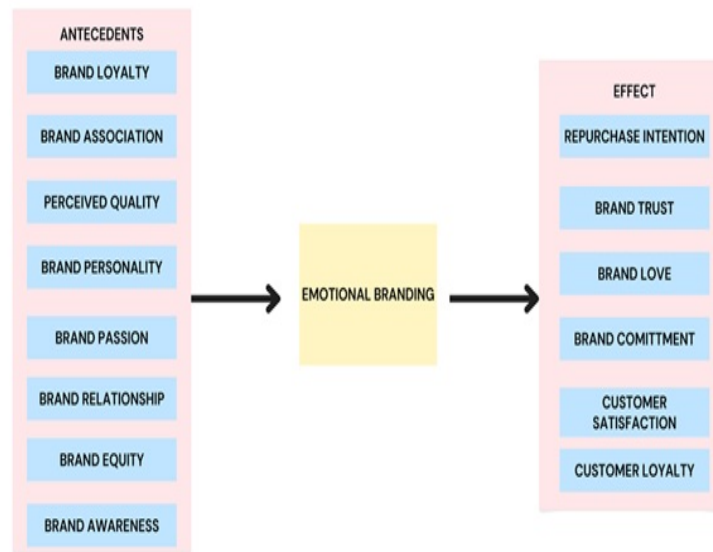


Fig 2: The Emotional Branding Framework

5 Case analysis of methods in Emotional Branding

5.1 Various methods can be deployed by companies to use emotional branding as a strategic marketing tool

(i) **Sensory Branding** generates memorable brand experiences by appealing to consumers' senses — taste, smell, touch, sound, and sight — to elicit feelings and associations with the brand.

(ii) **Storytelling** delivers a brand's identity, values, and purpose through compelling narratives, arousing empathy and connecting with audiences on a deeper level.

(iii) **Cause Branding** builds emotional bonds by aligning brands with social or environmental causes, fostering favourable associations with customers.

(iv) **Empowerment Branding** conveys concepts of freedom and self-expression, appealing to consumers' need for independence and self-actualization (Kyung Kim and Sullivan, 2019).

(v) **Visual Branding** uses colours, imagery, and design to evoke specific emotions and reinforce brand identity consistently across all touchpoints.

(vi) **Personalized Communication** leverages data-driven insights to tailor marketing messages to individual preferences, creating emotionally resonant interactions.

(vii) **User-Generated Content** cultivates community and authenticity by encouraging customers to share personal stories and experiences associated with the brand.

(viii) **Experiential Marketing** creates immersive experiences through events, pop-ups, or interactive installations that evoke strong emotional responses.

(ix) **Brand Rituals** build lasting memories and community by establishing meaningful traditions that deepen emotional loyalty over time.

5.2 Pattern-Based Analysis Across Cases

Market context shapes emotional branding effectiveness — India responds to sensory and cause-driven strategies due to cultural sensitivity, while the US favours storytelling and individual empowerment. Impact intensity varies: transformational methods (Nike, P&G India) reshape brand perception; reinforcement strategies (Always) deepen existing values; enhancement tactics (Cadbury) simply boost positivity. Sensory branding carries lowest risk but drives recall, storytelling builds loyalty at moderate-high risk, and cause branding offers social credibility despite high risk. Cadbury leans on joy,

Method of Emotional Branding	Company	Campaign Name & Year	Country	Emotions Targeted	Consumer Impact
Sensory Branding	Cadbury Dairy Milk	"The Taste of Joy" (2012)	India	- Joy- Pleasure- IndulgenceUsed upbeat music, rich visuals, and sounds of chocolate unwrapping to engage senses and evoke happiness.	Strengthened brand recall and preference.Increased emotional attachment and purchase intent.
Storytelling	Nike	"Dream Crazy" (2018)	United States	- Empowerment- Bravery- DeterminationInspired dreams through the story of Colin Kaepernick and positioning Nike as a bold, purpose-driven brand.	Reinforced brand identity and loyalty.Enhanced brand equity by aligning with social movements.
Empowerment	Always	"Like a Girl" (2014)	United States	- Pride- Self-esteem- ResilienceChallenged gender stereotypes and aimed to reinterpret the phrase "like a girl" positively.	Promoted gender positivity.Boosted consumer trust and built a progressive brand image.
Cause Branding	P&G India	"Touch the Pickle" (2014)	India	- Empathy- Solidarity- EmpowermentTackled taboos around menstruation and encouraged open conversations for social change.	Enhanced brand image as socially responsible.Deepened engagement with modern, value-driven consumers.

