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*From Purpose to Brand: How Purpose-Driven Organisations
Translate Internal Purpose into Customer Experience*

Beatriz Cano Serrano



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From Purpose to Brand: How Purpose-Driven Organisations Translate Internal Purpose into Customer Experience

Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and Management

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Delivery date: 28/04/2026

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Carlos Rey, for his guidance throughout this research. From the very beginning, he has supported this project by sharing his knowledge on purpose-driven organisations, an area that I find personally motivating and meaningful, and by encouraging me to think more critically and explore this topic in greater depth. I am especially thankful for his time, dedication, and valuable insights.

I would also like to thank all the professors at UIC, as this dissertation represents the stage of five years of undergraduate studies. Their teaching and the university's academic offer have played a key role in my professional and personal development.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to my family for giving me the opportunity to pursue these studies and for teaching me the values of hard work and perseverance. I would also like to thank my friends and classmates for their constant support and encouragement, and for making this process more enjoyable and manageable along the way.

Abstract

Purpose-driven organisations increasingly place organisational purpose at the centre of how they define their identity and shape customer experience. However, there is still limited understanding of how this purpose moves from internal intent to something that can be observed and experienced externally, particularly in early-stage organisations. This study explores how organisational purpose is articulated, enacted, and experienced across communication, product design, and user experience, focusing on The NoMBA as an exploratory case.

The research adopts a qualitative and exploratory approach. Data were gathered through documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews with the organisation's co-founder and a programme participant. An inductive analysis inspired by the Gioia methodology was used to develop first-order concepts, second-order themes, and aggregate dimensions grounded in the data. This approach allows for a context-sensitive understanding of how organisational purpose is both constructed and interpreted.

The findings show that organisational purpose acts as a guiding framework that shapes both communication and product design, contributing to a largely coherent user experience. At the same time, this coherence is not entirely straightforward. Subtle tensions emerge between the organisation's intended purpose and how it is interpreted by users, suggesting that purpose is not simply communicated, but co-constructed through interaction and experience.

This study contributes to the literature on purpose-driven organisations by offering an in-depth view of how purpose is translated into practice within an early-stage context. It highlights the need to examine purpose across multiple organisational dimensions and positions coherence as an emergent and interpretative outcome rather than a fixed condition. While the findings are not statistically generalisable, they provide useful insights for organisations seeking to align purpose with branding and user experience.

Keywords: organisational purpose; purpose-driven organisations; brand purpose; qualitative case study; user experience; organisational coherence

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

The role of organisations in society has increasingly been questioned in recent decades, as stakeholders demand that firms contribute not only to economic performance but also to social and environmental wellbeing (Porter & Kramer, 2011; Eccles & Serafeim, 2013). However, despite this growing attention, a key tension remains between how organisational purpose is defined internally and how it is made visible externally.

In management research, organisational purpose has been conceptualised as an organisation's reason for being that provides direction, meaning, and motivation beyond profit maximisation (Henderson & Van den Steen, 2015). From this perspective, purpose is understood as a guiding principle that shapes strategy, internal culture, and operational practices rather than as a mere formal statement.

Building on this idea, the literature refers to purpose-driven organisations as those that embed this underlying purpose into their strategic and operational activities, aligning their actions with broader societal or stakeholder-oriented goals (Quinn & Thakor, 2018; Sisodia et al., 2007). As highlighted by Rey, Bastons and Sotok (2019), purpose in such organisations guides how they think, act, and make decisions, being reflected not only in what they communicate but also in what they do.

At the same time, marketing and branding research has recognised that organisations increasingly rely on purpose as a source of differentiation and meaning in competitive markets (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 1993). Branding is therefore not limited to communicating functional or symbolic attributes, but also serves as a platform through which organisations express their values and identity (Kapferer, 2012).

However, the growing presence of purpose in corporate communication does not always correspond to observable organisational practices. When declared values are not supported by consistent actions, stakeholders may develop scepticism towards the organisation's credibility (Forehand & Grier, 2003; Beverland, 2005). This has led to increased attention to the importance of coherence between what organisations say and what they do.

In this context, the relationship between organisational purpose and branding becomes particularly relevant. Organisational practices, products, and stakeholder experience provide evidence of how purpose is enacted within the organisation, while promotional communication constitutes the primary space where organisations articulate their values and intentions (Kotler & Keller, 2011; Schmitt, 2010). Both elements act as visible cues through which stakeholders interpret the organisation's commitment to its declared purpose (Spence, 1973).

1.2 Motivation

The choice of this topic is driven by a genuine interest in how organisations can combine economic objectives with a positive contribution to society. Purpose-driven

organisations are particularly relevant in this context, as they seek to integrate their reason for being into their strategy and day-to-day operations, rather than treating it solely as a communication tool.

This interest is partly influenced by previous academic work developed during the Marketing degree. A past dissertation titled *“Exploring the Impact of Social Media Marketing Strategies in Brand Activism on Consumer Perceptions of Authenticity and Brand Loyalty”* focused on how brands communicate values and authenticity through their actions. This experience motivated a desire to explore the topic further, but from an organisational and strategic perspective rather than purely from a communication standpoint.

The topic is also closely connected to the knowledge developed throughout the double degree in Business Administration and Marketing. While Business Administration provides the perspective needed to understand how purpose shapes organisational practices and decision-making, Marketing offers the tools to analyse how this purpose is expressed and interpreted through branding.

In this context, focusing on organisational practices, products, branding, and stakeholder experience is particularly relevant, as these dimensions make it possible to observe how organisations translate their purpose into tangible and communicative elements in practice.

1.3 Research Gap

Academic research has long emphasised the importance of coherence between what brands communicate and what they actually do. Foundational work in branding highlights that credibility and authenticity depend on the alignment between brand identity, values, and visible actions (Aaker, 1996; Beverland, 2005). These studies explain how stakeholders assess brands based on the consistency between discourse and practice. However, they approach coherence primarily from a branding perspective, without explicitly linking it to the organisational processes through which purpose is internally developed and enacted.

More recently, management research has focused on how organisations integrate purpose into their internal strategy, culture, and decision-making processes. In *“Purpose-Driven Organizations: Management Ideas for a Better World”* (Rey et al., 2019), purpose is conceptualised through the dimensions of knowledge, motivation, and action, providing a structured understanding of how purpose operates as a lived organisational reality. While this framework offers a robust explanation of how purpose is embedded internally, it does not explicitly address how these internal dimensions become visible to external stakeholders through observable organisational outputs.

At the same time, studies on purpose-driven branding analyse how organisations communicate purpose and how this influences consumer perceptions. For example, *“The Real Purpose of Purpose-Driven Branding: Consumer Empowerment and Social Transformations”* (Hajdas & Kłeczek, 2021) focuses on brand messaging and consumer interpretation as key mechanisms through which purpose is conveyed. However, this stream of research concentrates primarily on communication, with limited attention to how purpose may be materially enacted through products or other aspects of the organisational offering.

Taken together, these streams of literature provide valuable but partial insights. While branding research explains how coherence is perceived externally, and organisational research explains how purpose is lived internally, there is limited understanding of how these two dimensions are connected. In particular, there is a lack of integrative approaches that explain how the internal enactment of purpose is translated into a coherent and authentic external experience.

This study addresses this gap by conceptualising product and brand communication not as separate marketing variables, but as observable manifestations of internally enacted organisational purpose. By analysing these elements as signals of the organisation’s internal reality, this study seeks to contribute to a more integrated understanding of purpose integrity, understood as the coherence between what the organisation lives internally and what it expresses externally.

1.4 Research Aim

The aim of this study is to analyse how purpose-driven organisations translate their internal organisational purpose into external practices, products, branding, and stakeholder experience, and to examine the extent to which coherence is achieved between internal purpose implementation and its external manifestation.

1.5 Research Objectives

The specific objectives of this study are:

1. To study how purpose-driven organisations translate internal organisational purpose into organisational practices, products, branding, and stakeholder experience.
2. To explore the extent to which coherence exists between internal purpose implementation and its external manifestation, and how this is interpreted in terms of authenticity and credibility.

1.6 Research Question

How are purpose-driven organisations and brand purpose related through the translation of internal organisational purpose into external practices, products, branding, and stakeholder experience?

Through an exploratory qualitative approach combining documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews, this study examines how organisational purpose is

translated from internal implementation into externally observable practices and stakeholder experience. In doing so, it analyses the degree of coherence between how purpose is defined, enacted, and ultimately interpreted, providing insight into how purpose becomes visible and credible beyond the organisation.

1.7 Research contribution

This research makes an exploratory contribution to the study of purpose-driven organisations by providing an integrative perspective that connects internal organisational purpose with its external manifestation through organisational practices, products, branding, and stakeholder experience. In doing so, it extends existing literature by conceptualising brand purpose as the experiential outcome of internally enacted organisational purpose

The main contribution of this work lies in analysing these two dimensions jointly and in linking the organisational perspective of purpose-driven organisations with their external manifestation in branding practices. In doing so, the study addresses a gap in the existing literature, which has often examined organisational purpose and branding from separate or primarily conceptual perspectives.

Rather than seeking generalisable conclusions, this research offers a descriptive insight into how purpose-driven organisations may communicate and materialise their purpose through visible elements that stakeholders can interpret from a branding perspective. The findings may serve as a useful reference for future studies exploring the relationship between organisational purpose and branding practice.

1.8 Research Structure

This research is structured into five main chapters.

Chapter 1: Introduction presents the research background, motivation, research gap, research aim, research objectives, and the overall contribution of the study. This chapter introduces the topic of purpose-driven organisations and explains the relevance of analysing how organisational purpose is translated into practices, products, branding, and stakeholder experience.

Chapter 2: Literature Review examines the academic literature related to purpose-driven organisations, purpose-driven branding, and coherence in branding practices. It also introduces the theoretical framework of the study, including Signaling Theory and Commitment–Trust Theory, which guide the interpretation of the findings.

Chapter 3: Methodology explains the qualitative and exploratory research design adopted in this study. It describes the data collection process based on publicly available information and complementary interviews, as well as the criteria used to analyse and categorise the data.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis presents the results obtained from the analysis of the selected organisations. The findings are organised around the conceptualisation of purpose, its translation into organisational practices, and its interpretation through stakeholder experience.

Chapter 5: Discussion interprets the findings in light of the literature and theoretical framework, developing the main analytical insights of the study.

Chapter 6: Conclusion outlines the main conclusions, limitations of the study, and suggestions for future research.

1.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has introduced the context and relevance of studying purpose-driven organisations from a branding perspective. It has outlined the research background, identified the existing research gap, and presented the research aim, objectives, and central research question guiding the study.

In addition, the chapter has explained the motivation behind the topic, the expected contribution of the research, and the overall structure of the research. Together, these elements provide the foundation for the literature review presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1 Purpose-Driven Organisations

The concept of purpose-driven organisations has gained increasing attention in recent years, as scholars recognise that some organisations define their existence beyond the pursuit of economic profit. These organisations are characterised by the integration of a central social or moral mission into their strategy, culture, and decision-making processes, shaping not only what they do but why they do it (Quinn & Thakor, 2018; Gartenberg et al., 2019). Within this perspective, purpose is understood as a guiding principle of organisational behaviour rather than a purely communicative element.

Early contributions highlight that organisational purpose provides a fundamental reason for being and can guide long-term strategic direction, while later work emphasises aligning economic objectives with broader societal value creation (Collins & Porras, 1994; Porter & Kramer, 2011). From this perspective, purpose is not merely a communication tool, but a foundational element that shapes internal organisational dynamics and stakeholder relationships (Porter & Kramer, 2011). This distinction is particularly relevant, as it highlights that purpose originates within organisational practice before being expressed externally.

A particularly useful framework for understanding how purpose operates internally is the multidimensional model proposed by Rey et al. (2019), which conceptualises purpose across three interrelated dimensions: cognitive (knowledge), motivational, and behavioural (action). The cognitive dimension refers to employees' understanding of the organisation's purpose and underlying values. The motivational dimension captures the extent to which purpose fosters engagement and commitment. Finally, the behavioural dimension reflects how purpose is translated into organisational practices and decision-making. This model is especially relevant for this study, as it provides a structured way to analyse how purpose is understood, internalised, and enacted within organisations.

This holistic view suggests that purpose extends beyond formal statements to influence organisational behaviour and everyday operations. It can shape decision-making processes and how organisations engage with stakeholders, although the extent of this influence varies across contexts. In this sense, purpose becomes visible through organisational actions rather than solely through formal declarations (Quinn & Thakor, 2018)

The literature also distinguishes purpose from related concepts such as mission, vision, and values, emphasising that purpose represents the underlying reason for organisational existence rather than being reducible to a formal statement (Fitzsimmons et al., 2022). This distinction supports the view that purpose extends beyond articulation and may be reflected in organisational behaviour and practice.

In this context, purpose-driven organisations can be understood as those in which purpose shapes internal organisational dynamics through knowledge and motivation, and becomes observable externally through action. However, while existing literature provides a strong understanding of how purpose operates within organisations, less

attention has been given to how this purpose becomes visible externally through branding elements that stakeholders can directly observe.

This distinction between the internal nature of organisational purpose and its external manifestation is particularly relevant for analysing how purpose-driven organisations translate their purpose into observable elements such as products and brand communication.

2.2 Brand Purpose

While organisational purpose originates within the firm, it becomes meaningful to external stakeholders through its expression via the brand. In this sense, branding can serve as a mechanism through which an organisation's underlying values and intentions are communicated in ways that are relevant to consumers and other stakeholders (Keller, 2013; Urde, 2016). It therefore functions as a connecting mechanism between internal organisational intent and external stakeholder perception, translating abstract organisational principles into meanings that can be interpreted in the marketplace.

From a strategic perspective, brand purpose can play an important role in shaping brand identity and positioning. Traditional branding literature emphasises that strong brands are built not only on functional attributes but also on symbolic and emotional meanings (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 2013). Within this context, brands may be anchored in broader societal values, enabling deeper stakeholder engagement and differentiation in competitive markets (Holt, 2002; Ind et al., 2017). Consequently, brand purpose can be understood not merely as an additional communication layer, but as a potentially foundational element influencing how the brand is positioned and experienced.

However, the effectiveness of brand purpose depends on its perceived authenticity. Research on brand authenticity suggests that stakeholders continuously evaluate whether a brand's stated values are consistent with its actions and behaviour (Beverland, 2005; Napoli et al., 2014). When such alignment is perceived, brand purpose can strengthen trust and credibility, contributing to long-term brand value. In contrast, inconsistencies between communicated purpose and actual practices may lead to scepticism and accusations of 'purpose-washing', thereby undermining brand legitimacy (Vredenburg et al., 2020). This highlights that brand purpose is not solely determined by the organisation, but is shaped through stakeholder interpretation.

