Examining Moral Philosophy, Self-conscious Emotions and Behavioral Intention among Consumers of Pakistan

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship of moral philosophy and self-conscious emotions and the way they impact behavioral intention. The study investigates Forsyth's Ethical Position Theory by theoretically linking it with self-conscious emotions. Behavioral intention is measured through the use of vignettes depicting ethical scenarios in retail settings. A total of 1000 retail consumers were approached through social media (i.e. Facebook), 350 respondents filled in an online survey (Google docs), whereas final analysis included 338 valid responses. Descriptive statistics, Exploratory Factor Analysis, Correlation and Regression Analysis is used to examine the relationship. Findings of the study indicate a relationship between moral philosophy and self-conscious emotions. Private self-conscious emotion is not found to be associated with relativism and ethical behavioral intention. The limitations associated with cross sectional research design and online survey technique are inevitable. Online survey administration is likely to contribute towards non-response bias and social desirable bias. Marketers may develop promotional activities highlighting the company's efforts towards minimizing harmful outcomes to consumers and society will have good chances to enhance brand image and customer loyalty. Business courses targeting consumer behavior in Pakistan may use the findings of the study to educate students about ethical beliefs of the

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consumers in Pakistan. The study is among the pioneer studies that examines moral philosophy with self-conscious emotions in Pakistan. The target respondents are the general consumers that most previous studies have ignored by using only student samples.

Keywords: Moral philosophy, idealism, relativism, self-conscious emotions, shame, behavioral intention, consumer ethics, Pakistan.

1. Introduction

Recent global mega corporate scandals have unearthed the need to study business ethics in great detail in order to avoid such incidents in future. The incidents of Enron, AIG, WorldCom and Royal Ahold have uncovered some serious ethical misconduct of businesses (Ferrell & Ferrell, 2010) that has shaken the confidence and trust of the general public at large (Huang, Dubinsky, & Nataraajan, 2006). This has resulted in a rise of academic rigor in the field of business ethics over the last couple of decades. Despite immense attention dedicated to the field, however researchers still call for more in-depth investigation of the field. In order to better understand the real cause of unethical behaviors in businesses, Vitell (2003) calls for investigating both seller/buyer sides of the dyad. Majority of the efforts in the field have remained focused around corporate role and responsibility whereas the consumer side has largely been ignored. The existence of multi billion dollars industry of infringement products, pirated software, pirated movies, pirated music etc. exist in the market because of consumers who make ethically compromised decisions. An estimated counterfeited transaction per year is 500 billion Euros that damages 5-7 percent of world trade worth 250 billions (WCO, 2007). The situation is even worst in developing countries i.e. Pakistan where governments are struggling to implement the writ of law. There is need to examine moral philosophy and the role of self-conscious emotions and their collective impact on behavioral intention.

Moral philosophy also called moral ideology plays an important role in shaping the behavior of individuals. Individuals may differ in their views

about the nature of ideological principles. To some, ethical principles are universal in nature while to others, they are subjective in nature and hence should not be generalized. Similarly, ideological difference between individuals may exit regarding their beliefs of avoidance of harm to others. Some may consider that harm to others should be avoided at any cost, while others may consider it is inevitable to avoid in certain situations (Forsyth, 1980). Self-conscious emotion (SCE) is a growing field of interest among social researchers around the world. These emotions are invoked within the individual's inner self and subsequently affect their behavioral intentions. Consumers, when face an ethical dilemma in retail setting, on realization that they have encountered an ethical dilemma will evaluate the consequences of their different possible behaviors within their mind. Such an evaluation will raise their concern about social acceptance and rejection of behavior while triggering self-conscious emotions.

The study is empirical in nature that examines the theoretical link between consumer moral philosophy and self-conscious emotions and their impact on behavioral intention. A total of 350 consumers filled in the on-line survey questionnaire. Three responses were found low on respondents' engagement level and nine were duplicate responses. The final analysis includes 338 valid responses. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA), correlation and regression analysis is carried out to analyze the relationship. In our model, the link between consumer moral philosophy with self-conscious emotions (SCE) is proposed; a link that is less empirically investigated in the literature. Moral philosophies and their link to moral self has extensively been investigated among developed countries that mostly share individualistic cultures and little attention has been given to underdeveloped countries like Pakistan that have a collectivist culture (Lu & Lu, 2010).

The basic objectives of the study are listed below:

i.   To investigate the relationship between consumer moral philosophy and self-conscious emotions.

ii. To investigate the effect of moral philosophy (Idealism, Relativism) on self-conscious emotions.

iii. To investigate the impact of Moral philosophy and Self-conscious emotions on consumer behavioral intentions.

The study attempts to address the following research questions:

RQ1: How consumer's moral philosophy and self-conscious emotions are related to each other?

RQ2: How Moral philosophy and Self-conscious emotions predicts consumer behavioral intentions?

The current study attempts to examine the role of ideology and self-conscious emotions and its link to behavioral intention. The motivation for the current study stems from the available limited literature in the field of moral self especially in the context of Pakistan economy. Available literature generally and particularly in Pakistan requires more rigorous investigation of the role of ideology (moral philosophy) and self-conscious emotions on behavioral intention in order to establish an explicit relationship for better understanding. The study is among the pioneer studies that examines self-conscious emotions and moral ideology in a collectivist culture i.e. Pakistan. The target respondents of the study are general consumers contrary to the major studies in the field that have used students as their main respondents.

The paper is organized in such a way that section two discusses relevant literature. Section three elaborates the methodology used in the study. Section four provides research findings, whereas section five is dedicated to discuss these findings. Conclusions are drawn and policy recommendations are suggested in the last section.

