

# The Impact of Moral Emotions on Cause-Related Marketing Campaigns: A Cross-Cultural Examination

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**Abstract** This research was focused on investigating why some consumers might support cause-related marketing campaigns for reasons other than personal benefit by examining the influence of moral emotions and cultural orientation. The authors investigated the extent to which moral emotions operate differently across a cultural variable (US versus Korea) and an individual difference variable (self-construal). A survey method was utilised. Data were collected from a convenience sample of US ( $n = 180$ ) and Korean ( $n = 191$ ) undergraduates. Moral emotions significantly influenced purchase intention for a social-cause product. The influence of an ego-focused moral emotion (i.e., pride) on purchase intention was greater for US than Korean participants. The influence of another-focused moral emotion (i.e., guilt) on purchase intention was greater for high-interdependent participants than for low-interdependent participants. The findings of this research provide important and relevant implications to marketers and policy makers in developing persuasive messages and customer relationship programmes.

**Keywords** Cause-related marketing · Culture · Moral emotion · Self-construal

## Introduction

Consumers in their everyday decision-making concerning the purchase of goods have opportunities to demonstrate their moral views. They can make consumption decisions that benefit themselves as well as other members and other aspects of society and the environment. Cause-related marketing (CRM) is a term used to describe marketing activities that offer consumers opportunities to make purchase decisions for reasons other than personal benefit (e.g., social, moral beliefs). CRM is defined as “the process of formulating and implementing marketing activities that are characterised by an offer from the firm to contribute a specified amount to a designated cause when consumers engage in revenue-providing exchanges that satisfy organizational and individual objectives” (Varadarajan and Menon 1988, p. 60).

The benefits of using CRM for many companies include increasing consumers’ purchase motivation, building a strong relationship with customers, and enhancing corporate image (Benezra 1996; Murphy 1997; Strahilevitz and Myers 1998). Many companies utilise CRM as an important promotional tool (Strahilevitz and Myers 1998). For example, Target (a US-based retailer) serves its surrounding communities by donating a percentage of sales to eligible K-12 schools with their ‘Take Charge of Education’ programme (Target Corporation 2008). A group of retailers, including Gap, Apple, Converse, Motorola and Emporio Armani created a product line labelled Product Red and sent a percentage of the profits from sales to help HIV/AIDS-infected African women and children (Garrett 2006).

Previous research in CRM focuses on identifying characteristics of CRM programmes that impact consumers’ positive evaluations (Barone et al. 2000; Pracejus and Olsen 2004; Strahilevitz and Myers 1998). This research

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complements these efforts as it contributes to understanding why some consumers might support CRM campaigns and others might not. We examined the influence of moral emotions on purchase intention for a product linked to a social cause. In addition, we tested whether cultural orientation moderates the relationship between moral emotion and purchase intention for a cause-related product. Understanding the influence of cultural background on moral emotions is important for the success of multinational companies (Erffmeyer et al. 1999) as it helps them to consider which views on moral behaviour relative to consumption are culturally specific and which are not.

Important to understanding the role of moral emotions in decision-making within a cross-cultural context is the concept of self-construal. Markus and Kitayama (1991) introduced self-construal as an individual difference variable and found it was useful in understanding cultural differences between individualistic and collectivistic cultures. Self-construal refers to the “constellation of thoughts, feelings, and actions concerning the relationship of the self to others and the self as distinct from others” (Singelis and Sharkey 1995, p. 624). People can view themselves either as individuated entities (independent self-construal) or they can view themselves in relationship to others (interdependent self-construal). The self-construal one takes is heavily influenced by one’s culture (Markus and Kitayama 1991).

One’s relationship to the self may influence the moral emotions associated with consumption because self-construal encourages the expression of specific emotions (Aaker and Williams 1998; Kitayama et al. 2006; Markus and Kitayama 1991; Matsumoto 1989). In this article, we report our investigation of whether self-construal moderates the relationship between moral emotion and purchase intention for a cause-related product. Our purposes were (1) to investigate whether moral emotions influence purchase intention for a social-cause product, (2) to investigate whether cultural orientation moderates the relationship between moral emotion and purchase intention for a social-cause product, and (3) to investigate whether an individual’s self-construal moderates the relationship between moral emotion and purchase intention for a social-cause product.

## Conceptual background

### Literature on cause-related marketing

CRM emphasises that a part of customers’ payments for a product or transaction will be donated to or will support some social or ethical cause (Brown and Dacin 1997; Ellen et al. 2000). Similar areas of research concerning CRM

include bundling of products with donations to charity (Strahilevitz and Myers 1998), donations to charitable causes (Liu and Aaker 2008; Winterich et al. 2009) and socially conscious consumption (Anderson and Cunningham 1972; Diamantopoulos et al. 2003).