Building on this perspective, research emphasises that purpose becomes visible through organisational actions rather than through communication alone (Quinn & Thakor, 2018). This implies that stakeholders may interpret brand purpose through their experiences of products, services, communication, and customer interactions (Ind et al., 2017). These elements can serve as cues through which organisations express their underlying purpose, enabling stakeholders to evaluate the credibility of the brand's claims. As a result, brand purpose can be understood not as a static message, but as an outcome of how organisational purpose is enacted and perceived in practice.

In this sense, brand purpose emerges from the interaction between organisational behaviour and stakeholder interpretation. It is constructed through the perceived

coherence between what the organisation claims, what it does, and what stakeholders experience through the brand. This perspective shifts the focus from what organisations say about their purpose to how that purpose is made observable and meaningful in the marketplace.

Overall, brand purpose represents the external manifestation of organisational purpose, shaping how stakeholders interpret and evaluate the brand. However, while existing literature acknowledges the importance of both organisational purpose and brand purpose, it provides limited explanation of the mechanisms through which internal purpose is translated into observable brand expressions. Addressing this gap is therefore necessary, and requires the development of a theoretical framework that explains how purpose is enacted, signalled, and ultimately perceived at the brand level.

2.3 Theoretical framework

Building on the previous sections, this theoretical framework explains the relationship between purpose-driven organisations and brand purpose. The central assumption of this research is that organisational purpose should not remain only as an internal statement or cultural aspiration, but should become visible through the brand's external manifestations, particularly through product and branding. This relationship can be understood through four complementary theoretical perspectives: Signaling Theory, Commitment–Trust Theory, Brand Authenticity, and the Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose.

The following subsections present each of these theoretical perspectives.

2.3.1 Signaling Theory

Signaling Theory was originally developed by Spence (1973) within the field of economics to explain how individuals communicate information in situations characterised by information asymmetry. In such contexts, one party possesses more information than the other, creating uncertainty. To reduce this uncertainty, observable signals are used to convey credible information to the less informed party.

Therefore, Signaling Theory explains how one party communicates information to another in contexts where the receiver cannot directly observe internal qualities or intentions (Spence, 1973). In organisational and branding contexts, stakeholders rarely have direct access to the internal reality of the firm. Therefore, they interpret observable elements, such as communication, products, services, and brand behaviour, as signals of what the organisation stands for.

Applied to this study, this suggests that the purpose-driven organisation acts as the sender, while brand-related elements such as products, communication, and customer experience function as signals through which stakeholders infer the organisation's underlying purpose. The internal purpose of the organisation is therefore made visible externally through branding elements. If the organisation claims to be purpose-driven, this purpose should be signalled consistently through what the brand communicates and delivers. From this perspective, Signaling Theory explains how internal

organisational purpose becomes externally interpretable, providing a mechanism through which purpose is translated into observable brand expressions. This mechanism of signalling provides the basis for understanding how purpose becomes externally visible, but does not explain how such signals are evaluated by stakeholders.

2.3.2 Commitment–Trust Theory

Commitment–Trust Theory, developed by Morgan and Hunt (1994), is a foundational framework in relationship marketing that explains how long-term relationships between organisations and stakeholders are built and maintained. The theory proposes that trust and commitment are the two central variables that determine the strength and stability of these relationships.

This theory argues that successful relationships depend on trust and commitment, particularly when one party believes that the other is reliable and acts with integrity (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). In branding, this is especially relevant because stakeholders evaluate not only what brands say, but whether their actions are consistent with their promises.

In this study, trust emerges from the perceived relationship between the organisation's internal purpose and its external brand expression. If a purpose-driven organisation communicates a brand purpose that is coherent with its product, behaviour, and customer experience, stakeholders are more likely to perceive the brand as trustworthy. However, when there is a gap between internal purpose claims and external brand execution, trust may be weakened. This suggests that trust is not generated by the communication of purpose alone, but by the consistent alignment between internal purpose and externally observable practices over time. Therefore, Commitment–Trust Theory helps explain why coherence between purpose-driven organisations and brand purpose is essential.

2.3.3 Brand Authenticity

The concept of Brand Authenticity has received increasing attention in branding literature as a way to explain how stakeholders evaluate the credibility and sincerity of brands. Beverland (2005) defines brand authenticity as the alignment between an organisation's values, actions, and communication, arguing that authentic brands are those that act consistently with what they claim to represent.

Recent research on purpose-driven branding also warns that when brands communicate a social or moral purpose without supporting it through internal practices, they risk being perceived as inauthentic or engaging in 'woke washing' (Vredenburg et al., 2020; Walter et al., 2024). Walter et al. further emphasise that the perceived authenticity of brand purpose depends on alignment between external claims and internal corporate practices.

Brand authenticity provides a third explanation of the relationship between purpose-driven organisations and brand purpose. Brand purpose is authentic only when it reflects the organisation’s internal purpose and is enacted through real organisational behaviour. In this sense, authenticity represents the evaluative outcome of signaling processes, as stakeholders assess whether the signals conveyed by the organisation genuinely reflect its internal purpose. Therefore, authenticity depends on the connection between what the organisation says it lives internally and what it expresses externally through product and branding.

2.3.4 Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose

A central theoretical foundation for this research is the Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose, which conceptualises purpose as a multidimensional construct composed of knowledge, motivation, and action (Rey & Bastons, 2018; Rey et al., 2019). This model provides a structured explanation of how organisational purpose is not only defined but also internalised and enacted across the organisation.

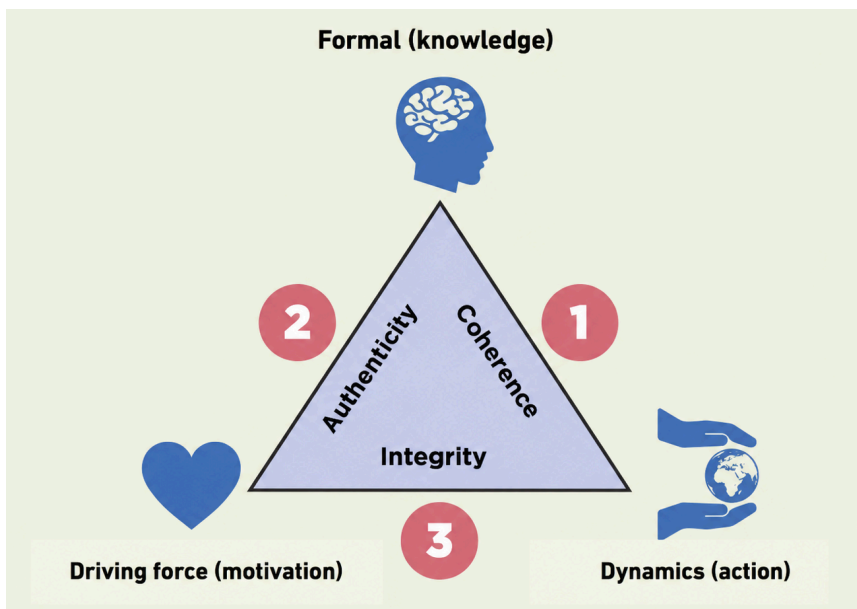


Figure 1: Three-dimensional model of purpose. Rey, C, Bastons, M. y Sotok, P (eds). Purpose-driven Organizations management ideas for a better world. Palgrave Macmillan, 2019

The knowledge dimension refers to the formal and cognitive understanding of organisational purpose. It involves the articulation and communication of purpose through mission statements, values, and strategic narratives. At this level, purpose is something that organisational members are expected to know and be able to explain, representing the explicit layer of purpose implementation (Rey et al., 2019). However, existing research emphasises that knowledge alone is insufficient to generate a genuine sense of purpose within organisations (Rey et al., 2019).

The motivation dimension captures the degree to which individuals internalise organisational purpose. It reflects whether employees perceive the purpose as meaningful and align it with their own motivations and values. This internalisation process is critical, as purpose is more likely to be effective when it is embraced at an

individual level rather than merely communicated from the top down (Rey et al., 2019). Prior research in organisational behaviour supports this view, showing that internalised purpose can enhance engagement, commitment, and prosocial behaviour (Grant, 2012; Martela & Pessi, 2018).

The action dimension represents the behavioural realisation of purpose in everyday organisational practices. It refers to the extent to which purpose is translated into concrete decisions, processes, and outputs, including products, services, and stakeholder interactions. According to Rey and Bastons (2018), purpose is only fully realised when it is consistently enacted in daily operations, making this dimension the most observable and externally visible manifestation of purpose.

A key contribution of this model is the emphasis on the interaction and alignment between these three dimensions. Purpose is not simply a statement or an intention; rather, it emerges from the coherence between what organisational members know, feel, and do (Rey & Bastons, 2018). As illustrated in Figure 1, the model represents knowledge (formal), motivation (driving force), and action (dynamics) as interdependent elements forming a unified structure, where their alignment generates three critical conditions: coherence, authenticity, and integrity .

More specifically, coherence refers to the alignment between purpose and organisational behaviour, ensuring that decisions and actions are consistent with the stated purpose. Authenticity reflects the extent to which individuals genuinely identify with and believe in the purpose, capturing the internal connection between employees and organisational values. Integrity, positioned at the centre of the model, represents the integration of knowledge, motivation, and action, indicating that purpose is fully embedded when individuals both believe in it and enact it consistently in their daily work . Together, these three elements explain how purpose moves from a formal statement to a lived organisational reality.

This notion of coherence is particularly relevant for understanding the external implications of organisational purpose. If purpose must be aligned internally across knowledge, motivation, and action, it follows that inconsistencies between these dimensions may result in misalignment between what the organisation communicates and what it actually delivers. In this regard, the action dimension plays a critical bridging role, as it connects internal purpose implementation with externally observable outcomes.

From a branding perspective, these outcomes include product characteristics, service delivery, and customer experience, which constitute key elements of brand expression. As suggested in previous research, the internal dimensions of purpose can be analysed through their external manifestations in branding, particularly through communication (knowledge) and product-related actions (action) (Rey et al., 2019; Aaker, 1996; Keller, 1993). Therefore, brand purpose can be understood as an external reflection of internally implemented organisational purpose.

In this sense, the Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose provides a theoretical bridge between internal organisational dynamics and external brand expression. It supports the argument that brand purpose is not an isolated construct, but rather the result of

how effectively purpose is implemented and aligned within the organisation. When coherence, authenticity, and integrity are achieved internally, they are expected to extend externally through consistent and credible brand expressions. Conversely, a lack of internal alignment may lead to discrepancies between communicated purpose and actual organisational behaviour.

This model, offers a robust conceptual framework to analyse how purpose-driven organisations translate their internal purpose into observable branding elements. By emphasising coherence across dimensions, it directly informs the study's central research focus on the relationship between internal purpose implementation and its external manifestation through brand purpose. This internal alignment is critical, as it determines the consistency of the signals that are later interpreted externally, linking internal purpose implementation with external brand perception.

Taken together, these theoretical perspectives suggest that the relationship between purpose-driven organisations and brand purpose can be understood as a multi-stage process. Organisational purpose is first defined and internalised through knowledge, motivation, and action (Rey et al., 2019). It is then expressed through observable organisational practices, which function as signals to external stakeholders (Spence, 1973). These signals are subsequently interpreted and evaluated in terms of authenticity and trust (Beverland, 2005; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Brand purpose therefore emerges not as a direct communication, but as the outcome of how internal purpose is enacted, signalled, and perceived in practice.

2.4 Purpose-Driven Organisations and Brand Purpose

Building on the theoretical framework developed in the previous section, this study proposes that the relationship between purpose-driven organisations and brand purpose can be understood as a process through which internal organisational purpose is translated into externally observable and interpretable brand expressions. More specifically, the way organisations define, internalise, and enact purpose internally is reflected in how that purpose becomes visible through products, branding, and customer experience.

From a signaling perspective, organisational purpose is not directly observable by external stakeholders and must therefore be inferred through observable organisational practices (Spence, 1973). As outlined in Section 2.3, brand-related elements such as products, services, communication, and customer experience function as signals through which stakeholders interpret the organisation's underlying intentions. In this sense, brand purpose does not operate as a signal in itself, but rather emerges from the interpretation of these observable elements, which reflect how purpose is enacted in practice.

However, the interpretation of these signals depends on their perceived consistency and credibility. Commitment–Trust Theory suggests that trust is developed when stakeholders perceive alignment between organisational claims and actual behaviour over time (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Applied to the context of purpose-driven organisations, this implies that the relationship between internal purpose and external

brand manifestation is contingent upon the degree of coherence between what the organisation claims and what it delivers through its products, services, and interactions.

Closely related to this, the concept of brand authenticity highlights that stakeholders evaluate whether organisational actions genuinely reflect stated values (Beverland, 2005; Napoli et al., 2014). Brand purpose is therefore perceived as authentic only when it is grounded in consistent organisational practices rather than being used as a purely symbolic or communicative device. This reinforces the idea that external brand meaning is not directly controlled by the organisation, but is co-constructed through stakeholder interpretation of organisational behaviour.

At an internal level, the Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose provides a structured explanation of how such consistency is achieved. As discussed, purpose is realised through the alignment between knowledge, motivation, and action (Rey et al., 2019). This internal coherence determines the extent to which organisational practices consistently reflect the intended purpose, thereby shaping the reliability of the signals that are interpreted externally. In this sense, internal purpose implementation constitutes the foundation upon which credible brand expressions are built.

Taken together, these perspectives suggest that brand purpose should not be understood as an independent or purely communicative construct, but as the outcome of a relational process linking internal purpose implementation with external stakeholder interpretation. Organisational purpose is first defined and enacted internally, then expressed through observable practices, and finally interpreted by stakeholders in terms of authenticity and trust. This processual view highlights that the relationship between purpose-driven organisations and brand purpose is neither automatic nor guaranteed, but depends on the degree of coherence between internal dynamics and external manifestations.

Accordingly, this study is guided by the following research question:

How are purpose-driven organisations and brand purpose related through the translation of internal organisational purpose into external practices, products, branding, and stakeholder experience?

2.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has examined the concept of organisational purpose and its role within purpose-driven organisations, highlighting how purpose is embedded internally through knowledge, motivation, and action. It has also explored the concept of brand purpose as the external expression of organisational intent, emphasising its role in shaping brand identity, stakeholder perceptions, and authenticity.

Building on this distinction, the chapter developed a theoretical framework to explain the relationship between internal purpose implementation and external brand manifestation. Drawing on Signaling Theory, Commitment–Trust Theory, Brand Authenticity, and the Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose, the analysis suggests that the way organisations understand, internalise, and enact purpose internally is reflected in how it is expressed externally through products, branding, and customer experience.

