



WHEN GREEN MARKETING LICENSES NON-GREEN LUXURY CONSUMPTION: A MORAL LICENSING PERSPECTIVE

Fathayani Salsabila*, Yolanda Masnita, Husna Leila Yusran

Department of Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Trisakti, Jakarta, Indonesia

*Correspondence: 022002301131@std.trisakti.ac.id

Abstract

Introduction: Although green marketing has been widely recognized for promoting environmentally friendly products, little is known about its ability to encourage consumers to purchase non-green luxury products. Drawing on Moral Licensing Theory, this study examines how green marketing influences purchase intention through brand ethical image while considering the role of luxury brand perception.

Method: A quantitative cross-sectional survey was conducted among 130 Indonesian consumers familiar with luxury brands. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with AMOS to test the proposed relationships.

Results: Green marketing positively influenced both brand ethical image and purchase intention. Brand ethical image also significantly enhanced purchase intention, while luxury brand perception remained a significant predictor of consumers' intention to purchase non-green luxury products. These findings indicate that consumers simultaneously consider ethical evaluations and symbolic brand value in luxury purchasing decisions.

Discussion: This study extends Moral Licensing Theory by demonstrating that organizational sustainability communication can generate ethical evaluations that justify consumers' intention to purchase non-green luxury products. The findings highlight that sustainability communication and luxury symbolism complement one another, providing both theoretical insights into sustainable luxury consumption and managerial guidance for integrating environmental responsibility into luxury brand strategies.

Keywords: Green marketing; Brand ethical image; Luxury brand perception; Purchase intention; Moral Licensing Theory; Sustainable luxury consumption.

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A. INTRODUCTION

Sustainability has become one of the most influential forces shaping contemporary business strategies and consumer markets. Growing public awareness of climate change, environmental degradation, and resource depletion has encouraged companies across industries to integrate sustainability principles into their corporate strategies. Among these initiatives, green marketing has emerged as a strategic approach that enables firms to communicate their environmental commitment while simultaneously strengthening brand reputation and consumer trust (Azzahra & Roosdhani, 2025). Rather than functioning solely as a promotional tool, green marketing has increasingly become an important mechanism through which companies signal their environmental responsibility and reinforce their legitimacy in the eyes of consumers.

The increasing adoption of green marketing is particularly evident in the luxury industry. Traditionally, luxury brands have been associated with exclusivity, superior craftsmanship, exceptional quality, and symbolic value. More recently, however, these brands have increasingly incorporated sustainability narratives into their marketing strategies in response to growing consumer expectations regarding environmental and social responsibility (Shin *et al.*, 2024). Through sustainability campaigns, environmentally responsible sourcing, and corporate social responsibility initiatives, luxury brands seek to project themselves as ethical organizations that contribute positively to society while maintaining their premium market positioning.

Despite this growing commitment to sustainability communication, an important paradox remains. Many luxury brands actively promote environmental responsibility through green marketing while continuing to offer products whose production processes, materials, or consumption patterns cannot be fully categorized as environmentally friendly. Consequently, consumers are exposed to two potentially conflicting signals: on the one hand, the brand communicates strong environmental values; on the other hand, the products themselves may not fully reflect those sustainability claims. This contradiction raises an important question concerning consumer behavior: can green marketing encourage consumers to purchase luxury products that are explicitly non-green?

Understanding this paradox is particularly important because consumer evaluations are not formed solely by product characteristics. Consumers also consider broader perceptions regarding the ethical values and symbolic meaning associated with a brand. Green marketing may therefore influence purchase intention not only by promoting environmental awareness but also by shaping consumers' perceptions that a brand behaves responsibly and ethically. Such perceptions contribute to the development of a favorable brand ethical image, which reflects consumers' beliefs that a company demonstrates social responsibility and environmental concern (Shin *et al.*, 2024). At the same time, consumers' perceptions of luxury brands as symbols of prestige, exclusivity, and social status remain important determinants of purchasing decisions (Destina & Masnita, 2026; Liu *et al.*, 2025). Consequently, purchase intention toward luxury products may be influenced simultaneously by ethical evaluations and symbolic brand value.

Consumers' responses to green marketing are not always driven by environmental concerns alone. Contemporary consumer behavior research suggests that ethical evaluations of a brand may substantially influence subsequent purchasing decisions, even when the purchased products themselves are not environmentally friendly. This phenomenon has attracted growing scholarly attention because it challenges the conventional assumption that green marketing primarily stimulates demand for sustainable products. Instead, green marketing may generate broader psychological

consequences by shaping consumers' moral evaluations of a brand and subsequently influencing consumption decisions beyond environmentally friendly product categories.

This phenomenon can be explained through Moral Licensing Theory, which argues that previous moral behavior or exposure to ethical actions may provide individuals with a psychological justification for engaging in subsequent behaviors that would otherwise create moral conflict. Within the context of luxury consumption, consumers who perceive a brand as environmentally responsible through its green marketing initiatives may experience a reduced sense of moral concern when purchasing products that are not explicitly environmentally friendly. In other words, the ethical reputation established through green marketing may function as a form of moral license that legitimizes non-green luxury consumption.

Although Moral Licensing Theory has been widely applied in studies of ethical decision-making and sustainable consumer behavior, its application within the luxury marketing literature remains relatively limited. Existing studies have primarily examined the direct relationship between green marketing and consumers' purchase intention toward environmentally friendly products, emphasizing the positive role of sustainability communication in encouraging responsible consumption (Azzahra & Roosdhani, 2025; Shin *et al.*, 2024). Comparatively fewer studies have investigated whether green marketing may unintentionally encourage consumers to purchase products that are not environmentally sustainable by strengthening the ethical reputation of luxury brands.