2. Literature Review

A consensus on a universally acceptable definition of ethics is missing in

the literature; however majority of the definitions contain individual's judgment between right & wrong or good & bad. Jones (1991) defines an ethical decision as the one that is morally as well as legally a correct decision according to a majority of the community. The history of ethics can be traced back to Aristotle (Graham, 2004). Muncy & Vitell (1992) defines consumer ethics as a set of "moral rules, principles, and standards that guide consumers in selecting, purchasing, using and disposing off goods or services in a socially responsible way".

This section discusses relevant literature on moral philosophy, self-consciousness and development of hypotheses.

2.1 Moral Philosophy

Ethical philosophy or ethical ideology is also referred to as ethical position theory in the literature. The theory is among the most famous theories explaining ethical philosophy (O'Fallon & Butterfield, 2005). The theory was proposed by Forsyth (1980) which is an extension of the famous work of Kohlberg (1976). It talks about the conceptual system of morality of the individuals (called as ethics position) that is linked with their moral actions and evaluation. The ethical position is further explained by Idealism and Relativism. Individuals who are high on relativism are defined as the individuals who reject the notion that rules should be universal in nature. Such individuals believe that the moral issues should be judged in context of the circumstances in which such decision was made. On the other hand, individuals who are high on idealism are defined as individuals who firmly believe in the existence of universal moral principles. Such individuals believe in upholding of moral principles in all situations. Hence a special attention to the context of the moral judgment is not a consideration of such individuals. This study uses Forsyth (1980) developed questionnaire known as Ethical Position Questionnaire (EPQ). The instrument consists of a total of 20 items, 10 items each for idealism and relativism.

Forsyth & O'Boyle (2011) in a study conducted on firms' headquarters

situated in 12 countries (Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Hong Kong, Ireland, Japan, Japan, New Zealand, Spain, the UK, and the US) have reported the relevance of relativism on ethical codification of businesses in the nation. Swaidan, Vitell, & Rawwas (2003) have reported that consumer's high on idealism reject questionable consumer practices whereas relativism is not found to be associated with such practices. Chan, Othman, & Joned (2011) confirmed the impact of moral philosophy on ethical decision making. Vitell, Ramos, & Nishihara (2010) reported a positive relationship of idealism and a negative relationship of relativism with ethical decision making. Idealism is not found to be significantly associated with ethical judgment and behavior intention whereas relativism is found associated with both (Bakir & Vitell, 2010). Idealism is found to be associated with ethical beliefs and intention whereas relativism is not found to be associated with either (Steenhaut & Kenhove, 2006). Anticipated guilt is positively associated with behavioral intention to avoid any resulting harm to victims (Steenhaut & Kenhove, 2006).

2.2 Self-conscious Emotions

The literature on moral self can be traced back to Aristotle (Solomon, 1992) however the movement of critical investigation of anthropological and ethnographic writings which is also known as 'post-modernism" between 1970 and 1980 brought the selfhood concept to main stream literature (Cohen, 2002). The work of Blasi (1983) can be rightfully termed as the pioneer work in the field as it lays down a foundation to several succeeding theories in the field (Jennings, Mitchell, & Hannah, 2014). According to Aquino & Reed (2002), the moral identity consists of two main dimensions i.e. Internalization and Symbolization. Internationalization refers to individual's preference towards being caring, fair and compassionate while symbolization refers to the extent in which these preferences are reflected by the selection of their behavioral choice (ethical vs. unethical). Hence the process of internalization of moral concept resulting in activation of individual's inner feelings towards implications of a moral/immoral action can be termed as self-conscious emotions (Sparks & Hunt, 1998). Hence, the

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individual on realization of these self-conscious emotions will act as a moral agent and will make a moral decision. Jones (1991) considers that this moral agent who makes a moral judgment may not necessarily be aware of any moral issues that are being violated. However, it is the essence of the self-conscious emotions that an individual realizes that something is wrong in my decision making.

Moral decisions require a different set of cognitive skills and a set of standards, rules and goals that the moral agent feels being threatened while choosing a course of action (Lewis, 1995). These decisions require a higher level of self-awareness and self-representation that emerge at a later stage in childhood as compared to basic emotions in order to attain more complex social goals. Further the emotion recognition is also characterized as an automatic process initiated with in an individual (Tracy & Robins, 2007, 2008).

Literature highlights two dominant methodologies for studying self-conscious emotions i) self-reporting scale ii) coding of nonverbal behavior (Robins, Noftle, & Tracy, 2007). Further the prevailing scales consist of "trait or dispositional scales", "state or online feeling scales" and "state and trait scales of related constructs". This study has used the first technique of "self-reporting scales" with scenarios based questionnaire technique.

Tracy & Robins (2007) calls for a more in depth investigation of the self-conscious emotions for a better understanding of the motives behind the unethical behaviors. Jennings et al., (2014) state that individuals in different cultures may exhibit diversified moral self (i.e. private self, public self, collective self) on cultural basis of individualism versus collectivism. The researchers call for examination of moral self across different cultures in order to have better understanding of the field.

After a succinct discussion on the key variables the following section presents hypothesized relationship of variables in the light of supporting literature.

