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Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY OF BARCELONA

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS

DOCTORAL THESIS

**THE EFFECT OF SELF-CONSTRUAL ON THE LEVEL OF
ENGAGEMENT IN CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING CAMPAIGNS**

HAITHAM MERHI

DOCTORAL THESIS PRESENTED BY HAITHAM MERHI TO OPT FOR THE GRADUATE
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Director: Dr. JOSEP RIALP CRIADO

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Abstract

Research around Cause-related marketing has had been amongst the main interests of the Marketing Science Institute ever since the year 2018, specifically on understanding the means of stimulating engagement in such campaigns. This dissertation builds up on this research interest and analyses the effect of an individual's self-construal (SC) on the level of engagement in Cause-related campaigns. Engagement is measured through the level of attitudes, participation/intentions in such campaigns, along with the level of dissemination of positive Electronic/word of mouth and the mediation role of company reputation in this process.

One important phenomenon revealed itself while trying to measure the previously mentioned relationship, which was the fact that the measurement of self-construal has had been facing multiple discrepancies throughout literature which prioritizes the investigation around the best measurement technique to use while measuring it. The authors created a meta-analysis on this topic and realized that there is truly a need for a new self-construal scale and that the best way of doing it is through a qualitative ranking Delphi.

The creation of a new self-construal scale is crucial for academics working in both research lines, whether that of Self-construal or Cause-related marketing because the existence of discrepancies around the validity of the measurement scales of self-construal would prohibit researchers from maintaining external validity while testing their hypotheses. As a matter of fact, hundreds of research papers in literature today are validating their models with opposing views on the same topic and in the base of this phenomenon is the measurement of the Self-construal scale. To resolve this issue, this dissertation anticipated that it is imperative to provide researchers with the chance to participate in the creation of a new self-construal scale which would allow them to correct previous mistakes, hence resolving discrepancies while creating a new validated scale. This scale would allow future researchers to measure their models with higher confidence in their results.

The Delphi set off by the identification and the recruitment of the most influential experts on the topic and empowered them to critically brainstorm all the possible items that could be used in order to include all the known dimensions of the construct to date. They then had the opportunity to decide unanimously (while staying anonymous) on the most important items that this scale should contain. Eventually, they all reached a high level of consensus around the most important

items, and the new scale was ready to be validated, the result of which means a contemporary scale, resolving discrepancies and enabling the better measurement of the construct along with its antecedents in all literature.

The Delphi was implemented, and a new measurement scale was created through the efforts of multiple experts on the topic from different countries around the world. After the creation of this new scale, it underwent a confirmatory factor analysis using data retrieved from two different countries representing two opposing cultures (individualistic vs. collectivistic), and as a result, a modified version of the scale was validated, reflecting the construct as a 4th order formative construct, measuring 6 dimensions through 35 items.

After the validation of the scale, this dissertation studied the model and measured the direct relationship between individuals' self-construal and their level of engagement in Cause-related marketing campaigns amongst cultures that are individualistic versus collectivistic, and concluded that such campaigns are very beneficial to marketers in both cultures as they improve the consumers' attitudes, participation intentions, and actual participation in such campaigns, along with the company's reputation and the level of positive dissemination of word-of-mouth. This was an important phenomenon for marketers in individualist countries as it was expected by research that consumers in their markets are more interested in their own wellbeing than in participating in such collective activities.

This dissertation provided researchers with a new and validated self-construal scale, along with proof that Self-construal has a direct positive causal relationship on cause-related marketing campaigns, which are profitable for companies operating in different cultures in terms of sales, reputation, and loyalty towards the brand.

A major limitation for this research was the fact that this study was conducted as a comparison between only two countries (UK and Lebanon), and through a limited number of questionnaires, which leaves future researchers with the recommendation of applying this new scale and testing the model amongst more individuals belonging to more cultures around the world.

List of Keywords: Cause-related Marketing, Self-construal, Delphi, Validation, Company Reputation, Word-of-mouth, Electronic Word-of-mouth, Culture.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In this digital age, companies continuously search for means to engage their consumers with their brand, promote loyalty and maintain a sustainable income (Kotler & Keller, 2012). The growth of the internet played an important role in the dissemination of information to the public, something that made it difficult for companies to innovate and maintain a competitive edge in the market. Today companies could make use of many innovations that trend in the field, which will duplicate their efforts amongst the same target audience. As a result, consumers will become bombarded with a clutter of similar advertising efforts that makes it extremely difficult for a marketing campaign to stand out.

On a positive note, consumers' interest in sustainability has had been increasing, and so, companies are doing their best to utilize this by implementing Corporate Social Responsibility activities with the main aim of engaging consumers with their brand (Lafferty, Lueth, & McCafferty, 2016). One of those activities that has seen the most interest nowadays was Cause-related Marketing (CM) as it became universally spread with its popularity increasing yearly amongst marketers (Forbes, 2018), and the main reason for this is its success in boosting short-term sales combined with an enhanced brand equity in the long run (Krishna, & Rajan, 2009). As a matter of fact, in 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, corporate giving accounted to nearly two-thirds of the total philanthropic funding at \$7.9 billion (EngageForGood.com, 2020).

Armed with the CM strategy, managers started focusing on appealing to not only their socially conscious consumers, but as well to those who are usually less involved in such campaigns. The main aim here was to increase the level of engagement with CM campaigns, by solidifying loyalty with responsible consumers, and then stimulating purchase requests and positive word of mouth with irresponsible ones. But one question was of interest to marketers: knowing that behavior is directly related to the thoughts and norms of the society, what is the role of self-construal in the success of CM campaigns? It has been evident in research on self-construal

that consumers could be clustered into two segments, interdependent (who are expected to be interested in social good) and independent (who are expected to be more focused on their own wellbeing) (Yang, & Yen, 2017). As a result, SC is anticipated to play a positive role in influencing the success of a CM campaign. More specifically, it was contended by Xiaojun et al., (2020), that an individual's SC influences a CM campaign's success. More specifically, interdependent consumers are prone to be more supportive to such activities. Such support is shown in three important ways: actual participation in such campaigns, a boost in company reputation (Demetriou, Papasolomou, & Vrontis, 2010), and the dissemination of positive electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and traditional word of mouth (WOM) (Christofi et al., 2019).

Throughout literature, multiple tools for the measurement of the SC construct were implemented, but the most used were the qualitative Twenty-statement Test, and the seminal quantitative scale by professor Singelis (1994). SC has had been a hot topic in research, and researchers from all different cultures of the world attempted to measure the construal of individuals in their societies using these scales but multiple discrepancies had been witnessed (Levine et al., 2003), and these phenomena were considered happening because of the invalidity of these scales, something that necessitated researching other means of measurement (Vignoles et al., 2016).

Noting that valid research could not be conducted by using invalid scales, the authors followed the recommendations of Vignoles et al., (2016), and those of professor Singelis "to start fresh" (Personal communication, December 2019), and set off to implement a qualitative Delphi technique to create a new and valid self-construal scale. The technique provided experts with the ability to create new items, outside of the limited contents that had been theorized and measured previously, using a bottom-up (open ended) approach. This approach was expected to improve the validity of the current measurements scale and broaden its reach (Vignoles et al., 2016). One of the important contributions of this technique is the ability to modify items that are targeted specifically to students, along with the reshaping of items for them to be understood homogeneously amongst individuals from different cultures (Smith, 2009). Whereas the main contribution of this technique is its ability to bring to light a scale that is created with high consensus between experts in the field belonging to different cultures around the world which better measures the construal of individuals of different cultures. This research built up on a

limitation proposed in Vignoles et al., (2016) research, and systematically provided a contemporary list of items using a validated scientific technique.

The new scale was created with high consensus between the experts, and it consisted of 8 dimensions that were expected to measure the self-construal construct, using 37 unique items. However, although this scale was created by experts on the field of self-construal, it remained crucial to test it quantitatively amongst different cultures, to make sure that it is both reliable and valid amongst them. Consequently, this research set-off to validate the proposed scale by conducting a comparison between a collectivistic and an individualistic country. The United Kingdom (UK) was chosen as the Individualistic country based on the study by Hofstede (2001), which is specifically helpful in stirring away from the typical USA benchmarking that used to happen in the past. On the other hand, Lebanon was chosen as a benchmark for collectivistic countries due to the high effect of religion on its citizens, and hence Lebanese individuals were raised on traditions like giving to others, taking care of their guests, and respecting authority (Minorityrights.org, 2019). As a result, a survey containing the 37 items of the SC scale was compiled using SurveyMonkey and then distributed in both countries. Through rigorous confirmatory factor analysis using SmartPLS3, this research was able to validate a new modified version of the theorized scale. The data showed that the model is better explained by 6 dimensions and using 35 items. Deference and Harmony seeking behavior together formed a second order construct of Collective-interdependent SC. Then Relational SC, which combined with collective interdependent SC formed the third order construct of Interdependent SC. On the other hand, we have other first order constructs represented by the three dimensions of “Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency”, “Realizing and validating Internal Attributes”, and “Direct Communication” who together formed the second order construct of Independent SC, which in its turn, along with Interdependent SC construct formed the 4th order construct of Self-construal (shown in Figure 1 in the appendix). Now that we have a valid and reliable scale, it became possible to test our full model.