At the same time, the chapter acknowledges that this relationship may not always be consistent, as potential misalignments between organisational intent and stakeholder perception can arise. Based on these theoretical foundations, a central question was proposed, which guides the empirical analysis of this research.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1 Methodological Approach

This study adopts a qualitative and exploratory methodological approach in order to examine how organisational purpose is translated into practice across communication, product design, and user experience. The research question seeks to understand how purpose is articulated, enacted, and experienced, rather than to measure its impact quantitatively. For this reason, a qualitative design is considered the most appropriate.

The research follows an inductive logic, where insights are derived from the data rather than imposed through predefined theoretical categories. While a central question guides the study, the research does not aim to test it in a confirmatory manner, but to explore how the relationship emerges within the case. This approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of how organisational purpose is constructed and expressed in practice.

A quantitative approach would require predefined variables and measurable indicators of purpose or authenticity. However, the objective of this study is not to test causal relationships or produce statistically generalisable findings, but to explore how purpose is interpreted and experienced within a specific organisational context. These processes involve meanings, perceptions, and contextual practices that are better captured through qualitative inquiry (Creswell, 2014).

The research is informed by a constructivist perspective, which assumes that reality is not objective or fixed, but socially constructed through interpretation. In this context, organisational purpose is understood as something that is articulated by the organisation, enacted through its practices, and interpreted by different actors, including founders and users. The role of the researcher is therefore interpretative, focusing on how these meanings are constructed and connected across different sources of data.

Given its exploratory nature, this study does not aim to produce statistically generalisable results. Instead, it seeks to generate in-depth analytical insight into how organisational purpose is translated into practice and how coherence emerges across different dimensions within a bounded case.

3.2 Research Design: Single Exploratory Case Study

This study adopts a single exploratory case study design centred on The NoMBA. The NoMBA is an educational programme that offers structured daily learning and positions itself as purpose-driven, emphasising reflective leadership and humanistic development beyond purely economic objectives.

A case study design is appropriate when the aim is to examine a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2018; Stake, 1995). In this research, the phenomenon under examination is how organisational purpose is articulated, translated into product design, and experienced by users. These elements are deeply embedded within the organisational context and cannot be meaningfully separated

from it. A case study approach therefore enables a detailed and context-sensitive analysis of how purpose is expressed in practice.

The decision to focus on a single case is intentional. Rather than comparing multiple organisations at a surface level, this research prioritises depth in order to develop a rich understanding of how purpose is constructed and enacted within one specific context. Given the exploratory nature of the study, a single case allows for a coherent and manageable analysis while remaining aligned with the objective of generating in-depth insight rather than broad generalisation.

The selection of The NoMBA is based on several considerations. First, the organisation explicitly positions itself around a clearly articulated purpose centred on personal development and reflection. Second, its product design and communication are closely connected to this purpose, making it particularly suitable for examining how purpose is translated into practice. Third, access to the founder and a user provided direct insight into both the intended and experienced dimensions of the programme, enabling a multi-perspective analysis.

An additional rationale for case selection relates to the organisation's stage of development. This study focuses on an early-stage, purpose-driven organisation in which purpose is positioned as a foundational element rather than a retrospective addition. While much of the existing literature examines organisations with established structures and formalised practices, this case provides a unique opportunity to explore how purpose is embedded from the outset. In this sense, the case can be understood as revelatory, offering access to a phenomenon that is less frequently examined in its formative stage.

This research is exploratory rather than explanatory. The objective is not to test causal relationships, but to understand how organisational purpose is translated and experienced across different dimensions within a bounded case. The emphasis is therefore placed on interpretation and understanding rather than prediction or measurement.

Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis in this study is not the organisation itself, nor individual actors in isolation, but the process through which organisational purpose is translated across different dimensions. Specifically, the analysis focuses on how purpose is articulated through communication, embedded in product design, and experienced by users.

This relational perspective allows the study to examine how coherence emerges across these dimensions, rather than treating them as separate elements. By focusing on the connections between conceptualisation, design, and experience, the research captures purpose as a dynamic and multi-layered phenomenon.

Defining the unit of analysis in this way ensures consistency with the research objective and supports a focused examination of how organisational purpose is constructed and enacted within a single case.

3.3 Triangulation and Research Rigour

To strengthen the credibility of the findings, this study adopts an exploratory triangulation approach and follows a systematic yet interpretative analytical process. In qualitative research, triangulation refers to the use of multiple data sources to examine a phenomenon from different perspectives (Denzin, 1978; Yin, 2018). In this research, triangulation is not employed to confirm predefined patterns or relationships, but to develop a richer and more nuanced understanding of how organisational purpose is constructed, enacted, and experienced across different contexts.

Triangulation is achieved through the combination of three primary sources of data: documentary materials, a semi-structured interview with the founder, and a semi-structured interview with a user. Each of these sources provides access to a different dimension of organisational purpose, allowing the analysis to move between how purpose is articulated, how it is translated into organisational practice, and how it is ultimately experienced.

Rather than analysing each source in isolation, the study adopts an integrated analytical approach, in which all data are examined jointly. This decision is consistent with the exploratory nature of the research, as it allows meanings to emerge through the interaction between different sources rather than through their separation. Analysing the data collectively enables a more holistic understanding of how organisational purpose is expressed across communication, product design, and user experience, thereby enriching the analysis and strengthening the depth of interpretation and analytical robustness of the study.

This approach is inspired by qualitative inductive research such as *“I’m Not Mopping the Floors, I’m Putting a Man on the Moon”: How NASA Leaders Enhanced the Meaningfulness of Work by Changing the Meaning of Work* by Andrew M. Carton (2017), in which multiple forms of data are analysed in an integrated manner to capture how meaning is constructed across organisational levels. It is also informed by the inductive principles of the Gioia methodology (Gioia et al., 2013), which emphasises the systematic development of concepts through iterative engagement with empirical data and the progressive abstraction of meaning. In line with this perspective, the analysis in this research moves iteratively between data and theory, allowing themes to emerge while maintaining a close connection to the empirical material.

Through this integrated and inductive analysis, the study explores how meanings of purpose are constructed across communication, product design, and user experience, with particular attention to how these dimensions are interconnected. The aim is therefore not to assess consistency in a confirmatory sense, but to understand how coherence and potential misalignments emerge through the interaction of different perspectives. In this way, the analysis reflects the principles of exploratory triangulation, where findings are developed through the interplay between sources rather than through linear validation.

To enhance research rigour, several additional steps were taken. All interviews were audio-recorded with informed consent and transcribed in full to ensure accuracy and reduce reliance on memory. Documentary materials were systematically collected and

archived during the data collection period, supporting transparency and consistency in the analytical process. Furthermore, the use of multiple data sources reduces dependence on a single perspective, strengthening the credibility of the findings.

Given the exploratory nature of the study, the objective is not to achieve statistical generalisation, but to provide analytical insight into how organisational purpose is translated into practice within a specific context. The emphasis is therefore placed on depth, interpretative coherence, and transparency in the research process.

3.4 Data Collection

Data for this study were collected during **February 2026** using multiple qualitative sources in order to support triangulation and ensure analytical depth. Consistent with the exploratory case study design, the research combines documentary analysis with semi-structured interviews. These sources were selected because they provide complementary perspectives on how organisational purpose is articulated, translated into product design, and experienced by users.

All documentary materials were publicly accessible at the time of data collection. Interview participants took part voluntarily and provided informed consent prior to recording.

3.4.1 Documentary Analysis

The primary documentary source was the official website of The NoMBA (www.thenomba.com), which provides detailed information regarding the organisation's purpose, programme structure, positioning, and visual identity. The website was particularly relevant for identifying how purpose is formally articulated and how the programme is presented to potential participants.

In addition to the website, social media content from Instagram and LinkedIn was analysed in order to examine how purpose is communicated across platforms. A promotional YouTube video introducing the programme and an external press article published in *Vozpópuli* were also included to broaden the perspective on how the organisation positions itself publicly.

All documentary materials were collected and archived during **February 2026**. Relevant pages, posts, and visual elements were saved and organised in a structured document to facilitate systematic coding. Particular attention was given to recurring purpose-related statements, messaging tone, visual identity, and descriptions of the programme structure.

These materials primarily informed the analysis of how purpose is communicated and externally represented, while also providing insight into observable aspects of the product design.

3.4.2 Founder Interview

A semi-structured interview was conducted face-to-face with Pablo Canela, co-founder of The NoMBA, on 13 February 2026. The interview lasted approximately 30 minutes

and was audio-recorded with prior consent. The participant was informed about the purpose of the research and agreed to be identified by name due to his public role within the organisation. Personal contact details remain confidential.

The interview combined predefined guiding questions with flexibility to explore relevant themes. Questions focused on how the organisation defines its purpose, how purpose informs strategic decisions, and how it is translated into product design and branding.

The recording was transcribed and reviewed to ensure accuracy. This interview provided insight into the internal perspective of the organisation, particularly in relation to the intended role of purpose in shaping both strategic direction and product structure.

3.4.3 User Interview

To incorporate the experiential perspective, one semi-structured interview was conducted with a female participant of The NoMBA programme on 27 February 2026. The participant remains anonymous to protect her identity. The interview lasted approximately 25 minutes and was audio-recorded with informed consent.

The interview followed a semi-structured format similar to that used in the founder interview. Questions focused on the participant's expectations before joining the programme, her experience during participation, and her perceptions of the relationship between the organisation's communication and her lived experience.

The interview was transcribed and reviewed for accuracy. This source provided insight into how organisational purpose is interpreted and experienced in practice, including aspects of reflection, engagement, and perceived coherence.

The data from this interview were later analysed in relation to documentary materials and founder perspectives in order to explore how purpose is constructed across different dimensions of the case.

3.5 Data Analysis Procedure

The analysis followed a qualitative, inductive process inspired by the Gioia methodology (Gioia et al., 2013), enabling a systematic progression from empirical data to higher-level theoretical insights. This approach was selected due to its suitability for exploring how meanings are constructed and for developing concepts grounded in qualitative data.

The analytical process began with familiarisation with the data. All interview transcripts and documentary materials were read multiple times in order to identify recurring patterns, expressions, and ideas related to organisational purpose. At this stage, the focus was on remaining close to the data, without imposing predefined categories.

In the first stage of coding, first-order concepts were generated using language that closely reflected the terms and expressions found in the data. This included phrases drawn directly from interview transcripts and organisational materials, capturing how

participants and the organisation articulated purpose, learning, and experience in their own terms.

These first-order concepts were then examined through a process of constant comparison, allowing for the identification of similarities and differences across data sources. Through this iterative process, related concepts were grouped into second-order themes, which represent more abstract interpretations of the underlying patterns observed in the data.

In a further stage of analysis, these second-order themes were organised into broader aggregate dimensions. These dimensions capture recurring patterns across the dataset and reflect higher-level analytical categories that structure the findings. Importantly, these dimensions were not predefined, but emerged progressively through engagement with the data, while remaining conceptually consistent with the research objective.

The resulting data structure, presented in Chapter 4, illustrates the progression from first-order concepts to second-order themes and aggregate dimensions. While this structure is presented in a clear and linear format, it was developed through an iterative process involving movement back and forth between data, codes, and emerging interpretations.

In addition to this coding process, the analysis involved a within-case interpretative strategy. Patterns identified across communication, product design, and user experience were examined in relation to one another in order to explore how organisational purpose is translated and experienced within the case. This process involved identifying patterns, relationships, and potential tensions across data sources, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of coherence.

Rather than applying predefined criteria or measuring alignment, the analysis focuses on how coherence emerges through the relationships between different dimensions of the case. This interpretative approach allows for the identification of both alignment and subtle tensions, which are further explored in the findings.

Overall, this analytical procedure ensures a structured yet flexible approach, combining systematic coding with interpretative depth. It enables the study to remain grounded in empirical data while developing higher-level insights into how organisational purpose is articulated, enacted, and experienced.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted in accordance with established ethical principles for qualitative research, with particular attention to informed consent, confidentiality, and responsible data management. Given that the research involves human participants through semi-structured interviews, ensuring ethical integrity throughout the process was a central consideration.

Prior to each interview, participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and the intended use of the data within this

research. Interviews were audio-recorded only after explicit consent had been obtained. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage prior to analysis without any negative consequences.

The co-founder of The NoMBA agreed to be identified by name due to his public role within the organisation. However, no personal contact details or sensitive information have been disclosed. In contrast, the programme participant has been fully anonymised to protect her identity, and no identifying details are included in the analysis.

All interview recordings and transcripts were stored securely on a password-protected device and used solely for academic purposes. The data have not been shared beyond the scope of this research and will be handled in accordance with standard data protection practices.

With regard to documentary analysis, all materials used were publicly available at the time of data collection. These sources were archived in **February 2026** to ensure transparency and consistency throughout the analytical process.

The study does not seek to evaluate the organisation normatively or to make reputational judgements. Instead, it adopts an interpretative approach aimed at understanding how organisational purpose is articulated, enacted, and experienced within a specific context. No significant ethical risks were identified, and care has been taken to represent all participants and data accurately and responsibly.

3.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined the methodological approach adopted to examine how organisational purpose is translated into practice within a specific case. The study is grounded in a qualitative, exploratory, and inductive research design, informed by a constructivist perspective that understands purpose as a socially constructed phenomenon articulated, enacted, and experienced across different organisational dimensions.

A single exploratory case study design was employed to enable an in-depth and context-sensitive analysis of The NoMBA, focusing on the process through which purpose is translated across communication, product design, and user experience. To enhance analytical depth, the study adopted an exploratory triangulation approach, combining documentary analysis with semi-structured interviews with both the founder and a user.

Rather than analysing data sources separately, the research followed an integrated analytical approach, allowing insights to emerge through the interaction between different forms of empirical material. This approach, informed by inductive qualitative research and the Gioia methodology (Gioia et al., 2013), enabled the systematic development of concepts while maintaining close engagement with the data.

The analysis proceeded through iterative coding, moving from first-order concepts to second-order themes and aggregate dimensions, in order to capture patterns of

meaning and relationships across the dataset. Throughout this process, the emphasis was placed on understanding how coherence, and potential misalignments, emerge across different dimensions of organisational purpose.

Overall, this methodological framework provides a robust and coherent basis for the analysis presented in the following chapter, which examines how organisational purpose is articulated, enacted, and experienced within the case.