2.3 Hypotheses development

The theory of moral self strongly advocates that individuals who hold a strong moral self will prefer to avoid unethical behavior as compare to the ones who hold less inclination towards moral self (Jennings et al., 2014). Self-conscious emotions are negatively associated towards behavioral intention as it triggers feeling to hide, disappear or die among individuals who wish to follow certain moral principles or ideology (Lewis, 1995). Self-conscious emotions influence individual's decision making process, behavior, and even his/her health (both mental and physical) for those who hold strong moral philosophies (Tracy & Robins, 2007). The results of empirical findings indicate a positive relationship between shame-proneness with public self-consciousness (Tangney & Dearing, 2002).
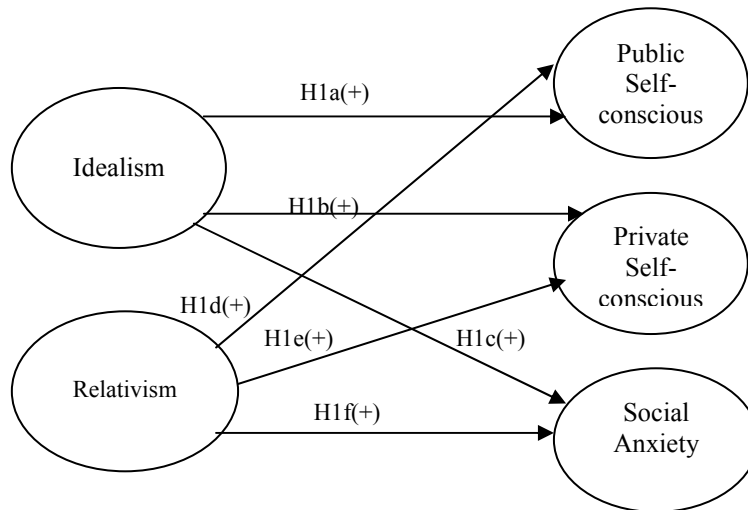

Fig. 1 Conceptual Framework -I

H1. Consumers' ethical Moral philosophy is related to their self-conscious emotions:

H1a Idealism is positively associated with consumers' public self-consciousness.

H1b Idealism is positively associated with consumers' private self-consciousness.

H1c Idealism is positively associated with consumers' social anxiety.

H1d Relativism is positively associated with consumers' public self-consciousness.

H1e Relativism is positively associated with consumers' private self-consciousness.

H1f Relativism is positively associated with consumers' social anxiety.

Majority of the studies on ethical decision making in ethically posed situations have reported idealism as positively related to avoid unethical behavior whereas relativism as negatively related (e.g. Barnett, Bass, & Brown, 1996; Boyle, 2000; Elias, 2002; Kim & Chun, 2003). Only few studies (e.g. Bass et al., 1999) reported a negative relationship of idealism with judgment. Tim Barnett, Bass, & Brown (1996) identified idealism as a major contributor to differences in ethical judgment. Forsyth & O'Boyle (2011) reported that individuals with low level of relativism as highly related to individuals following close ethical standard in businesses. Swaidan, Vitell, & Rawwas (2003) reported consumers' with high level of idealism strongly rejected questionable activities whereas no relationship was found between relativism and the rejection of questionable activities. The link between ethical moral philosophy and decision making is also well established, as idealistic individuals tend to behave more ethical as compared to relativist individuals (Elias, 2002; O'Fallon & Butterfield, 2005; Singhapakdi, A., Marta, Rallapalli, & Rao, 2000). Similarly, the individuals who are high on self-conscious emotions have been positively associated with ethical behavioral intentions (Aquino, McFerran, & Laven, 2011; Tangney, Stuewig, & Mashek, 2007).

H2. Consumer moral philosophy and self-conscious emotions adequately

predict their behavioral intentions:

H2a Idealism positively predicts consumer behavioral intention to avoid unethical behavior.

H2b Relativism negatively predicts consumer behavioral intention to avoid unethical behavior.

H2c Consumers' public self-consciousness is positively associated with their behavioral intention to avoid unethical behavior.

H2d Consumers' private self-consciousness is positively associated with their behavioral intention to avoid unethical behavior.

H2e Consumers' social anxiety is positively related with their behavioral intention to avoid unethical behavior.
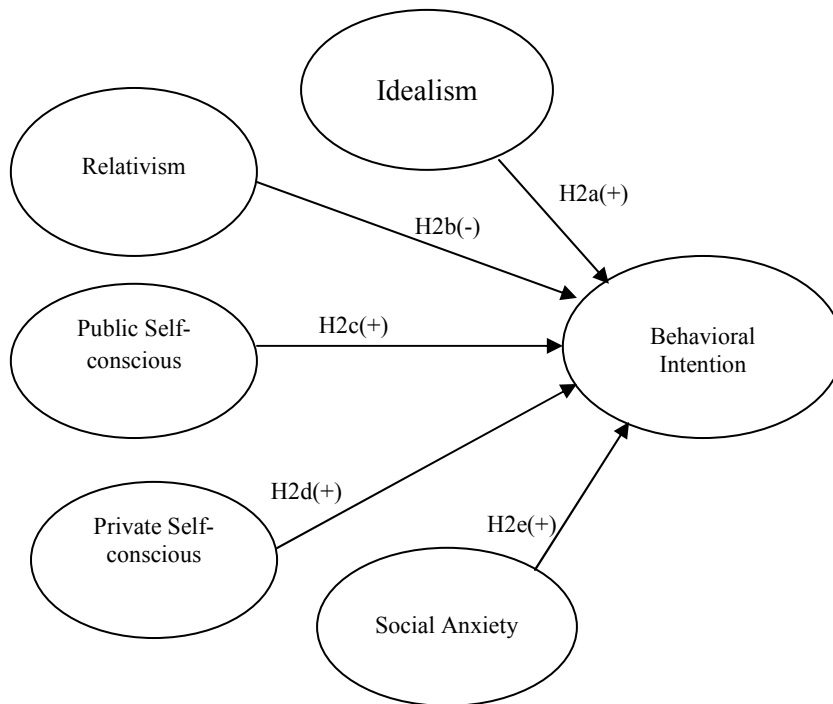