Moreover, previous findings remain inconclusive regarding the mechanisms through which green marketing influences consumer purchase intention. Several studies argue that green marketing directly enhances consumers' willingness to purchase by strengthening environmental awareness and corporate credibility. In contrast, other studies suggest that consumer responses depend on psychological and perceptual mechanisms, including ethical evaluations of the brand and perceptions of luxury value. These inconsistencies indicate that the relationship between green marketing and purchase intention is more complex than previously assumed and requires further theoretical explanation.

To address these inconsistencies, this study introduces brand ethical image as a mediating mechanism through which green marketing influences consumers' purchase intention. Brand ethical image represents consumers' perceptions that a company behaves responsibly toward society and the environment, thereby strengthening trust and positive evaluations of the brand. At the same time, luxury brand perception is incorporated as an additional explanatory construct because luxury consumption is strongly associated with prestige, exclusivity, symbolic value, and social identity. Examining these two constructs simultaneously provides a more comprehensive understanding of the psychological processes underlying consumers' intention to purchase non-green luxury products.

Accordingly, this study seeks to answer the following research question: When does green marketing encourage consumers to purchase non-green luxury products? Drawing upon Moral Licensing Theory, this study proposes that green marketing strengthens consumers' purchase intention by enhancing brand ethical image while simultaneously acknowledging the enduring influence of luxury brand perception. By examining these relationships, the study extends the application of Moral Licensing Theory from general ethical consumption to the context of non-green luxury consumption, thereby contributing to the growing literature on sustainable marketing, consumer behavior, and luxury brand management.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Moral Licensing Theory

Moral Licensing Theory provides the primary theoretical foundation for explaining why consumers may engage in behaviors that appear inconsistent with their moral values. The theory proposes that previous moral actions, or exposure to ethical cues, can generate a psychological sense of moral credibility that subsequently licenses individuals to perform behaviors that might otherwise create feelings of guilt or moral inconsistency (Merritt et al., 2010). Rather than representing irrational behavior, moral licensing reflects a self-regulatory mechanism through which individuals maintain a positive moral self-concept while simultaneously satisfying competing personal preferences.

Within the marketing context, Moral Licensing Theory has increasingly been employed to explain consumers' responses to sustainability initiatives and ethical branding. When companies actively communicate their environmental responsibility through green marketing, consumers may perceive these firms as morally responsible organizations. Such ethical perceptions reduce the psychological tension that normally accompanies purchasing products with potentially negative environmental consequences. Consequently, consumers may feel justified in purchasing products that are not explicitly environmentally friendly because they believe that the brand itself has already demonstrated responsible environmental behavior.

This psychological mechanism is particularly relevant to the luxury industry. Luxury products are frequently associated with exclusivity, prestige, superior craftsmanship, and symbolic consumption. However, many luxury products also require resource-intensive production processes, premium materials, and consumption patterns that are often questioned from a sustainability perspective. Consequently, consumers who value both environmental responsibility and luxury consumption may experience moral conflict when purchasing non-green luxury products.

Green marketing may reduce this moral conflict by strengthening consumers' perceptions that a luxury brand behaves ethically and responsibly. Once consumers perceive that a brand contributes positively to environmental sustainability, they may transfer these positive ethical evaluations to the brand's broader product portfolio, including products that are not environmentally friendly. This process creates a form of moral licensing whereby consumers perceive their purchasing decisions as more ethically acceptable because the brand has already established a positive moral reputation.

Accordingly, Moral Licensing Theory offers a comprehensive theoretical explanation for understanding why green marketing may influence purchase intention beyond environmentally friendly products. Rather than affecting consumer behavior solely through environmental awareness, green marketing may operate by shaping ethical perceptions that subsequently justify non-green luxury consumption. This perspective provides the theoretical foundation for examining the mediating role of brand ethical image and the influence of luxury brand perception in explaining consumers' purchase intentions toward non-green luxury products.

Building upon this theoretical perspective, the present study argues that green marketing does not merely communicate environmental commitment but also establishes the psychological conditions under which consumers perceive non-green luxury consumption as morally acceptable. Consequently, Moral Licensing Theory serves as the overarching theoretical framework that integrates green marketing, brand ethical image, luxury brand perception, and purchase intention within a single explanatory model.

2. Green Marketing and Brand Ethical Image

Green marketing has evolved from a promotional strategy into a strategic organizational capability that enables firms to communicate their environmental responsibility while strengthening corporate reputation and consumer trust. As environmental sustainability becomes an increasingly important consideration in consumer decision-making, companies increasingly adopt green marketing not only to differentiate their products but also to demonstrate their commitment to responsible business practices (Azzahra & Roosdhani, 2025). Consequently, green marketing functions as a strategic signal through which firms communicate values that extend beyond the functional attributes of their products.

From a consumer behavior perspective, green marketing influences consumers by shaping their cognitive and affective evaluations of a brand. Sustainability campaigns, environmental claims, eco-friendly packaging, and corporate environmental initiatives provide consumers with cues regarding a firm's ethical commitment. Rather than evaluating products solely based on quality or performance, consumers increasingly assess whether a company genuinely demonstrates responsibility toward the environment and society. These ethical evaluations subsequently influence consumers' trust and overall perception of the brand (Shin *et al.*, 2024).

