

An Examination of Cultural Influences in Green Environmental Behaviour in India and the United States

Bashar S. Gammoh, Anthony C. Koh, Sam C. Okoroafo, and Mark Gleim

Abstract Environmental issues is on the forefront in many discussions from both business and consumer perspectives. However, not everyone is pursuing pro-environmental sustainable behaviors. This research contributes to the literature by investigating some cultural antecedents of environmental concerns and pro-environmental behavior in two different, somewhat dichotomous cultures. Our proposed model suggests that cultural differences measured at the individual level influence consumer's environmental concerns and subsequently their pro-environmental sustainable behaviors. We empirically examined our model within a rich cross-cultural context using samples from India and the United States. When examined at the macro-cultural level, Individualism and collectivism are considered at the opposite ends of one continuum. However, at the individual level, existing research suggest that individualism and collectivism represent separate dimensions. That is, both exist within the same culture and the same individual can exhibit both values at the same time across different situations. Consistent with such conceptualization, our findings show that at the individual level and for this type of perceptions and behaviors both individualism and collectivism are strongly related to green consciousness. Results show a negative strong influence for individualism on environmental consciousness while we find strong positive influence for collectivism on environmental consciousness across the two countries. With regard to harmony and mastery, our results show that while harmony was a strong and significant predictor of environmental consciousness in the United States and India, mastery did not significantly influence environmental consciousness in both countries. Such findings suggest that overall cultural influences and motivates people in different ways in different cultures depending on the type or the context of behavior. Results suggest that while the United States in general is a society that is driven more by mastery orientation, our results suggest that at the individual level, individuals might be driven by different orientations depending on the context of decision and consumption. Finally, our results show that environmental consciousness was

B.S. Gammoh (✉) • A.C. Koh • S.C. Okoroafo • M. Gleim
University of Toledo, Toledo, OH, USA
e-mail: bashar.gammoh@utoledo.edu; anthony.koh@utoledo.edu;
sam.okoroafo@utoledo.edu; mark.gleim@utoledo.edu

positively related to both green consumerism behavior and active ecological behavior. From a theoretical perspective, we investigated the role that cultural factors influence consumer environmental concerns and behaviors. More importantly, while previous research focused on such differences at the country level we investigated such issues at the individual consumer level. Our findings are interesting and suggest the importance of examining such cultural factors at the individual level rather than just at the country level as well as signal the importance of examining the different role that such cultural factors play across different consumption contexts. Even for consumers in developing countries, like the United States, that are categorized as individualistic and mastery oriented societies are capable of being influenced by collectivism and harmony orientation at the individual level and within some contexts (e.g., environmental issues).

References

References Available Upon Request