Fig. 2 Conceptual Framework-II

2.4 Model Specifications

In order to examine the hypothesized relationships the following model is specified for empirical analysis.

$$\text{Public Self-conscious}_{i =} b_0 + b_1\text{Idealism}_i + b_2\text{Relativism} + U_t \qquad (1)$$

$$\text{Private Self} - \text{conscious}_i = b_0 + b_1\text{Idealism} + b_2\text{Relativsim}_i + U_t \qquad (2)$$

$$\text{Social Anxiety}_i = b_0 + b_1\text{Idealism}_i + b_2\text{Relativism} + U_t \qquad (3)$$

$$\text{Behavioral Intention} = b_0 + b_1\text{Idealism} + b_2\text{Relativism} + b_3\text{Public Self-conscious} + b_4\text{Private Self-conscious} + b_5\text{Social Anxiety} + U_t \qquad (4)$$

3. Methodology

The study is quantitative in nature that involves cross sectional research design. Respondents of the study are general retail consumers of Pakistan. An online survey research design yielded 350 responses whereas the final analysis was carried out on 338 valid responses. The following section briefly discusses data variables and measurement scales, data collection and sampling methods and data analysis techniques.

3.1 Data Variables and Measurement Scales

Consumer Moral philosophy is measured through using famous Forsyth's (1980) Ethical Position Questionnaire (EPQ). The scale consists of 20 items, 10 items explores Idealism and 10 items to measure Relativism. In order to measure the aspects of self-conscious emotions, Fenigstein, Scheier & Buss (1975) developed a scale which was later upgraded by Scheier & Carver (1985). This study capitalizes upon the scale developed by Scheier & Carver (1985). The initial scale consisted of a total of 23 items, 7 items for Public Self-conscious, 10 items for Private Self-conscious and 6 items for Social Anxiety (Robins et al., 2007). The research measured both the scales

on 5 points Likert Scale. 1= A lot like me, 2= Somewhat like me, 3=A little like me 4=Not like me 5=Not at all like me. Behavioral intention is measured through using two vignettes (Strutton, Vitell, & Pelton, 1994) and to indicate their likelihood to engage in each behavior if faced with or similar situation. A 3-point scale was used for each scenario with 1=Highly Likely 2=Neutral 3= Highly Unlikely. This vignette approach to measure behavioral intention is supported by Hunt & Vitell (1986) and adopted by Bass, Barnett, & Brown (1999).

3.2 Data Collection and Sampling Methods

The data was collected through convenience sampling using snow ball sampling technique. A within subject correlation research design through social media (i.e. Facebook) contact list was used. The questionnaire was placed online through Google Docs facility. Two hundred and fifty individuals in the list were approached to fill in the online questionnaire and to circulate among other 3 contacts. Further, emails were sent to around 250 contacts from organizational employee contact list. Hence, the sampling pool consisted of 1000 individuals, whereas 350 filled in responses were received. Respondents were asked to proceed with the survey only if they are actively involved in the retail purchasing for their homes and have experienced some ethical dilemma during their retail experiences. This was made a mandatory question in order to secure responses from consumers that have real life consumer ethics experiences in retail settings.

3.3 Data Analysis

A multiple regression technique using SPSS Version 17 was used to estimate the data and to test the hypothesis. The dimensionality of the data explaining the relationship between observed and latent variables was examined through exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is the most suitable technique in situations where the link between observed and latent variables is unknown or uncertain (Byrne, 2010). The study employed an adopted instrument that was hardly used in

Pakistani context; hence EFA furnishes adequate evidence to overcome this uncertainty.

4. Research Findings

4.1 Demographic Profiles

Male respondents (66 percent) were slightly higher in numbers as compared to their counterparts. Similarly, youth respondents (90 percent) made a major portion as compared to elderly respondents. The unmarried respondents (59 percent) were slightly higher than the married respondents.

Table 1
Demographic Factors

Variable	Category	Percentages	Frequencies
Gender	Male	33.7	114
	Female	66.3	224
Age	15 years & 20 years	10.1	34
	21 years to 30 years	57.4	194
	31 years to 40 years	24.3	82
	41 years to 50 years	4.4	15
	51 years & above	3.8	13
Marital Status	Single	58.9	199
	Married	40.2	136
	Divorced/Widowed	0.9	3
Number of Children	None	66	223
	One	8	27
	Two	11.8	40
	Three	6.8	23
	Four	3.8	13
	Five	1.2	4
	Six	1.5	5
	Seven	0.3	1
	Ten	0.3	1
	Twelve	0.3	1
Family Structure	Nuclear Family	43.8	148
	Joint Family	56.2	190
Family Size	Less than 4 members	16.6	56
	5 to 7 members	58	196
	More than 7 members	25.4	86

As majority of the respondents were young and unmarried around 66 percent reported zero number of children. A good majority of the respondents live in a joint family structure (56 percent) with majority (58 percent) having a family size of 5-7 members. Table 1 present a full detail on the demographic factors of the respondents.

Table 2 report mean values, standard deviation and frequency of the responses. On a 1 to 5 likert scale, majority of the respondents can be categorized as high on Idealism (m=2.12), low on relativism (m=3.24), high on Public and Private self-conscious emotions (m= 2.43 & m=2.66) whereas low on social anxiety (m=3.92).

