

Increasing numbers of brands position having corporate social responsibility (CSR) as their founding ideology. This article examines what makes ethical consumers develop a loyalty to CSR-led brands, using a questionnaire survey of The Body Shop consumers. Contrary to some existing work in marketing, the consumer self-brand congruence on the ethical character did not have a significant impact on brand identification, with the exception of the empathy virtue character. The structural equation modeling of the data confirms that the citizenship image of the brand is influenced by brand identification, which in turn is influenced by the empathy virtue congruence. Ironically, in the case of The Body Shop, while the empathy congruence is the most important indicator for consumer identification and citizenship image, the gap on the empathy virtue was the largest. If customers with a high-empathy character see a CSR-led brand lacking empathy, consumer loyalty will be reduced. The managerial implications of the findings are discussed.

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