

*Research Paper*

# **Empowering Luxury: How Cause-Related Marketing Influences Gen Z and Millennials' Post-Purchase Guilt in China's High-End Retail Landscape**

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Purpose:** This study explores the emotional impact of post-purchase guilt on younger consumers in the Chinese luxury retail market, with a specific focus on the role of Cause-related Marketing (CrM) in mitigating negative emotions across luxury and non-luxury product categories.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** A quantitative experimental design was utilized, involving 326 respondents exposed to different advertising scenarios. The study tested the impact of CrM on post-purchase guilt in both luxury (high-priced) and non-luxury (moderately priced) product conditions, using a 2 × 2 factorial design. The data were analyzed using ANCOVA to assess the effects of CrM campaigns across conditions.

**Findings:** The results demonstrate that CrM effectively reduces post-purchase guilt across both luxury and non-luxury product categories, providing a moral justification for purchases by linking them to a positive social cause. However, contrary to expectations, the impact of CrM was not significantly stronger in the luxury context compared to non-luxury. This suggests that CrM's influence on post-purchase guilt operates uniformly, regardless of product type.

**Originality:** This research enhances understanding Millennial and Gen Z consumer behavior in the Chinese luxury market. The findings offer actionable insights for luxury brands, highlighting the effectiveness of CrM in addressing guilt-related concerns, thereby informing marketing strategies aimed at younger generations.

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## 1. Introduction

The landscape of international luxury brands has undergone significant transformation in recent years, driven by the rapid economic development of emerging markets like China (Bai et al., 2018) and evolving consumption patterns. These changes include shifting luxury consumption trends (Atkinson and Kang, 2022; Wang, 2022), innovative forms of ownership (Kumar, 2024), and the democratization of luxury, now appealing beyond the traditional upper-class and older demographics to include younger, diverse audiences (Al-Issa et al., 2024; Ye and Kim, 2024).

To adapt to this new market reality and attract a broader consumer base, luxury brands are increasingly turning to Cause-related Marketing (CrM). CrM leverages consumers' perceptions of altruism and philanthropy to build brand loyalty, enhance brand image, and elevate perceived value, thereby boosting sales (Silva et al., 2020). This strategy has proven effective in the luxury sector, where consumer values often dictate attitudes towards sustainable practices (Aggawal et al., 2024), nudging even materialistically driven consumers toward prosocial behavior (Kim et al., 2022b). Yet, despite its potential, CrM in the luxury industry has met with skepticism among younger generations, who perceive a paradox between the exclusivity associated with luxury and the ethical narratives promoted through CrM campaigns. This tension has raised questions about the authenticity of luxury brands' ethical positioning and their focus on well-being (Thomas et al., 2024; Kim et al., 2022a).

Although CrM is often seen as an effective promotional tool (Ferraris et al., 2020; Schamp et al., 2024), the specific impact of such campaigns on the purchase intentions of young consumers in the luxury sector, particularly in China, remains under-researched. Emotional states, including feelings of guilt, significantly influence purchase behavior

(Bagozzi et al., 2016), and marketers have long used emotions—like guilt—to encourage consumption, especially in the context of ethical products (Silva and Martins, 2017; Escadas et al., 2019). In the luxury sector, guilt may be particularly pertinent, as CrM efforts can influence it, yet the dynamics of this emotional response among Millennials and Gen Z remain poorly understood (Lyons, Wien, and Altintzoglou, 2019).

This study aims to address these gaps by examining the effectiveness of CrM campaigns in shaping the purchase intentions of Millennials and Gen Z within the Chinese luxury market, focusing on the role of guilt in this context. Previous research has highlighted CrM's ability to mitigate post-purchase guilt, particularly financial guilt (Silva and Martins, 2017), raising questions about its broader applicability in luxury. By exploring these dynamics, this research offers strategic insights for luxury brands aiming to engage younger consumers in China, aligning marketing strategies with contemporary trends and consumer expectations (Ye and Kim, 2024).