Table 2
Mean, Standard Deviation and Frequency

Variable	Mean	S.D.	1.Alot like me	2. Somewhat like me	3. A little like me	4. Not like me	5. Not at all like me
			Percentage (%)				
Idealism (I)	2.12	1.33	48.5	19.4	10.7	14.8	6.6
Relativism (R)	3.24	1.13	4.1	27.0	25.0	28.6	15.3
Public Self-conscious (S)	2.43	1.34	33.7	25.0	14.8	17.3	9.2
Private Self-conscious (SP)	2.66	1.13	13.3	40.8	17.9	21.9	6.1
Social Anxiety	3.92	0.93	7.1	0.10	26.0	33.7	32.1

4.2 Correlation Analysis

The results of Pearson correlation indicate a strong positive correlation between Moral philosophy variables (Idealism & Relativism) with Private SCE (SP) with 0.703 and 0.839 respectively. Idealism is strong positively correlated with behavioral intention (BI) whereas relativism has a strong positive correlation with social anxiety (0.750). A weak positive correlation exist between Public SCE (S) and moral philosophy variables (I, R), Public

SCE and Behavioral Intention (BI) with 0.222, 0.173, 0.248 & 0.235 respectively. Table 3 present the full picture of the correlation results.

The correlation results largely support the hypothesized relationship among variables. The relationship between all the variables are significant as hypothesized which provides enough evidence to proceed further and investigate predictive ability of the independent variables. The proceeding section examines the dimensionality of the data through factor analysis.

Table 3
Correlation

	1	2	3	4	5
Idealism	1.000				
Relativism	0.645*** (0.000)	1.000			
Private SCE	0.703*** (0.000)	0.839*** (0.000)	1.000		
Public SCE	0.222*** (0.000)	0.173*** (0.001)	0.248*** (0.000)	1.000	
Social Anxiety	0.548*** (0.000)	0.750*** (0.000)	0.732*** (0.000)	0.330*** (0.000)	1.000
Behavioral Intention	0.768*** (0.000)	0.583*** (0.000)	0.751*** (0.000)	0.235*** (0.000)	0.497*** (0.000)	1.000

4.3 Dimensionality of the Data

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is used to examine the dimensionality of data. EFA is an appropriate method when the objective is to explore the relationship between variables at an early stage (Pallant, 2005, Hyman & Sierra, 2010). This study employs EFA because of the following three reasons i) The relationship between moral philosophy and self-conscious emotions is in dearth ii) The instrument is adopted from developed countries and there is a need to investigate for relevant factors that examine the desired personality traits. iii) The questions are in English language and the national language of the country is Urdu. Hence, in order to achieve content validity an EFA is a pre-requisite. The instrument contains 42 adopted questions. Consumer Moral philosophy is explored through the

famous Ethical Position Questionnaire (EPQ) developed by Forsyth (1980). EPQ contains 20 items as a whole, 10 items to examine Idealism and 10 items for Relativism. Self-conscious emotions are measured through a frequently used questionnaire developed by Scheier & Carver (1985). The questionnaire contains 22 items altogether in which 9 items examine Public Self-conscious, 7 items to examine Private Self-conscious and 6 items for Social Anexity.

A total of 42 items of self-conscious emotions and moral philosophy were made subject to Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using SPSS. The suitability of the data was examined before applying the EFA. Correlation matrix indicates existence of many coefficients of 0.3 and above (Table 3). The Kaiser Meyer Olkin Value was 0.710 which is well above the recommended value of 0.6 (Kaiser, 1970, 1974).The values of approximate Chi Square is 2086.504 and degree of freedom is 120. The value of Barlett's test of sphericity is 0.000 which is within the well below the criteria >0.05 (Bartlett, 1954). Hence the data is fit to be examined for factorability.
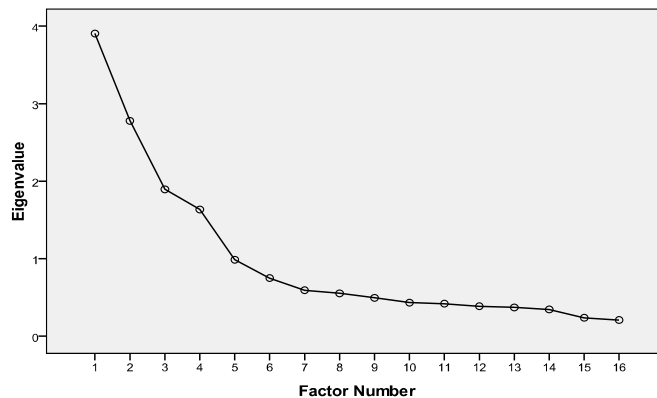

Fig. 3 Scree Plot

Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum and Strahan (1999) strongly recommend the use of Maximum likelihood (ML) technique. According to them it facilitates calculation of a "wide range of indexes of the goodness of fit of the model permits statistical significance testing of factor loadings and

correlations among factors and the computation of confidence intervals" (p. 277). The results of maximum likelihood identified a total of 67.4 percent variance explained by 5 components. The output of the Catell (1966) scree plot also (figure 3) confirms the retaining of five components for further examination because of a clear break after the fifth component. In order to get a better interpretation of the results the most suitable Oblique rotation technique (i.e. Promax rotation) was performed (Thurstone, 1947). Promax provides solutions with correlated components factors which are very essential for social sciences contrary to Varimax rotation which has many limitations (Matsunaga, 2010). The items with cross loadings were removed and the final results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4
Promax Rotation

	Idealism	Public SCE	Private SCE	Relativism	Anxiety SCE	Behavioral Intention
One should not perform an action which might in any way threaten the dignity and welfare of another individual	.923					
The existence of potential harm to others is always wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained.	.858					
A person should make certain that their actions never intentionally harm another even to a small degree	.820					
I am concerned about what other people think of me.		.855				
I usually worry about making a good impression.		.817				
Before I leave my house I check how I look.		.703				
I care a lot about how I present myself to others		.329				
I sometimes step back (in my mind) in order to examine myself from a distance.			.866			
I am quick to notice changes in my mood.			.823			