Within the luxury industry, the role of green marketing becomes particularly important because luxury brands often face a paradox between exclusivity and sustainability. While luxury products symbolize prestige, rarity, and superior craftsmanship, consumers also expect luxury companies to demonstrate environmental and social responsibility. Consequently, luxury brands increasingly employ green marketing initiatives to strengthen their ethical reputation without compromising their premium positioning.

Drawing upon Moral Licensing Theory, green marketing serves as an ethical signal that encourages consumers to perceive a brand as morally responsible. Repeated exposure to environmental communication enables consumers to develop favorable ethical evaluations of the brand, thereby strengthening its brand ethical image. Rather than influencing purchase behavior directly, green marketing first establishes positive moral perceptions that become the foundation for subsequent consumer evaluations.

Previous studies consistently report that green marketing positively influences consumers' ethical perceptions of brands by enhancing corporate credibility and environmental trust (Azzahra & Roosdhani, 2025; Shin *et al.*, 2024). These findings indicate that sustainability communication contributes to the development of a favorable brand ethical image, which subsequently influences consumers' behavioral responses.

Based on the theoretical arguments and empirical evidence presented above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₁: Green marketing has a positive effect on brand ethical image.

3. Brand Ethical Image and Purchase Intention

Brand ethical image refers to consumers' perceptions that a brand consistently demonstrates integrity, environmental responsibility, and ethical business practices. Unlike corporate reputation, which reflects overall organizational performance, brand ethical image specifically captures consumers' ethical evaluations of a brand and their beliefs that the company behaves responsibly toward society, the environment, and its stakeholders (Shin *et al.*, 2024). Consequently, brand ethical image represents an important intangible asset that shapes consumers' trust, emotional attachment, and

behavioral intentions.

As sustainability issues become increasingly important, consumers no longer evaluate brands solely based on product quality, price, or functional performance. They also consider whether companies genuinely contribute to environmental protection and social well-being. Brands that consistently communicate responsible environmental practices through green marketing are therefore more likely to establish favorable ethical perceptions among consumers.

From the perspective of Moral Licensing Theory, brand ethical image represents the psychological mechanism through which ethical evaluations influence consumer behavior. Once consumers perceive a brand as ethically responsible, they are more likely to regard purchasing products from that brand as morally acceptable. This favorable ethical perception reduces feelings of guilt or moral conflict that might otherwise arise when purchasing products that are not explicitly environmentally friendly. Consequently, brand ethical image provides the psychological justification that facilitates consumers' purchase intention toward non-green luxury products.

Within the luxury market, this mechanism becomes particularly relevant because consumers often experience competing motivations between environmental responsibility and the desire for prestige, exclusivity, and symbolic value. A strong brand ethical image helps reconcile these competing motivations by reinforcing consumers' confidence that purchasing from an environmentally responsible luxury brand remains consistent with their moral values.

Previous empirical studies indicate that brand ethical image positively influences consumers' purchase intention by strengthening trust, corporate credibility, and favorable brand evaluations (Shin et al., 2024; Destina & Masnita, 2026). These findings suggest that consumers who perceive a brand as ethical are more likely to develop stronger intentions to purchase its products, even in contexts where environmental characteristics of the products themselves remain limited.

Based on the theoretical arguments and empirical evidence presented above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₂: Brand ethical image has a positive effect on consumers' purchase intention of non-green luxury products.

4. Green Marketing and Purchase Intention

Purchase intention refers to consumers' conscious willingness or planned behavior to purchase a particular product after evaluating the information available about the brand and its offerings. Within the context of sustainable marketing, purchase intention is generally strengthened when consumers perceive that a company demonstrates environmental responsibility and aligns its business practices with societal expectations (Saifudin et al., 2026). Consequently, green marketing is widely regarded as an effective strategy for encouraging favorable consumer responses and increasing purchase intention toward environmentally responsible products.

However, the relationship between green marketing and purchase intention becomes more complex in the luxury market. Unlike conventional green products, luxury products are primarily valued for their exclusivity, prestige, symbolic meaning, and emotional appeal. Many luxury products continue to rely on premium materials and production processes that may not fully satisfy sustainability standards. Nevertheless, luxury brands increasingly communicate environmental responsibility through green marketing initiatives, creating favorable ethical perceptions that may influence consumer evaluations beyond the environmental characteristics of individual products.

From the perspective of Moral Licensing Theory, green marketing may influence purchase intention through a psychological justification process. Consumers who perceive that a luxury brand actively engages in environmentally responsible practices may consider purchasing products from that brand as morally acceptable, even when the products themselves are not explicitly environmentally friendly. In this situation, consumers evaluate not only the product itself but also the broader ethical reputation of the company. The positive moral image established through green marketing therefore reduces perceived moral conflict and increases consumers' willingness to purchase non-green luxury products.

Previous studies consistently report that green marketing positively affects consumers' purchase intention by strengthening trust, environmental awareness, and positive brand evaluations (Bukhari et al., 2023; Saifudin et al., 2026). Although these studies predominantly focus on environmentally friendly products, the underlying psychological mechanism suggests that green marketing may also influence consumers' intention to purchase non-green luxury products when the brand is perceived as ethically responsible. This perspective is consistent with Moral Licensing Theory, which proposes that prior exposure to ethical behavior can shape subsequent consumer decisions by reducing feelings of moral inconsistency.

Based on the above theoretical arguments and empirical evidence, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H₃: Green marketing has a positive effect on consumers' purchase intention of non-green luxury products.