Chapter 4. Findings

4.1 Introduction to the findings

This chapter presents the findings of the qualitative case study, focusing on how organisational purpose is conceptualised, translated into organisational practices, and ultimately experienced and interpreted by users. To address this objective, the analysis draws on multiple sources of data, including an interview with the founder, an interview with a user, and documentary materials from the organisation's website and LinkedIn communication.

The analysis follows a Gioia-inspired approach (Gioia et al., 2013), enabling a structured progression from empirical observations to more abstract conceptual insights. First-order concepts were identified using language closely grounded in interviews and documentary materials, and subsequently grouped into second-order themes through an iterative process of comparison and interpretation. These themes were then aggregated into broader dimensions that capture recurring patterns across the dataset.

Figure 2 presents the resulting data structure, illustrating the progression from first-order concepts to second-order themes and aggregate dimensions. While presented in a structured format, this analytical framework emerged inductively through continuous engagement with the data rather than being predefined. The resulting dimensions therefore reflect how organisational purpose is not only articulated, but also enacted and experienced in practice.

The findings are organised around three interconnected aggregate dimensions. The first explores how purpose is conceptualised as an internal and evolving construct. The second examines how purpose is translated into structured organisational practices. The third considers how purpose is experienced and interpreted in practice by users.

Although presented separately for analytical clarity, these dimensions are closely interrelated. Together, they reveal how organisational purpose is not a static construct, but a dynamic process that is continuously shaped through its conceptualisation, enacted through organisational practices, and interpreted through experience. While grounded in a single case, the analysis is oriented towards identifying broader patterns that may inform the understanding of how organisational purpose becomes observable in practice across different organisational contexts. In doing so, the findings provide an empirical basis to examine the relationship between internal purpose implementation and its external manifestation, as proposed in the central question.



Figure 2: Gioia Data Coding

4.2 Conceptualisation of Purpose as an Internal and Evolving Construct

This section examines how organisational purpose is initially conceptualised as an internal and evolving construct. The findings indicate that purpose is not approached as a fixed statement or predefined objective, but rather as a meaning system that is continuously constructed and refined within the organisation. In this sense, purpose emerges as an interpretative process through which organisational members make sense of their actions, priorities, and direction.

The data suggest that purpose is primarily grounded in internal understanding, rather than external communication. It is articulated through reflection on values, assumptions, and dominant logics, indicating that purpose is first developed at a cognitive and conceptual level before being translated into practice. This aligns with the notion of purpose-driven organisations, where purpose operates as a guiding principle shaping internal decision-making and organisational orientation (Quinn & Thakor, 2018).

From a theoretical perspective, this internal conceptualisation of purpose can be linked to the knowledge dimension of the Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose (Rey et al., 2019), which refers to the formal and cognitive understanding of purpose within the organisation. The findings suggest that this dimension is not limited to the articulation of purpose through statements or narratives, but involves an ongoing process of questioning, reinterpretation, and meaning-making.

Furthermore, the analysis indicates that purpose is closely connected to identity, both at an organisational and individual level. Rather than being externally imposed, purpose is constructed through processes of reflection and self-understanding, reinforcing its role as an evolving construct. This perspective resonates with prior research highlighting that purpose becomes meaningful when it is internalised and connected to identity (Grant, 2012; Martela & Pessi, 2018).

The findings show that organisational purpose is initially conceptualised as an internal, dynamic, and identity-related construct. This conceptual foundation provides the basis for its subsequent translation into organisational practices, through which purpose becomes more visible and actionable.

4.2.1 Reframing Dominant Performance-Oriented Logics

The findings indicate that organisational purpose is conceptualised as an alternative to dominant performance-oriented logics that prioritise measurable outcomes, efficiency, and external achievement. Rather than being framed in instrumental terms, purpose is constructed as a broader orientation that places emphasis on internal development, reflection, and meaning. This suggests a shift away from purely outcome-driven approaches towards a more holistic understanding of organisational activity.

Prevailing logics centred on performance, optimisation, and external validation are actively questioned and reframed. Purpose is not defined through metrics of success alone, but through its capacity to guide behaviour, shape priorities, and influence how individuals interpret their work and development. In this sense, purpose functions as a counterbalance to dominant managerial logics that reduce organisational activity to measurable outputs, reinforcing instead the importance of intrinsic meaning and long-term orientation.

This finding aligns with existing literature that critiques the limitations of purely instrumental approaches to organisational performance. Scholars have argued that an excessive focus on short-term outcomes and efficiency can undermine deeper forms of engagement and meaning within organisations (Ghoshal, 2005; Pfeffer, 2018). In contrast, purpose-driven organisations emphasise a broader reason for being that

integrates economic objectives with social and human dimensions (Porter & Kramer, 2011; Quinn & Thakor, 2018). Within this perspective, purpose is not subordinate to performance, but reframes how performance itself is understood and evaluated.

Furthermore, the findings resonate with research on intrinsic motivation and meaningful work, which highlights that individuals are more engaged when their activities are connected to a sense of purpose beyond external rewards or outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Grant, 2012). Rather than being driven by external incentives or predefined success metrics, purpose is constructed as an internal driver that shapes how individuals approach their actions and decisions.

Importantly, this reframing does not imply a rejection of outcomes altogether, but rather a redefinition of their role. Performance remains relevant, but it is understood as a consequence of purpose-driven action rather than its primary objective. This perspective reflects a shift from outcome-centric to purpose-centric organising, where meaning and internal alignment guide behaviour, and external results emerge as a by-product of this orientation.

Organisational purpose operates as a mechanism through which dominant performance-oriented logics are reconsidered and reinterpreted. By prioritising meaning, reflection, and internal alignment, purpose provides an alternative framework for understanding organisational activity, setting the foundation for its subsequent translation into structured practices.

4.2.2 Questioning Established Norms and Conventional Approaches

Organisational purpose is conceptualised through an active questioning of established norms and conventional approaches. Rather than being defined within existing frameworks, purpose emerges through the rejection of automatic patterns, taken-for-granted assumptions, and dominant ways of organising and acting. This suggests that purpose is not simply adopted, but constructed through a critical reassessment of what is considered normal or expected within organisational contexts.

Practices and habitual behaviours are often problematised, particularly those associated with standardised, efficiency-driven, or externally validated models of success. In this sense, purpose is articulated in contrast to these dominant logics, positioning itself as an alternative way of understanding organisational activity. This process of questioning allows organisational members to move beyond routine patterns and to engage more consciously with their actions, priorities, and underlying assumptions.

This finding can be linked to broader literature on meaning-making, which emphasises that individuals and organisations construct meaning by interpreting and reinterpreting their experiences in relation to existing frameworks (Weick, 1995). From this perspective, purpose emerges through a process of sensemaking in which established norms are not passively accepted but actively examined and redefined. By disrupting habitual ways of thinking, organisations create space for new interpretations and alternative orientations to emerge.

Furthermore, this process is closely connected to identity formation. Organisational identity is not fixed, but continuously constructed through the ways in which organisations differentiate themselves from dominant norms and articulate what they stand for (Gioia et al., 2013; Albert & Whetten, 1985). The findings suggest that purpose plays a central role in this process, serving as a mechanism through which organisations define themselves in relation to, and often in opposition to, prevailing practices.

The questioning of established norms does not occur in isolation, but is embedded within an ongoing process of reflection and reinterpretation. Purpose is therefore not constructed through a single moment of definition, but through continuous engagement with existing assumptions and practices. This reinforces the idea that purpose is dynamic and evolving, shaped through the interaction between organisational members and the broader contexts in which they operate.

Organisational purpose is defined not only by what it promotes, but also by what it challenges. By questioning established norms and conventional approaches, purpose creates the conditions for alternative ways of organising and acting, further contributing to its role as an evolving and meaning-based construct.

4.2.3 Understanding Purpose as an Evolving, Identity-Related Construct

It can be seen that organisational purpose is understood as an evolving and identity-related construct, rather than as a fixed or static definition. Purpose is not treated as a stable statement that remains unchanged over time, but as a dynamic process that develops through reflection, experience, and ongoing interpretation. This suggests that purpose is continuously reshaped as individuals engage with it, rather than simply adopted in its initial form.

The data show that purpose is closely connected to processes of identity formation, both at an individual and organisational level. Rather than being externally imposed, purpose becomes meaningful when it is internalised and integrated into how individuals understand themselves and their role within the organisation. In this sense, purpose functions as a reference point for self-definition, guiding how individuals interpret their actions, decisions, and priorities. This reinforces the idea that purpose is not only something organisations communicate, but something that is lived and experienced internally.

This perspective aligns with literature on identity and meaningful work, which suggests that individuals are more likely to engage with organisational purpose when it resonates with their own values and sense of self (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Pratt et al., 2013). Purpose, therefore, becomes a mechanism through which individuals connect their personal identity with the broader organisational context, facilitating a deeper sense of alignment and commitment (Grant, 2012). From this viewpoint, purpose is not effective simply because it is clearly articulated, but because it is personally meaningful and internally accepted.

Furthermore, this finding can be linked to the motivation dimension of the Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose (Rey et al., 2019), which emphasises the

importance of internalisation. According to this framework, purpose becomes operative when individuals move beyond cognitive understanding and develop an emotional and motivational connection to it. The findings suggest that this process is gradual and evolving, shaped through continuous interaction between individuals and organisational practices.

The evolving nature of purpose also reflects its dependence on experience. As individuals engage with organisational practices and reflect on their implications, their understanding of purpose may deepen, shift, or be reinterpreted. This reinforces the idea that purpose is not a one-directional construct that flows from the organisation to the individual, but a reciprocal process in which meaning is continuously negotiated and reconstructed.

Overall, the findings suggest that organisational purpose is best understood as a dynamic and identity-related construct that evolves through processes of internalisation, reflection, and experience. This perspective highlights the limitations of viewing purpose as merely a communicative or symbolic element, emphasising instead its role as an internally lived and continuously developing phenomenon.

4.3 Translating Purpose into Structured Organisational Practices

The analysis shows that organisational purpose does not remain at the level of internal understanding, but becomes concretely enacted through structured organisational practices. Rather than being confined to abstract articulation, purpose is operationalised through the design of activities, processes, and interactions that make it observable in practice. This transition marks a critical shift from conceptualisation to enactment, where purpose begins to take a tangible form.

Across the data, purpose is consistently embedded within structured practices that guide behaviour and shape how organisational activity unfolds. These practices are not neutral or purely functional; instead, they reflect underlying values and priorities, indicating that purpose is actively translated into the way organisational processes are designed and experienced. In this sense, practices function as the primary mechanism through which purpose becomes visible beyond internal discourse.

This finding aligns with the action (or dynamics) dimension of the Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose (Rey et al., 2019), which emphasises that purpose is realised through consistent behavioural enactment. Purpose is not fully operative when it is merely understood or internalised, but when it is reflected in what the organisation actually does. The data suggest that structured practices play a key role in ensuring this translation, providing continuity between internal meaning and external action.

From a theoretical perspective, this process can also be interpreted through the lens of Signaling Theory (Spence, 1973). Organisational practices, particularly those embedded in products and services, act as signals that communicate underlying purpose to external stakeholders. Unlike verbal communication, these signals are grounded in observable behaviour, making them more credible indicators of organisational intent.

Importantly, the findings suggest that the effectiveness of these practices depends on their consistency and alignment with the internally constructed purpose. When practices reflect the same values and priorities that define purpose at a conceptual level, they reinforce coherence and strengthen the credibility of the organisation's external expression. Conversely, any misalignment between purpose and practice would risk undermining this coherence, highlighting the importance of consistency across dimensions.

This section shows that organisational purpose becomes externally observable through its translation into structured practices. This provides empirical support for the central question, suggesting that internal purpose implementation is reflected in the way organisations design and enact their activities, thereby bridging the gap between internal meaning and external manifestation.

4.3.1 Structuring Practices Through Progression and Consistency

Purpose becomes observable in the way organisational practices are structured over time. The analysis highlights that activities are not designed as isolated interventions, but organised through progression, rhythm, and continuity. This structuring creates a temporal logic in which purpose is reinforced through repeated engagement rather than one-off actions, allowing it to move from abstract intention to sustained practice.

The data suggest that this progression is not merely operational, but purposive. Practices are deliberately sequenced to guide engagement in a consistent direction, ensuring that the underlying purpose is not diluted across interactions. Rhythm and regularity play a central role in this process, as they stabilise expectations and create a coherent experience over time. In this sense, structure functions as a mechanism through which purpose is maintained and reinforced, rather than left to individual interpretation or variability.

This finding can be linked to the notion of coherence as discussed in the literature on purpose implementation (Rey et al., 2019), where alignment between intention and action is essential for purpose to be credible. Structured practices reduce the gap between what the organisation claims and what it actually does by embedding purpose into repeatable and observable patterns of behaviour. Consistency therefore becomes a key condition for translating purpose into practice, as it enables stakeholders to recognise stable signals over time.

From a broader organisational perspective, this also reflects insights from practice-based theories, which emphasise that organisational meaning is sustained through recurrent patterns of action rather than isolated decisions (Orlikowski, 2002; Feldman & Pentland, 2003). The findings suggest that purpose is similarly enacted through ongoing practices that gradually shape how organisational activity is understood and experienced.

This structuring does not imply rigidity, but rather continuity. While practices follow a coherent progression, they remain adaptable and open to interpretation, allowing purpose to be both stable and evolving. This balance between consistency and

flexibility supports the idea that purpose is not imposed through strict control, but reinforced through repeated and meaningful engagement.

The findings show that progression and consistency are central to how organisational purpose becomes visible in practice. By embedding purpose within structured and continuous activities, organisations create conditions for coherence between intention and action, strengthening the credibility of their external expression.

4.3.2 Encouraging Depth and Reflection Over Intensity

A clear pattern across the data is the privileging of depth and reflection over intensity and rapid consumption. Practices are designed to slow down engagement, encouraging sustained attention and deliberate processing rather than short bursts of activity. This orientation contrasts with dominant organisational logics that favour speed, optimisation, and continuous stimulation, and instead positions purpose as something that requires time to be meaningfully enacted.

This emphasis on depth shapes both the pacing and the content of practices. Activities are structured to foster reflection and internal processing, suggesting that purpose is operationalised not through maximising output, but through enabling more meaningful engagement with underlying ideas and experiences. Such an approach aligns with research on meaningful work, which highlights that depth of engagement and opportunities for reflection are central to the development of personal significance and intrinsic motivation (Grant, 2012; Martela & Pessi, 2018). Rather than encouraging constant activity, practices create space for interpretation and sensemaking, reinforcing purpose as an internally oriented construct.