I am constantly thinking about the reasons for doing things		.815				
No rule concerning lying can be formulated; whether a lie is permissible or not permissible totally depends upon the situation.			.994			
Ethical considerations in interpersonal relations are so complex that individuals should be allowed to formulate their own individual codes.			.627			
There are no ethical principles that are so important that they should be a part of any code of ethics.			.557			
It takes me time to get over my shyness in new situations.					.852	
It's easy for me to talk to strangers. (R)					.629	
It is hard for me to work when someone is watching me.					.383	
Cronbach's Alpha	.895	.804	.897	.743	.658	.696
Eigen values	4.27	2.62	1.90	1.86	1.46	
Cumulative percent of variation	23.7	38.3	48.9	59.3	67.4	

The interpretation of the components is consistent with the theoretical foundations of Idealism and Self-Conscious Emotions. The results of this analysis provides a new set of lean and robust factors for idealism and self-conscious emotions that can be applied to collectivist society i.e. Pakistan.

4.4 Regression

Both Models (Model-I and Model-II) are regressed using standard multiple regression using IBM-SPSS Statistics 17.

4.4.1 Regression Analysis of Model-I

In the model-1 a hypothesized relationship between Moral philosophy

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and Self-conscious emotions is presented. It was posit that moral philosophy is a positive predictor of self-conscious emotion among consumers. This relationship is tested by using a standard multiple regression technique. The correlation table indicates a relationship (preferably >0.3) between independent variables (idealism, relativism) with dependent variables (Private SCE, Public SCE, Social Anxiety) as a proof of some sort of relationship (Pallant, 2005). Also the correlation between independent variables (idealism, relativism) is 0.645 which is below the alarming value of 0.70 (Pallant, 2005). Also the 'collinearity diagnostics' performed by SPSS favors the absence of Multicollineraity issue. The tolerance value of 0.762 is well above the lower limit of 0.1 and the VIF value of 1.312 is well below the upper limit of 10.0 (Pallant, 2005). Further no issues of outliers, normality, linearity, Homoscedasticity and Independence of Residuals was found during an in-depth analysis of the data.

Table 5 illustrates the regression results of Model-1. It shows that the independent variable moral philosophy (Idealism, Relativism) explain a variance of 53.5 percent in the dependent variable Public SCE (R^2=.535), 3.7 percent in Private SCE (R^2=.037) and 46.2 percent in Social Anxiety (R^2=.462). The model reaches a statistically significance of .01 except one value which is .045 and is beyond the acceptable range of $p<0.05$. Idealism has been found to be a significant ($p<0.01$) positive predictor of self-conscious emotions. Idealism is a positive predictor of Public SCE (β=0.337, $p<0.01$), Private SCE (β=0.201, $p<0.01$) and Social Anxiety (β=0.179, $p<0.01$). Relativism positively influence Public SCE (β=0.417, $p<0.01$) and

Table 5
Regression Results for Model-I

| | B Coefficients | | | | |
	Idealism	Relativism	R^2	Adj R^2	F-Value
Public SCE (S)	0.337[**] (0.008)	0.417[**] (0.003)	0.535	0.533	223.700[**]
Private SCE (SP)	0.201[**] (0.002)	-0.045 (0.675)	0.037	0.032	7.458[**]
Social Anxiety (SA)	0.179[**] (0.005)	0.366[**] (0.002)	0.462	0.459	167.145[**]

Social Anxiety (β=0.366, p<0.01). However, the influence of Relativism on Private SCE is insignificant and negative in nature (β=-0.045, p>0.01).
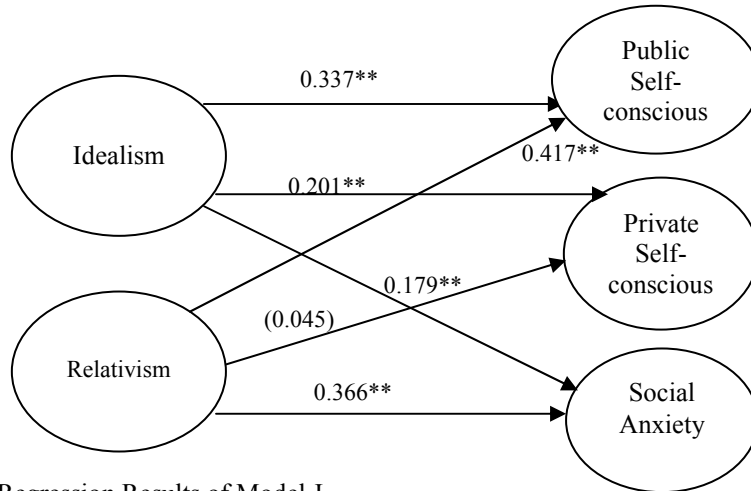

Fig. 4 Regression Results of Model-I
Note: Significance level= ** significant at .01 level, *significant at .05 level

4.3.2 Regression Analysis of Model-II:

Conceptual Model-II posits that Moral philosophy and Self-conscious emotions have an effect on consumers' intention to avoid unethical behavior. The correlations table clearly indicate relationship among independent and dependent variables (few correlations >0.3). The chances of Multicollineraity issues are also bleak as none of the correlation has exceeded the alarming value of 0.70 (Pallant, 2005). The values for tolerance are 0.630, 0.468, 0.341, 0.853, and 0.375 for Idealism, Relativism, Public SCE, Private SCE & Social Anxiety respectively, which are well above the minimum level of 0.1. Similarly the values for VIF are 1.587, 2.136, 2.937, 1.172, and 2.668 for Idealism, Relativism, Public SCE, Private SCE and Social Anxiety respectively fulfill the minimum acceptance criteria i.e. VIF value should be less than 10. Also no issues regarding outliers, normality, linearity, Homoscedasticity and Independence of Residuals were identified during data analysis.