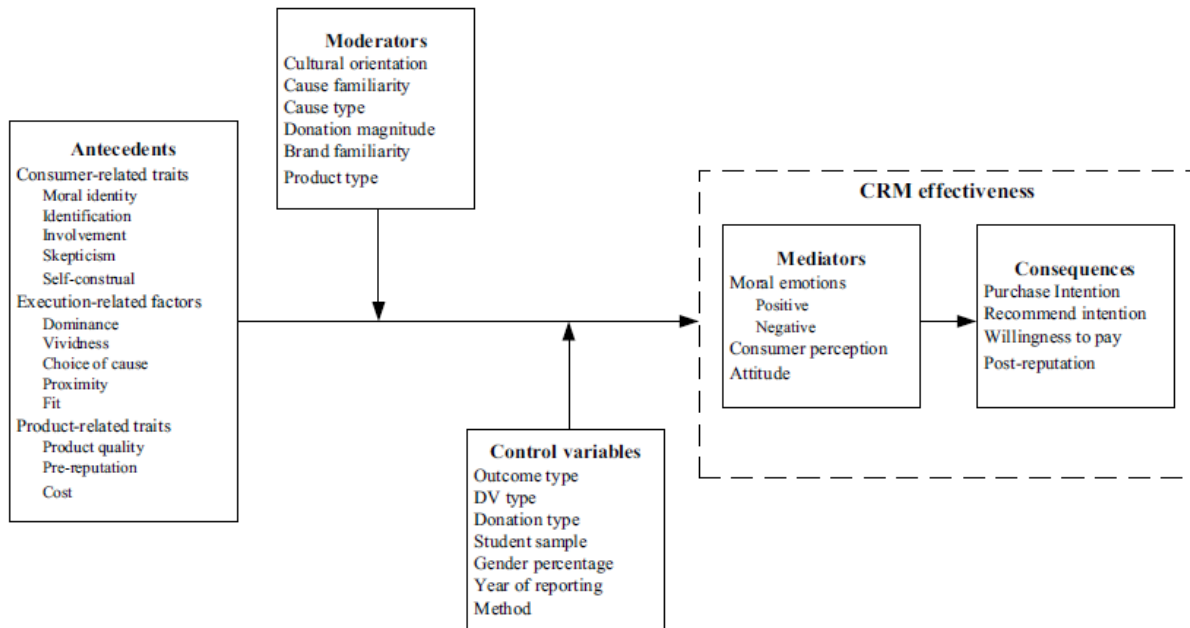
The model was tested amongst 224 individuals from the UK and Lebanon, and the results were interesting as this dissertation was able to prove that regardless of the construal of the consumers, they will have a positive attitude towards CM campaigns, which will translate into a

higher level of engagement with the brand by improving its reputation and increasing the level of positive word of mouth surrounding it.

1.2 Literature review:

During a detailed meta-analysis on the factors that affect CM campaigns, Fan et al., (2020) contended that the antecedents were split into 3 categories: Consumer-related traits, execution related factors, and product related traits (as can be seen in Figure 1 below), and while some studies found an impact on one of these antecedents, others directly negated it by reporting either no, or a reverse impact for the same antecedent, something that demanded further investigation (Fan et al., 2020).

Figure 1. Meta-analytic framework



*Adapted from “Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Cause-Related Marketing: A Meta-Analysis” by X. Fan, N. Deng, Y. Qian, and X. Dong, 2020, 175, p. 339-360. Copywrite 2020 by Springer Nature B.V.

One category that this dissertation was highly interested in studying was that of the consumer-related traits, as they reflected key factors for implementing successful CM campaigns. A consumer is at the base of this success and so if s/he believes in the campaign, it will strive

(Winterich, & Barone 2011). Furthermore, it was contended that self-construal is one of the important factors that would support in the understanding of the consumer's interest in CM campaigns (Fan et al., 2020). This construct measures how individuals view their self, in comparison to that of others' (Cross, 2009). It was argued that those with an interdependent self-construal find others' goals as more important than their self-interest, while those with an independent Self focuses more on personal goals than social ones (Youn, & Kim 2018). Hence it was stated by Chen and Huang (2016) that individuals with an interdependent SC would be more interested in supporting CM campaigns than those with an independent one. But Fan et al., (2020) contended that marketers should realize which culture is dominating their target audience to predict if CM campaigns will succeed or not. Of course, individuals living in a collectivistic culture are more prone to supporting CM campaigns as they mostly hold an interdependent construal, while those living in an individualistic culture are more independent and hence support less these campaigns. But controversy rose around this subject, specifically when Choi et al., (2016) mentioned that people in individualist societies tend to make more altruistic contributions than those in collective countries. Moreover, in their study, Fan et al., (2020) contended that cultural orientation (collectivism vs. individualism) does not affect CM effectiveness. These discrepancies made the primary mission of this dissertation be to forever rectify these phenomena, specifically since the authors expected that the wrongful measurement of the SC construct was at the base of these results, and hence, a new scale could be created to test this hypothesis. Finding the real reason behind these discrepancies is important to rectify mistakes and solidify theory.

While studying the six moderators in their meta-analysis, Fan et al., (2020), contended that those of cause type, product type, donation magnitude, and brand familiarity all reflected similar results to those in previous theory. On the other hand, those of cultural orientation, and cause familiarity reflected contradictory results. Although literature explained that the more familiar the cause is, the higher the effectiveness of the campaign, their study provided proof of otherwise (ibid). Moreover, when studying cultural orientation, they also contended that collectivism vs. individualism does not affect CRM effectiveness, something that negates the theory of self-construal. This discrepancy required special attention from this dissertation because it affects the theory of self-construal, which is at the base of this research (unlike that of cause familiarity). This fact led us to consider this moderator in the dissertation and so when choosing the target audience, samples from a collective country (Lebanon) and an individualistic one (UK) were considered.

After carefully studying the antecedents and moderators that would influence the effectiveness of CM campaigns, it became important to understand the consequences that were represented by participation intentions, participation, recommendation intentions, and reputation. Previous studies often focused on the attitudinal and behavioral aspects of CM effectiveness from a consumer's viewpoint (Chang 2008). Moreover, Barone et al. (2007) used CM effectiveness to examine how consumers' response to CM campaigns, attitude, and purchase intention were used to measure CM effectiveness. Besides purchase intention, Chang (2008) also used recommendation intention to measure CM effectiveness. However, Koschate-Fischer et al. (2012) focused on consumer behavior and used willingness to pay, while Vanhamme et al. (2012) used corporate reputation to measure CM effectiveness.

It was contended that when consumers have stronger perceptions, they will have more favorable attitudes toward the campaign and show a stronger purchase intention (Barone et al. 2000; La Ferle et al. 2013). Purchase intention or participation intention as it was used in research, is defined as a consumer's interest in supporting a certain cause by purchasing a certain product or service (Folse et al. 2010). Similarly, recommendation intention refers to consumers' intention to recommend, or the word-of-mouth effect (Lafferty et al. 2016), which is also positively influenced by CM initiatives (Lii and Lee 2012). Finally, as Lafferty et al. (2016) suggested, post-reputation is an outcome measuring corporate reputation after being exposed to the CM campaign, including brand image and loyalty.

While both experience and research has shown that CM campaigns are effective marketing tools for a business (Chang et al. 2018; Lafferty et al. 2016), some contended that such campaigns could be harmful and hence perform differently than previously expected (Berglind, & Nakata 2005). As a matter of fact, Krishna (2011) argued that CM reduces participation intentions, while Kim, Youn, & Lee, (2019) had clearly proven that CM campaigns positively stimulate participation intentions in them. Another occurrence that was revealed was related to the antecedents of CM and their different impact levels on consumer responses. It turned out that literature on CM is fragmented and findings related to the most used antecedents are often inconsistent and this led to a lack in capability of creating an integrated approach to determine the actual effects of these antecedents on CM effectiveness (Fan et al., 2020).

Finally, it seems that marketers all over the world has not yet established the means to successfully implement CM initiatives across many industries like retail, technology, banking, insurance, pharmaceuticals, and food while all of which currently support various initiatives from cancer to wildlife preservation. This dissertation reveals the important role of Self-construal as an antecedent to CM evaluation, and culture as a moderator, on the effectiveness of CM campaigns in terms of attitudes, participation intentions, participation, company reputation and the spread of Electronic/Word-of-mouth. With the right Measurement of SC, this study will clarify any discrepancy in previous results related to the correct role of self-construal and culture in relation to CM campaigns.

While CM has had witnessed an increased growth in the practical world, it has received limited attention among academics. Such a phenomena necessitates an increased focus on this subject matter (Mora and Vila, 2018). More specifically on the factors that affect consumers' behavior towards CM campaigns as they are reaping an increased interest amongst modern scholars (Vrontis et al., 2020). As a matter of fact, the influence of culture on such campaigns is an under-researched topic, and there is relatively little research that focuses solely on self-construal as being the only dimension under investigation with the CM context (ibid).