Previous research in CRM focused on investigating the effectiveness of CRM campaigns for sponsoring companies. CRM positively influences consumers’ attitudes towards the sponsoring company and products offered (Brown and Dacin 1997; Ross et al. 1992), purchase intentions (Ross et al. 1992) and the probability that a consumer will choose a brand (Barone et al. 2000a, b). Negative effects of CRM may occur if consumers believe that the motivation underlying a company’s use of CRM is exploitative (Varadarajan and Menon 1988; Webb and Mohr 1998).

Additionally, researchers have examined the characteristics of CRM programs that lead consumers to make positive evaluations of such programs or that increase participation in them (Barone et al. 2000a, b; Ellen et al., 2000; Pracejus and Olsen, 2004; Strahilevitz and Myers, 1998). For example, Strahilevitz and Myers (1998) found that CRM was more effective when the charity involved was associated with a hedonic product versus a practical product. Ellen et al. (2000) found that evaluation of CRM was more positive for a donation situation described as disaster relief than for aiding an ongoing charitable group and for a donation describing the exertion of great effort by individuals (e.g., collecting cash) than for little effort (e.g., collecting products).

### Moral emotions and cause-related marketing

Previous researchers have examined how global positive or negative emotions influence consumers’ judgment and decision-making (Gorn et al. 1993; Barone et al. 2000a, b; Yeung and Wyer 2005). Utilising “Affect-as-Information” theory (Schwarz and Clore 1983), these researchers found that people use their current positive or negative emotions as a basis for judgments of target items such as products, advertisements, and brand extensions. For example, participants’ positive emotions lead to positive evaluation of a target product (Gorn et al. 1993).

In addition to having a focus on the valence of emotion, researchers have focused on the content of various emotions (e.g., joy, shame, fear) that consumers experience when they engage in consumption acts (Westbrook and Oliver 1991). These different discrete emotions influenced judgments and decision-making (Griskevicius et al. 2010). For example, Griskevicius et al. (2010) found that pride enhanced judgments of the attractiveness of public products (e.g., watches) and contentment enhanced judgments of the attractiveness of home products (e.g., dishwashers).

In research concerning people's moral decision-making, few researchers have considered the role of emotion (Gaudine and Thorne 2001). Some researchers have highlighted the contribution of moral emotions (Haidt 2001, 2007; Monin et al. 2007; Shweder and Haidt 1993). Moral emotions are defined as "those emotions that are linked to the interests or welfare either of society as a whole or at least of persons other than the judge or agent" (Haidt 2003, p. 276). Moral emotions are different from basic emotions (e.g., joy, happiness, surprise) in that they are linked to something external to the individual such as the welfare of society or others (Haidt 2003).

Haidt (2003) developed four categories of moral emotions: other-condemning emotions (i.e., anger, contempt, disgust); self-conscious emotions (i.e., guilt, shame, embarrassment, pride); other-suffering emotions (i.e., empathy); and other-praising emotions (i.e., elevation, gratitude). Other-condemning emotions refer to "the negative feelings about the actions or character of others" (Haidt 2003, p. 856). Anger, contempt, and disgust are included in other-condemning emotions. Self-conscious emotions are evoked by self-evaluation or self-reflection. These emotions include guilt, shame, embarrassment and pride (Tangney et al. 2007). Other-suffering emotions are evoked when others experience distress. Empathy is included in this category. Other-praising emotions are the bright side of moral emotions and motivate individuals to be engaged in admirable and respectful deeds in their relationships with others (Haidt 2003; Tangney et al. 2007). Elevation and gratitude are included in this category.

Moral emotions are important because they can be used to explain how individuals make decisions concerning what behaviours are good and what are bad (Haidt 2001, 2007; Monin et al. 2007; Shweder and Haidt 1993). Researchers have suggested that people engage in moral behaviours based on feelings of approval or disapproval which are linked to moral emotions (Haidt 2001). Researchers have tried to understand how individuals' moral emotions such as guilt and pride influence their judgment and their behaviours in the context of making donations or volunteering. For example, Hoffman (1981) found that some people donate their time to alleviate feelings of guilt for not contributing their money. Arnett et al. (2003) showed that some people donate time to feel proud or happy as a result of supporting a worthy cause. Because there appears to be a link between moral emotions and charitable behaviours, we predicted that moral emotions influence individuals' intention to purchase social-cause products that utilise a CRM campaign because the support of the associated social or ethical cause evokes these emotions. Based on this rationale, the following hypothesis was developed.

**H1** Moral emotions influence purchase intention for a social-cause product.

#### Moral emotions: cultural differences and self-construal

Two main concepts that researchers have used to understand cultural variability are individualism versus collectivism (Hofstede 1980). Individualism is relevant to "societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family". Collectivism, as its opposite, is relevant to "societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty" (Hofstede 2003, p. 51). Individualism and collectivism are terms used to characterise a society as a whole (Oyserman et al. 2002). To explain why individuals from different cultures tend to align themselves with one or the other of these orientations, Markus and Kitayama (1991) identified the psychological construct of self-construal.