5. Luxury Brand Perception and Purchase Intention

Luxury brand perception reflects consumers' overall evaluation of a brand as prestigious, exclusive, superior in quality, and capable of enhancing personal identity and social status. Unlike functional products that are primarily evaluated based on utilitarian benefits, luxury brands derive their value from symbolic meanings, emotional experiences, and social recognition. Consequently, consumers purchase luxury products not only to satisfy functional needs but also to express self-identity, signal social status, and experience psychological satisfaction (Destina & Masnita, 2026; Liu et al., 2025).

The growing importance of symbolic consumption has strengthened the influence of luxury brand perception on consumer decision-making. Consumers who perceive a brand as highly prestigious and exclusive tend to develop stronger emotional attachment and greater confidence in the brand. These positive perceptions increase consumers' willingness to purchase because luxury brands are viewed as representing superior quality, authenticity, and social distinction. Accordingly, luxury brand perception functions as an important psychological driver of purchase intention.

Within the context of non-green luxury products, luxury brand perception may become even more influential. Although consumers increasingly express concern for environmental sustainability, the symbolic benefits associated with luxury consumption often remain an important consideration in purchasing decisions. Prestige, exclusivity, craftsmanship, and brand heritage may outweigh concerns regarding the environmental characteristics of individual products. As a result, consumers with stronger perceptions of luxury brands are more likely to maintain favorable purchase intentions despite recognizing that certain luxury products may not fully conform to sustainability principles.

This relationship can also be understood through the perspective of Moral Licensing Theory. Once consumers perceive a luxury brand as ethically responsible through its

sustainability communication, the symbolic value associated with the brand is reinforced by positive moral evaluations. The combination of ethical credibility and luxury symbolism reduces consumers' psychological resistance and strengthens their intention to purchase products offered by the brand, including those that are not explicitly environmentally friendly. Therefore, luxury brand perception complements consumers' ethical evaluations by increasing the attractiveness and desirability of luxury consumption.

Previous studies consistently report that luxury brand perception positively influences consumers' purchase intention by enhancing perceived prestige, emotional value, and brand desirability (Destina & Masnita, 2026; Liu et al., 2025). These findings indicate that favorable perceptions of luxury brands significantly encourage consumers' willingness to purchase luxury products, particularly when the brands successfully maintain both symbolic value and a positive corporate image.

Based on the theoretical arguments and empirical evidence presented above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Luxury brand perception has a positive effect on consumers' purchase intention of non-green luxury products.

Drawing upon Moral Licensing Theory, this study proposes that green marketing influences consumers' purchase intention toward non-green luxury products through both direct and indirect psychological mechanisms. Green marketing serves as the primary antecedent by communicating a brand's environmental commitment and ethical responsibility. These sustainability signals are expected to strengthen consumers' perceptions of the brand's ethical image, which subsequently functions as a psychological mechanism that facilitates moral justification and increases purchase intention. At the same time, luxury brand perception is expected to exert a direct positive influence on purchase intention by reinforcing the symbolic value, prestige, and desirability associated with luxury consumption.

Accordingly, the proposed conceptual framework integrates environmental communication, ethical brand evaluation, and symbolic consumption within a single explanatory model. This framework provides a comprehensive understanding of how green marketing shapes consumers' behavioral intentions toward non-green luxury products by simultaneously considering both ethical and symbolic dimensions of consumer decision-making. The conceptual model underpinning this study is presented in Figure 1.

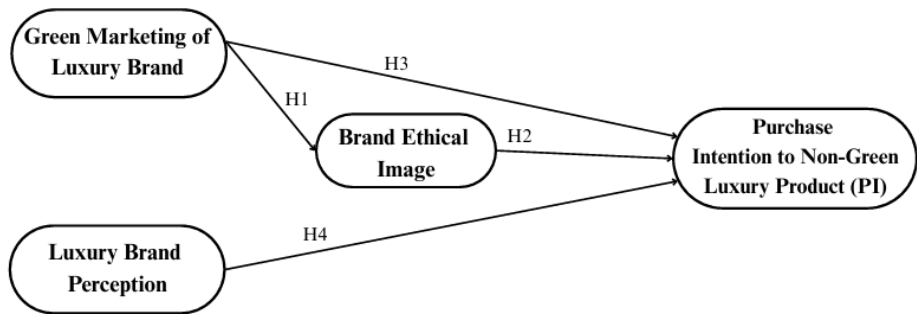


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

C. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey to examine the proposed

relationships among green marketing, brand ethical image, luxury brand perception, and purchase intention toward non-green luxury products. Primary data were collected in Indonesia through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms to respondents who met the predetermined selection criteria. A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that participants were familiar with luxury brands, had prior awareness of green marketing practices implemented by luxury brands, and understood the concept of non-green luxury products. Following the screening process, 130 valid responses were retained for analysis. Given the complexity of the proposed model involving multiple latent constructs and a mediating relationship, the sample size was considered adequate for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis (Hair *et al.*, 2021).

The study examined four latent constructs: green marketing, brand ethical image, luxury brand perception, and purchase intention. All measurement items were adapted from previously validated studies and contextualized to reflect consumers' evaluations of luxury brands. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree").

