

Luxury with Purpose: Ethical Brand Narratives and Consumer Decision-Making among Luxury Goods Buyers in Quezon City

Jennifer G. Boles¹ and Norberto R. Paranga Jr.^{1*}

¹*The Master's Theological Seminary International*

*norbiepar@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the influence of ethical brand narratives—encompassing sustainability practices, corporate social responsibility (CSR), transparency, and purpose-driven storytelling—on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions toward luxury brands in Quezon City. Using a quantitative descriptive-correlational design with 50 luxury goods buyers, the research evaluated perceptions of brand credibility, emotional engagement, and value alignment. Findings indicate highly favorable consumer attitudes (grand mean = 4.34) and positive purchase intentions (grand mean = 4.26). Spearman's rank-order correlation demonstrated robust, positive, and statistically significant

associations between ethical narratives and both consumer attitudes ($\rho = 0.842$) and purchase intentions ($\rho = 0.798$). The results demonstrate the importance of purpose-driven communication in building trust and competitive advantage in the luxury market.

Keywords: *Ethical Brand Narratives, Consumer Attitudes, Purchase Intention, Luxury Brands, Sustainability, Corporate Social Responsibility*

INTRODUCTION

The luxury goods industry has shifted from a traditional focus on exclusivity to integrating ethical and social values into consumer decision-making. Ethical brand narratives, which emphasize sustainability and social impact, have become vital marketing strategies for communicating brand purpose. While luxury was historically associated with excess, modern consumers increasingly view ethical responsibility as compatible with prestige. Despite the global rise of ethical branding, empirical research within the Philippine context—specifically in populous urban centers like Quezon City—remains limited. This study addresses this gap by examining how ethical narratives influence local luxury buyers. It is anchored in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to explain cognitive factors and the brand storytelling theory to assess emotional engagement.

METHODS

Research Design

A quantitative descriptive-correlational design was employed to measure variables and examine their relationships.

Participants

Fifty (50) luxury goods buyers in Quezon City were selected via purposive sampling. Criteria included a luxury purchase or intent to purchase within the last 12 months and familiarity with brand ethical communications.

Instrumentation

A researcher-made structured questionnaire was used, divided into sections for Ethical Brand Narratives, Consumer Attitudes, and Purchase Intention.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using JASP software. Weighted means were used for descriptive assessment, and Spearman's rho was applied to test the significance of relationships between variables.

RESULTS

- Ethical Brand Narratives: Respondents evaluated purpose-driven storytelling highest (mean = 4.31), followed by sustainability practices (4.25) and CSR (4.22).
- Consumer Attitudes: Attitudes were highly favorable (grand mean = 4.34), with trust (4.38) and perceived brand credibility (4.35) scoring highest.
- Purchase Intention: Intention was rated positively (grand mean = 4.26), with a notable willingness to recommend ethical brands (4.30).
- Correlational Analysis:
 - H1: A strong, significant positive relationship exists between ethical narratives and consumer attitudes ($\rho = 0.842, p < 0.001$).
 - H2: A strong, significant positive relationship exists between ethical narratives and purchase intention ($\rho = 0.798, p < 0.001$).

DISCUSSION

The findings confirm that ethical brand narratives are primary drivers of brand evaluation in the Quezon City luxury market. High scores in trust and credibility suggest that transparency in sourcing and CSR initiatives effectively mitigate skepticism. The strong link between storytelling and emotional engagement fits with what other research has said about how stories help people connect their purchases to their values. These results imply that for luxury brands, ethical positioning is not just a moral choice but a strategic tool for enhancing brand legitimacy and consumer loyalty.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Ethical brand narratives significantly shape the attitudes and buying behaviors of luxury consumers. It is recommended that luxury brands develop integrated branding strategies that consistently communicate sustainability and social purpose. Marketers should prioritize authentic, transparent storytelling to foster long-term trust and competitive advantage in emerging urban markets. The implications of these findings extend beyond retail into the broader realms of leadership and culinary management. For leaders in the high-end hospitality and culinary sectors, the high valuation of 'Transparency and Ethical Sourcing' (mean = 4.22) suggests that organizational performance is increasingly dependent on the ability to lead with integrity. By adopting the 'Luxury with Purpose' framework, organizations can innovate their service delivery, ensuring that ethical storytelling becomes a core competency that drives both consumer engagement and long-term institutional growth.