

**Emotional ambivalence in luxury Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
communication: when turning ethical generates both support and mistrust**

Oxana LAHBIB

Université d'Aix-Marseille, CERGAM, IAE, 13089 Aix-en-Provence, France

oxana.lahbib@iae-aix.com

Aurélié Kessous

Université d'Aix-Marseille, CERGAM, IAE, 13089 Aix-en-Provence, France

aurelie.kessous@iae-aix.com

Pierre Valette-Florence

Université de Grenoble, CERAG, IAE, 38040 Saint-Martin-d'Hères, France

pvalette@grenoble-iae.fr

Abstract:

Luxury brands face two difficulties nowadays: a perceived incompatibility of their universe with the CSR world, and a rising trend of scepticism among clients regarding the brand's ethical claims. This situation leads the brands to doubt if they have an interest to promote their efforts or not. The purpose of this research is to understand how individuals mentally represent the role of an inspirational figure in ethical luxury communication, supposed to work as an indirect demonstration of the brand's ethical roots. Through a projective qualitative method, the participants have projected themselves in two experiences: a scenario with the presence of impacts of the ethical commitment onto the luxury brand's final products (e.g., the use of recycled materials) and the absence of impacts (e.g., supporting a charitable cause). A common tendency of scepticism regarding the ethical pledge and a situation of emotional ambivalence are observed across the two groups.

Keywords: Luxury, Corporate Social responsibility, Celebrity endorsement

Track: Product and Brand Management