Table 1. Measurement of Research Constructs

Construct	Code	Measurement Item	Source
Green Marketing	GM1	I am interested in luxury brands that implement environmentally friendly marketing practices.	Widodo <i>et al.</i> (2022); Z. Li <i>et al.</i> (2026)
	GM2	I perceive that some luxury brands actively promote environmentally friendly practices.	
	GM3	Green marketing implemented by luxury brands reflects their concern for environmental sustainability.	
Brand Ethical Image	BEI1	I believe that the luxury brand behaves ethically.	Khan (2023); Ribamar <i>et al.</i> (2023)
	BEI2	I believe that the luxury brand demonstrates social responsibility.	
	BEI3	Luxury brands implementing environmentally responsible practices appear more trustworthy.	
	BEI4	Luxury brands promoting sustainability possess strong ethical values.	
Luxury Brand Perception	LBP1	I perceive luxury brands as offering superior quality.	Kokatnur (2025); Zhao <i>et al.</i> (2023)
	LBP2	Luxury brands convey exclusivity and a high-end image.	
	LBP3	Luxury brands represent prestige and enhance consumers' social image.	
Purchase Intention	PI1	I remain interested in purchasing luxury products even if they are not environmentally friendly.	Info <i>et al.</i> (2025); Liu <i>et al.</i> (2025)
	PI2	The quality and prestige of luxury brands encourage me to purchase them despite their non-green characteristics.	
	PI3	My likelihood of purchasing a non-green luxury product remains high.	

Source: Adapted from Khan (2023), Ribamar *et al.* (2023), Zhao *et al.* (2023), Li *et al.* (2026), Liu *et al.* (2025), and compiled by the authors.

Before testing the structural relationships, the measurement model was evaluated to establish construct validity and reliability. As presented in Table 2, all standardized factor loadings exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, while the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR) values were above 0.50 and 0.70, respectively, indicating satisfactory convergent validity and internal consistency (Hair *et al.*, 2021).

Table 2. Construct Validity and Reliability

Construct	Items	Factor Loadings	AVE	CR	Interpretation
Green Marketing	3	0.942–0.946	0.981	0.961	Valid and reliable
Brand Ethical Image	4	0.904–0.931	0.850	0.958	Valid and reliable
Luxury Brand Perception	3	0.901–0.943	0.849	0.944	Valid and reliable
Purchase Intention	3	0.937–0.941	0.883	0.958	Valid and reliable

Source: Authors' calculations based on SEM-AMOS analysis of survey data (2026).

The hypotheses were tested using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with AMOS. The analytical procedure consisted of two stages. First, the measurement model was assessed through validity and reliability testing. Second, the structural model was evaluated using goodness-of-fit indices and path analysis to examine the proposed direct and mediating relationships among the constructs. SEM was selected because it enables the simultaneous estimation of multiple causal relationships among latent variables while accounting for measurement error, thereby providing a rigorous assessment of the proposed conceptual model (Hair et al., 2021).

D. RESULTS

This study examined the relationships among green marketing, brand ethical image, luxury brand perception, and consumers' purchase intention toward non-green luxury products using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Before evaluating the proposed hypotheses, the overall model fit was assessed to determine whether the proposed structural model adequately represented the observed data. Subsequently, the structural relationships among the latent constructs were examined through hypothesis testing.

1. Model Fit Assessment

The adequacy of the proposed model was evaluated using several goodness-of-fit indices representing absolute fit, incremental fit, and parsimonious fit measures. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Goodness-of-Fit Assessment

Measurement Category	Fit Index	Obtained Value	Recommended Criterion	Evaluation
Absolute Fit Measures	ECVI	0.993	Closer to the saturated model (1.411) than the independence model (17.726)	Good Fit
	RMSEA	0.028	≤ 0.08	Good Fit
	RMR	0.019	≤ 0.05	Good Fit
Incremental Fit Measures	IFI	0.997	≥ 0.90	Good Fit
	CFI	0.997	≥ 0.90	Good Fit
	TLI	0.996	≥ 0.90	Good Fit
Parsimonious Fit Measures	CMIN/DF	1.101	1.00–5.00	Good Fit
	AIC	128.058	Closer to the saturated model (182.000) than the independence model (2286.643)	Good Fit

Source: Model estimation was performed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with AMOS 26.

As presented in Table 3, all goodness-of-fit indices satisfied the recommended criteria. The RMSEA (0.028) and RMR (0.019) values indicate that the proposed model adequately fits the observed data. Likewise, the incremental fit indices demonstrated excellent model performance, with IFI (0.997), CFI (0.997), and TLI (0.996) exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.90. The CMIN/DF value of 1.101 also fell within the acceptable range. Furthermore, both ECVI and AIC were closer to the saturated model

than to the independence model, indicating that the proposed structural model provides an adequate representation of the empirical data. Overall, these findings confirm that the model is appropriate for hypothesis testing.

2. Hypothesis Testing

Following confirmation of model adequacy, the structural model was evaluated to examine the proposed hypotheses. The standardized path coefficients, *t*-statistics, significance levels, and hypothesis decisions are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Structural Relationship	Standardized Coefficient (β)	t-statistic	p-value	Decision
H1	Green Marketing $\rightarrow$ Brand Ethical Image	0.772	14.367	0.000	Supported
H2	Brand Ethical Image $\rightarrow$ Purchase Intention	0.297	2.524	0.012	Supported
H3	Green Marketing $\rightarrow$ Purchase Intention	0.589	5.728	0.000	Supported
H4	Luxury Brand Perception $\rightarrow$ Purchase Intention	0.402	9.547	0.000	Supported

Note: Standardized coefficients are reported. All significance tests are two-tailed

The hypothesis testing results indicate that all proposed relationships are statistically significant. Green marketing positively influenced brand ethical image ($\beta = 0.772$, $t = 14.367$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H1. Brand ethical image also exerted a positive effect on consumers' purchase intention toward non-green luxury products ($\beta = 0.297$, $t = 2.524$, $p = 0.012$), supporting H2. In addition, green marketing demonstrated a significant direct effect on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.589$, $t = 5.728$, $p < 0.001$), confirming H3. Finally, luxury brand perception positively affected purchase intention ($\beta = 0.402$, $t = 9.547$, $p < 0.001$), thereby supporting H4.