Table 4: Case study analysis

Nike on achievement, Always on gender norms, and P&G India on collective empathy. In mature markets, purpose leads; in emerging ones, sensory appeal paired with social causes wins.

6 The E.A.R.T.H. Framework of Emotional Branding

The **E.A.R.T.H. framework** organizes what makes emotional branding truly effective in practical, easy-to-understand terms.

Empathy: Brands need to genuinely understand how their audience feels, what they hope for, and the cultural background they come from. This means actively listening online, studying how people live, and using tools that help map out customer emotions, so brands can tap into the feelings that matter most to their customers.

Authenticity: Being honest and transparent in how a brand tells its story builds trust. When companies like Dabur highlight their roots in Ayurveda and focus on all-natural ingredients, it helps customers see them as real and sincere.

Resonance: For emotional branding to hit home, it must spark feelings that mirror what people value, believe, and experience in their lives. Campaigns like Tanishq's "Ekatvam" do this by weaving messages of unity and shared values, making audiences feel proud and part of a larger community.

Tangibility: Emotional messages work best when there's something real and logical backing them up—solid product quality, clear benefits, or strong deals. Flipkart's "Big Billion Days" combines the excitement of a big event with actual discounts, which helps increase trust and sales.

Holistic Integration: Emotional connections aren't built in just one area—they need to show up everywhere a customer interacts with the brand, from how a product looks and feels, to ads, to customer service, and even after sales. This consistency keeps the brand's message strong and encourages customers to come back.

Pillar	Core Focus	Example from Research
Empathy	Consumer understanding	Emotional analytics, social listening
Authenticity	Trust and credibility	Dabur's Ayurvedic positioning
Resonance	Emotional connection	Tanishq's "Ekatvam" campaign
Tangibility	Rational support for emotions	Flipkart's logical offers
Holistic Integration	Consistent experience	Multi-channel brand alignment

Table 5: EARTH Framework

This E.A.R.T.H. framework offers a structured, actionable approach for brands seeking to implement emotional branding.

7 Conclusion

To sum up, this study has examined the complex field of emotional branding, reviewing relevant literature, delving into theories, investigating effective campaigns, and examining the use of emotion in branding and advertising. Through the lens of theories like Aristotle's Three Pillars of Persuasion or Marc Gobe's Emotional Branding commandments, it becomes evident that emotional connections play a pivotal role in consumer behavior. In their branding campaigns, businesses purposefully influence a range of emotions, sometimes using negative emotions to compel action and sometimes using good emotions to establish connections of fulfillment and enjoyment. Emotional branding strategies rely on antecedents like brand loyalty, personality and association to form feelings of trust, brand advocacy, purchase intention etc. Its various methods like sensory branding, storytelling, cause branding and empowerment branding serve as important and effective emotional branding strategies. To maintain meaningful relationships with customers in a market that is becoming more and more competitive, businesses must continue to navigate the changing world of branding and advertising and for that, understanding and utilizing the power of emotional branding is crucial. Furthermore, by adopting the E.A.R.T.H. framework, brands move beyond superficial emotional appeals, embedding empathy, authenticity, resonance, tangibility, and holistic integration into their marketing DNA—thereby fostering deeper, more sustainable relationships with consumers in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

8 Future Directions

Looking ahead, there are several promising avenues for future research in the realm of emotional branding in understanding how emotions can influence consumer behavior and brand perceptions. Researchers could focus coming up with best practices for designing and implementing emotionally resonant branding campaigns, as well as strategies for measuring the effectiveness of such initiatives. A deep dive into the neuroscientific aspects of emotional branding by various quantitative tools could make us understand the how and why certain emotional cues resonate with consumers more effectively than others. Future studies could also explore innovative research methods, such as biometric measurements or advanced data analytics, to capture and analyze consumer emotional responses in real-time.

Acknowledgments: We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all those who contributed to the completion of this research paper on our topic – “The Science of Sentiment: Decoding the Success of Emotional Branding in Strategic Marketing.” We would like to acknowledge the support of Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies, GGSIPU for providing resources and facilities essential for conducting this research. We are indebted to the authors of the literature and resources cited in this paper, whose scholarly contributions formed the foundation of our research. Their groundbreaking work has provided valuable insights and perspectives that have enriched our understanding of emotional branding concepts and theories. Last but not least, we express our heartfelt thanks to our families, friends, and colleagues for their unwavering support and encouragement throughout this academic journey.

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