## **2. Literature Review**

### ***2.1. Cause-Related Marketing in Luxury Brands***

Cause-related Marketing (CrM) merges traditional business objectives with social impact, enabling companies to strengthen brand loyalty, enhance consumer perception, and boost sales by aligning with a social cause (Silva et al., 2020). Typically, CrM involves businesses donating a portion of sales to a non-profit, creating a mutually beneficial partnership that appeals to the increasingly socially-conscious consumer (Sindhu, 2020). This dual-purpose strategy drives revenue and aligns with modern expectations that brands should contribute positively to society.

However, implementing CrM within the luxury sector requires a careful approach due to the apparent contrast between luxury's emphasis on exclusivity and CrM's focus on inclusivity and altruism (Pereira et al., 2021). Traditionally, luxury brands are associated with prestige and self-indulgence, values that might clash with social responsibility. Yet, this challenge also presents an opportunity for luxury brands to redefine their image. By incorporating CrM, luxury brands can demonstrate that they offer more than material excess, positioning themselves as contributors to meaningful causes, which can justify their high prices through ethical commitments (Broccardo et al., 2023; Kunz et al., 2020).

This shift has been particularly relevant as Millennials and Gen Z become dominant forces in the luxury market, prioritizing sustainability and ethics in their purchasing decisions (Atkinson and Kang, 2022; Wong, 2023). CrM in luxury requires a strong alignment between the brand's values and the supported cause, as a clear brand-cause fit can increase perceived authenticity, fostering consumer trust and loyalty (Silva et al., 2020). When the cause aligns with the brand's identity—such as supporting sustainable fashion or artisanal craftsmanship—consumers are more likely to perceive the CrM initiative as genuine rather than opportunistic, reducing skepticism (Kim et al., 2022a; Thomas et al., 2024).

Emotional engagement is a crucial aspect of luxury consumption, and CrM can further deepen this connection. In luxury, emotions drive consumer loyalty, willingness to pay a premium, and repeated purchases. CrM enhances this by satisfying consumers' desire to make a positive impact, adding meaning to luxury consumption beyond indulgence (Ferraris et al., 2020; Schamp et al., 2024). Even for more materialistic consumers, CrM has shown to nudge them towards prosocial behavior, aligning ethical considerations with the desire for luxury, reducing cognitive dissonance and strengthening positive post-purchase emotions (Pandey et al., 2023).

A significant challenge for luxury brands utilizing CrM is to convey authenticity. Consumers, especially younger generations, are quick to detect "cause-washing," where brands use social causes merely as marketing tactics without genuine commitment (Kim et al., 2022b). To overcome this, luxury brands must integrate CrM initiatives into their core values, demonstrating long-term dedication rather than engaging in short-term promotional activities. For instance, brands that consistently support sustainable practices or community development projects can reinforce their quality and exclusivity narrative while genuinely addressing ethical concerns (Silva et al., 2020).

Effective CrM can be a key differentiator in a competitive luxury market, attracting consumers who value social and environmental contributions. This strategy is particularly compelling for Millennials and Gen Z, who seek brands that align with their values. By hosting exclusive events or launching limited collections tied to a cause, luxury brands can foster community, enhancing consumer loyalty through shared values and unique experiences (Bazi et al., 2020; Wong, 2023).

## **2.2. Post-Purchase Guilt**

Guilt is a complex psychological concept rooted in personal values and beliefs, which can be understood as either a state or a trait. As a state, guilt is an immediate emotional response triggered by actions that violate one's moral or ethical standards, such as a sense of wrongdoing or a "feeling of guilt". In the consumer context, this manifests as consumer guilt—a negative emotional reaction when a purchase contradicts personal values or societal expectations (Dedeoğlu and Kazançoğlu, 2010). As a trait, guilt takes the form of "guilt proneness", indicating a person's tendency to experience guilt across various situations when they fall short of their moral standards. This predisposition can significantly affect consumer behavior, influencing both purchase decisions and post-purchase emotions.