Overall, the empirical findings demonstrate that green marketing contributes to strengthening consumers' ethical evaluations of luxury brands while simultaneously increasing their purchase intention toward non-green luxury products. Moreover, both brand ethical image and luxury brand perception exhibit significant positive relationships with purchase intention, indicating that all proposed direct relationships are empirically supported.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Green Marketing and Brand Ethical Image

The findings of this study demonstrate that green marketing positively influences consumers' perceptions of brand ethical image. This result suggests that environmentally oriented marketing initiatives extend beyond their traditional promotional role by shaping consumers' ethical evaluations of luxury brands. Rather than merely communicating environmental attributes, green marketing functions as a strategic mechanism through which firms convey responsibility, transparency, and long-term commitment to sustainability. Consequently, consumers tend to associate luxury brands implementing credible green marketing initiatives with stronger ethical values, thereby enhancing the overall ethical image of the brand.

This finding is consistent with the underlying assumptions of Moral Licensing Theory, which proposes that previous moral actions or ethical behaviors generate favorable moral evaluations that subsequently influence future judgments and decisions.

Within the present study, green marketing serves as an observable ethical signal that enables consumers to perceive luxury brands as socially and environmentally responsible organizations. These positive ethical evaluations become particularly important in the luxury market because consumers increasingly assess luxury brands not only through product quality and exclusivity but also through corporate responsibility and sustainability commitments. Therefore, environmentally responsible marketing activities strengthen the ethical legitimacy of luxury brands and contribute to the formation of a positive brand ethical image.

The findings also reinforce previous studies reporting that green marketing enhances consumers' perceptions of corporate responsibility and strengthens favorable brand evaluations (Azzahra & Roosdhani, 2025; Shin *et al.*, 2024). In addition, the present findings support the work of Hanifah, Hidayati, and Mutiarni (2019), who demonstrated that environmentally oriented product strategies positively influence consumers' purchasing decisions by increasing positive evaluations of environmentally responsible products. Although their study focused on green products rather than luxury brands, both studies indicate that sustainability-oriented marketing activities shape favorable consumer perceptions that subsequently encourage positive behavioral responses. This consistency suggests that environmental responsibility has become an important strategic asset capable of strengthening both product evaluation and brand reputation across different market contexts.

Beyond confirming previous empirical evidence, this study extends the application of Moral Licensing Theory within the context of luxury marketing. Previous research has predominantly applied the theory to explain individual moral judgments and subsequent consumption behavior. The present findings suggest that moral licensing may also operate at the organizational level, whereby environmentally responsible marketing activities generate ethical legitimacy for luxury brands before consumers evaluate individual products. This perspective broadens the theoretical application of Moral Licensing Theory by demonstrating that ethical perceptions can originate from corporate sustainability communication rather than solely from consumers' prior moral behavior. Consequently, brand ethical image emerges as an important psychological mechanism through which green marketing influences consumer evaluations within the luxury market.

5.2 Brand Ethical Image and Purchase Intention

The empirical results further indicate that brand ethical image positively affects consumers' purchase intention toward non-green luxury products. This finding suggests that consumers' ethical evaluations of a luxury brand play a significant role in shaping subsequent purchasing decisions. When consumers perceive a luxury brand as responsible, trustworthy, and committed to environmental sustainability, they become more willing to purchase products offered by that brand, even when the products themselves are not explicitly environmentally friendly. Accordingly, consumers appear to evaluate the ethical reputation of the brand as a whole rather than focusing exclusively on the environmental characteristics of individual products.

This relationship can be understood through Moral Licensing Theory, which argues that positive moral evaluations provide psychological justification for subsequent decisions that might otherwise generate moral concerns. In the present context, consumers who perceive a luxury brand as ethically responsible experience lower levels of psychological conflict when considering the purchase of non-green luxury products. The favorable ethical image accumulated through sustainability communication functions

as moral reassurance, enabling consumers to reconcile the apparent inconsistency between supporting environmental responsibility and purchasing luxury products that may not fully satisfy sustainability standards. Consequently, ethical brand perceptions become an important explanatory mechanism linking corporate sustainability initiatives with consumers' purchase intentions.

These findings are consistent with previous studies demonstrating that ethical brand image strengthens consumer trust, corporate credibility, and purchase intention (Shin *et al.*, 2024; Destina & Masnita, 2026). The present findings also complement previous consumer behavior studies emphasizing that favorable perceptions toward environmentally responsible products encourage stronger purchasing decisions (Hanifah *et al.*, 2019). While earlier studies primarily focused on the direct influence of green products on purchase behavior, the present study demonstrates that ethical perceptions of the brand itself constitute an additional psychological pathway through which sustainability initiatives influence consumer behavior. This distinction represents an important contribution because luxury consumers frequently evaluate brands not only on the basis of product performance but also on symbolic and ethical values associated with the brand.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings contribute to the growing literature on sustainable luxury consumption by highlighting the importance of brand ethical image as a psychological construct connecting environmental communication with consumer decision-making. Rather than assuming that consumers respond exclusively to the environmental characteristics of products, the findings indicate that ethical evaluations of luxury brands substantially shape consumers' willingness to purchase non-green luxury products. This evidence enriches the application of Moral Licensing Theory by demonstrating that moral justification can be generated through organizational ethical reputation, thereby expanding current understanding of how sustainability communication influences consumer behavior within the luxury industry.