As a result, this research will focus on the factors affecting consumer engagement in CM campaigns, by studying the role of Self-construal in stimulating positive attitudes and behaviors towards them. Then this research will focus on the role of these campaigns in the dissemination of positive eWOM/WOM, and the mediating role of company reputation in this equation. Based on the construal theory and that of planned behavior, it is expected that the higher the level of SC, the better the attitude, participation intentions, and the higher their level of participation in CM campaigns. Moreover, based on the associative learning theory, we hypothesize that participation in CM campaigns will raise the level of positive word-of-mouth (including electronic), then based on the stakeholder theory, it was contended that an increased level of participation in CM campaigns will lead to a better perception of a company's reputation, and finally, company reputation positively mediates the relationship between participation and positive dissemination of word of mouth as advised by the social identity theory.

Research questions:

- 1- From how many dimensions is the SC construct formed?

- 2- What are the best items needed to measure the current SC construct in multiple cultures?
- 3- Is the newly proposed SC scale reliable and valid?
- 4- Is there a positive causal relationship between SC, CM, Company reputation, eWOM, WOM, and Culture?
 - a. Does self-construal play a causal role on attitudes, participation intentions, and the level of participation in CM campaigns?
 - b. Does participation in CM campaigns affect the level of WOM and (eWOM)?
 - c. Does company reputation play a mediating role in the relationship between participation and eWOM/WOM?
 - d. Will SC have the same effect on the level of engagement in CM campaigns for individuals from different cultures?

1.3 Why is this topic important to marketing practice?

Culture plays an important role in shaping the behavior of individuals in a society (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), it either creates the sense of support to social initiatives, or it promotes self-interest. Knowing that individuals of different construal should react differently to CM campaigns (Christofi et al., 2019), it was evident that an intercultural study between an individualistic country and a collective one should be conducted. This is important because marketing managers of companies operating in individualistic communities need to know if SC could harm their CM efforts or facilitate their prosperity.

Furthermore, it is important to know if SC and CM campaigns can lead to positive company reputation and the dissemination of eWOM/WOM. This research provides evidence that CM campaigns can be extremely effective in stimulating positive company reputation and eWOM/WOM in both developing and developed countries with a high level of collectivistic/individualistic cultures; thus, highlighting the importance of the CM campaigns for contemporary marketers as an important antecedent to understanding the level of positive engagement through both eWOM\WOM and boosting company reputation.

1.4 Research approach and brief description of the chapters

In order to attend to the previous research questions and provide marketers with critical answers that fulfills the gaps in literature, this research proposes five main stages of study that will best revert with an answer to all of our questions (see Figure 2 below).

To address the first research question, a detailed analysis of the construct of SC is provided in chapter 2, starting with a definition of culture, its effect on the individual's SC, and the latter's effect on Cognition, Emotion and motivation. We then introduce the subparts of SC and the co-existence of the two selves in an individual. Finally, we will introduce the different measurements of the construct along with the different arguments necessitating the creation of a new SC scale.

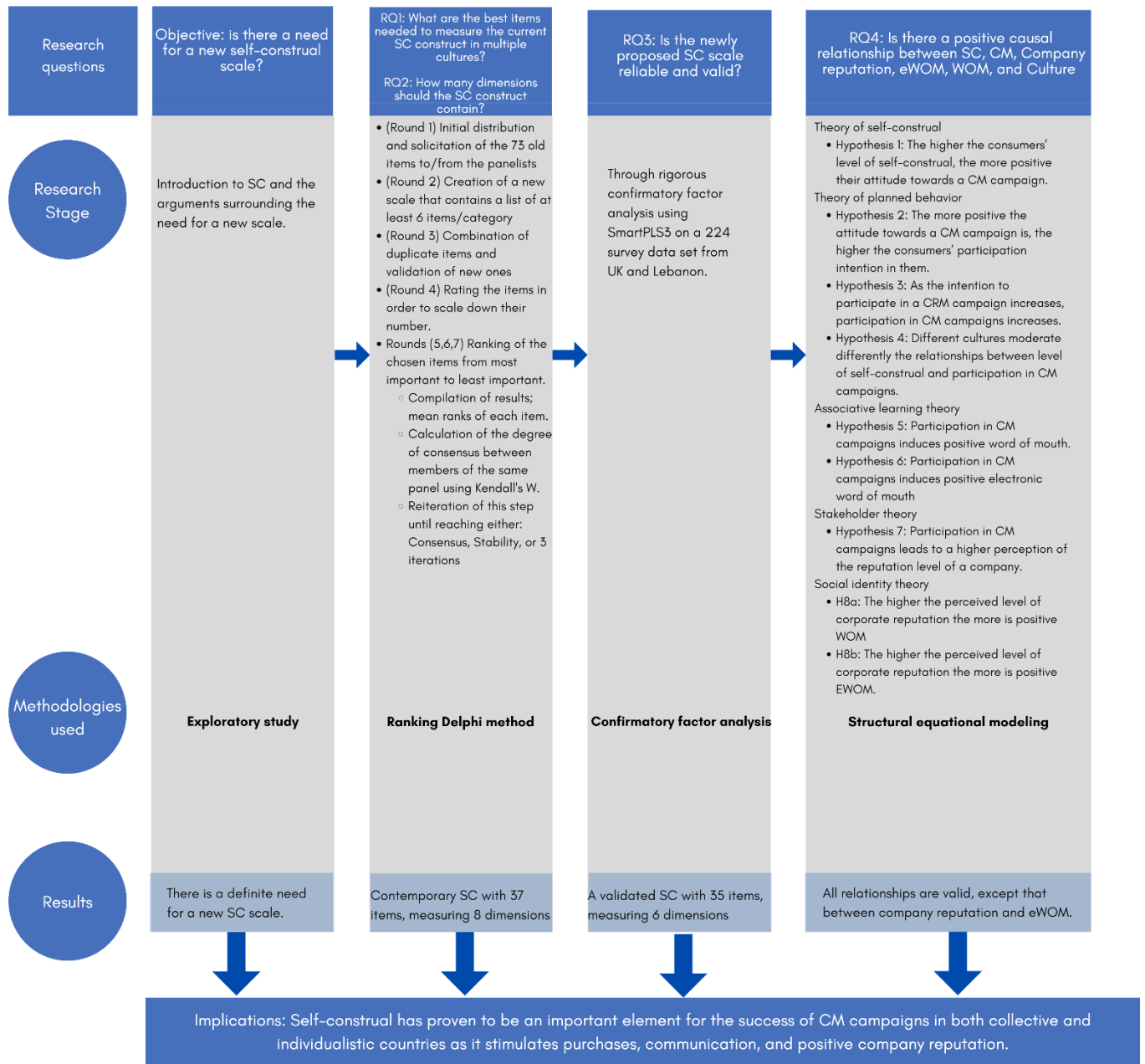
Next, in chapter 3 we touch base on the Ranking Delphi study that will allow us to create a new SC scale. We introduce the method, its process, explain why it is the most appropriate method, and then provide the final items of this scale.

After the creation of this scale, the next step is to validate it. In chapter 4 of this research, we implemented a confirmatory factor analysis using SmartPLS3 on data extracted using a questionnaire in two different contexts: UK (98 surveys) and Lebanon (126 surveys). As a result, a six-dimensional model of SC was validated via 35 items.

Now that the scale was validated, the next step is to answer the fourth research question of the relationship between SC, CM, Company reputation, eWOM, WOM, and Culture. During this study we defined CM and the evolution of the consumers' involvement with them. We then measured the relationship between the multiple constructs in different country contexts to realize that SC has a positive relationship towards engagement in CM campaigns and the dissemination of positive company reputation and WOM/eWOM.

Finally, chapter 6 presents the conclusions and implications from the research. The chapter outlines the main contributions of the research, its limitations, draws future research lines, and comes up with important managerial implications.

Figure 2. Research approach.



Chapter 2

The Need For A New Self-Construal Scale

2.1 Introduction

Culture plays an important role in shaping the behavior of individuals in a society (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Culture provides guidelines on how to behave under various situations through a set of values and beliefs that are portrayed by customs (Gudykunst et al., 1996). These customs, through the socialization process of an individual with his/her in-groups and out-groups, influence cognitions, emotions, and behavior (Harb & Smith, 2008; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Moreover, the socialization process provides individuals with answers to questions about their self, and identity (Brewer & Chen, 2007).