Martins et al. (2024) developed a scale to measure consumer guilt proneness across five dimensions: health, extravagance, social influence, misevaluation, and ethics and sustainability guilt proneness. Each dimension highlights the sources of guilt that can drive consumer decision-making, especially in the luxury context, where purchases often involve trade-offs between indulgence and responsibility.

Post-purchase guilt arises when consumers regret buying products that conflict with their moral or ethical values—often associated with spending on luxury items perceived as unnecessary or wasteful (Silva et al., 2020). This is particularly common in luxury purchases, where the motivation for buying often centers on self-reward, status, and indulgence. Such motivations can create cognitive dissonance, especially when the consumer's internal values prioritize sustainability, practicality, or financial prudence (Bagozzi et al., 2016). The result is a heightened sense of post-purchase guilt, prompting consumers to question the ethicality and necessity of their luxury expenditure.

However, guilt can also act as a motivator for more ethical consumption behaviors. The discomfort associated with guilt can drive consumers to seek redemption, pushing them to make choices that align more closely with their values. This is where CrM can play a transformative role. By linking consumption with positive social or environmental impacts, CrM provides a means for consumers to mitigate their guilt, offering a moral justification for indulgent purchases (Escadas et al., 2019). For instance, a luxury brand that donates a portion of its proceeds to environmental initiatives can alleviate guilt by allowing consumers to view their purchase as contributing to a greater good.

Younger generations, like Millennials and Gen Z, are particularly susceptible to post-purchase guilt when their decisions deviate from their ethical standards. These consumers are generally more receptive to CrM strategies, as they are keen to balance their desire for luxury with their values of social responsibility and sustainability (Silva et al., 2020). CrM, therefore, acts as a buffer against guilt, enabling these consumers to indulge while maintaining a sense of ethical integrity.

The intensity of guilt varies significantly between luxury and non-luxury purchases. Luxury items, often seen as symbols of excess, are more likely to trigger post-purchase guilt due to their association with extravagance and exclusivity. On the other hand, non-luxury goods are viewed as more utilitarian, leading to a lower likelihood of guilt, even if the purchase does not fully align with ethical standards (Bagozzi et al., 2016). CrM can be a valuable tool for luxury brands in mitigating this guilt, by framing high-cost purchases as part of a socially responsible act, thus enhancing the perceived emotional value of the product and reducing cognitive dissonance (Silva and Martins, 2017).

CrM amplifies positive emotions for non-luxury brands, like pride and satisfaction, rather than countering guilt. While non-luxury purchases generally evoke less intense guilt, consumers still appreciate knowing their buying decisions support a worthwhile cause (Escadas et al., 2019). This positive reinforcement can further drive brand loyalty and repeat purchases, even in markets where price sensitivity is higher.

Understanding consumer guilt proneness is essential for segmenting audiences and tailoring marketing strategies. Those with high guilt proneness are more likely to be influenced by CrM, as they are sensitive to ethical and moral appeals. These consumers tend to avoid products that trigger guilt, making them an ideal target for brands emphasising social responsibility (Martins et al., 2024). Conversely, consumers with lower guilt proneness may be driven more by status and self-reward, requiring CrM campaigns that highlight ethical considerations and the emotional and experiential benefits of giving back (Patel et al., 2024).

CrM campaigns must be seen as credible and impactful to mitigate post-purchase guilt effectively. The authenticity of the brand's commitment to a cause, its relevance to the brand's identity, and the perceived impact of its efforts are all critical factors. If CrM efforts are perceived as shallow or insincere, they may backfire, increasing skepticism and intensifying guilt instead of alleviating it (Kim et al., 2022a). Luxury brands must

seamlessly integrate CrM with their brand values and maintain a consistent commitment to the cause to ensure long-term success and enhance consumer loyalty (Pereira et al., 2021).