The rejection of intensity also has implications for how authenticity is perceived. When practices reflect the same emphasis on reflection and depth that characterises the organisation's stated purpose, a stronger alignment emerges between what is communicated and what is enacted. This consistency is central to perceptions of authenticity, which depend on the congruence between organisational claims and observable behaviour (Beverland, 2005; Napoli et al., 2014). In this case, the design of practices functions as evidence that purpose is not merely rhetorical, but embedded in how activities are structured.

Importantly, this orientation does not eliminate performance considerations, but reframes them. Outcomes are approached as the result of sustained and meaningful engagement rather than rapid optimisation. This reflects a shift from efficiency-driven practices towards purpose-driven practices, where value is generated through depth rather than speed. In doing so, purpose becomes visible not only in what is done, but in how it is done.

4.3.3 Providing Guidance and Relational Support

Another salient pattern concerns the role of guidance and relational support in translating purpose into practice. The data point to the presence of mechanisms that go beyond individual engagement, embedding purpose within interactions that involve support, feedback, and accompaniment. These relational elements indicate that

purpose is not enacted in isolation, but through structured interactions that shape how individuals engage with organisational practices.

Guidance plays a central role in this process. Rather than leaving engagement entirely self-directed, practices incorporate forms of direction and support that help individuals interpret and apply purpose in practice. This suggests that purpose is not assumed to be self-evident, but requires facilitation to be effectively enacted. Relational support, in turn, reinforces this process by creating a context in which individuals can engage more confidently and consistently with the underlying purpose.

This finding can be interpreted through the lens of Commitment–Trust Theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), which emphasises that trust develops through reliable, consistent, and supportive interactions. When organisational practices provide ongoing guidance and relational reinforcement, they signal commitment to the values underpinning purpose, thereby strengthening trust. Trust, in this sense, is not generated solely through communication, but through the experience of supportive and dependable practices.

The presence of relational mechanisms also contributes to the internalisation of purpose. Prior research suggests that individuals are more likely to adopt organisational values when they are embedded within relational contexts that enable dialogue, feedback, and shared understanding (Pratt et al., 2013). By structuring practices around interaction rather than isolation, organisations create conditions for purpose to be collectively interpreted and reinforced.

Guidance and relational support function as key mechanisms through which organisational purpose is enacted. By embedding purpose within supportive interactions, organisations not only facilitate engagement but also strengthen trust and alignment between intention and practice, further contributing to the coherence of purpose in action.

4.3.4 Extending Purpose into Action Beyond Structured Activities

Purpose does not remain confined to formally designed practices; it extends into actions that occur beyond predefined structures. The analysis shows that organisational purpose becomes actionable when it shapes how individuals behave outside scheduled or guided activities, indicating that it has moved from a designed process to a lived orientation. This extension suggests that purpose is not only embedded in what the organisation structures, but also in how individuals continue to act when those structures are no longer present.

What is notable is that purpose begins to guide behaviour in less controlled and more autonomous contexts. This indicates a deeper level of internalisation, where individuals draw on purpose as a reference point for action rather than relying solely on externally imposed frameworks. In this sense, purpose transitions from being supported by structured practices to being enacted independently, reinforcing its role as an operative principle rather than a contextual feature.

From a theoretical perspective, this shift can be interpreted through Signaling Theory (Spence, 1973). Actions that occur beyond formal structures serve as particularly

strong signals of organisational purpose, as they are less likely to be perceived as staged or strategically designed. When purpose is reflected in behaviour that is not explicitly orchestrated, it becomes a more credible indicator of underlying organisational intent. These actions therefore contribute to how external stakeholders interpret the organisation's purpose, reinforcing its authenticity and consistency.

Moreover, this extension into action highlights the importance of behavioural continuity. When purpose is evident both within and beyond structured practices, a more coherent pattern emerges, reducing the gap between formal articulation and lived reality. This continuity strengthens the visibility of purpose and supports its translation into broader organisational and stakeholder contexts.

The findings suggest that purpose becomes fully operational when it extends beyond structured activities and informs behaviour more broadly. In doing so, actions themselves function as signals of internal purpose, bridging the space between organisational intent and external perception.

4.4 Experiencing and Interpreting Purpose in Practice

The previous sections have examined how organisational purpose is conceptualised internally and translated into structured practices. This section shifts the focus to how purpose is experienced and interpreted in practice, exploring how users engage with, make sense of, and evaluate the organisation's purpose through their direct interaction with its activities.

The analysis highlights that purpose is not simply received as communicated, but actively interpreted by users through their lived experience. This interpretative process involves assessing whether the organisation's practices align with its stated purpose, and whether this alignment is meaningful and credible in practice. In this sense, purpose is not only enacted by the organisation, but co-constructed through the interaction between organisational intent and user perception.

This perspective aligns with literature on brand purpose, which emphasises that purpose is ultimately realised through stakeholder interpretation rather than organisational declaration (Keller, 1993; Aaker, 1996). Users do not passively accept purpose claims, but evaluate them based on their experience, forming judgements about the organisation's authenticity and credibility. As such, purpose becomes visible not only through what the organisation does, but through how those actions are perceived and interpreted externally.

Authenticity plays a central role in this process. When users perceive a strong alignment between communicated purpose and actual experience, purpose is interpreted as genuine and trustworthy. Conversely, any perceived inconsistency may lead to questioning or scepticism, highlighting the importance of coherence between intention and delivery (Beverland, 2005; Napoli et al., 2014). This reinforces the idea that purpose is not inherently credible, but must be validated through experience.

Importantly, the findings suggest that this evaluation is not purely cognitive, but also emotional and experiential. Users engage with purpose through feelings of connection,

relevance, and personal impact, indicating that purpose operates at both a rational and affective level. This aligns with research on customer experience, which highlights the role of emotional engagement in shaping perceptions of value and meaning (Schmitt, 2010).

Overall, this section shows that organisational purpose is ultimately realised through user experience, where it is interpreted, evaluated, and either reinforced or questioned. This interpretative layer is essential for understanding how internal purpose implementation is translated into external brand perception, providing a direct link between organisational practice and stakeholder meaning-making.

4.4.1 Experiencing Reflection and Internal Change

Engagement with the organisation's activities is consistently described in terms of reflection and internal change. Rather than focusing on immediate outputs, the experience prompts users to reconsider assumptions, behaviours, and priorities, suggesting that purpose operates as a catalyst for self-examination. This indicates that purpose is not only encountered at a cognitive level, but actively shapes how individuals interpret their own actions and development over time.

What emerges from the data is a process-oriented experience in which change is gradual and internally driven. Reflection is not positioned as an isolated activity, but embedded within ongoing engagement, allowing users to revisit and reinterpret their understanding of purpose. This reinforces the idea that purpose is experienced as something evolving, rather than something fully grasped from the outset.

This dynamic can be linked to the motivation dimension of the Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose (Rey et al., 2019), where purpose becomes effective when it is internalised and personally meaningful. The findings suggest that internalisation occurs through reflective engagement, as individuals move from simply understanding purpose to integrating it into their own perspective. In this sense, purpose begins to influence behaviour not through external direction, but through internally generated motivation.

Existing literature on meaningful work supports this interpretation, highlighting that reflection plays a central role in enabling individuals to connect their activities to a broader sense of purpose (Grant, 2012; Martela & Pessi, 2018). Through this process, purpose becomes a reference point for personal development, shaping how individuals evaluate their actions and progress.

The experience of reflection and internal change indicates that purpose is not passively received, but actively processed and internalised. This reinforces its role as a dynamic construct that gains meaning through engagement, and highlights the importance of experiential processes in translating organisational purpose into individual understanding.

4.4.2 Developing Emotional Connection and Identification

Beyond cognitive engagement, the data point to the development of an emotional connection between users and the organisation's purpose. This connection is reflected in feelings of resonance, relevance, and personal alignment, suggesting that purpose becomes meaningful when it is experienced not only as an idea, but as something individuals can relate to on an affective level.

This emotional dimension plays a key role in shaping identification. As users engage with the organisation's practices, they begin to align their own values and perspectives with those embedded in the organisation's purpose. This process goes beyond agreement at a conceptual level, involving a deeper sense of belonging and recognition. In this sense, purpose contributes to the construction of identity, influencing how individuals see themselves in relation to the organisation.

Such findings are consistent with research on organisational identification, which suggests that individuals are more likely to identify with organisations whose values align with their own (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Pratt et al., 2013). When purpose resonates at an emotional level, it strengthens this identification, fostering a more enduring connection between the individual and the organisation.

From a branding perspective, this process can also be understood in terms of identity-based branding, where brands create value by enabling stakeholders to express and reinforce aspects of their own identity (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Aaker, 1996). The findings suggest that purpose plays a central role in this process, as it provides a framework through which users can interpret their experience and connect it to their own sense of self.

Emotional connection also contributes to the perceived authenticity of purpose. When users feel that their experience aligns with both the communicated purpose and their own values, purpose is more likely to be interpreted as genuine rather than constructed. This reinforces the idea that authenticity emerges through the alignment between internal organisational intent, enacted practices, and user experience.

The development of emotional connection and identification highlights the role of purpose as both a relational and identity-related construct. It shows that purpose is not only understood or enacted, but also felt and internalised, further strengthening its impact on how organisational activities are experienced and interpreted.

4.4.3 Perceiving the Offering as Compatible with Everyday Life

A recurring theme in the data is the extent to which the offering is experienced as compatible with everyday routines and constraints. Engagement is not framed as requiring exceptional effort or disruption, but as something that can be integrated into existing patterns of work and life. This perceived usability and accessibility are central to how purpose is evaluated in practice, as they determine whether individuals are able to sustain engagement over time.

The findings suggest that purpose becomes meaningful when it is enacted within realistic conditions. Practices that are perceived as overly demanding or detached from everyday realities risk limiting participation and weakening the connection between intention and experience. In contrast, when activities are adaptable and manageable, purpose is more likely to be consistently enacted, reinforcing its relevance beyond isolated moments of engagement.

This aligns with research on practice-based perspectives, which emphasise that organisational meaning is sustained through routines that are embedded in everyday action (Feldman & Pentland, 2003; Orlikowski, 2002). Purpose, from this perspective, is not realised through exceptional or symbolic acts alone, but through its integration into ordinary practices that can be repeated and maintained over time.

Moreover, the compatibility of practices with everyday life contributes to their perceived legitimacy. When purpose is experienced as workable within real-world constraints, it is less likely to be seen as aspirational rhetoric and more as a viable framework for action. This reinforces the idea that purpose must be not only conceptually compelling but also practically implementable.

Overall, the findings indicate that the translation of purpose into accessible and sustainable practices is a key condition for its continued enactment. By aligning organisational activities with the realities of everyday life, purpose becomes both actionable and enduring, strengthening its role within lived experience.

4.4.4 Recognising and Questioning Alignment Between Promise and Delivery

Evaluation of purpose ultimately depends on how users interpret the relationship between what is communicated and what is experienced in practice. The data reveal that users actively assess whether organisational claims are supported by observable actions, indicating that purpose is continuously evaluated rather than passively accepted.

Instances of perceived alignment reinforce the credibility of purpose. When practices and experiences reflect the values and intentions communicated by the organisation, users are more likely to interpret purpose as genuine and consistent. This alignment strengthens trust, as it signals that the organisation is acting in accordance with its stated principles rather than using purpose as a purely symbolic or strategic device.

However, the findings also point to moments of questioning and potential tension. Even when overall alignment is perceived as strong, users remain attentive to discrepancies between promise and delivery. These moments do not necessarily invalidate purpose, but they highlight its conditional nature: credibility depends on ongoing consistency rather than one-time validation.

This process can be understood through the lens of brand authenticity, which emphasises that authenticity is constructed through the perceived congruence between organisational claims and actions (Beverland, 2005; Napoli et al., 2014). Authenticity is therefore not inherent, but continuously negotiated through experience. Similarly,

Commitment–Trust Theory suggests that trust is built and maintained through reliable and consistent behaviour over time (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Any perceived inconsistency may weaken this trust, even if purpose is broadly aligned.

The presence of questioning does not necessarily indicate failure, but rather reflects an active and critical engagement with purpose. Users do not simply consume organisational narratives; they interpret, evaluate, and sometimes challenge them. This reinforces the idea that purpose is co-constructed through the interaction between organisational intent and stakeholder perception.

Alignment between promise and delivery is central to how purpose is experienced, but also that this alignment is continuously assessed and open to scrutiny. This dynamic highlights the importance of sustained coherence across communication and practice in maintaining the credibility and trustworthiness of organisational purpose.

4.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the findings of the study by examining how organisational purpose is conceptualised, enacted, and experienced within the case. Structured around three interconnected dimensions, conceptualisation, organisational practices, and experience, the analysis has shown that purpose operates not as a static statement, but as a dynamic process that evolves across different stages of organisational activity.

The findings indicate that purpose is initially constructed as an internal and evolving meaning system, shaped through reflection, questioning of dominant logics, and processes of identity formation. This internal conceptualisation provides the foundation for the subsequent translation of purpose into structured organisational practices. Through these practices, purpose becomes observable, as it is embedded in the design of activities, the pacing of engagement, and the relational mechanisms that support its enactment. Finally, purpose is experienced and interpreted by users, who evaluate its credibility through their lived interaction with these practices.

Across these dimensions, the analysis highlights the importance of coherence. Purpose is most effectively realised when there is alignment between how it is defined internally, how it is enacted in practice, and how it is experienced externally. This alignment not only strengthens the visibility of purpose, but also contributes to perceptions of authenticity and the development of trust. At the same time, the findings reveal that such coherence is not absolute, as moments of questioning and potential tension emerge, indicating that purpose is continuously negotiated rather than fully stabilised.

Overall, the chapter provides empirical support for the central question by demonstrating that the internal implementation of organisational purpose is reflected in its external manifestation through observable practices and user experience. At the same time, it shows that this relationship is shaped by the degree of alignment achieved across dimensions. These insights form the basis for the following chapter, which discusses the theoretical implications of the findings and develops the study's

conceptual contribution. While overall alignment is observed, the limited number of interviews may restrict the visibility of deeper tensions or conflicting interpretations.

Chapter 5. Discussion

5.1 Introduction to the Discussion

This chapter interprets the findings of the study in relation to the research objective of understanding how organisational purpose is translated into its external manifestation through brand-related elements. While Chapter 4 presented the empirical patterns emerging from the data, the present chapter focuses on analysing their meaning by connecting them to the theoretical frameworks outlined in Chapter 2.

More specifically, the discussion examines how the relationship between internal purpose implementation and external brand expression can be understood through existing theories, including the Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose (Rey et al., 2019), Signaling Theory (Spence, 1973), Commitment–Trust Theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), and the literature on brand authenticity. In doing so, the chapter moves beyond description to provide a more integrated understanding of how purpose operates across organisational and stakeholder dimensions.