In individualistic cultures (e.g., United States, Canada), independent self-construal is dominant. Individuals with an independent self-construal tend to define themselves in terms of attributes that make them unique and distinct from others. This self-definition includes mental representations of one's own traits, abilities, motives, values, and the motivation to be independent (Markus and Kitayama 1991; Lee et al. 2000). In collectivistic cultures (e.g., Korea, Japan, China), interdependent self-construal is dominant. Individuals with an interdependent self-construal tend to define themselves in the context of relationships and group memberships. This self-definition includes mental representations of social norms, group membership, and others' opinions (Markus and Kitayama 1991; Lee et al. 2000). The dominant self-construal activates variations in emotions including differences in the intensity and frequency that an emotion is experienced as well as whether or not a specific emotion is experienced at all (Aaker and Williams 1998; Kitayama et al. 2006; Markus and Kitayama 1991; Matsumoto 1989).

Researchers have identified two types of emotions: ego-focused (or interpersonally disengaging) emotions and other-focused (or interpersonally engaging) emotions (Aaker and Williams 1998; Kitayama et al. 2006). These two types of emotions are differentiated based on "the extent to which they follow from, and also foster or reinforce an independent versus interdependent self" (Kitayama et al. 2006, p. 235). Markus and Kitayama (1991) argued that members of individualistic cultures tend to experience or express ego-focused emotions such as pride and anger because these emotions affirm an individual's internal state, experience and expression. Ego-focused

emotions are associated with an “individual’s internal state or attributes, to the exclusion of others and are consistent with the need for individual awareness, experience, and expression” (Aaker and Williams 1998, p. 241). Examples of ego-focused emotions include feeling pride or anger. These emotions are also regarded as types of moral emotions (Aaker and Williams 1998; Haidt 2003; Kitayama et al. 2006; Markus and Kitayama 1991).

In contrast, members of collectivistic cultures tend to experience or express other-focused emotions (Aaker and Williams 1998; Kitayama et al. 2000, 2006; Markus and Kitayama 1991; Matsumoto 1989). These emotions are “associated with others in a social context or close others and are consistent with the need for unity, harmony, and the alignment of one’s actions with those of another” (Aaker and Williams 1998, p. 241). Examples include guilt, empathy, embarrassment and shame which are also regarded as types of moral emotions (Aaker and Williams 1998; Haidt 2003; Kitayama et al. 2006; Markus and Kitayama 1991; Singelis and Sharkey 1995).

Previous researchers have examined cultural differences in the experience of emotions (Kitayama et al. 2000, 2006; Markus and Kitayama 1991; Matsumoto 1989). For example, Kitayama et al. (2006) examined how good feelings are experienced differently or similarly across cultures. They asked college students in the US and Japan to remember the most emotional episode of the day and to report how strongly they experienced each of the different emotions in that episode. Japanese participants reported stronger experiences of other-focused (or socially engaging) emotions such as friendly feelings, close feelings, respect, empathy, guilt, indebtedness, shame, and fear of causing trouble to another. US participants reported stronger experiences of ego-focused (or socially disengaging) emotions such as feelings of pride, superiority, self-esteem, sulking, frustration and anger.

Anticipating that ego-focused emotions are dominant in moral consumption situations for members of individualistic cultures, we reasoned that the influence of ego-focused moral emotions on purchase intention for a social-cause product is higher for members in an individualistic culture versus those in a collectivistic culture. Similarly, because other-focused emotions are dominant in moral situations for members of collectivistic cultures, it was reasoned that other-focused emotions would influence purchase intention for a social-cause product. For example, people from individualistic cultures may decide to purchase social-cause products because they would feel proud of themselves and their behaviour. On the other hand, people from collectivistic cultures may purchase social-cause products in order to avoid feelings of guilt that could result from not purchasing items wherein their behaviour could help others

and ultimately society overall. Based on this rationale, the following hypothesis was developed.

**H2** Cultural orientation moderates the influence of moral emotions on purchase intention for a social-cause product. Specifically, (a) the influence of the association of ego-focused moral emotions on purchase intention for a social-cause product is greater for members of an individualistic culture than for members of a collectivistic culture; and (b) the influence of the association of other-focused moral emotions on purchase intention for a social-cause product is greater for members of a collectivistic culture than for members of an individualistic culture.

Markus and Kitayama (1991) argued that differences between people from individualistic versus collectivistic cultures are based in self-construal. One’s culture affects self-construal and individuals from different cultures have reliable differences in self-construal (Matsumoto 1989). Cultural orientation is operationalized and measured using ethnicity. It is often used as a proxy for self-construal (Markus and Kitayama 1991). In effect, this practice confounds the influence of self-construal with cultural orientation.