### 2.3. The conceptual model

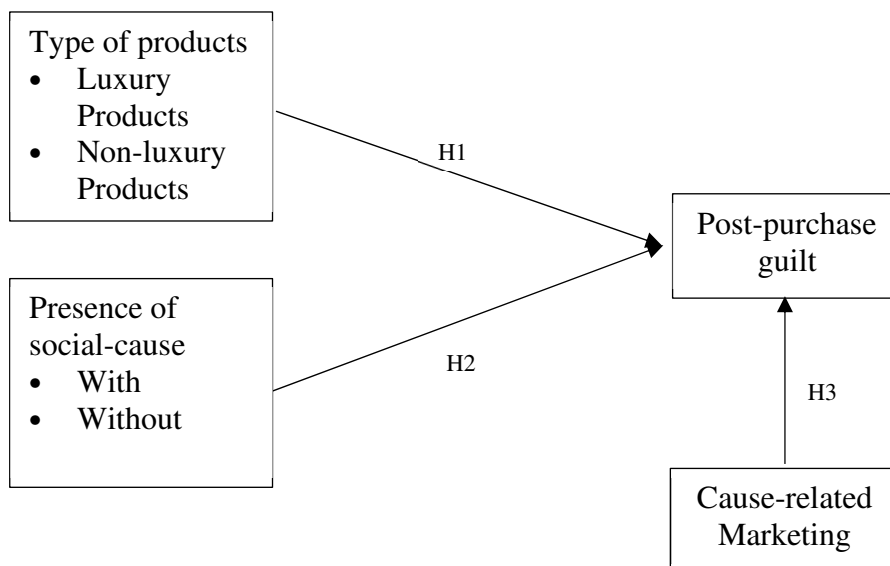
The conceptual model (figure 1) was designed to explore how luxury status and the presence of Cause-related Marketing (CrM) impact post-purchase guilt. It is based on three primary hypotheses that examine the relationships between product type, marketing strategy, and consumer emotional responses. The conceptual model includes the following hypotheses:

*H1: Luxury products (high-priced) will generate higher post-purchase guilt than non-luxury products (moderately priced).*

*H2: Advertising campaigns that include a social cause (CrM) will reduce post-purchase guilt compared to campaigns without a social cause.*

*H3: The effect of Cause-related Marketing (CrM) on reducing post-purchase guilt will be stronger for luxury products than non-luxury products.*

**Figure 1: Conceptual model**



Source: Own Elaboration

The model suggests that the interaction between product type (luxury vs. non-luxury) and the presence of a social cause (with vs. without) will jointly affect the level of post-

purchase guilt, with Cause-related Marketing (CrM) serving as a crucial control variable in this relationship, particularly in the luxury context. These hypotheses aim to uncover the nuanced effects of marketing strategies on consumer emotions, particularly in the emotionally charged domain of luxury consumption.

### 3. Methodology

The study was designed to investigate the impact of incorporating a social cause into product communication campaigns on the intensity of post-purchase guilt. A quantitative, experimental research approach was adopted to test this effect. The experiment was conducted under two distinct conditions: a luxury (highly priced) and a non-luxury (commonly priced) product. The central hypothesis is that adding a social cause to the communication campaign will reduce post-purchase guilt, which is expected to be more pronounced in the luxury product condition.

ANCOVA was employed to test the conceptual model, allowing for controlling potential confounding variables and comparing guilt levels across both conditions. The experimental manipulation involved presenting participants with product advertisements featuring or omitting a social cause.

Data collection took place between April and mid-May 2022, targeting a consumer sample from the Chinese market. 326 valid responses were obtained, with all participants completing the survey. Detailed sample characteristics are presented in Table 1. This robust sample size ensures the statistical power to detect significant differences in post-purchase guilt across the two product conditions.

*Table 1: demographical data of the respondents*

<b>Demographical Variable</b>	<b>Options</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>Proportion</b>
Gender	Male	67	21%
	Female	257	79%
	Others	2	1%
Birth year	Before 1966	27	8%
	1966 – 1980	71	22%
	1980 – 1994	154	47%
	After 1994	74	23%
Nationality	B.N.O. (British National Overseas)	2	1%
	Macau SAR	57	17%