5.3 Green Marketing and Purchase Intention

The findings indicate that green marketing has a positive and significant direct effect on consumers' purchase intention toward non-green luxury products. This result suggests that environmentally responsible marketing communication influences consumers not only by strengthening ethical perceptions of luxury brands but also by directly encouraging their willingness to purchase. In other words, green marketing appears to reduce consumers' hesitation toward purchasing non-green luxury products by creating favorable impressions of the brand's overall environmental commitment. Consequently, consumers evaluate the company as a responsible corporate actor, allowing sustainability-related marketing activities to positively influence purchase intention despite the products themselves not being explicitly environmentally friendly.

From the perspective of Moral Licensing Theory, this finding demonstrates that corporate sustainability initiatives may generate a form of moral reassurance that facilitates consumer decision-making. Consumers who perceive that a luxury brand consistently engages in environmentally responsible marketing activities may regard purchasing products from that brand as morally acceptable. Rather than evaluating each product exclusively based on its environmental attributes, consumers incorporate the firm's broader sustainability commitment into their purchasing decisions. This mechanism reduces perceived moral inconsistency and enables consumers to justify purchasing luxury products that may not fully conform to sustainability standards. Therefore, green marketing functions not merely as a communication strategy but also as

a psychological mechanism that shapes consumers' moral evaluations and subsequent behavioral intentions.

The present findings are consistent with previous studies demonstrating that green marketing positively influences consumers' purchase intention by strengthening environmental trust, brand credibility, and favorable consumer attitudes (Bukhari *et al.*, 2023; Saifudin *et al.*, 2026). Similarly, Hanifah, Hidayati, and Mutiarni (2019) reported that environmentally oriented product strategies contribute to stronger consumer purchasing decisions because consumers increasingly appreciate firms demonstrating environmental responsibility. Although their research examined green products rather than luxury brands, both studies consistently suggest that sustainability-oriented marketing initiatives positively influence consumer decision-making by improving overall brand evaluations.

Beyond confirming previous empirical findings, this study extends existing literature by demonstrating that the influence of green marketing is not restricted to environmentally friendly products. Instead, green marketing also encourages consumers' intention to purchase non-green luxury products when the luxury brand successfully establishes an ethical corporate image. This finding contributes to sustainable luxury marketing literature by suggesting that consumers evaluate sustainability at the organizational level in addition to the product level. Consequently, green marketing creates value not only by communicating environmental initiatives but also by strengthening consumers' psychological confidence in the brand, thereby increasing purchase intention toward luxury products that are not explicitly green.

5.4 Luxury Brand Perception and Purchase Intention

The empirical findings further demonstrate that luxury brand perception positively influences consumers' purchase intention toward non-green luxury products. This result indicates that consumers continue to value prestige, exclusivity, superior quality, and symbolic benefits when making purchasing decisions in the luxury market. Although environmental sustainability has become increasingly important, consumers do not necessarily abandon their preference for luxury products. Instead, positive perceptions regarding a brand's exclusivity, heritage, and social prestige remain influential determinants of purchase intention.

This finding reflects the distinctive characteristics of luxury consumption, where symbolic value frequently complements functional product attributes. Consumers purchase luxury products not only to satisfy utilitarian needs but also to express personal identity, social status, and emotional satisfaction. Consequently, stronger perceptions of luxury brand value increase consumers' willingness to purchase, even when products are not explicitly marketed as environmentally friendly. Within the framework of Moral Licensing Theory, this finding suggests that positive ethical evaluations generated through sustainability communication can coexist with consumers' desire for prestige and symbolic consumption. Rather than creating a contradiction, ethical reputation and luxury symbolism jointly strengthen consumers' confidence in purchasing luxury products.

The findings support previous studies reporting that luxury brand perception positively affects consumers' purchase intention by enhancing perceived prestige, emotional attachment, and symbolic value (Destina & Masnita, 2026; Liu *et al.*, 2025). These studies consistently argue that consumers tend to develop stronger purchase intentions when luxury brands successfully communicate superior quality and exclusivity. The present study complements these findings by demonstrating that luxury brand perception remains an important determinant of purchase intention even within the

context of sustainability-oriented marketing. Accordingly, luxury consumers do not perceive environmental responsibility and luxury consumption as mutually exclusive concepts but rather integrate both considerations when evaluating brands.

The present study contributes to the growing literature on sustainable luxury consumption by illustrating that symbolic value remains an essential driver of consumer behavior despite increasing environmental awareness. Previous research has predominantly examined either sustainability communication or luxury brand value as separate determinants of consumer behavior. In contrast, the present findings indicate that these two dimensions operate simultaneously in shaping consumers' purchase intention toward non-green luxury products. This integrated perspective broadens current understanding of consumer decision-making within the luxury market and demonstrates that ethical responsibility and symbolic prestige can reinforce rather than undermine one another. Consequently, the findings provide additional evidence that sustainable marketing strategies can coexist with traditional luxury brand positioning without diminishing consumers' desire to purchase luxury products.

5.5 Theoretical Implications

This study offers several important contributions to the literature on sustainable marketing, consumer behavior, and luxury branding. First, the findings extend the application of Moral Licensing Theory by demonstrating that consumers' ethical evaluations can be shaped not only by their own prior moral actions but also by sustainability-oriented marketing activities undertaken by firms. In the context of luxury consumption, green marketing serves as an organizational ethical signal that strengthens consumers' perceptions of brand ethical image and subsequently influences their purchase intention toward non-green luxury products. This perspective broadens the application of Moral Licensing Theory from an individual-level psychological process to a broader organizational communication context.