Table -6
The Regression Results for Model-II

	I	R	S	SP	SA	R^2	Adj R^2	F-Value
	β Coefficients							
Behavioral Intention (BI)	.685** (0.002)	-.154** (0.003)	.355** (0.007)	-.048	.194*	.591	.586	111.697**

Note: Independent Variables: Idealism (I), Relativism (R), Public SCE (S), Private SCE (SP), Social Anxiety (SA)
Dependent Variable: Behavioral Intention (BI)
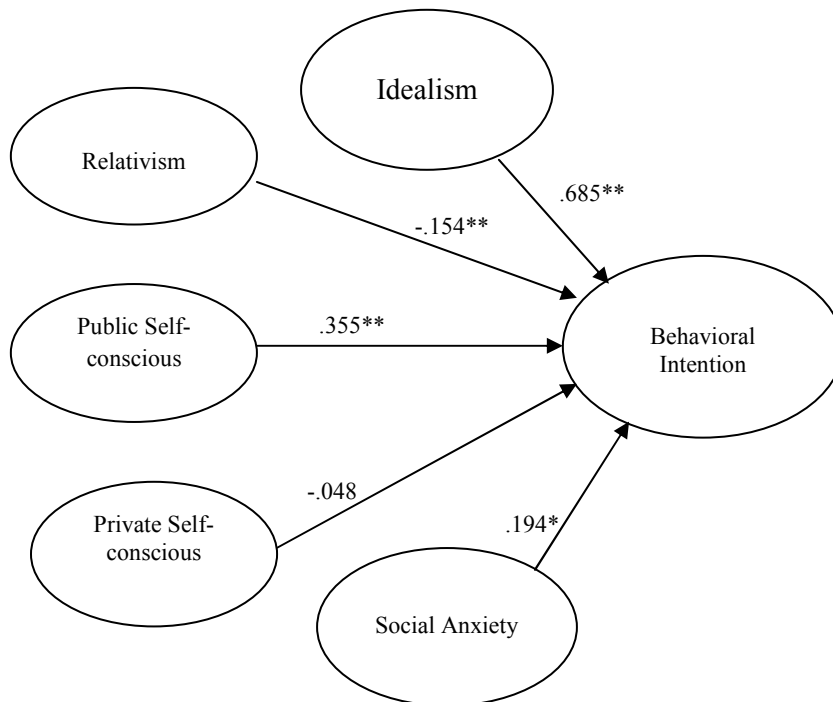Significance level= ** significant at .01 level

Fig. 5 Regression Results of Model II
Note: ** significant at .01 level *significant at .05 level

The overall variance in intention to make ethical decision by independent variables is explained to be 59.1 percent, which is quite encouraging (R^2=.591). The model also exhibits a good generalisabilty with (Adjusted R^2=.586). The ANOVA table also indicates that the model overall is significant with F-value=111.697, p<0.0005. The regression results indicate that Moral philosophy strongly predict consumer behavioral intention.

Idealism, Public self-consciousness emotion and social anxiety are found to be significant positive predictors of ethical intention with β values 0.685[**], 0.355[**] and 0.194[*]. Relativism is found to be significant inverse predictor towards ethical intention. Private self-consciousness is found to have an insignificant inverse relationship with ethical intention.

5. Discussion

5.1 Discussion on Model-I

Idealist individuals firmly believe in achievement of the desired outcomes through right actions only (Forsyth, 2980). Most of the respondents are identified high on Idealism (mean=2.12). Also Idealism is found significant and positively associated with consumer's public SCE. Individuals ranking high on Public SCE (mean=2.43) indicate they are exceedingly concerned over their social self and adherence to social norms and values. The acceptance of H1a indicates consumers strongly feel to abide with the social norms and values and believe that it can be achieved through right behaviors and actions. Idealism is also a significant positive predictor of Private SCE and Social Anxiety (Acceptance of H1b & H1c). This indicates consumers believing in outcome be achieved through only right practices will uphold their privately held values or believes and will also try to avoid by bad self-image resulting in social anxiety.

Consumers were found to be relatively lower on β relativism (mean 3.24) were significantly associated with Public SCE (β= 0.417) and the relationship is also found to be positive (acceptance for H1d) This indicates that even consumers who consider the ethical decisions should be seen in the context of circumstances and individuals also prefer to abide by the social norms and values. This is an indication of prevailing highly collectivist culture where individuals like to be seen as part of a group instead of being considered as alone.

Relativism is not found to be positively associated with private SCE as

hypothesized in H1e. , hence we will accept null hypothesis that relativism is not positively related with private SCE. As hypothesized the relationship between relativism and social anxiety is found to be significant and positive (β=0.366) resulting in acceptance of H1f. This indicates that individuals who give weightage to the circumstance while making the ethical decision will exhibit a high level of concern towards avoidance of social anxiety. Such individuals give high importance to other person's view towards their un/ethical judgments and their expected outcomes. These findings are in line with the findings of Daniels, Diddams, & Van Duzer (2011) who have reported a positive influence of idealism on moral sensitivity and attention to moral issues. The relationship between idealism and emotional intelligence is also found positive by Angelidis & Ibrahim (2011). Hence, an individual high on ideology will positively affect different aspects of self-conscious moral emotions (Krettenauer & Johnston, 2011).