	Hong Kong SAR	182	56%
	Portuguese Mainland	3	1%
	Chinese	70	21%
	Taiwanese	3	1%
	Others	3	1%
Place of Residence	China (mainland)	44	13%
	Macau SAR	190	58%
	Hong Kong SAR	54	17%
	Taiwan	3	1%
	Europe	24	7%
	Others	11	3%
Education Level	High School Diploma	60	18%
	Bachelor	170	52%
	Master	82	25%
	Doctorial	14	4%
Monthly Net income	< MOP 15000	90	28%
	MOP 15000 – 25000	86	26%
	MOP 25001 – 35000	35	11%
	MOP 35001 – 45000	48	15%
	MOP 45001 - 55000	28	9%
	> MOP 55000	39	12%

*Source: Own Elaboration*

### ***3.1. Manipulation of independent variables***

This study employed a  $2 \times 2$  experimental design, with two independent variables: the presence of a social cause (with cause vs. without cause) and the type of product (luxury vs. non-luxury). Both variables were manipulated between subjects. Participants were exposed to one of four fictitious advertising scenarios for a phone case. The product remained identical across all scenarios but differed in brand (Dior vs. Castify) and price (MOP 5000 vs. MOP 500).

In the first scenario, a Dior-branded phone case, priced at MOP 5000, was promoted with a Cause-related Marketing (CrM) campaign, involving a 5% donation of its value to the Women's Refugee Commission. In the second scenario, the same Dior phone case, also priced at MOP 5000, was advertised without a CrM campaign.

The third scenario featured the same phone case but branded Castify, priced at MOP 500, and accompanied by a CrM campaign involving a 5% donation to the same charitable

organization. In the fourth scenario, the phone case was also branded Castify and priced at MOP 500, but with no associated CrM campaign.

This design allowed for a clear comparison of the effects of brand prestige and social cause on consumer perceptions and feelings of post-purchase guilt.

### ***3.2. Dependent variable***

The likelihood of participants experiencing negative emotions related to purchasing the depicted product—specifically, post-purchase guilt—was evaluated using two targeted statements. Each statement was rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," providing a nuanced measure of participants' potential emotional response to the purchase.

The statements used were as follows: (1) "I might feel somewhat guilty if I bought this product," and (2) "After buying this product, I might feel regretful." By measuring both guilt and regret, the study aimed to distinguish between different dimensions of negative post-purchase emotions that may discourage future purchases or impact brand loyalty.

To ensure the reliability of these measures, internal consistency was assessed, resulting in a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of 0.82, which indicates a high level of reliability. This score reflects that the items consistently capture the underlying construct of post-purchase guilt, enhancing the validity of the findings and supporting the use of these statements as reliable indicators of anticipated emotional response.

### ***3.3. Control variables***

Recognizing that an individual's predisposition to feel guilt can shape their post-purchase emotional response, this study included all subscales of the Consumer Guilt Proneness Scale as control variables (Martins et al., 2023). This allowed for a clearer assessment of guilt specifically tied to the purchasing decision, independent of an individual's general guilt sensitivity. Controlling for these variables ensures that observed changes in guilt levels are attributed to the effect of Cause-related Marketing (CrM) rather than pre-existing guilt tendencies.

## 4. Results

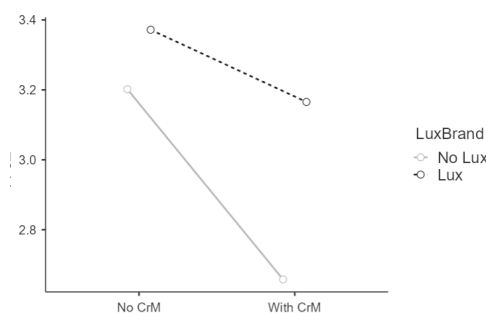
The results demonstrate a clear interaction between product type (luxury vs. non-luxury) and the presence of Cause-related Marketing (CrM) on post-purchase guilt. CrM effectively reduces guilt overall, but its impact varies by product category. For luxury brands, CrM leads to a slight reduction in post-purchase guilt, indicating a more moderate effect. In contrast, non-luxury brands experience a more substantial decrease, highlighting CrM's greater influence in this segment (difference = 0.34;  $F(1, 317) = 5.73$ ;  $p = .017$ ;  $\eta^2 = .02$ ). This finding counter the initial expectation that the higher price and exclusivity of luxury products would trigger stronger emotional reactions.