Second, this study contributes to the growing literature on sustainable luxury marketing by integrating environmental responsibility and symbolic consumption within a single conceptual framework. Previous studies have generally examined green marketing and luxury brand perception as separate determinants of consumer behavior. The present findings demonstrate that these two dimensions coexist in shaping consumers' purchase intention, suggesting that environmental responsibility does not necessarily diminish the symbolic value of luxury brands. Instead, ethical responsibility and luxury prestige jointly contribute to consumers' positive evaluations and purchasing decisions.

Finally, this study enriches the literature on brand ethical image by positioning it as a strategic psychological construct through which sustainability communication influences consumer behavior. Rather than functioning merely as a favorable brand perception, brand ethical image represents an important mechanism that translates firms' environmental initiatives into behavioral intentions. This finding provides additional theoretical evidence that ethical brand evaluations constitute an essential component of consumer decision-making within the luxury market.

5.6 Managerial Implications

The findings provide several practical implications for managers of luxury brands seeking to strengthen their market competitiveness while responding to increasing consumer demand for environmental responsibility. First, luxury brand managers should recognize that green marketing represents more than a promotional activity.

Sustainability communication should be integrated into long-term corporate strategy because consumers evaluate environmental responsibility as part of the overall ethical identity of the brand. Consequently, consistent environmental initiatives accompanied by credible communication are likely to strengthen consumers' trust and improve the brand's ethical image.

Second, managers should carefully balance sustainability initiatives with the symbolic characteristics that distinguish luxury brands. The present findings indicate that consumers continue to value exclusivity, prestige, and superior quality alongside environmental responsibility. Therefore, sustainability strategies should complement rather than replace the traditional symbolic attributes of luxury brands. Integrating environmental responsibility without compromising luxury identity may strengthen consumers' purchase intention while preserving the brand's premium positioning.

Finally, managers should view brand ethical image as a strategic intangible asset capable of influencing long-term consumer relationships. Investments in environmentally responsible business practices, transparent sustainability reporting, and credible green marketing communication can strengthen consumers' ethical evaluations, thereby increasing purchase intention and reinforcing competitive advantage within the luxury market.

5.7 Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations should be acknowledged when interpreting the findings of this study. First, the study employed a cross-sectional research design that captures consumers' perceptions at a single point in time. Future studies may adopt longitudinal approaches to examine how consumers' ethical evaluations and purchase intentions evolve as sustainability initiatives become more established within the luxury industry.

Second, this study focused exclusively on Indonesian consumers. Cultural values, environmental awareness, and luxury consumption patterns may differ across countries, thereby limiting the generalizability of the findings. Future research is therefore encouraged to conduct comparative studies across different cultural and national contexts to obtain a broader understanding of consumers' responses toward sustainability-oriented luxury branding.

Third, the present study examined purchase intention rather than actual purchasing behavior. Although purchase intention represents an important predictor of consumer behavior, future research should investigate whether consumers' intentions are consistently translated into actual purchasing decisions. Incorporating behavioral data or experimental research designs would provide deeper insights into the psychological mechanisms underlying luxury consumption.

Finally, future studies may extend the proposed research model by incorporating additional psychological variables, such as environmental concern, perceived consumer effectiveness, green trust, brand authenticity, or consumer skepticism toward green marketing claims. Examining these variables may provide a more comprehensive understanding of how sustainability communication influences consumer decision-making within the evolving luxury market.

E. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study investigated the influence of green marketing on consumers' purchase intention toward non-green luxury products by examining the roles of brand ethical image and luxury brand perception within the framework of Moral Licensing Theory. The empirical findings demonstrate that green marketing significantly strengthens consumers'

perceptions of brand ethical image while also exerting a direct positive influence on purchase intention. Furthermore, brand ethical image and luxury brand perception were found to positively influence consumers' willingness to purchase non-green luxury products. Collectively, these findings indicate that consumers evaluate luxury brands not only on the basis of product characteristics but also through broader ethical and symbolic considerations. Consequently, sustainability-oriented marketing initiatives contribute to stronger purchase intention even when the products themselves are not explicitly environmentally friendly.

From a theoretical perspective, this study extends the application of Moral Licensing Theory by demonstrating that moral justification may emerge from organizational sustainability communication rather than solely from consumers' prior moral behavior. The findings also contribute to sustainable luxury marketing literature by integrating environmental responsibility and symbolic consumption within a single explanatory framework. Accordingly, this study provides empirical evidence that ethical brand evaluations and luxury brand perceptions operate simultaneously in shaping consumers' purchase intentions, thereby offering a more comprehensive understanding of consumer decision-making within the luxury market.

From a managerial perspective, the findings suggest that luxury brand managers should position green marketing as a long-term strategic investment rather than merely a promotional instrument. Sustainability initiatives should be communicated consistently and credibly to strengthen consumers' perceptions of brand ethical image while preserving the exclusivity, prestige, and symbolic value that characterize luxury brands. Integrating environmental responsibility into overall brand strategy may enhance consumer trust, strengthen brand competitiveness, and increase purchase intention without compromising the premium positioning of luxury products.

Despite these contributions, several opportunities remain for future research. Subsequent studies are encouraged to examine the proposed relationships across different cultural settings and luxury product categories to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Future research may also employ longitudinal or experimental research designs to capture changes in consumer perceptions over time and establish stronger causal inferences. In addition, incorporating variables such as green trust, perceived consumer effectiveness, environmental concern, brand authenticity, or consumer skepticism toward green marketing claims may provide a more comprehensive understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying sustainable luxury consumption.

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