Previous researchers have noted that there is considerable variation within US culture with respect to self-construal. Members of many ethnic and religious groups tend to perceive themselves as interdependent rather than as independent (Allen et al. 1989). Therefore, measuring self-construal within a single culture and comparing between interdependent versus independent individuals within that culture allows testing for the effect of self-construal, controlling for the influence of cultural background (Ahluwalia 2008; Lee et al. 2000). Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis was developed.

**H3** Self-construal moderates the influence of moral emotion on purchase intention. Specifically, (a) the influence of the association of ego-focused moral emotions on purchase intention for a social-cause product is greater for high independents versus low independents; and (b) the influence of the association of other-focused moral emotions on purchase intention for social-cause product is greater for high interdependents versus low interdependents.

## Method

### Pilot test

To test the hypotheses, a scenario was developed describing a situation in which an individual had to make a decision about his/her intention to purchase a social-cause

product. The scenario developed was a pilot tested with individuals representing the two cultures (US and Korea) from which participants were going to be drawn. The pilot was carried out to verify that the situations described in the scenarios were realistic and the product chosen (i.e., t-shirt) was relevant in the situation. Ten volunteers who grew up in the US and ten volunteers who grew up in Korea were asked to rate the realism of the scenario and the relevancy of a t-shirt as a cause-related product, using a 7-point scale. The two scenarios were evaluated as realistic ( $M = 5.9$ ), and the t-shirt was relevant in the situation described ( $M = 6.0$ ).

### Sample

Data were collected from a convenience sample of undergraduate students<sup>1</sup> enrolled at a university in the US and undergraduate students enrolled at universities in Korea. Previous researchers have suggested that the US represents an individualistic culture and Korea represents a collectivistic culture (Markus and Kitayama 1991). In addition, Koreans spent US\$1.5 billion dollars for corporate social responsible activities in 2005, and it is the second largest participant of corporate social responsible activities in Asia (Lee et al. 2009). Thus, drawing a sample from each country facilitated inclusion of individuals reflecting two different cultural orientations with an understanding of CRM activities.

### Procedure

Instructors of undergraduate courses were asked permission to recruit participants from their courses. The procedure followed was to introduce the research, ask for participation, and if people indicated an interest, distribute the consent form. After reading the consent form, the questionnaire was distributed to those individuals who volunteered to participate.

First, participants completed Singelis' (1994) Independent-Interdependent Scale. Next participants were instructed to read the scenario and then to imagine that they were in the purchase situation described. The scenario method was used in order to generate participants' experience of a moral dilemma in a consumption situation. This

method is useful in triggering participants' moral decision-making processes (Moore and Chang 2006). The scenario, which was developed by the researchers, outlined a consumption situation in which consumers were given an opportunity to purchase a t-shirt knowing that a percentage of the profit would go to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in Africa. The scenario was as follows:

The Mall of America [*Myeongdong* in Seoul] is a famous shopping mall where a variety of fashion products are offered for sale. Products offered include clothing, handbags and accessories. Imagine that you are shopping here. While you are shopping, you find two t-shirts that you like equally. One t-shirt is your favourite style and is in a colour you like. The other t-shirt is also your favourite style and colour but it has a label that indicates if you purchase it, a percent of the profits will go to the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria in Africa. The price of the second t-shirt is 10% higher than the first one. You can only purchase one t-shirt.

After reading the scenario, participants were asked to close their eyes and think about purchasing the cause-related product. Then they were asked to rate how strongly they would feel each of several moral emotions if they purchased the product described in the scenario (Babin and Babin 1996; Kitayama et al. 2006). In the following part, participants responded to the measures including purchase intention and provided background information. The questionnaire was drafted in English and the English version was translated to Korean. The Korean version was then back-translated into English to verify the equivalence of translation (Hui and Triandis 1985).

### Measures

To assess self-construal, Singelis' (1994) 24-item Independent-Interdependent Scale was used. Participants responded to each item, using 7-point Likert scales ranging from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 7 = "strongly agree". Sample independent items included, "I'd rather say 'No' directly than risk being misunderstood." Sample interdependent items included, "I have respect for the authority figures with whom I interact."

In order to measure ego-focused versus other-focused moral emotions, anger and pride for ego-focused moral emotions and empathy, guilt and elevation for other-focused moral emotions were selected for two reasons. The literature on emotion and culture in psychology and consumer behaviour suggests that anger and pride are strong examples of ego-focused emotions, while guilt and

<sup>1</sup> We used student sample in this study because the focus of this study was theory application. Researchers have argued that homogeneous student samples are desired in research when the goal of the research is theoretical in nature (Calder et al. 1981; Peterson 2001). The homogeneity of samples between two cultures was important to exclude any alternative explanations caused by the heterogeneity of samples within a culture. A student sample is also considered to be appropriate when researchers aim to simultaneously compare differences in views and values within as well as between countries and cultures (Bello et al. 2009).



empathy are strong examples of other-focused emotions (Aaker and Williams 1998; Kitayama et al. 2006; Markus and Kitayama 1991). In addition, the findings of several researchers studying altruistic behaviours suggest that individuals' engagement in those behaviours is highly related to feelings of pride, guilt and empathy (Arnett et al. 2003; Fisher et al. 2008; Hoffman 1981). Elevation as an other-focused emotion was also included because it is commonly experienced by individuals from Asian cultures (Haidt 2003). Elevation tends to involve others' feelings as a primary referent motivating people to be better persons, build social bonds, and engage in acts of charity for connectedness (Haidt 2003).