The discussion is structured around three key analytical themes. First, it explores how organisational purpose evolves from an internal construct into observable practices and experiences. Second, it examines the role of coherence in ensuring alignment between intention and action. Third, it analyses how purpose becomes credible through signaling processes, shaping perceptions of authenticity and trust.

Finally, the chapter revisits the central question, evaluating the extent to which the findings support the proposed relationship between internal organisational purpose and its external manifestation. Through this analysis, the chapter aims to clarify the broader implications of the findings and to position them within the existing academic literature.

5.2 Interpreting the Relationship Between Internal Purpose and Brand Manifestation

The findings indicate that the relationship between internal organisational purpose and its external manifestation is more appropriately understood as a process rather than a direct or static connection. Rather than being transferred linearly from the organisation to the market, purpose evolves through a sequence of stages in which it is conceptualised, enacted through organisational practices, and ultimately interpreted through user experience. This processual perspective offers a more nuanced understanding of how purpose becomes visible beyond the organisation.

At an internal level, purpose is constructed as a system of meaning, shaped through reflection, the questioning of dominant logics, and processes of identity formation. However, such conceptualisation alone does not ensure external visibility. The analysis suggests that purpose becomes tangible only when it is translated into structured practices that guide behaviour and shape organisational activity. These practices function as the primary interface through which stakeholders encounter and interpret purpose.

From this perspective, external manifestation is not merely the outcome of communication, but of enacted behaviour. Stakeholders engage with purpose through their experience of organisational practices, evaluating whether these reflect the values and intentions that define the organisation internally. Consequently, brand-related elements, particularly products and user experience—emerge as key vehicles through which purpose is both expressed and assessed.

This interpretation is consistent with the Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose (Rey et al., 2019), which conceptualises purpose through the interconnected dimensions of knowledge, motivation, and action. The findings extend this model by illustrating how these internal dimensions become externally perceptible. Conceptualisation aligns with the knowledge dimension, internalisation with motivation, and practices with action; however, the external manifestation of purpose depends on how effectively these dimensions are translated into observable and interpretable experiences.

Importantly, this process is neither linear nor unidirectional. User experience does not simply reflect internal purpose, but actively contributes to its interpretation and ongoing evaluation. Purpose is therefore continuously shaped through the interaction between organisational intent and stakeholder perception, reinforcing its dynamic and relational nature. At the same time, this suggests that external interpretations may not always fully align with internal intentions, introducing potential variation in how purpose is understood.

Overall, organisational purpose operates as a process that connects internal meaning with external manifestation through the mediating role of organisational practices. This challenges the view of purpose as a static or purely communicative construct, positioning it instead as an evolving phenomenon that becomes visible through action and is ultimately validated yet also potentially reinterpreted through experience.

5.3 Coherence as the Central Condition of Purpose Realisation

A central insight emerging from the findings is that the realisation of organisational purpose depends fundamentally on coherence across its different dimensions. Rather than being determined solely by how purpose is defined or communicated, its effectiveness is shaped by the alignment between how it is conceptualised internally, how it is enacted through organisational practices, and how it is ultimately experienced by stakeholders. This alignment constitutes the condition under which purpose becomes both visible and credible.

The analysis indicates that coherence operates across three interconnected levels. At the conceptual level, purpose is articulated as a set of values and guiding principles. At the level of practices, these principles are translated into structured actions and organisational processes. Finally, at the experiential level, stakeholders interpret purpose through their interaction with these practices. Coherence emerges when these levels reinforce one another, creating continuity between intention, action, and perception. However, this also implies that any disconnection between these levels may weaken the overall credibility of purpose, as stakeholders tend to evaluate organisations based on what is enacted rather than what is intended.

This interpretation is consistent with the Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose (Rey et al., 2019), which highlights the importance of alignment between knowledge, motivation, and action. The findings extend this perspective by demonstrating that such alignment must also be recognised externally in order to be effective. In this sense, coherence is not only an internal organisational condition, but also a perceptual outcome shaped by stakeholder interpretation. This suggests that coherence cannot be fully controlled by the organisation, as it depends on how organisational practices are perceived in context.

Importantly, coherence does not appear as a stable or permanent state, but as a dynamic and ongoing process. Maintaining alignment across conceptualisation, practices, and experience requires continuous adjustment, as each dimension is subject to change and reinterpretation. Organisational practices may evolve, stakeholder expectations may shift, and meanings attached to purpose may vary across contexts. As a result, coherence must be actively sustained rather than assumed, introducing a level of complexity that challenges the notion of fully consistent purpose implementation.

While the presence of coherence strengthens the credibility of organisational purpose by reducing the gap between what is claimed and what is enacted, the findings also suggest that achieving perfect alignment may be difficult in practice. Even minor inconsistencies can introduce ambiguity and trigger stakeholder scepticism, particularly when expectations of authenticity are high. This highlights the sensitivity of coherence as a condition for purpose realisation, as well as its potential fragility in dynamic organisational environments.

Coherence emerges as the central mechanism through which organisational purpose is translated into meaningful and credible external expression. It connects internal intention with external perception, reinforcing the idea that purpose is not realised through isolated elements, but through the continuous, inherently imperfect, alignment of how it is defined, enacted, and experienced.

5.4 From Signals to Trust: How Purpose Becomes Credible

The findings indicate that organisational purpose becomes credible not through declaration alone, but through a process in which organisational actions function as signals that are subsequently interpreted by stakeholders. This process provides a coherent way to integrate insights from Signaling Theory, Commitment–Trust Theory, and the literature on brand authenticity, explaining how purpose moves from internal intention to external validation.

Organisational practices, particularly those in products and user experience, operate as observable signals of underlying purpose. From the perspective of Signaling Theory (Spence, 1973), such signals reduce information asymmetry by allowing stakeholders to infer organisational intent from behaviour rather than relying solely on communicated claims. The findings support this view by showing that stakeholders evaluate purpose primarily through enacted practices, suggesting that observable behaviour carries greater weight than formal articulation.

However, signals do not carry fixed or objective meaning; they are subject to interpretation. Stakeholders actively assess whether observed practices align with communicated purpose, forming judgements about the organisation's credibility. While repeated exposure to consistent signals may strengthen the perception that purpose is embedded in organisational activity, this process is inherently interpretative and may vary across individuals and contexts. As a result, the same organisational practice may be understood differently depending on stakeholder expectations and prior experiences.

This interpretative dimension is closely linked to the notion of authenticity. As highlighted in the branding literature, authenticity emerges when stakeholders perceive congruence between what an organisation claims and what it does (Beverland, 2005; Napoli et al., 2014). The findings suggest that authenticity is not an intrinsic property of organisational purpose, but an outcome of how signals are interpreted over time. When practices consistently reflect stated values, purpose is more likely to be perceived as genuine rather than strategically constructed. At the same time, even minor inconsistencies may undermine these perceptions, particularly in contexts where stakeholders are sensitive to symbolic or value-based claims.

The perception of authenticity, in turn, plays a central role in the development of trust. Drawing on Commitment–Trust Theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), trust can be understood as the outcome of sustained, reliable behaviour that aligns with stakeholder expectations. The findings indicate that when organisational practices repeatedly confirm purpose-related claims, stakeholders develop confidence in the organisation's intentions, reducing uncertainty and supporting longer-term relational trust. However, this process is not automatic; trust depends on the continued consistency of signals and may be quickly eroded if discrepancies emerge.

Importantly, this sequence—from signals to interpretation, and from interpretation to authenticity and trust, is cumulative rather than immediate. Credibility is built gradually through the consistent alignment between purpose, practice, and experience. Any disruption in this alignment may weaken the process, highlighting both the fragility of trust and the ongoing effort required to sustain it in practice.

Overall, organisational purpose becomes credible through a layered and interpretative process in which practices act as signals, signals are evaluated by stakeholders, and these evaluations shape perceptions of authenticity and trust. This integrated perspective demonstrates that purpose is not validated through communication alone, but through the consistent, context-dependent interpretation of organisational behaviour.

5.5 Extending the Three-Dimensional Model: Connecting Internal Purpose and Brand Manifestation

The findings of this study suggest that the Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose (Rey et al., 2019) provides a robust conceptual foundation for understanding how purpose is implemented within organisations. By articulating purpose through the dimensions of knowledge (head), motivation (heart), and action (hands), the model captures the

internal conditions required for purpose to be consistently understood, internalised, and enacted. In particular, the relationships of coherence (head–hands) and integrity (heart–hands) explain how alignment within the organisation enables purpose to move from formal intention to observable behaviour.

Building on this foundation, the findings indicate that this internal alignment can be further developed by considering how purpose becomes visible and meaningful beyond the organisation. While the original model focuses on internal dynamics, the empirical analysis highlights that purpose is ultimately interpreted through stakeholder experience. This does not represent a limitation of the original framework, but rather an opportunity to extend its explanatory scope towards the external manifestation of purpose.

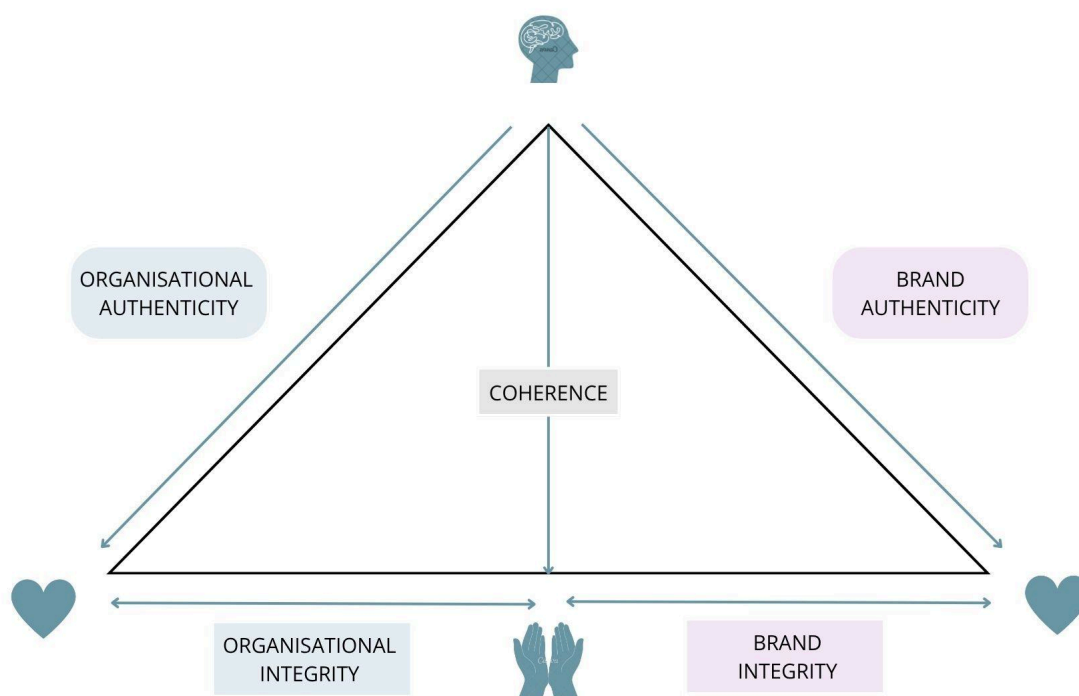


Figure 3: Extended 3D Purpose Model: Connecting Organisation and Brand.

Source: Adapted from Rey, C., Bastons, M. & Sotok, P. (eds.). Purpose-driven Organizations: management ideas for a better world. Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.

As illustrated in Figure 3, this study proposes an extended model that connects the internal structure of the purpose-driven organisation with its external manifestation. Within the Extended 3D Purpose Model: Connecting Organisation and Brand the left side of the triangle represents the internal organisational domain, where purpose is defined, internalised, and enacted through the dimensions of knowledge (head), motivation (heart), and action (hands). Organisational authenticity reflects the alignment between internal motivation and purpose, while organisational integrity captures the consistency between values and enacted behaviour. These internal

elements are connected through coherence, positioned centrally, which ensures that what is formally defined is reflected in organisational action.

In contrast, the right side of the model represents the external domain, where purpose is interpreted through stakeholder interaction. Here, brand authenticity reflects whether stakeholders perceive organisational values as genuine, while brand integrity captures the consistency between what the organisation delivers and what stakeholders experience. This external dimension therefore represents how purpose is evaluated rather than how it is internally constructed.

The connection between these two domains is mediated by organisational practices, particularly those embedded in products and user experience. The findings show that purpose follows a process through which it is conceptualised (head), internalised (heart), and enacted (hands), but it is through these enacted practices that purpose becomes externally observable. Stakeholders do not access internal purpose directly; instead, they interpret it through their experience of organisational outputs and interactions.

This process can be further understood through the theoretical lenses applied in this study. From the perspective of Signaling Theory (Spence, 1973), organisational practices function as observable signals through which stakeholders infer underlying purpose. These signals are then interpreted, leading to perceptions of authenticity, understood as the alignment between organisational values and behaviour (Beverland, 2005; Napoli et al., 2014). Over time, the consistency of these signals contributes to the development of trust, as explained by Commitment–Trust Theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), reinforcing the credibility of purpose.

Within this extended framework, authenticity emerges as a key relational dimension connecting the internal and external domains. Specifically, it reflects the relationship between internal motivation (heart) and external experience, capturing whether what is genuinely lived within the organisation is perceived as such by stakeholders. As such, authenticity is not an inherent property of the organisation, but an outcome of how internal purpose is interpreted externally.

Importantly, the model highlights that the relationship between internal purpose and its external manifestation is not automatic. While coherence and integrity enable purpose to be enacted consistently within the organisation, external authenticity and trust depend on how this enactment is perceived. This introduces a degree of uncertainty, as stakeholder interpretations may vary and cannot be fully controlled. As a result, alignment is both necessary and inherently imperfect, requiring continuous reinforcement.

Overall, the extended model conceptualises organisational purpose as operating across two interconnected domains: an internal domain, where purpose is defined, internalised, and enacted, and an external domain, where it is experienced and interpreted. The connection between these domains is mediated by organisational practices and evaluated through stakeholder experience. In this way, the study contributes by extending the Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose to include the experiential dimension through which purpose becomes meaningful to stakeholders,

suggesting that what is commonly referred to as brand purpose can be understood as the external manifestation of internally coherent and enacted organisational purpose.

5.6 Cross-Dimensional Insights: Coherence, Signaling and Authenticity

Taken together, the findings suggest that the relationship between internal organisational purpose and its external manifestation is not the result of isolated elements, but of the interaction between conceptualisation, organisational practices, and stakeholder experience. These dimensions do not operate independently; rather, their alignment shapes the extent to which purpose becomes visible, credible, and meaningful. In this sense, the translation of purpose from an internal construct into an externally observable phenomenon can be understood as a relational and processual outcome.