Cultures were categorized in literature as either collectivistic or individualistic, with the possibility of them coexisting together (Oyserman, Coon, and Kammelmeyer, 2002). In its essence, collectivism vs. individualism is an ongoing struggle between an individual's rights, and his/her duties towards the community (Hofstede, 1980). Individualists view themselves as autonomous individuals who seek their own initiatives, emotions, and privacy. On the other hand, collectivists reflect emotional dependence, submission to group decision, duties, and a collective identity. It has been evident that western industrialize countries possess an individualistic culture, whereas those eastern republics (China, Korea, & Japan) were more collectivists (Hofstede, 2001). Interestingly, multiple researchers contradicted these results and contended that Japanese people are more individualistically oriented than their American counterparts (Levine et al., 2003; Oyserman, Coon, and Kammelmeyer, 2002). One of the explanations provided for such contradictions is the fact that individuals' construal changes depending on the age of the individual (Gudykunst et al., 2003). Another could be due to the fact that the two-dimensional model is not acceptable, meaning that a new scale needs to be formed in order to better measure the construct (Vignoles et al., 2016; Levine et al., 2003).

Triandis (1989) considered the individual's self as a mediator between culture and behavior. Self-construal (SC) is viewed as the way individuals define their self in relation to that of others; it ranges from highly independent to highly interdependent (Markus and Kitayama,

1991). In psychological research, the individual differences between individualists and collectivists have received the lion's share of the attention of researchers (Levine et al., 2003). Researchers from both eastern and western countries had set to measure the SC of individuals in their societies, and multiple discrepancies had been witnessed (Levine et al., 2003). Such discrepancies in results throughout literature lead Cross et al., (2000) to identify a new dimension, and thus separate interdependent individuals into collective (outgroups) and relational (ingroups). The introduction of this scale led to the explanation of multiple discrepancies and was adapted ever since.

Means to measure self-construal were plenty, but the most used scales were the qualitative Twenty-Statement Test, and the quantitative scales by Singelis (1994), Leung & Kim, (1997) and Gudykunst et al., (1996); Singelis's scale being the most used (Levine et al., 2003). A most recent scale though was created in an unprecedented effort between professor Vignoles and a group of 71 other researchers from 33 countries of the world. They created a promising scale that measures self-construal through 7 dimensions (Vignoles et al., 2016) (Table 2 in the Appendix of this research contains the list of most used scales in literature and their items).

The seminal research by Singelis (1994) unveiled the most popular scale for the measurement of the self-construal construct (Vignoles et al., 2016). This scale was constructed to target students in an individualistic country (Singelis, 1994). Although the SC scale succeeded in tests for rigorousness and validity in multiple studies, many discrepancies regarding the validity of this scale surfaced in other ones, which opened the door towards researching other means of measurements (Vignoles et al., 2016; Bresnahan et al., 2005; Levine et al., 2003). These discrepancies forced the authors to launch a meta-analysis on the SC construct to realize if a new scale is truly needed or not. As a result of this study, the authors realized that a new SC scale is overdue.

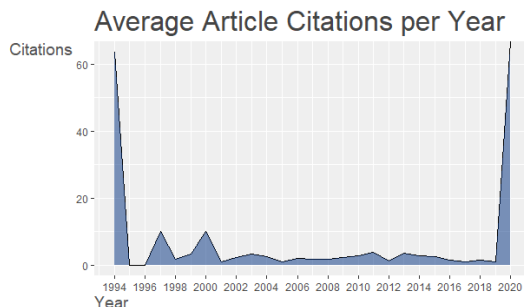
2.2 Methodology

Academic interest on SC has increased incrementally ever since the seminal papers of Markus and Kitayama (1991) and Singelis (1994). To undertake a scientific review of literature focused on SC and the tools to best measure it, the selection of academic papers was limited to those published

on “Web of Science” as this platform is known for its high impact and level of professionalism (Van den Heede & Van de Voorde, 2016). A refined search was performed for the exact phrase “self-construal” displaying 1,159 papers.

In order to be assured of the need for this research, data analysis was performed using the “Web of science” Platform, and the Bibliometrix package in “R-studio”. The first step was to check if the topic of “self-construal” has witnessed an increased interest amongst researchers. Figure 2 in the appendix displays the results. The topic of SC has had been witnessing an increase from 77 publications in the year 2017, to 108 publications in the year 2019. An increase in the number of publications reinsures the increased importance of this topic. The next conducted search was for the citation report on the topic of SC and with emphasis on SC measurement. As shown in Figure 3 of the appendix, the total sum of times self-construal measurement was cited per year had increased drastically from 2017 to 2019 from 643 to 856 citations respectively: the highest ever. Another interesting result in this figure was that of the high “h index” being 40. This result shows that there are 40 papers that have each been cited at least 40 times. Another interesting figure is that of the average citations per item (28.58). It is interesting because this means that when this paper gets published, there is an average of 28 people who will be interested in citing it. The next step was to extract the Bibliometrix files from Web of Science and processing them through “R-studio”. R-studio assists researchers in managing databases of information by being an open-source programming language for data science, scientific research, and technical communication (RStudio, 2020). The first figure that attracted our attention was that of “average article citations per year”. As you can see in Figure 3 below, the highest average citation was w in the period of 2019-2020, with values exceeding those from 1994 when Singelis introduced his SC scale.

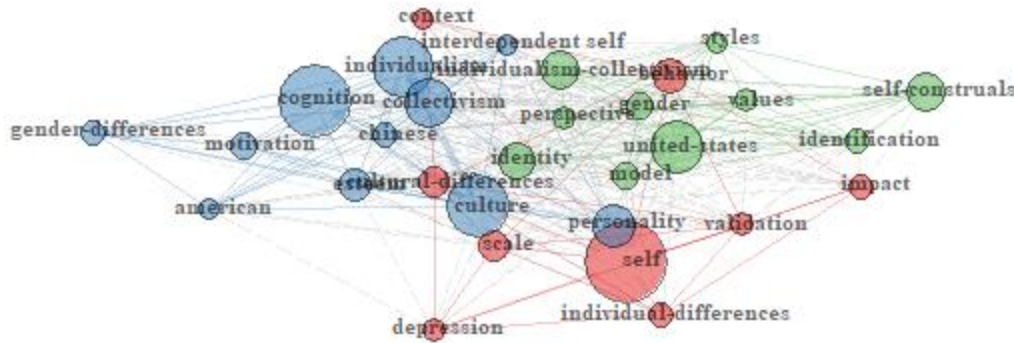
Figure 3. Average Article Citations Per Year.



Source: Webofknowledge.com, extracted using Bibliometrix package in “R”.

Finally, Figure 4 below represents the Keyword co-occurrences. The analysis of the Bibliometrix data shows that there are three major themes related to our topic, highlighted in blue, green, and red. The blue color represents those papers revolving mainly around cognition, individualism, collectivism, and culture. The green colored group represents studies focused on the US where identity and self-construal are relevant. Finally, the red colored group reflects the papers that were more focused on the scale development for the construct of the self where context is important. This research fits perfectly into that of the red category as it is interested in measuring the Self of the consumers through the creation of a new SC scale.

Figure 4. Keyword Co-occurrences.



Source: Webofknowledge.com, extracted using Bibliometrix package in “R”.

After being assured with the importance of this topic, the authors started analyzing the 1,159 papers. As a first step, another filter was introduced in order to limit the results for papers that discuss the measurement of SC; the filter was the term “measure*”. As a result, 243 papers were filtered and considered for this study.

The results were then ordered by the number of times they were cited, starting from the most cited to the ones with minimal citations; this step was conducted to identify the seminal papers, but all the results were treated with the same importance. The abstracts of all papers were extracted, analyzed, and summarized into key concepts, which were then converted to keywords. Afterwards, the keywords were cross referenced to those extracted from the Bibliometrix data (as shown in Table 1 below).

Table 1. Lists of Keywords

Author Keyword	Number of occurrences	Keywords-Plus (ID)	Number of occurrences
SELF CONSTRUAL	84	CULTURE	52
CULTURE	36	SELF	48
INTERDEPENDENT SELF CONSTRUAL	10	COGNITION	45
RELATIONAL SELF CONSTRUAL	10	INDIVIDUALISM	36
SELF CONSTRUALS	10	COLLECTIVISM	32
GENDER	9	UNITED STATES	26
IDENTITY	8	ESTEEM	23
INTERDEPENDENCE	8	INDIVIDUALISM COLLECTIVISM	23
PERSONALITY	7	PERSONALITY	23
SOCIAL ANXIETY	7	IDENTITY	19

Source: *Webofknowledge.com*, extracted using *Bibliometrix* package in “R”.

Based on this result, irrelevant keywords were excluded from the search and only the papers that contained the following key words were selected (leaving us with a total of 52 papers): self-construal, culture, collectivism, individualism, interdependent, independent, relational, self, and identity. A search was then conducted in order to identify the most productive authors on the topic in order to make sure that these authors’ papers were included in the 52 that we have previously chosen.

Table 2. Most Productive Authors

Authors	Articles	Authors	Articles Fractionalized
CROSS SE	7	CROSS SE	3.5
GORE JS	5	NORASAKKUNKIT V	2.83
HARDIN EE	5	HARDIN EE	2.5
NORASAKKUNKIT V	5	BARRY DT	2.33
BARRY DT	4	LAM BT	2
HAN S	4	OKAZAKI S	2
KIM SY	4	GORE JS	1.92
LEONG FTL	4	SINGELIS TM	1.67
LEVINE TR	4	LEONG FTL	1.67
UCHIDA Y	4	SMITH PB	1.59

Source: *Webofknowledge.com*, extracted using *Bibliometrix* package in “R”.