Multiple-item indicators of moral emotions were adapted from various emotional scales developed by Aaker and Williams (1998), Izard (1977), and Richins (1997). Three items were used to assess each of anger (i.e., frustrated, angry, irritated), pride (i.e., proud, confident, excited), guilt (i.e., repentant, guilty, blameworthy), empathy (i.e., warm-hearted, moving, empathetic) and elevation (i.e., exalted, dignified, respected). Each participant was asked to indicate how strongly he/she would experience each emotion, using a 6-point scale ranging from 0 = "would not experience at all" to 5 = "would experience very much".

Next, the participants were asked to indicate their purchase intention. These purchase intention were measured by modifying Gill et al.'s (1988) scale so as to be relevant to a shopping situation involving CRM. Participants were asked to indicate how likely it was that they would buy the social-cause t-shirt. Purchase intentions were assessed using two 7-point scales anchored on one end with "very unlikely (very impossible)" to "very likely (very possible)" at the other. Finally, the participants were asked to share some background information. Demographic variables, such as gender, age and income, influence socially conscious consumption (Diamantopoulos et al., 2003). Individuals who are likely to purchase socially conscious products tend to be young women. Thus, demographic variables (e.g., age, gender and income) were measured to control for their influence on purchase intention.

## Results

### Participants' characteristics

The primary qualifier for participation was that an individual needed to have primarily been culturalised in either the US or Korea. In order to be included in the final dataset, participants' responses to the cultural orientation questions were reviewed. For these questions, participants were first asked to identify their ethnicity and then the country where they had lived for the majority of their life. Participants,

who indicated that they had spent most of their lives in countries other than the US or Korea, were excluded from further data analysis. This qualifying process resulted in a convenience sample of 180 US participants (130 women; 50 men) and a total of 191 Korean participants (161 women; 30 men).

The majority of US participants were European American (88.9%), and all Korean participants were Korean of Asian descent (100%). Seventy-two percent of the US participants were women, as were 84% of the Korean participants. The US participants' ages ranged from 18 to 32 years ( $M = 20.7$ ). Korean participants' ages ranged from 18 to 30 years ( $M = 21.3$ ). Participants' personal income levels were generally under US\$10,000 (US: 75.0%; Korea: 60.7%). Participants' academic backgrounds included design (US: 29.5%, Korea: 25.7%), family social science (US: 6.7%, Korea: 28.3%), business (US: 40.0%, Korea: 14.1%), liberal arts (US: 12.8%, Korea: 27.2%), and technology (Korea: 3%).

### Preliminary data analyses

In order to use multiple linear regression to test the hypotheses, assumptions were verified. The assumption testing process included verifying the normality of residuals, the independence of residuals (Durbin–Watson statistic), linearity, and the constant variance of the residuals (homoscedasticity). All assumptions were satisfied. The normality of the residuals was checked by constructing a probability plot. The results confirmed the assumption that the residuals were normally distributed. The Durbin–Watson statistics (1.78–2.00) showed that residual errors were independent, thus, the independence of residuals assumption was not violated. The assumption of linearity was also met as several scatterplots of the relationships between variables looked linear. The homoscedasticity assumption was satisfied because when standardising the residuals and plotting the standardised residuals against the standardised predicted values, the residual errors were randomly scattered and the variability was not similar across all values along the  $x$ -axis. Some of the correlations of the measures indicated possible problems of multicollinearity. In order to minimise correlations between the independent variables and interaction terms, the independent variables were mean-centred prior to the computation of the interaction terms (Aiken and West 1991). The variance inflation factor was checked for each regression coefficient and results showed that all variance inflation factors were less than the threshold of 10 (0.76–1.00). The reliabilities of all measures were calculated using Cronbach's alpha. The test of reliability showed that the overall Cronbach's alpha coefficients of anger, pride, guilt, empathy, elevation,