Across the analysis, coherence emerges as the central condition underpinning this relationship. Purpose appears most robust when there is continuity between how it is defined internally, how it is enacted through organisational practices, and how it is experienced by stakeholders. This reinforces the view that purpose is not realised through articulation alone, but through alignment across multiple dimensions. Consistent with the Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose (Rey et al., 2019), the findings indicate that the integration of knowledge, motivation, and action is essential; however, they further suggest that such internal alignment must also be recognised externally in order to generate meaningful impact. Coherence therefore extends beyond an internal organisational condition, becoming dependent on stakeholder interpretation.

This external recognition is mediated through observable signals. Drawing on Signaling Theory (Spence, 1973), organisational practices, particularly those embedded in products and user experience, function as indicators through which stakeholders infer underlying purpose. The findings show that these signals carry greater weight than formal communication, as they are grounded in enacted behaviour. However, their meaning is not fixed. Stakeholders actively interpret signals based on their expectations and prior experiences, which implies that the same practice may reinforce or weaken perceived purpose depending on context. As a result, the relationship between internal purpose and external manifestation is shaped not only by what organisations do, but by how these actions are interpreted.

Within this interpretative process, authenticity emerges as a critical evaluative outcome. Rather than being inherent to purpose itself, authenticity is constructed through the perceived alignment between organisational claims and lived experience (Beverland, 2005; Napoli et al., 2014). The findings indicate that when stakeholders perceive consistency across communication, practice, and outcomes, purpose is more likely to be understood as genuine. At the same time, this highlights the fragility of authenticity, as even minor inconsistencies may generate scepticism, particularly in contexts where purpose claims are highly visible.

The development of authenticity further contributes to the formation of trust. In line with Commitment–Trust Theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), trust emerges when stakeholders perceive that organisational behaviour is reliable and aligned with stated intentions.

The findings suggest that this trust is built cumulatively through repeated exposure to consistent signals, rather than through isolated interactions. However, this process is not guaranteed; discrepancies between promise and delivery may quickly undermine trust, reinforcing its contingent and dynamic nature.

Importantly, the analysis also reveals that coherence is not absolute. While alignment across dimensions strengthens the credibility of purpose, moments of tension and questioning indicate that such alignment is inherently difficult to sustain. Organisational practices may evolve, stakeholder expectations may shift, and interpretations of purpose may vary, introducing a degree of instability into the process. These tensions do not necessarily negate purpose, but they highlight its negotiated character and the limits of achieving complete consistency in practice.

Overall, these cross-dimensional insights provide a more nuanced answer to the research question. The findings suggest that organisational purpose, when coherently conceptualised and enacted, can be reflected in its external manifestation; however, this relationship is neither direct nor fully controllable. Instead, it depends on the continuous alignment between internal dimensions and their external interpretation, mediated through signalling processes and evaluated through perceptions of authenticity and trust. Purpose can therefore be understood as a dynamic and relational process that connects internal implementation with external manifestation, rather than as a fixed or purely communicative construct.

5.7 Practical Implications

The findings of this study generate several practical implications for organisations seeking to translate organisational purpose into credible and meaningful brand manifestations. Crucially, these implications suggest that purpose cannot be managed as a communicative layer, but must be designed and sustained as an organisational process that connects internal meaning, structured practices, and stakeholder experience.

First, organisations should prioritise the [design of purpose as an internally constructed and evolving meaning system](#), rather than as a fixed strategic statement. The findings in Section 4.2 show that purpose in the case is developed through continuous reflection, questioning of dominant performance-oriented logics, and identity construction. This suggests that managers should create organisational conditions that enable ongoing sensemaking processes (Weick, 1995), rather than attempting to define purpose in a static or top-down manner. In practice, this implies embedding reflective spaces, encouraging critical questioning of existing assumptions, and allowing purpose to evolve alongside organisational learning. Without this internal depth, subsequent attempts to communicate purpose externally are likely to lack substance.

Second, organisations should move beyond alignment at the level of discourse and focus on the [intentional design of practices as carriers of purpose](#). The findings demonstrate that purpose becomes observable through structured practices characterised by progression, consistency, and reflection (Section 4.3). In particular, elements such as rhythm, guidance, and relational support function as mechanisms

that translate abstract purpose into lived organisational reality. This extends existing theory by showing that coherence (Rey et al., 2019) is not only a matter of alignment, but of designing repeatable and meaningful interactions. For practitioners, this implies that product and service design should be approached as a core site of purpose implementation, where values are embedded into the structure, pacing, and experience of the offering.

Third, the study highlights the importance of **embedding purpose in everyday usability and behavioural continuity**, rather than in exceptional or symbolic initiatives. Findings in Section 4.4.3 indicate that purpose is more effectively enacted when it is compatible with users' daily routines. This suggests that organisations should prioritise accessibility, adaptability, and sustained engagement over intensity or one-off experiences. From a practical perspective, this challenges the tendency to design purpose-driven initiatives as high-impact but episodic interventions, and instead emphasises the need for integrated, habitual practices that allow purpose to persist over time (Feldman & Pentland, 2003).

Fourth, organisations should recognise that purpose is **validated externally through experience, not controlled through communication**. The findings show that stakeholders actively interpret and evaluate purpose by assessing the alignment between promise and delivery (Section 4.4.4). This reinforces insights from Signaling Theory (Spence, 1973), but extends them by demonstrating that signals are not inherently credible; their meaning is constructed through user experience. Managers should therefore shift their focus from message consistency to experience consistency, ensuring that every interaction reinforces the same underlying logic of purpose. This also implies the need for continuous feedback mechanisms to capture how purpose is interpreted and where discrepancies may emerge.

Fifth, the findings suggest that organisations should actively manage the **relational and emotional dimensions of purpose**, rather than treating it as purely cognitive or strategic. The development of emotional connection and identification (Section 4.4.2) indicates that purpose becomes meaningful when stakeholders can relate it to their own identity (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). Practically, this requires designing experiences that foster reflection, personal relevance, and emotional engagement, rather than simply communicating values. Purpose, therefore, should be understood as a relational construct that is co-created with stakeholders through interaction.

Finally, organisations should approach purpose implementation as a **dynamic and imperfect process requiring continuous alignment**. The presence of tensions and questioning within the findings demonstrates that coherence is not a stable condition, but something that must be actively maintained. In line with Commitment–Trust Theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), trust emerges gradually through consistent behaviour, but may be quickly undermined by misalignment. Managers should therefore adopt an iterative approach, regularly reassessing the relationship between internal purpose, organisational practices, and stakeholder experience. This involves not only reinforcing alignment, but also recognising and addressing inevitable gaps between intention and perception.

Overall, these implications suggest that the effective management of purpose requires a shift from communication to organisational design and experience management. Purpose-driven organisations must ensure that what is conceptualised internally is systematically embedded in practices and consistently reflected in stakeholder experience. Only through this multi-level alignment can purpose move from an abstract organisational intention to a credible and meaningful brand reality

5.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has interpreted the findings by linking them to the theoretical frameworks and research objective of the study. It has shown that organisational purpose operates as a process connecting internal implementation with external manifestation through practices and experience. The analysis highlights coherence as a central condition, while signaling processes and stakeholder interpretation explain how purpose becomes credible through authenticity and trust. The proposed extension of Rey's model incorporates experience as a key element in this process. Overall, the findings support the question, while emphasising the conditional and dynamic nature of the relationship between internal purpose and brand purpose.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

6.1 Research Contribution

This study set out to explore how purpose-driven organisations translate their internal purpose into external brand manifestations through product, promotion, and customer experience. Building on a qualitative, exploratory case study of The NoMBA, the research provides an integrative understanding of how organisational purpose operates across internal and external dimensions .

The main contribution of this research lies in conceptually connecting internal purpose implementation with brand purpose as an experiential outcome. While prior literature has examined organisational purpose as an internal construct (Rey et al., 2019) and brand purpose as an external communication tool (Keller, 2013), this study provides an initial integrative perspective by showing that purpose is realised through a process linking conceptualisation, practices, and experience.

More specifically, the findings suggest three key contributions:

First, the study advances a processual understanding of purpose, demonstrating that purpose is not a static statement but an evolving phenomenon that moves from internal meaning to external interpretation through organisational practices. This reinforces and extends the Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose by showing how internal alignment becomes externally observable.

Second, the research highlights coherence as the central condition for purpose realisation. Rather than assuming that purpose naturally translates into brand expression, the findings show that this relationship depends on continuous alignment between what the organisation defines, does, and delivers. This contributes to the literature by positioning coherence not as a binary condition, but as a dynamic and ongoing organisational process (Rey et al., 2019).

Third, the study contributes to branding theory by explaining how purpose becomes credible through a mechanism of signaling, interpretation, and trust formation. Organisational practices function as signals (Spence, 1973), which are interpreted by stakeholders and shape perceptions of authenticity (Beverland, 2005) and trust (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). In this sense, brand purpose is not simply communicated, but constructed through experience.

Finally, the research proposes a conceptual extension of the Three-Dimensional Model of Purpose by incorporating an external experiential dimension. This extension suggests that brand purpose can be understood as the experiential manifestation of internally coherent purpose, thereby offering a more integrated framework to analyse purpose-driven organisations.

Overall, This study finds that purpose-driven organisations and brand purpose are related through a process in which internally enacted purpose is translated into consistent organisational practices that function as signals, shaping stakeholder perceptions of authenticity and trust. This research contributes by providing an

analytical bridge between organisational theory and branding, offering a more holistic understanding of how purpose operates across internal and external domains.

6.2 Research Limitations and Implications for Future Research

Despite its contributions, this study presents several limitations that should be acknowledged.

First, the research is based on a single exploratory case study, which limits the generalisability of the findings. While the case of The NoMBA provides rich and unique insights from a growing business, the conclusions drawn are context-specific and may not fully apply to organisations operating in different industries, scales, or maturity levels. Future research could adopt multiple case studies to compare how purpose is translated across different organisational contexts.

Second, the study relies on a limited number of interviews, including one founder and one user. Although triangulation with documentary data strengthens the analysis, the inclusion of additional stakeholders, such as employees, customers, or partners, would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how purpose is interpreted across different perspectives.

Third, the research adopts a qualitative and interpretative approach, which prioritises depth over measurement. While this is consistent with the exploratory nature of the study, future research could complement these insights with quantitative methods to examine the relationship between purpose, coherence, and outcomes such as trust, loyalty, or brand equity.

Fourth, the study focuses primarily on product and promotion, as defined in the research objectives. However, other brand touchpoints, such as service interactions, organisational culture, or digital ecosystems, may also play a significant role in shaping the external manifestation of purpose. Future studies could extend the analysis to include a broader range of customer experience dimensions.

Finally, the proposed extension of the Three-Dimensional Model represents an analytical interpretation derived from a single case. While it offers a useful conceptual framework, further research is needed to test and refine this model across different empirical settings. In particular, future work could explore how the relationship between internal purpose and external experience evolves over time, and how organisations manage tensions between intention and perception.

6.3 Conclusion Summary

This study has shown that organisational purpose is not realised through communication alone, but through a process that connects internal meaning with external experience. The findings demonstrate that purpose becomes visible and credible when it is consistently enacted through organisational practices and interpreted by stakeholders as authentic and trustworthy.

By highlighting the role of coherence, signaling, and experience, the study provides a more integrated understanding of the relationship between purpose-driven

organisations and brand purpose. Ultimately, the research suggests that purpose is not simply what organisations say, but what they do and how it is experienced.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 — Data Structure: Raw Data and First-Order Codes

Data Source	Raw Extract (SPANISH)	1st Order Code (ENGLISH)
Interview User	"centrado exclusivamente en la reflexión sobre el ser"	emphasis on internal reflection
Interview User	"más orientado hacia la dimensión filosófica y antropológica"	focus on deeper human understanding
Interview User	"no es aprender información, sino repensarte a ti mismo"	emphasis on internal change
Interview User	"te hace cuestionar y elaborar tu propia interpretación"	importance of personal judgement
Interview User	"aprender a pensar con profundidad quién eres"	emphasis on developing self-awareness
Interview Founder	"no formamos técnicos, formamos criterio"	rejection of purely instrumental approaches
Interview Founder	"reordenamos la persona desde dentro"	emphasis on internal transformation
Website	"salir de la rueda"	breaking automatic or habitual patterns
Website	"la escuela que no te hará ascender en una Big4"	critique of dominant success expectations
LinkedIn	"no vienes a subir en el organigrama"	focus on purpose beyond external outcomes
LinkedIn	"convertirte en quien estás llamado a ser"	identity development and self-discovery
Website	"pasar de ejecutor a líder"	shift from execution to personal agency
Website	"desarrollar la dimensión cultural y espiritual"	focus on internal development beyond skills
LinkedIn	"el mundo no se cambia desde Excel"	rejection of purely technical logic
Website	"lecciones de aproximadamente 15 minutos"	short and manageable structure
Interview User	"solo 15 minutos al día lo veo asumible"	compatibility with everyday routines
Interview Founder	"15 minutos al día durante uno o dos años"	importance of consistency
Website	"300 pasos de aprendizaje"	gradual progression over time
Website	"12 etapas temáticas"	sense of staged development
Interview User	"es un proceso, no contenido aislado"	structured learning journey
Interview Founder	"no queremos impacto dopamínico"	rejection of high-intensity formats
Interview Founder	"transformación sostenida"	preference for slower and reflective pacing
Website	"acompañamiento de mentores"	presence of guidance throughout the process
Interview User	"hay mentorías y apoyo durante el proceso"	access to mentoring or support
Website	"eventos presenciales y online"	ongoing access to spaces for interaction
LinkedIn	"eventos que despiertan y conectan"	sense of community or shared experience
Website	"comunidad eterna"	ongoing access to spaces for interaction
Website	"HUB de creación de proyectos con impacto"	applying ideas in practice
Interview Founder	"el conocimiento termina en acción"	emphasis on creating beyond structured content
Website	"plan de lectura"	structured and guided content
Website	"biblioteca y apuntes accesibles"	access to learning resources
Interview User	"me está ayudando a conocerme mejor"	development of self-awareness
Interview User	"valorar más el silencio"	appreciation for reflection and pause
Interview User	"asombro de las cosas bellas"	emotional engagement with experience
Interview Founder	"transformación sostenida"	change emerging through reflection
LinkedIn	"parar y mirar dentro"	encouragement of self-reflection
Interview User	"me siento parte de algo diferente"	sense of connection
Interview User	"experiencia educativa única"	emotional engagement with the experience
Website	"ser NCMB es SER"	identification with values or approach
Interview User	"me identifico en algunos aspectos"	identity development and self-discovery
Interview User	"es compatible con mi vida diaria"	perceived as manageable in daily life
LinkedIn	"20 minutos diarios"	compatibility with existing routines
Interview User	"hay coherencia entre lo que dicen y lo que ofrecen"	perception of coherence between what is communicated and delivered
Website	"cuando lo que hacemos y para qué se alinea"	recognition of alignment between purpose and action
Interview User	"requiere constancia y paciencia"	recognition of effort and commitment required
Interview User	"no es inmediato, es progresivo"	impact perceived beyond immediate outcomes
Interview Founder	"no es inmediato, es acumulativo"	change emerging gradually over time