The selection of these papers is not fully exhaustive to the understanding of SC, but it is useful for the objectives of this literature review; a list of these papers that were used, including the names of the authors, year of publication, title of paper, purpose and major findings can be found in Table 1 of the Appendix. Additional references sources were used across the elaboration of this review.

2.3 Culture

2.3.1 Define culture:

Culture is a socially constructed (or transmitted) community with shared practices, ideas, competencies, schemas, values, symbols, norms, goals, institutions, and rules (Fisk, 2002). Culture shapes individuals through a set of values and beliefs that are meant to determine their emotions, cognitions and behaviors (Brewer & Chen, 2007; Markus and Kitayama, 1991). It provides broad guidelines about the acceptable means for achieving targets under different scenarios that could face a member of its community. The socialization process is responsible for enforcing on individuals a set of cognitive, emotional, and motivational procedures that allow them to adapt to common and recurrent situations in the society (Kitayama et al., 1997). It is through one's interaction with his/her community that individuals are able to answer multiple fundamental questions about their self, and identity (Brewer & Chen, 2007).

2.3.2 The two categories of culture: Individualism vs collectivism:

While cultural studies have been implemented in multiple domains of psychological research, cultural differentiations were always based on how individuals define themselves in relation to others in their in-group and collectives to which they belong (Brewer & Chen, 2007). Throughout literature, cultures were characterized into two separate categories: individualism and collectivism. Oyserman, Coon, and Kammelmeyer (2002) entered more details and provided evidence that collectivism and individualism are distinct constructs and could co-exist within the same culture.

In its essence, collectivism vs individualism is an ongoing struggle between an individual's rights, and his/her duties towards the community (Hofstede, 1980). An individualist culture is described as a set of loosely linked individuals who view themselves as independent of others and are mainly interested in their own self-interests over the goals of their in-groups. On the other hand, collectivism is defined as a set of closely linked individuals who find themselves motivated towards the interest of the collective through subordinating their own personal goals to that of their in-group (Triandis et al., 1995). Characteristics of individualistic societies include autonomy, individual initiative, pleasure seeking behavior, emotional independence, and right to privacy amongst others; basically, emphasizing the "I" consciousness. On the other hand, collectivistic societies emphasize the "We" consciousness that reflects emotional dependence, sharing of obligations and duties, submission to group decisions, group solidarity, and collective identity (Brewer & Chen, 2007).

2.3.3 East vs West:

It has been evident throughout literature that western cultures have individualism in the core of their self-definitions (Hofstede, 2001). Such cultures are built upon individual autonomy, freedoms, rights, and the importance of being independent. In contrast, eastern cultures (mostly represented by China and Japan), had been identified as collectivistic as they promoted social embeddedness and interdependence with others in their collectives (Brewer & Chen, 2007). Many reasons were expected to be the source of such distinctions amongst eastern and western cultures. For example, it was noticed that amongst developed industrialized western societies, the culture was measured to be generally more individualistic than in developing rural-agricultural societies where collaboration is a must for their own prosperity. Religion (Protestantism vs Catholicism) and social class (Upper/impoverished vs Medium/low class) were as well two other bases of cultural distinctions (Triandis et al., 1995; Oyserman, Coon, and Kammelmeyer, 2002). Many empirical studies were conducted throughout literature in order to categorize countries under one of the two dimensions. The seminal work was conducted by Hofstede (2001) where he concurred that North Americans and Western Europeans host more individualistic cultures, as opposed to East Asian countries and the middle east. On the contrary, most recent research continued to find theoretical incongruent differences amongst data representing North Americans as less

independent than Japanese counterparts and vice versa (Vignoles et al., 2016). As a matter of fact, studies showed that North Americans are a bit more individualist than their Asian counterparts, in fact they were nowhere close to the end of the individualism range (Oyserman, Coon, and Kammelmeyer, 2002). Studies had also considered combining East Asians into one collective category could as well reflect a misrepresentation of the countries. For example, Japanese, Koreans, Taiwanese, are quite different (ibid). It seems there existed multiple discrepancies regarding the generalized categorization of societies into being individualists or collectivists.

2.3.4 Effect of culture on individuals:

Culture affects the relative development of the self through a set of values and beliefs that would define how individuals view themselves. Triandis (1989) considered the individual's self as a mediator between culture and behavior. Self-construal was considered to be represented by a constellation of feelings, thoughts, and actions that stimulate different perceptions, evaluations and behaviors (Singelis, 1994). Hence culture plays an indirect mediated role in shaping the behavior of individuals inside a community based on its set of values and beliefs.

Throughout research, there had been multiple variations in the conception of the relationship between culture and the self. As a matter of fact, the theoretical picture is complicated due to the common use of similar measurements of both constructs (Vignoles et al., 2016). In its essence, self-construal is used to define an individual's self, whereas individualism/collectivism are used in order to describe overall cultural statuses (Cross et al., 2011). It was contended by Brewer and Chen (2007) that cultural level characteristics may not necessarily be reducible to differences in individual characteristics. Moreover, cultural level characteristics have been theorized as embedding cultural syndromes, normative beliefs, practices, values, and Self-construal (ibid); hence, a culture is not a king-sized individual (Hofstede, 2001). Literature surrounding culture has identified multiple components that distinguish between cultural and individual level definitions. Triandis (1995) highlighted three attributes that aided this differentiation: First, the variation amongst the structuring of goals; whether ingroup focused or individual focused. Second cultures are differentiated depending on the behavior of its members,

whether based on social norms or individual attitudes. Third, based on the focus of the ingroup versus social exchanges.

2.4 Self-construal

2.4.1 Defining the Self and the effect of culture on Cognition, Emotion and motivation

Human behavior is one of the most domains that cultivated the interest of social psychologists throughout literature. It has been evident that behaviors are a result of a constellation of psychological and social phenomena that allow individuals to actively function in a society. The self is hence a set of mental processes of perception and stable constellation of memories that form beliefs, experiences, and generalizations about an individual's behavioral domains (Harb & Smith, 2008). Although multiple representations of the "self" had been studied throughout literature, the distinction between the public and the private selves has had received the lions share. This distinction between inner, unobservable selves, and the outer selves that we portray to others, provide a useful framework for understanding human behavior (Cross et al., 2011). One of the earliest efforts exerted towards measuring and understanding the difference between the self's multiple frameworks was studied by Triandis (1989) who argued that individuals generate a combination of three selves: private, public, and collective. This bundle of selves is shaped based on cultural beliefs, ideologies, and values that define self-construal as an individual-level cultural orientation that is theorized to mediate and explain the effect of culture on social behavior. Having a combination of selves means that based on different priming situations, an individual will access a specific aspect of the self and react accordingly (Kashima & Hardie, 2000). In their seminal work, Markus & Kitayama (1991) contended that people of different cultures have strikingly different construal of their Self, of others, and the interdependence between the two. Such differences have in their essence the determinant of the nature of individual experience, including cognition, emotion, and motivation (ibid).

2.4.1.1 Consequences for cognition:

Individuals with an interdependent self will be more attentive to others than those with an independent self. It has been noted that the knowledge of the self of others is more elaborated and

distinctive than that of an individual's own. There exist three primary effects on cognition: to start with, individuals with an interdependent SC will be better equipped to learn about others, and thus obtain a better elaborate cognitive representation of the others than that of themselves. Next, those same individuals will possess cognitive representations of the self that incorporate a social context in contrast to that of independent individuals. Lastly, individuals with an independent SC are better cognitively equipped to handle counterfactual thinking and reasoning about abstract concepts (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

2.4.1.2 Consequences for emotions:

It has been contended by Markus and Kitayama (1991) that SC defines the emotional experience of an individual. Those with an interdependent SC will experience "other focused emotions" like shame and guilt, whereas those with an independent SC will experience "ego focused emotions" such as anger and pride. Knowing that those with an interdependent SC are heavily focused on others, it was clear that their feelings will be crafted in a way to satisfy those others, which in many instances creates a guilt trap if individuals fail to live up to expectations. On the other hand, those with an independent SC reflect emotions that are based on their own interests, and hence, they could experience a feeling of anger in case a situation doesn't turn up to be as they expected, or a sense of pride in case it did.

2.4.1.3 Consequences for motivation

Markus and Kitayama (1991) reflected that SC and agency are two important factors that motivate an individual towards a certain action. They contend that individuals with an interdependent SC will be most likely interested in pursuing socially oriented goals, whereas those with an independent SC will be more focused on their own success. Moreover, they argued that Agency (defined as a sense of control and efficacy) is experienced differently between individuals with an interdependent and independent SC. For those with an independent SC, agency will be expressed as one's internal needs, rights, and capacities. On the other hand, those with an interdependent self

will adjust their own needs to that of the society's. Hence, individuals of both construal will experience the same sense of agency, but their specific goals differ. (Cross et al., 2011).