**Table 1** Correlation matrix, Cronbach's alpha reliabilities and descriptive statistics

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Anger	<i>0.86</i>							
2. Pride	−0.09	<i>0.81</i>						
3. Guilt	0.59**	0.03	<i>0.82</i>					
4. Empathy	−0.05	0.72**	0.08	<i>0.79</i>				
5. Elevation	0.06	0.70**	0.18**	0.74**	<i>0.82</i>			
6. Independent	−0.07	0.09	−0.06	0.01	−0.08	<i>0.70</i>		
7. Interdependent	−0.08	0.20**	−0.08	0.23**	0.11*	0.15**	<i>0.69</i>	
8. Purchase Intention	−0.33**	0.42**	−0.07	0.41**	0.25**	0.15**	0.18**	<i>0.90</i>
Mean								
US	0.48	2.52	0.39	2.38	1.46	4.89	4.70	4.78
Korea	0.60	2.83	0.57	2.79	2.42	4.50	4.76	4.26
SD								
US	0.81	1.37	0.74	1.22	1.09	0.68	0.65	1.70
Korea	0.88	1.22	0.88	1.18	1.22	0.73	0.68	1.32

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ 

Note. The coefficient alpha for each measure is on the diagonal (and in italics) and the intercorrelations among the constructs are located off the diagonal

independence, interdependence and purchase intention<sup>2</sup> were in an acceptable range. The means, standard deviations and the coefficient alphas are shown in Table 1.

### Main analyses

In order to present the stepwise results for control variables, main effects, interaction effects, and changes to  $R^2$ , the hypotheses were tested using the four models presented in Table 2. This approach has been used by researchers to provide the dynamics of inclusion or exclusion of variables in multiple regression models (Chandy and Tellis 2000; Kellermanns and Eddleston 2007). The data from both cultures were pooled and used for multiple regression analyses in all models. In Model 1, the control variables including gender, age and income were entered. None of the control variables were significant. In Model 2, the main effects of moral emotions and the control variables were entered.  $R^2$  for Model 2 was .32. Anger ( $\beta = -.36$ ,  $p < .01$ ), pride ( $\beta = .30$ ,  $p < .01$ ), guilt ( $\beta = .13$ ,  $p < .05$ ), empathy ( $\beta = .30$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and elevation ( $\beta = -.19$ ,  $p < .01$ ) all had significant influences on purchase intention, thus H1 was supported.

In the next step, control variables, moral emotions, cultural orientation and the interaction effects between cultural orientation and moral emotions were entered in

Model 3 to test H2a and H2b. A significant change in  $R^2$  was observed in Model 3 ( $\Delta R^2 = .07$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The regression analysis revealed that the interaction between cultural orientation and pride was significant ( $\beta = -.15$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The influence of pride on purchase intention for a social-cause product was higher for US than Korean participants (coded -1 for US and 1 for Korea). However, the interactions between cultural orientation and other types of moral emotions were not significant; thus H2a was supported for pride and H2b was not supported (see Table 2). In order to pictorially depict the effect of pride on purchase intention between US and Korean participants, pride was dichotomised by using a median split and an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The results showed a significant interaction between pride and cultural orientation ( $F = 7.81$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The influence of pride on purchase intention was higher for US than Korean participants (see Fig. 1).

To test H3a and H3b in Model 4, we entered the control variables, moral emotions, independent/interdependent self-construal, the interaction effects between self-construal and moral emotions and the interaction effect between independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal. In addition, we added cultural orientation as a control variable, thus we can test for the influence of self-construal. A significant change in  $R^2$  compared to that for Model 1 was observed in Model 4 ( $\Delta R^2 = .12$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The regression analysis revealed the interaction between independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal was significant ( $\beta = -.10$ ,  $p < .05$ ). More importantly, interdependent self-construal interacted with guilt.

<sup>2</sup> Controversy exists over the use of Cronbach's alpha for two-item scales and whether or not a correlation coefficient is the appropriate indicator (Hulin et al. 2001). As a result, the correlation coefficient for the two items was equal to .79 and is also reported here.

**Table 2** Results of multiple regression analyses on purchase intention<sup>3</sup>

Variables	Standardised regression coefficients			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Main effects				
Gender	0.08	−0.01	0.02	0.06
Age	−0.01	0.04	0.06	0.06
Income	−0.03	−0.04	0.00	−0.02
Anger		−0.36**	−0.38**	−0.34**
Pride		0.30**	0.25**	0.22**
Guilt		0.13*	0.15**	0.08
Empathy		0.30**	0.24**	0.25**
Elevation		−0.19**	−0.05	−0.04
Culture			−0.22**	−0.22**
Independent				0.07
Interdependent				0.05
Interaction effects:				
Anger × culture			0.09	
Pride × culture			−0.15*	
Guilt × culture			−0.02	
Empathy × culture			−0.05	
Elevation × culture			0.09	
Anger × independent				−0.08
Pride × independent				0.02
Guilt × independent				−0.11
Empathy × independent				0.11
Elevation × independent				−0.11
Anger × interdependent				0.04
Pride × interdependent				−0.06
Guilt × interdependent				−0.16**
Empathy × interdependent				0.10
Elevation × interdependent				−0.07
Independent × Interdependent				−0.10*
$\Delta R^2$	0.01	0.32**	0.07**	0.12**
$R^2$	0.01	0.32	0.39	0.44
Adjusted $R^2$	0.00	0.30	0.36	0.40
$F$	0.95	20.36**	15.25**	11.66**