Furthermore, as predicted, the inclusion of a social cause in the advertising campaign significantly eased post-purchase guilt, with participants reporting lower guilt levels when CrM was present (difference = 0.38;  $F(1, 317) = 7.05$ ;  $p = .008$ ;  $\eta^2 = .02$ ). Figure 1 illustrates that, for both luxury and non-luxury brands, CrM consistently lowers guilt, reinforcing its effectiveness in alleviating negative feelings.

However, the analysis did not support the hypothesis that CrM would have a more pronounced effect in the luxury context. The interaction between product type and CrM was not statistically significant ( $F(1, 317) = 1.45$ ;  $p = .229$ ;  $\eta^2 = .00$ ). As shown in Figure 1, both luxury and non-luxury brands saw similar reductions in guilt with CrM, suggesting that the presence of a social cause is equally effective across product types.

This outcome challenges the assumption that luxury brands would benefit more from CrM, indicating that consumers' emotional responses to CrM are relatively consistent, regardless of the product's price or brand perception.

**Figure 2: Post-purchase guilt means in the four experimental conditions**



*Source: Own Elaboration*

## 5. Discussion

The findings of this study provide significant insights into the emotional complexities associated with post-purchase guilt in the luxury retail sector, with a particular focus on younger Chinese consumers. These insights add depth to our understanding of how luxury purchases can lead to adverse emotional responses, influencing consumer behavior and long-term brand loyalty. Consistent with previous studies, a negative relationship was found between post-purchase guilt and purchase intention, indicating that higher levels of guilt may discourage future purchases and impair loyalty to the brand (Escadas et al., 2019; Ki et al., 2017; Silva et al., 2020). Given that luxury brands typically charge premium prices for products offering comparable functional attributes to non-luxury alternatives, their offerings may be especially susceptible to the adverse effects of post-purchase guilt. For luxury brands, this underscores the importance of identifying and leveraging strategies to alleviate consumer guilt, thereby fostering sustained engagement and loyalty.

The dynamics of guilt in the Chinese market are further complicated by cultural factors, including the influence of collectivism, face (*mianzi*), and rapid economic growth. Chinese consumers, particularly younger ones, exhibit a unique blend of traditional and modern values, where maintaining social status and personal image (associated with luxury purchases) coexists with a growing sense of social responsibility (Zhan & He, 2012; Chan et al., 2016). These factors contribute to heightened awareness of the ethical implications of consumption, amplifying post-purchase guilt among consumers who perceive luxury purchases as potentially indulgent or socially irresponsible. Furthermore, as demonstrated in studies of CrM in China, socially responsible branding resonates strongly with younger consumers, as it aligns with their desire to balance self-expression with social contribution (Long et al., 2022). This cultural predisposition underscores the potential effectiveness of CrM strategies in addressing guilt within this demographic.

In exploring methods to mitigate post-purchase guilt, this study demonstrates that Cause-related Marketing (CrM) is a viable approach. In alignment with existing literature, integrating CrM in advertising campaigns reduced levels of guilt by connecting consumer spending to a socially positive outcome (Silva et al., 2020; Escadas et al., 2019). This emotional buffering effect enables consumers to rationalize their luxury purchases, viewing them as contributions to social causes rather than as mere self-indulgence. CrM

appears to address the cognitive dissonance experienced by consumers—helping to reconcile the conflict between their ethical values and desire for luxury. This mechanism not only diminishes guilt but may also elevate consumer satisfaction, thus reinforcing brand loyalty and potentially boosting future purchase intention.

The effectiveness of CrM in the Chinese context is further supported by studies highlighting the cultural emphasis on collective well-being and the growing influence of sustainability movements in China (Chan et al., 2016). Younger Chinese consumers are particularly receptive to campaigns that tie luxury consumption to broader social and environmental goals, as these efforts align with both their aspirations for personal success and their desire to contribute positively to society (Jiang and Shan, 2018). For luxury brands, this represents a strategic opportunity to not only mitigate guilt but also to create a stronger emotional connection with their target audience.