2.4.2 Define Self-Construal and its subparts:

It was in the seminal work of Markus and Kitayama (1991) that the term self-construal was explained to be consisting of two separate construal; interdependent and independent self-construal. Ever since, the construct of self-construal was defined as the way individuals view their self in relation to that of others. Self-Construal has its roots in Erikson's (1950) identity theory where he contended that reconciling one's own self-perception with others' perception of oneself is the basis of identity development. Identity develops as a collaborative interaction between the self and context (Guo et al., 2008).

One of the major means of differentiation between independent and interdependent self-construal is through measuring the degree to which individuals see themselves as connected or separate to others by reference to their own internal repertoire of thoughts, feelings, and action, rather than those of others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Individuals with an independent self are perceived as a bounded, coherent, stable, and free entity, who's focus remains on the individual rather than the social unit. It has been contended that individuals with an independent SC focus on their internal abilities, thoughts, and feelings instead of that of other members of their ingroup. Moreover, they are direct in their communication, they stress their uniqueness, and express their self publicly and with confidence, as they realize their internal attributes, and are proud of promoting their own goals. Whereas those with an interdependent self are perceived as embodying a connected, fluid, flexible and committed being that is bound to others. Such individuals focus primarily on occupying their proper place in their society while engaging in appropriate action. They dwell on fitting into the society, they are indirect in their communication, and possess an increased interest in maintaining a positive social status and positive relationships. Individuals with an interdependent SC view themselves as part of the larger society, and dedicate their efforts towards ensuring its needs, desires and goals to the extent that the society's goals will be experienced as personal goals (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Cross et al., 2000). Hence, those with such a self would act differently based on the situation they are subjected to and the values and

beliefs of those to whom they intend to create with a social relationship. Clearly though, individuals with an interdependent SC will not attend to all the needs of others, but would focus on that of their ingroups the most (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). On the other hand, those individuals with an independent SC view themselves as an autonomous part of the society, where the only time they probe they learn about shared values and beliefs is when they want to compare them to their own; they will think of their individual characteristics, and attributes rather than relational and contextual factors (Singelis, 1994). Another factor that differentiates those with interdependent SC and independent SC is self-esteem (Singelis, 1994). For members of the interdependent SC, self-esteem is based on their ability to adjust to social norms, and push towards maintaining harmony amongst the ingroup. On the other hand, those with an independent SC value personal agency (Kam et al., 2012). Moreover, they gain self-esteem by expressing their self, and validating their internal attributes (Singelis, 1994). D’Amico, & Scrima, (2016) contended that self-esteem is closely related to independent self-construal, while interdependent self-construal is not correlated or is negatively correlated with self-esteem. Table 3 reflects the main characteristics of independent and interdependent individuals, as well as the focus of both profiles:

Table 3. Characteristic differences between independent and interdependent individuals

Characteristics		Focus	
Independent	Interdependent	Independent	Interdependent
Bounded	Connected	Internal abilities	Fitting into the society
Coherent	Fluid	Own thoughts	Others’ thoughts
Stable	Flexible	Own feelings	Others’ feelings
Free	Committed		
Direct in their communication	Indirect in their communication		
Stress uniqueness	Stress on being part of the larger society		
Express their self publicly	Occupy their proper place in their society		
Confident	Adhere by the society’s rules		
Proud of promoting their own goals	Proud of promoting the goals of the society		

2.4.3 The co-existence of the two selves in an individual:

The process of socialization has been dubbed to be the main source for shaping the construal of individuals, starting from their own homes, and continuing throughout their experiences in the society (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Everyone has both SC but they tend to use one more abundantly than the other in order to guide their social behavior (Singelis, 1994). It was evident that individuals who had to travel between one culture and another had to be able to effectively switch between independent and interdependent selves to better adapt to their current social habitat. Hence, one of the major regulators/determinants of individual's behavior in the society is SC through its adaptation to different societies (Kiuchi, 2006).

Kashima et al., (1995) were the first to demonstrate that it is empirically possible to separate between independent, collective and relational views of the self. Relational interdependent Self-construal (RelSC) was in brief defined to be the tendency to think of oneself in terms of close relationships with ingroup members. It was contended that Interdependent SC was a subordinate construct, while RelSC and Collective interdependent Self-construal were a second order construct within this larger domain (Cross et al., 2000). In-group members were defined as the group of acquaintances with whom an individual is willing to cooperate without demanding any equitable returns (Gudykunst et al.,1996). There exists a significant amount of confusion regarding the boundaries between RelSC and Collective Interdependent SC (Cross et al., 2011). As a matter of fact, it wasn't until five years later that professor Cross was able to create a Relational interdependent SC scale (Cross, 2009).

One of the major factors that differentiates relational from collective SC is the degree to which being a part of a close, dyadic relationship is self-defining. Relational interdependence stresses a more personal connection with significant others along with a deeper involvement and commitment to such relationships (Cross, 2009). Such self-views emphasize interpersonal relatedness, intimacy, and interdependence (Kashima & Hardie, 2000). On the other hand, collective interdependence highlights the general connection that someone builds with an outgroup of acquaintances with whom an individual interacts. It is best understood as the degree to which an individual defines the self in terms of larger collectives (Cross, 2009).

2.5 Measurement scales

Multiple measurement scales had been developed throughout literature in order to measure SC. Measurements were split between qualitative (represented by the twenty-scale test) and quantitative scales (the most cited being that of Singelis, 1994; Leung & Kim, 1997; Gudykunst et al., 1996 (Levine et al., 2003)). What is interesting about these scales is the fact that they were clearly a subsequent refinement of earlier measures; with Singelis' scale being the seminal in literature (ibid). Other scales had been created through literature that are worth noting based on their contribution to literature; specifically based on their untraditional opinion regarding the number of dimensions that are embodied in an individual's SC. Some of which are the scales created by Harb & Smith (2008), Hardin et al. (2004), Hashimoto & Yamagishi (2013), Kashima & Hardie (2000), Cross et al. (2000), and the most recent innovation was that by Vignoles et al. (2016) (More information regarding the items of the most used scales could be found in Table 2 of the Appendix).

2.5.1 Twenty Statement Test:

The Twenty Statement Test has been implemented as a self-reported measure of SC in which participants are asked to complete 20 sentences that starts with the words "I am" (Kuhn & McPartland, 1954). The respondents' responses would then be accumulated, codified as either independent, collective or relational interdependent. After this step, researchers analyze the results in their own methods that are not often codified and explained to the public. This in addition to the different ways they view the relationship between relational and collective SC makes it impossible to compare the findings from different researchers. It is agreed upon that eventually, the number of independent vs relational vs collective statements generated will be used in order to determine the individual's self-construal (Cross et al., 2011).

2.5.2 *Quantitative scales*

In his seminal work, Singelis (1994) introduced the most used SC scale in literature. Basing his work on that of Cross and Markus (1991), Yamaguchi (1994), Bhawuk and Brislin (1992), (Hui, 1988), and Triandis et al., (1985), Singelis compiled a list of 45 items (measured using a 7-item Likert scale) that focused on independent SC and was directed towards student samples in individualistic cultures. The SC Scale was consistent with literature and defined the two construal as orthogonal dimensions rather than ends of a single continuum (Singelis, 1994). Then, through principal component analysis with two imposed factors (Independent and Interdependent) and Varimax rotation, he selected only the 24 items that did not load greater than .35 on each factor. A maximum likelihood confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in the same sample was then performed on the 24 items, comparing a one factor model with the two hypothesized factor models. The results, replicated in another CFA on a new sample of subjects, demonstrated better overall fit indexes for the two-factor solution than for the one-factor solution. To improve psychometric properties of the scale, in a later unpublished document, Singelis proposed a new version of the scale by including 24 items of the original scale plus adding six more—three independent and three interdependent items. The new 30-item version has been used in a series of research studies by Singelis and colleagues (D'Amico & Scrima, 2016)

Although the two-dimensional theory for the measurement of SC was mostly cited and implemented (Levine et al., 2003), some other theories regarding multidimensionality are worth highlighting.

- Cross, Bacon, and Morris (2000) created the Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal Scale. Many of the initial items were generated by the authors, based on the conceptualization of the relational form of the interdependent self-construal as including close others in the self-concept. Additional items were created by modifying items from measures of conceptually related constructs, such as cross-cultural measures of the interdependent self-construal. The final scale was composed of 11 valid and reliable items that are used to measure the strength of the relationships between members of close ingroups with high precision.