Appendix 2 — Data Structure: First-Order Codes to Second-Order Themes

1st Order Code (ENGLISH)	2nd Order Theme (ENGLISH)
rejection of purely instrumental approaches	Reframing dominant performance-oriented logics
focus on purpose beyond external outcomes	Reframing dominant performance-oriented logics
rejection of purely technical logic	Reframing dominant performance-oriented logics
critique of dominant success expectations	Reframing dominant performance-oriented logics
breaking automatic or habitual patterns	Questioning established norms and conventional approaches
questioning conventional systems and paths	Questioning established norms and conventional approaches
shift from execution to personal agency	Questioning established norms and conventional approaches
emphasis on internal change	Understanding purpose as an evolving, identity-related construct
importance of personal judgement	Understanding purpose as an evolving, identity-related construct
identity development and self-discovery	Understanding purpose as an evolving, identity-related construct
emphasis on developing self-awareness	Understanding purpose as an evolving, identity-related construct
focus on internal development beyond skills	Understanding purpose as an evolving, identity-related construct
emphasis on internal transformation	Understanding purpose as an evolving, identity-related construct
emphasis on internal reflection	Understanding purpose as an evolving, identity-related construct
focus on deeper human understanding	Understanding purpose as an evolving, identity-related construct
short and manageable structure	Structuring practices through progression and consistency
importance of consistency	Structuring practices through progression and consistency
gradual progression over time	Structuring practices through progression and consistency
sense of staged development	Structuring practices through progression and consistency
structured learning journey	Structuring practices through progression and consistency
compatibility with everyday routines	Structuring practices through progression and consistency
rejection of high-intensity formats	Encouraging depth and reflection over intensity
preference for slower and reflective pacing	Encouraging depth and reflection over intensity
emphasis on reflection over speed	Encouraging depth and reflection over intensity
presence of guidance throughout the process	Providing guidance and relational support
access to mentoring or support	Providing guidance and relational support
sense of community or shared experience	Providing guidance and relational support
ongoing access to spaces for interaction	Providing guidance and relational support
applying ideas in practice	Extending purpose into action beyond structured activities
emphasis on creating beyond structured content	Extending purpose into action beyond structured activities
knowledge translated into action	Extending purpose into action beyond structured activities
development of self-awareness	Experiencing reflection and internal change
appreciation for reflection and pause	Experiencing reflection and internal change
encouragement of self-reflection	Experiencing reflection and internal change
change emerging through reflection	Experiencing reflection and internal change
impact perceived beyond immediate outcomes	Experiencing reflection and internal change
change emerging gradually over time	Experiencing reflection and internal change
emotional engagement with experience	Developing emotional connection and identification
sense of connection	Developing emotional connection and identification
identification with values or approach	Developing emotional connection and identification
identity development and self-discovery	Developing emotional connection and identification
perceived as manageable in daily life	Perceiving the offering as compatible with everyday life
compatibility with existing routines	Perceiving the offering as compatible with everyday life
perception of coherence between what is communicated and delivered	Recognising and questioning alignment between promise and delivery
recognition of alignment between purpose and action	Recognising and questioning alignment between promise and delivery
recognition of effort and commitment required	Recognising and questioning alignment between promise and delivery

Appendix 3 — Data Structure: Second-Order Themes and Aggregate Dimensions

2nd Order Theme	Aggregate Dimension
Reframing dominant performance-oriented logics	Conceptualising purpose as an internal and evolving construct
Questioning established norms and conventional approaches	Conceptualising purpose as an internal and evolving construct
Understanding purpose as an evolving, identity-related construct	Conceptualising purpose as an internal and evolving construct
Structuring practices through progression and consistency	Translating purpose into structured organisational practices
Encouraging depth and reflection over intensity	Translating purpose into structured organisational practices
Providing guidance and relational support	Translating purpose into structured organisational practices
Extending purpose into action beyond structured activities	Translating purpose into structured organisational practices
Experiencing reflection and internal change	Experiencing and interpreting purpose in practice
Developing emotional connection and identification	Experiencing and interpreting purpose in practice
Perceiving the offering as compatible with everyday life	Experiencing and interpreting purpose in practice
Recognising and questioning alignment between promise and delivery	Experiencing and interpreting purpose in practice

Appendix 4 — The Nomba Co-founder Interview (cleaned and translated to english)

Date: 13 February 2026

Format: Semi-structured interview

Participant: Pablo Canela, Co-founder of The Nomba

Interviewer:

Before we begin, I would like to briefly explain the purpose of this interview. This conversation forms part of my undergraduate dissertation, which explores how purpose-driven organisations translate their internal organisational purpose into external practices, products, branding, and stakeholder experience.

The aim of this interview is to gain a deeper understanding of how organisational purpose is conceptualised, implemented, and experienced in practice. Your insights will contribute to the qualitative analysis of this study.

I would also like to confirm that your participation is entirely voluntary, and that you are free to decline to answer any question or to stop the interview at any point. With your permission, the interview will be used for academic purposes only and may be include within the dissertation.

All information shared will be used solely for the purposes of this research, in line with academic ethical guidelines.

Do you consent to participate in this interview under these conditions?

Co-founder:

Yes, I consent.

Interviewer:

Could you explain how the project emerged and the context in which it was developed?

Co-founder:

It didn't emerge as an isolated idea, but as a response to something we were already observing. For several years, we had been working on a platform focused on long-form conversations with public figures across different fields. The aim was to contribute to society through meaningful dialogue.

Over time, although this content reached a wide audience, there was a clear limitation: people were not only looking for inspiration, but for something more structured and sustained. There was a demand for depth, not just isolated insights.

At the same time, we connected with another initiative that shared a similar concern about the need to go beyond surface-level engagement. That convergence made it clear that there was space to develop something more structured, capable of offering continuity and depth over time.

This is where the project emerges: as an attempt to move from inspiration to a more sustained process of personal development.

Interviewer:

How would you define the underlying purpose guiding this initiative?

Co-founder:

It starts from a diagnosis of the current context: a highly accelerated environment, with constant information but limited depth. Many existing systems are focused on performance, efficiency, or technical skills.

The intention here is different. Rather than focusing on output or immediate results, the aim is to cultivate the person more broadly — their way of thinking, their criteria, and their capacity to understand and engage with reality.

So the purpose is not centred on producing better “performers”, but on developing individuals who are able to think critically and act with greater awareness. In that sense, it challenges a purely instrumental or utilitarian view.

Interviewer:

How is this purpose translated into the structure of what you offer?

Co-founder:

It is designed as a process rather than as isolated content. The structure follows a progression that begins with questions of identity and gradually moves towards action and external impact.

The initial stages focus on understanding the individual — questions of purpose, anthropology, and philosophy. Then it expands into broader domains such as history, politics, and science. Finally, it moves towards creativity, entrepreneurship, and transformation.

The idea is that action should come after reflection. It is not about immediately producing results, but about developing a deeper foundation first.

Interviewer:

How does this purpose become visible in the way the experience is designed?

Co-founder:

One of the key decisions was to prioritise consistency over intensity. Instead of creating short-term, high-impact experiences, the model is based on what we call a “continuous” approach — small, regular engagement over a long period of time.

For example, the structure is based on around 15 minutes per day, rather than long sessions. The idea is that transformation happens gradually, through repetition and continuity, rather than through isolated moments.

In addition, the experience includes different elements: reading plans, complementary materials, mentoring, and opportunities for interaction. All of these are designed to support the process, not just to deliver content.

So the focus is not on consumption, but on sustained engagement.

Interviewer:

What role does guidance or support play within this structure?

Co-founder:

It is central. The process is not meant to be individual in isolation. There are different forms of support, such as mentoring and community interaction, that help maintain engagement over time.

There is also a strong emphasis on belonging. People are not just accessing content; they are part of a shared experience. That sense of connection plays an important role in maintaining commitment.

Interviewer:

From your perspective, how do participants experience this process?

Co-founder:

The aim is not immediate results, but gradual internal change. Many of the effects are related to reflection, changes in perspective, or a deeper understanding of oneself and the surrounding context.

In that sense, the experience is less about acquiring specific skills and more about reconfiguring how individuals think and interpret reality.

Interviewer:

How do you ensure that what you offer remains aligned with the underlying purpose?

Co-founder:

The purpose acts as a filter. It determines what is included and what is excluded. For example, decisions about content, structure, or expansion are always evaluated in relation to whether they contribute to that original intention.

This means that certain elements that might be attractive from a market perspective are deliberately avoided if they do not align with the core purpose.

Interviewer:

How is this purpose communicated externally?

Co-founder:

Communication reflects the same logic. The positioning deliberately contrasts with dominant narratives. It is designed to signal that this is not aligned with conventional performance-oriented models.

For example, some of the messaging explicitly challenges the idea that the goal is career advancement. This is intentional, as it reinforces the underlying purpose.

Interviewer:

Have you encountered any challenges in maintaining this approach?

Co-founder:

Yes, particularly in relation to expectations. Many people are used to fast results and high-intensity formats. A model based on depth and continuity can feel counterintuitive.

There are also tensions in how people engage with the process — some try to accelerate it, others disengage. This shows that maintaining alignment between intention and actual experience is not always straightforward.

Interviewer:

If you had to summarise the essence of this initiative in one idea?

Co-founder:

It is not primarily competing in terms of content or technical knowledge. It is more about creating the conditions for personal transformation over time.

[Appendix 5 — The Nomba User Interview](#)
(cleaned and translated to english)

Format: Semi-structured interview

Participant: Anonymous user of the programme

Date: 27 February 2026

Interviewer:

Before starting the programme, how did you initially understand its purpose?

Participant:

At the beginning, I perceived it mainly as something focused on the philosophical and anthropological dimension of the person. It seemed centred on reflection and on understanding the “being” rather than on developing specific practical skills.

Interviewer:

Beyond providing content, what do you think the programme is trying to achieve?

Participant:

It goes beyond content. It feels designed as a space for personal transformation. It encourages you to reflect more deeply about who you are, how you understand your life, and what gives it meaning. In that sense, it is less about learning information and more about rethinking yourself.

Interviewer:

Was there any idea or message that particularly shaped your perception of the programme?

Participant:

Yes, especially the idea that knowledge is something that transforms both the individual and their environment. Also, the emphasis on thinking — that in order to lead your life, you first need to develop your own criteria.

Interviewer:

Would you say the programme presents a clear and differentiated identity compared to other educational offerings?

Participant:

Yes, clearly. Most programmes focus on professional development or technical knowledge. Here, the focus is different — it is about learning how to think, understanding what motivates you, and developing a broader cultural and personal perspective. That makes it feel quite distinct.

Interviewer:

How would you describe your experience with the structure of short, daily sessions?

Participant:

It feels very realistic and sustainable. With work and other responsibilities, it would be difficult to maintain something more intensive over time. The short daily format makes it easier to stay consistent, which seems to be part of the intention.

Interviewer:

To what extent do you feel that the structure and content reflect what is communicated about the programme?

Participant:

There is a strong alignment. What is communicated about depth and reflection is reflected in the structure and the content. In fact, in some cases it goes beyond what I initially expected, especially in terms of the quality of the materials and the overall coherence of the journey.

Interviewer:

How do you perceive the balance between conceptual reflection and practical or technical content?

Participant:

It is clearly more focused on reflection than on technical tools. Rather than giving you

immediate solutions, it invites you to question things and develop your own understanding. It is a slower and more interpretative process.

Interviewer:

Do you feel that the progression of stages contributes to a deeper experience?

Participant:

Yes, because it feels like a process rather than isolated content. As you move through the stages, you gradually develop more clarity about yourself, your way of thinking, and what gives meaning to what you do. It is something that builds over time.

Interviewer:

How would you describe your experience of being part of this programme?

Participant:

It feels quite meaningful. There is a sense of being part of something different, not just another course. It creates a certain level of engagement beyond the content itself.

Interviewer:

Do you feel any identification with the community or the idea associated with it?

Participant:

Partially, yes. I identify with the idea of questioning established ways of thinking and trying to develop my own perspective. At the same time, I also see it as something I am still developing, rather than something I fully embody yet.

Interviewer:

Have you noticed any personal changes since starting the programme?

Participant:

Even in a relatively short time, I have noticed some changes, mainly in how I reflect and how I pay attention to things. For example, valuing silence more or becoming more aware of certain aspects of my daily life. They are not dramatic changes, but they are noticeable.

Interviewer:

To what extent do you feel that what is communicated about the programme aligns with your actual experience?

Participant:

There is a strong sense of alignment. The emphasis on depth, reflection, and personal development is consistent with what you actually experience. It does not feel like something that is only communicated, but something that is present in practice.

Interviewer:

Have you experienced any moments where your expectations were not fully met?

Participant:

So far, not really. If anything, the experience has been slightly more positive than I initially expected.

Interviewer:

Would you say that this alignment influences how credible or authentic the programme feels?

Participant:

Yes, definitely. The fact that what is communicated is actually reflected in the experience makes it feel more genuine and trustworthy.

Interviewer:

From your perspective, are there any aspects that could be improved to better reflect its purpose?

Participant:

At this stage, it is still early for me to identify clear areas for improvement. However, I think maintaining the pace and encouraging consistency is important, because the experience depends a lot on how people engage with it.

Interviewer:

Have you perceived any tensions or challenges in following the programme?

Participant:

Perhaps the main challenge is adapting to the slower pace. It requires patience and consistency, which is not always easy in a context where people are used to faster results.

Interviewer:

If you had to summarise the programme in one idea, how would you describe it?

Participant:

As a process of personal development that focuses on understanding yourself and developing your way of thinking, rather than simply acquiring knowledge.

Appendix 6 — Documentary Analysis: Website and LinkedIn Content of The Nomba

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NVyIMP4D-tNK91kHpC-q9ssKkxv-Uc5aLU9QHw1vfo/edit?usp=sharing>