Unexpectedly, the study found no evidence to suggest that the effect of CrM in reducing post-purchase guilt was more pronounced for luxury brands compared to non-luxury brands. This finding contrasts with initial expectations that CrM would have a greater impact on high-priced luxury purchases, which are more likely to elicit feelings of guilt. While CrM effectively reduced guilt in both luxury and non-luxury segments, its effect was notably stronger within the non-luxury category. A plausible explanation for this outcome could be linked to the type of product examined in the study—a phone case—which, although a non-essential item, was priced at a premium (MOP 500) even in the non-luxury condition. For younger consumers, both versions may have been perceived as indulgent, discretionary purchases, blurring the line between the luxury and non-luxury segments. Consequently, the emotional impact of CrM appeared similar across both categories, indicating that the efficacy of guilt mitigation through CrM may be influenced less by price or brand status and more by the consumer's perception of the product's necessity and context of use.

These findings broaden the understanding of post-purchase guilt in the luxury market, highlighting the nuanced role of consumer perception and the strategic value of CrM in managing guilt across diverse product categories. The implications suggest that luxury brands could benefit from exploring CrM initiatives that align with their brand values and appeal to the social consciousness of their consumers, fostering an emotional connection that may counterbalance the guilt often associated with luxury consumption. In the Chinese market, leveraging culturally resonant themes such as collective well-being and

environmental responsibility can further enhance the effectiveness of CrM strategies, positioning brands as both aspirational and socially conscious in the eyes of younger consumers.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study explored the emotional impact of post-purchase guilt in the context of luxury versus non-luxury consumption, with Cause-related Marketing (CrM) serving as a control variable among younger consumers in the Chinese market. The findings confirm that incorporating CrM into marketing strategies can mitigate negative emotions, as post-purchase guilt, by framing purchases as socially beneficial, providing a moral justification for indulgent spending.

However, and contrary to expectations, the study did not find a significantly stronger effect of CrM in the luxury sector compared to the non-luxury context, suggesting that CrM's benefits in reducing guilt are broadly applicable across product categories. This indicates that CrM's influence on consumer emotions may be more uniform than initially anticipated, challenging the idea that high-cost luxury products inherently offer greater opportunities for guilt reduction through ethical messaging.

This research makes several important contributions to consumer behavior and marketing strategy literature. It provides empirical evidence that post-purchase guilt is a significant factor influencing the consumption of luxury goods, supporting previous research that highlights the role of emotions in consumer decision-making, particularly in sectors where spending can be perceived as excessive or indulgent. The study also confirms the effectiveness of CrM as a marketing tool for reducing post-purchase guilt, suggesting that ethical messaging can be an emotional buffer against negative feelings associated with consumer behavior. This has implications for both luxury and non-luxury brands, emphasizing the versatility of CrM in influencing consumer perceptions. Additionally, the focus on younger generations in the Chinese market offers valuable insights for marketers, as these demographics are particularly attuned to ethical considerations and more prone to experiencing guilt. By understanding the emotional triggers that influence this segment, brands can better tailor their marketing strategies to resonate with younger, ethically-conscious consumers.

While this study offers significant insights, it is not without limitations. The research used a single product category—a phone case—which may not fully represent the emotional responses associated with other types of luxury and non-luxury goods. Future studies should examine a broader spectrum of product categories to validate the findings across different consumption contexts. Furthermore, this study focused exclusively on younger Chinese consumers. Although this demographic is highly relevant for the luxury market, the findings may not generalize to older age groups or consumers in different cultural contexts. Expanding the sample to include a more diverse demographic range would provide a more comprehensive understanding of post-purchase guilt and CrM effectiveness. Additionally, the non-luxury item in this study, priced at MOP 500, may not be perceived as genuinely affordable by the target demographic, potentially influencing the emotional responses measured. Future research should carefully consider the price points of non-luxury items to ensure they accurately represent typical consumer expectations.

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