- Kashima & Hardie, (2000) created a scale to measure the Relational, Individual, and Collective self-aspects (RIC) of the self. The scale consisted of ten questions each followed by three options reflecting the three self-aspects. Respondents rated each option in terms of its applicability to the self, yielding three subscale scores and revealing the relative prominence of each self-aspect. The relational aspect contained three dimensions: Loyalty, Relatedness, and personal affiliation. The Individual aspect contained Individuality, independence, and self-protection. The collective aspect contained group-involvement, collectivism, acceptance of norms, and conformity.
- Hardin et al., (2004) based their study on the work of Singelis' 30-item scale, and through exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses contended that there exist 4 independent SC and 2 interdependent ones. They summarized them as Autonomy/Assertiveness, Individualism, Behavioral Consistency, Primacy of Self, Esteem for Group, and Relational Interdependence.
- Lu & Gilmour (2007) supported the two-dimensional theory for self-construal, but based their research on that of Singelis (1994;1995), Markus & Kitayama (1991), and Triandis & Gelfand (1998) while revealing that each construal is made up from 7 different facets.
 - Facets for the independent subscale: 1, being independent, unique and consistent; 2, expressing oneself; 3, realizing internal attributes; 4, promoting one's own goal; 5, being direct; 6, separation from in-group; 7, self-reliance with hedonism.
 - Facets for the interdependent subscale: 1, belonging and fitting in; 2, occupying one's proper place; 3, engaging in appropriate action; 4, promoting others' goals; 5, being indirect; 6, family integration; 7, interdependence with sociability.

Initially, 70 items (5 items for each facet) were written and tested; Three items with the highest item-scale correlation were chosen and 42-items then formed the Independent and Interdependent Self Scales (IISS). A principal component analysis was undertaken with the 42 IISS items. A two-factor solution with a varimax rotation was imposed a priori based on our theoretical framework. The proposed two-dimensional structure was supported by exploratory factor analyses.

- Harb & Smith (2008) compiled their research by incorporating the principles derived from self-categorization theory and a critique of cross-cultural research. They contended that the

self is created of six subcategories: the personal self, relational horizontal and relational vertical selves, collective horizontal and collective vertical selves, and humanity-bound self-construal. Based on the work of Markus & Kitayama (1991), 5 items were selected and participants rated on 7-point Likert-type scales the extent to which each of the five self-construal questions applied to each of the six categories of construal, with anchors from “to a very small extent” to “to a very large extent”. A six-component exploratory factor analysis with principal axis factoring extraction and “equamax” rotation was conducted on the 30 items of the Sixfold Self-Construal Scale along with a multigroup confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in an attempt to validate their results.

- Hashimoto & Yamagishi, (2013) created a new SC scale and contended that there exist 3 constructs-an independent construct, an interdependent construct, and a power distance or hierarchy construct. Although they based their work on that of Singelis, they contended that interdependent self-construal should be split into two parts, harmony seeking and rejection avoidance. They posit that while the measurement of independent is valid, that of interdependent was strategically missing the concept of rejection avoidance.
- Vignoles et al., (2016) presented the most recent and comprehensive work on the topic. They conducted a worldwide study amongst 55 cultural groups in 33 countries and created a new seven-dimensional model of self-reported ways of being independent or interdependent. This scale has proven to be a cross-culturally valid theoretical model of variation in SC. They first created a pool of 62 items designed to represent as fully as possible the ways of being either independent or interdependent; these items were adapted from previous work (Singelis (1994); Gudykunst et al. (1996); Leung & Kim (1999); Cross et al. (2000); Singelis et al. (1995), along with newly created items (22 items which were conceptual reversals of existing items, to compensate for the lack of reversed items in existing scales.). These items were then factored into 38 items; which were later reworded in order to improve apprehension of the questions. Multiple models were tested with 38, 26, 25, and 22 items, and they all reflected that the 7-dimension model fits them best. The seven components are presented below:

○ Component I: *Self-reliance* *versus* *Dependence on others*

- Component II: *Self-containment* versus *Connection to others*
- Component III: *Difference* versus *Similarity*
- Component IV: *Self-interest* versus *Commitment to others*
- Component V: *Consistency* versus *Variability*
- Component VI: *Self-direction* versus *Receptiveness to influence*
- Component VII: *Self-expression* versus *Harmony*

Table 4. Examples of multi-dimensional models in literature

Author/s	Dimensions						
Singelis (1994)	Independent	Interdependent					
Kashima et al (1995)	Individualistic (agency & assertiveness)	Collective interdependence	Relational interdependence				
Cross et al. (2000)	Collectivism-based interdependence	Relational interdependence					
Harb & Smith (2008)	Personal self	-Collective-horizontal -Collective-vertical	-Relational-horizontal -Relational-vertical	Human bound			
Hardin et al. (2004)	Autonomy/assertiveness	Individualism	Behavioral consistency	Primacy of the self	Esteem for groups	Relational interdependence	
Hashimoto & Yamagishi (2013)	Harmony seeking	Rejection avoidance					
Vignoles et al. (2016)	Self-reliance VS Dependence on others	Self-containment VS Connection to others	Difference VS Similarity	Self-interest VS Commitment to others	Consistency VS Variability	Self-direction VS Receptiveness to influence	Self-expression VS. Harmony

The above scales are a mere representation of the inconsistencies in research regarding the number of dimensions that measure SC and the best means of doing so.

2.6 The need for a new scale:

Throughout research, there had been multiple studies that reflected the validity of Singelis's scale (Datu, 2014; Hardin et al., 2004). Other researchers contended that the two-dimensional model is not acceptable and that a new scale need to be formed in order to better measure the construct (Vignoles et al., 2016; Levine et al., 2003). One of the issues regarding the scales was reverted by Harb & Smith (2008) who mentioned that the first problem with the measurement is the phrasing and content of the Likert scale's items that contained much overlap between cultural level items and individual level items; hence, a new set of items need to be created, independent of those available in the measurement scales of culture. A second problem arises from the structural instability and reliability of self-construal scales when used across cultures (Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002). Individuals from different cultures could comprehend questions differently and their responses on a Likert scale could not be assumed to be of common understanding (ibid). Hence, it seems that it is important to have multiple experts from multiple cultures visit these items and modify them in a way that makes it possible to compare results across cultures. Another issue was reflected by Smith (2009) who argued that there is an inherent psychometric flaw in the SC scale because all of its items are worded positively. He contended that cultural differences in response styles may contribute to invalid positive correlations with other measures; hence the author advised the addition of reverse-scored items along with new ones (ibid). Moreover, Vignoles et al., (2016) contended that previous confusions in the self-construal literature are due to oversimplified dimensional models and the methodological limitation of self-report measures. The authors contended that there existed more than the 2 dimensions discussed by Singelis, and advised for the creation of a new scale, that consists of new items that could measure the multiple dimensions of the self. This, along with the heterogeneous results that were reflected in the extensive meta-analysis, leads to the conclusion that validity problems exist in research involving the use of SC scales in cross cultural research (Levine et al., 2003).

Many reasons could exist to be in the root of this issue, for example, it is interesting to note that the most used scales (Gudykunst et al., 1996; Leung & Kim, 1997; Singelis, 1994) are a subsequent refinement of the earlier scales (Levine et al., 2003). Another main reason referred to the concerns around the over dimensionality of the existing SC scales. Kashima et al. (1995) provided evidence for three types of self-construal (individualistic, collective, and relational) and

further suggested that the individualistic (independent) dimension has two subdimensions (agency and assertiveness) that are orthogonal at the individual level. Consistent with Kashima et al., Cross, Bacon, and Morris (2000) provide convincing evidence for two distinct forms of interdependent self-construal (collectivism-based interdependence and relational interdependence). Harb & Smith (2008) found that there exist 6 dimensions for SC (Personal self, relational-horizontal, relational-vertical, collective-horizontal, collective vertical, and human bound). Hardin et al., (2004) also contended that there exist 4 independent and 2 interdependent construal (autonomy/assertiveness, individualism, behavioral consistency, primacy of the self, esteem for groups, and relational interdependence). Hashimoto & Yamagishi (2013) found out that in the interdependent construal, there exist two dimensions of harmony seeking and rejection avoidance. Fiske (2002) contends that 4 types of interdependence and 10 types of independence may be conflated in self-construal scales. Finally, Vignoles et al., (2016) contended that 7 dimensions exist. Taken together, these data suggest that self-construal scale items may measure more than two constructs without a concrete evidence on a perfect, consistent measurement. Levine et al., (2003) added that the most important question raised by these results is whether the observed problems are solely attributable to the use of flawed scales or if the findings reflect more fundamental problems with the self-construal construct itself. Levine et al., (2003) as well contended that the highly unstable nature of the construct could be a main reason behind the variations in cross cultural results. On the other hand, (Gudykunst et al., 2003) supported the SC construct and its scales, and contended that the scales are valid and effective because results are compatible with theorizing about self-construal and that there may be multiple dimensions that form independent and interdependent self-construal in second-order factor analyses. Levine et al., (2003) reflected their disagreement with the before statement and contended that the interitem correlations are neither large enough, nor patterned in such a way as to suggest a second-order structure. Gudykunst et al., (2003) continued to debate that in many cases, scales were not considered valid because their results didn't follow expected patterns in previous research, and their rebuttal was that researchers could have failed to employ a representative sample of the whole culture which led to inconsistent findings. Amongst the confusion regarding the dimensionality, and the validity of previous SC scales is the fact that they were created more than 2 decades ago and that they were primarily created for students in individualistic countries. It is hence crucial that a new SC measurement is created that better reflects the construal of individuals from different cultures.