Note.  $N = 355$  \*  $p < .05$ ;

\*\*  $p < .01$

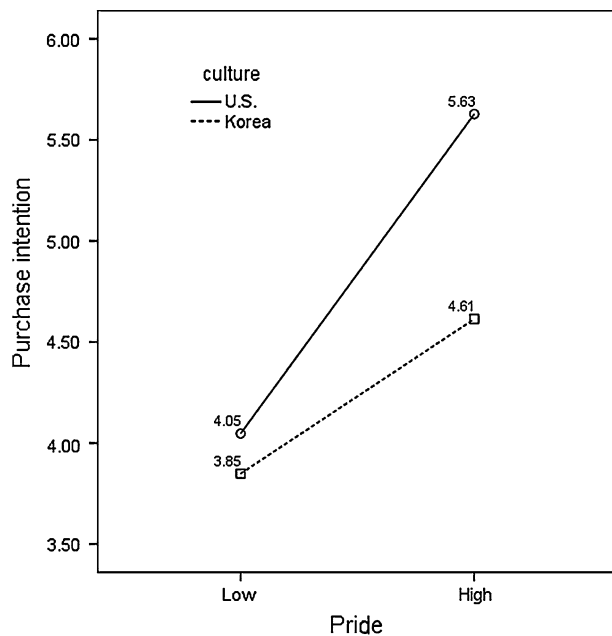
The interaction between interdependent self-construal and guilt was significant ( $\beta = -0.16$ ,  $p < .01$ ). However, the interactions between self-construal and other types of moral emotions were not significant; thus H3a was not supported and H3b was supported for guilt (see Table 2). In order to pictorially depict the significant interaction, guilt and interdependent self-construal were dichotomised using median splits and an ANOVA was conducted. The results indicated a significant interaction between guilt and interdependent self-construal ( $F = 3.23$ ,  $p = .07$ ). The

influence of guilt on purchase intention for a social-cause product was greater for high versus low interdependents (see Fig. 2).

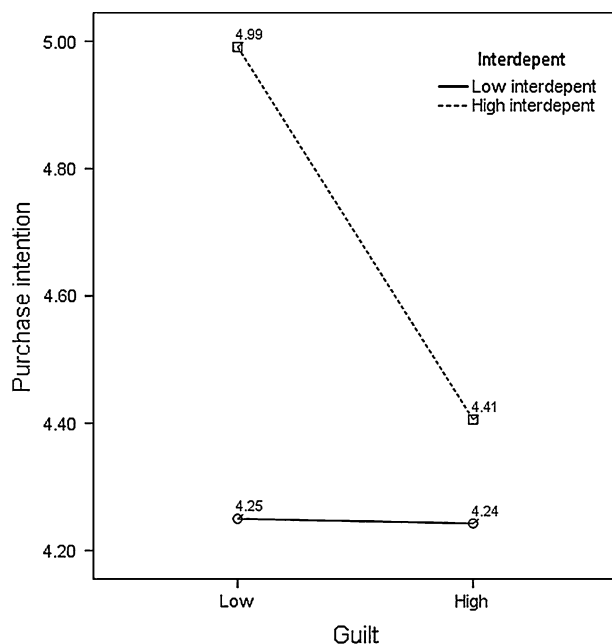
In addition, a Chi-square test was conducted to test the assumption that people in individualistic (collectivistic) cultures are more independent (interdependent) than people in collectivistic (individualistic) cultures (Markus and Kitayama 1991). A median-split technique was used to divide the sample into two groups for independent self-construal (high, low) and two groups for interdependent self-construal (low, high) (coded -1 for the low group and 1 for the high group) (Lee et al. 2000). More US participants were categorised as having a high independent (61.7%) versus a

<sup>3</sup> We tested three-way interaction effects among the two types of self-construal (independent, interdependent) and moral emotions. Our results were non-significant.





**Fig. 1** Purchase intention as a function of culture and pride



**Fig. 2** Purchase intention as a function of interdependent self-construal and guilt

high interdependent self-construal (50.6%) ( $\chi^2(1) = 4.51$ ,  $p < .05$ ). In contrast, more Korean participants were categorised as having a high interdependent (56.5%) versus a high independent self-construal (39.8%) ( $\chi^2(1) = 10.74$ ,

$p < .01$ ). This result supported the assumption concerning self-construal and excludes the possibility of a confounding effect between self-construal and cultural orientation.