5.2 Discussion on Model-II

Idealism is found to be a significant positive (β=.685) predictor of consumer intention towards rejection of unethical behavior. This finding is in parity with hypothesis (H1a) and is also supported with previous studies (Barnett et al., 1996; Boyle, 2000; Elias, 2002; Kim & Chun, 2003). Hence, consumers facing ethical dilemma holding idealistic beliefs strongly influence their behavioral intention of behaving ethically. Similarly, as postulated relativist consumers would influence negatively on consumer intention to avoid unethical behavior (β=-0.154). This indicates that consumers holding relativist approach will readily accept ethically compromised decision.

Pubic SCE is also found to be a significant positive predictor (β=-0.154) of ethical behavioral intention. Consumers strongly captivated with a sense of Public SCE would try to behave in a manner that is more appropriate with prevailing social norms and values. Private SCE is not found to be a significant predictor of behavioral intentions. An individual's outer world is far simpler than their inner world. There may be several reasons that might

influence their behavioral intention. This would require a further and in-depth study of aspects that impact their decision making behavior. Social Anxiety is also found to be a significant and positive predictor of behavioral intention. Consumers who pay heed to public self-image would try to behave in a way which is acceptable to society and in result improve the image of the consumers in their eyes.

The findings are in line with most of the previous studies carried out in the field (e.g. Elias, 2002; O'Fallon & Butterfield, 2005; Singhapakdi et al., 2000). A positive relationship is reported by Ruiz-Palomino & Martinez-Cañas (2011) where they have discovered relativist individuals' viewing corporate ethical values negative to ethical intention as compared to individuals who are high on idealism. Aquino, Reed, Thau, & Freeman (2007) have reported a positive relationship of Idealism moral engagement and a negative relationship of relativism with moral engagement.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

The objective of the study was to investigate the relationship of moral philosophy (ideology) and self-consciousness and how both of these variables are associated with consumer's behavioral intention. The study proposed and empirically examined two conceptual frameworks. The first model conceptualizes the relationship between moral philosophy (ideology) and self-consciousness, whereas the second model conceptualizes the impact of moral philosophy (ideology) and self-consciousness on establishment of behavioral intention among consumers.

The results are mostly found in confirmation with model-I. Idealist consumers are found to have significant positive influence on Public SCE, Private SCE and Social Anxiety. Relativism is found to have significant positive influence on Public SCE and   Social Anxiety, whereas no significant influence was found with Private SCE. Consumers' who hold a

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firm belief that circumstances of the event should be given importance were found more sensitive towards societal norms and values. Such kind of individuals will only perform certain behaviors which would result in societal acceptance and up-gradation of their public image. These individuals will avoid any such behavior which may decrease their public image in the eyes of others and create social anxiety. Similarly, the results of model -II assert the conceptualized relationships except for private self-consciousness. Hence, Idealism, Relativism, Public Self-consciousness and Social Anxiety were found as predictors of behavioral intention among consumers.

In brief, the study helps us to understand the moral ideology of individuals in Pakistan and its link with self-conscious emotions. It explains that consumers who strongly believe in upholding of universal moral principles show high concern towards how others feel about their behaviors. Such individuals consider themselves accountable towards their inner self and are generally shy to face the public in social gatherings. Such individuals try to avoid decisions that may be considered bad by the society. However, consumers who are found high on relativism and the one who consider holding up universal moral principles where found to have little concern towards their privately held self-beliefs. These individuals showed a great concern towards how others will feel about them and in facing the public. These consumers are found suppressing their inner feelings about the issues. The collectivist nature of the culture in the country may have a strong role in developing such attitudes. Consumers like these may avoid disapproval of the society in daily life, however if provided an opportunity they might fall prey of unethical conduct.

6.2 Recommendations / Practical Implications

The study recommends marketers to develop promotional activities in line with the moral philosophy of the consumers. Majority of the consumers are found high on idealism as compared to relativism. Whereas consumers who are high on idealism strongly believe that rules should be universal in nature. Hence any promotional effort made by marketers that highlight the

upholding of universality of laws would be viewed by consumers more acceptable. This will help organizations to attract the attention of viewers and result in enhanced brand image and brand loyalty. Similarly, marketers could find the results on self-consciousness as interesting to develop their promotional strategies. Respondents showed a high level of concern towards public self-consciousness as compared to private self-consciousness or social anxiety. Products and services that highlight, protect and promote public self-image would be seen more favorable by consumers and will help organizations develop a strong brand name. The findings of the study can be used as a course material for business education students for courses involving cultural and business practices in Pakistan.

6.3 Research Contributions

The current study contributes to the literature in three different aspects. Firstly, it extends the literature on moral self in collectivist culture like Pakistan. Secondly, it contributes towards the methodological aspect by including general consumers as target respondents unlike students that are used by majority of the studies in the field. Lastly, the study paves a way to future research endeavors that wish to examine the role of self-conscious emotions and ideology in different business settings in Pakistan.

6.4 Limitations and Future Research Opportunities

Like most of the research studies this study also suffers from certain limitations that may be accounted for in future research. The cross sectional research design may prove to be a limitation in this study. Future studies may opt for longitudinal research design for more in-depth understanding of the phenomena. Research may suffer a non-response bias and social desirable bias due to lack of control over online survey research design. Researchers may consider a more qualitative type of investigation i.e. interviewing. Future studies may replicate this study on different sub-cultures in Pakistan. Earlier studies have shown an existence of cultural difference between the provinces of Pakistan (Shah & Amjad, 2011; Shah, Iqbal, Janjua & Amjad,

2013; Shah, 2013). A self-administered survey research design and repetition of this study in different parts of the country will also help to produce some valuable insights into the phenomena.

Overall, the research contributes towards the body of business and consumer ethics in Pakistan. It broadens the understanding on moral philosophy and self-consciousness among the consumers in Pakistan. It opens up new avenues for potential research in the field.

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