## Discussion

As H1 predicted, moral emotions significantly influenced participants' purchase intention towards social-cause products. This is consistent with findings that indicate moral emotions are key factors underlying people's charitable behaviours (Arnett et al. 2003; Hoffman 1981). Results from the testing of H2 and H3 showed that only pride and guilt had significant interaction effects. Researchers in consumer behaviour have highlighted the importance of accurate understanding of specific emotions and their consequence (Griskevicius et al. 2010). As H2a predicted, the role of pride (ego-focused moral emotion) was significantly stronger for the US participants than for the Korean ones. The US participants were more likely than the Korean participants to intend to purchase social-cause products when they associated feelings of pride with the CRM campaign. However, significant moderating effects for cultural orientation did not occur for other-focused moral emotions (i.e., guilt, empathy, elevation).

As H3b predicted, the role of guilt (other-focused moral emotion) was significantly stronger for high versus low interdependents. High interdependents were more likely to intend to purchase social-cause products when they associated feelings of guilt with the CRM campaign than were low interdependents. The participants scoring as high interdependents may purchase social-cause products because their strong interdependence motivates them to alleviate any feelings of guilt by purchasing the merchandise. This result is generally consistent with Singelis and Sharkey's (1995) finding that high interdependents are more susceptible to embarrassment (another other-focused emotion) than are low interdependents.

Self-construal was considered as one possible avenue through which cultural difference may be understood (Markus and Kitayama 1991). The assumption that people in individualistic (collectivistic) cultures are more independent (interdependent) than people in collectivistic (individualistic) cultures (Markus and Kitayama, 1991) was supported in our research. However, the way cultural orientation and self-construal influenced moral emotions when considering the purchase of social-cause products was not uniform. The influence of pride on purchase intention was higher for the US versus Korean participants and the influence of guilt on purchase intention was greater for high interdependents than low interdependents. In the consumption of cause-related products, guilt may be the key moral emotion influenced by self-construal. On the

other hand, feelings of pride by participating in a CRM campaign may be shaped by different cultural components (Hofstede 1980).

Culture is considered to represent “packages of differences” (Singelis 2000). In fact, Hofstede’s (1980) cultural dimension comprises multiple dimensions including individualism, power distance, masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance. Because of its complex nature, Singelis (2000) suggests that future studies on cultural influence incorporate multiple conceptualisations of culture, and that they unpack the components of culture so as to assess the effects of its components on individual behaviour. The unpacking process should be shifted from merely comparing differences across cultures to understanding individual psychological variations that are responsible for these differences. We have moved a small step in this direction by examining self-construal.

### Implications

Existing cross-cultural research on emotions has focused on identifying differences in emotions experienced in daily life (Kitayama et al. 2000; Kitayama et al. 2006; Markus and Kitayama 1991; Matsumoto 1989). Prior researchers did not link moral emotions to consumption situations. Thus, this research theoretically contributes to the body of literature on moral emotions and cultural studies in consumer behaviour. This study also contributes to existing cross-cultural studies by uncovering a relationship between cultural background and self-construal. Several researchers have treated national or regional differences as cultural ones, however they have not provided a theoretical explanation for why these differences occurred (Kini et al. 2004; Rawwas 2001). This practice raises concerns over the possibility of underlying variables being confounded with a broadly operationalized cultural variable (Oyserman and Lee 2008). In the consumption of cause-related products, we found that guilt was the key moral emotion influenced by self-construal and pride was the key moral emotion influenced by cultural orientation.

Our findings provide relevant implications for practitioners. They yield useful information for designing advertising messages and consumer education campaigns to facilitate consumer engagement in CRM programs. In order to facilitate engagement for CRM in Western cultures, retailers could consider encouraging feelings of pride. A simple example of an effective persuasive message could be the following: “Be proud, buy responsibly.” In addition, understanding the differences in moral influence on decision-making can provide useful information in managing relationships with independent

versus interdependent consumers (Aaker and Williams 1998; Bagozzi et al. 2003). For example, retailers could emphasise how buying responsibly may alleviate guilt for interdependent consumers to encourage their CRM participation.

### Limitations and future research

Like all research, this study has limitations. First, the sample drawn was a nonprobability sample comprised of college students limiting generalisation. It is also very possible that individuals at different stages of the life-cycle have different cultural values. For example, as very young adults our Korean participants might have been more individualistic than middle-aged or older members of the Korean culture. This possibility also indicates that any generalisation be made cautiously. Future researchers could consider recruiting a probability sample of participants at different life stages allowing for within culture comparisons and increasing generalizability.

Second, the moral emotions experienced during the research were imagined by participants. Moral emotions reported were not physically felt emotions related to a consumption act. Individual differences in the ability to imagine the situation might strengthen or weaken the applicability of moral emotions. Therefore, future researchers could design a field study or experiment wherein actual purchasing behaviour could occur and they could directly measure emotions generated in the consumption act. This type of follow-up would serve not only as an opportunity to further validate these findings but also to assess whether the findings from imagined and experienced emotions are similar, thereby validating the use of imagined scenarios.

Finally, this investigation was limited to a fashion product. Further research could be directed to using various other product types by using highly priced goods (e.g., electronics, handbags) or by using less visible products (e.g., shampoo, software).

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