A detailed analysis of the most used items to measure the SC scale was conducted and the results were revealed in Table 2 in the appendix. Basing this research on five of the most important scales in literature, Singelis (1994), Leung and Kim (1997), Gudykunst et al., (1994), Cross et al., 2000, and Hashimoto and Yamagishi, (2013), a list of 73 items were identified as important for the measurement of the SC scale. The items fell under 8 categories: three for collective interdependent: Harmony seeking behavior, Deference, “Similance, affiliation, and abasement”. Then Relational Interdependent was provided as a single category as per literature, and independent Self Construal had 4 categories: Direct communication, Self-expression, “Independence, uniqueness, and consistency”, “Realizing & validating internal attributes”. The importance of these items lies in the fact that they were used in common by more than one of the identified scales. During the next stage, these items shall be used as a first step towards the creation of the new SC scale.

Chapter 3

CREATING A NEW SELF-CONSTRUAL SCALE VIA THE RANKING DELPHI METHOD

3.1 Introduction

The Delphi technique was developed by Dalkey and Helmer at the Rand Corporation in 1953 in an attempt to minimize the damage incurred by the US army in case of a potential Soviet bombing threat (Dalkey & Helmer 1963; Novakowski & Wellar, 2008). They wanted to predict and map out potential Soviet targets on American soil as a precautionary measure in order to protect the nation's most important targets. The Delphi technique was kept in the dark due to the nature of its applications until the 1964. Once the military applications of this method were revealed, it was publicly introduced in the academic mainstream (Martino, 1999). In academia, the method was used to handle predictions rather than facts through an iterative feedback technique with a group of experts (Novakowski & Wellar, 2008). The Delphi method was implemented in many fields over the course of literature, ranging from medicine, to technology, to public-administration, social work, information science, and management (Schmidt, 1997).

The Delphi method implements multiple iterative stages in an attempt to structure communication between a group of experts inside a panel. These panels will be subjected to multiple rounds of surveys where they will be asked to reflect their opinions on a set of complicated issue in their domain of experience. The main aim of this process is to seek consensus amongst the panelists around the best solutions for solving the complex issue on hand (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). Strasser (2017) explains that there exist multiple types of Delphi in research, but amongst the mostly used ones were the Classical Delphi (Dalkey and Helmer, 1963), Policy Delphi (Linstone and Turoff, 1975), and Ranking-Type Delphi (Schmidt, 1997). In brief, the Delphi method deploys 3 main waves: Brainstorming, narrowing down, and ranking. These waves would normally be implemented using 6 consecutive iterations (Okoli, & Pawlowski, 2004).

SC has had been witnessing a lot of scrutiny revolving around the validity of the available measurement techniques, number of dimensions, and inconsistent results across same cultures (Vignoles et al., 2016, Levine et al., 2003). The most prominent gaps throughout literature were

attributed to overreliance on student samples (Smith et al., 2013), culturally biased item wordings (Vignoles et al., 2016), and failure to capture the full range of possible dimensions of self-construal, as identified by theory (Vignoles et al., 2016; Hardin, 2006). As a result, Vignoles et al., (2016) tackled these gaps in an extensive study but were faced with a limitation of sticking to previously verified and measured SC items in literature. They contend that a more open-ended, bottom-up approach could facilitate the investigation of other known dimensions of SC (ibid). So as a continuation to the research of Vignoles et al., (2016), there is a need for a new SC scale that is to be created using a qualitative bottom-up approach in order to better identify the number of dimensions of SC, using culturally unbiased items that have less dependency on students; the technique of choice was the Ranking Delphi method by Schmidt (1997) as we will justify in the next section.

This chapter aims to attend to the previously mentioned gap by creating a Delphi survey that gathers experts from multiple cultures in one study. These experts will be provided with an opportunity to modify/add new items/dimensions that assist in the better measurement of the SC construct. As a result, experts will be able to introduce new items in order to measure new dimensions, and moreover, modify previously used items in order to decrease the dependency on students and minimize cultural bias. Hence, this research will seek expert consensus using the Delphi method in order to better identify the measurement items that best measure an individual's self-construal amongst different cultures.

The Ranking Delphi method will be applied using the services of experts in SC from countries representing different construal (USA, Germany, Spain, Italy, Lebanon, Turkey, UK, and Japan). After the creation of the consensual scale, the researcher will aim to validate it in multiple countries and among individuals of different age ranges. This research creates a new measurement technique using a bottom-up approach. Using the joint effort of these experts, we shall confirm the number of dimensions of Self-construal and the best items to measure them. So, with the results of this research, we will be able to answer the following research questions:

- 1- What are the best items needed to measure the current SC construct in multiple cultures?*
- 2- How many dimensions should the SC construct contain?*

3.2 Introduction to Delphi:

The Delphi is an iterative multistage process implemented to structure communication between a group of experts (referred to as panelists), through multiple iterations of questionnaires (referred to as rounds), with the main aim of seeking the consensus of the group around the best solution towards solving a complex issue (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). The Delphi technique is generally adapted in order to explore different assumptions/information that led to differing judgements. It seeks information generated through consensus and correlated informed judgements on diverse and interrelated aspects of a complex topic (Hasson et al, 2000). Strasser (2017) explains the different types of Delphi studies that had been adapted throughout research. He contended that the different types were differentiated based on two main categories: Focus and objective. He continued by differentiating between the most popular types and discussed the differences between the following: Argument, Classical, Decision, Policy, Ranking-type, and real-time. The argument Delphi focuses on creating arguments on a specific topic in order to develop reasons for certain behaviors. On the other hand, the decision Delphi focuses on decisions and aims to prepare and support them, and the real-time Delphi aims to speed up the process of the Delphi by asking for instantaneous responses from the panels of experts. Moreover, the objective of the classical Delphi is to elicit opinion and gain consensus amongst a group of homogeneous experts on a preferred future state or process. The Ranking-type Delphi shares the same characteristics of the classical Delphi with a main difference which is that it focuses on ranking items in order to come up with a consensus related to the relative importance of the issues. Finally, the purpose of the policy Delphi is not expert consensus but to target informed advocates pro and against a certain project in an attempt to strengthen the debate for or against a policy (Novakowski & Wellar, 2008). It is a tool for political issues and not to support the decisions as in other forms of the Delphi (Strasser, 2017).

The ranking type Delphi is an iterative method of controlled feedback that aims to reach consensus about the relative importance of a set of complex issues using the support of a group of experts. The result of this method is the creation of a rank-ordered list of risk factors/solutions that are anticipated to best explain/prepare for the issue on hand (Schmidt et al., 2001). This type was considered in this research based on its main goal. For instance, this research does not aim at developing arguments, nor does it prepare and support decisions. So, the use of argument and decision Delphi methods were scratched from the list. In addition, the experts selected for this

research will be located all over the world and so the real-time Delphi would not be possible due to the time zone difference. Moreover, this research does not aim to creating a policy, so the policy Delphi was eliminated from the list. Leaving the researcher with either adopting the classical or the Ranking-type Delphi. While both types aim towards reaching consensus around a topic of great debate, this research is interested in identifying the items that best measure the SC construct, so while the experts may agree on a certain set of items to be representing the SC measurement scale, using the ranking type Delphi the researchers will be able to identify those items that rank the best amongst the other items in each dimension. This will serve multiple purposes in the future, one of which is minimizing the number of usable items based on the rankings. Considering the differences regarding the purposes of the different alternatives, the researchers implemented the Ranking-type Delphi in the current research.

The Delphi method is enriched by a magnitude of advantages while its disadvantages are few. When it comes to experts, the process provides them with an equal opportunity to express their ideas with full anonymity and without allowing one expert to confiscate the decision of the others (Novakowski & Wellar, 2008). Another benefit is the fact that respondents could be asked to explain their reasoning which would support reaching consensus without being affected by respondent bias due to the anonymity of the responses; the responses are though not anonymous to the researcher, which facilitates the process of follow-up. This method also has strength in the fact that it targets experts and not random individuals. This allows for the generalization of the results, choosing a small and effective sample size and this decreases the attrition effect due to the direct line of communication between the expert and the researcher (*ibid*). The Delphi method also contributes towards construct validity (Okoli, & Pawlowski, 2004). The disadvantage of this techniques is based on its overreliance on expert opinions; experts could be chosen based on availability and not level of expertise in the subject. Some experts may possess a dominant personality which forces them to abide by their responses even in the presence of contradictory facts while others may simply conform to the opinions of the majority (Martino, 1999; Novakowski & Wellar, 2008).

3.3 The process of the Delphi:

Logistically, the process of the Delphi starts with a monitor (researcher) or a monitor team that are responsible for formulating the iterative surveys, analyzing results, and directly communicating with the panelists. This communication process could happen using different mediums, but it was contended that via email is the most efficient one (Okoli, & Pawlowski, 2004). The panelists are required to answer the surveys swiftly and with extreme anonymity and return them to the monitoring team. Each iterative survey is called a round, and rounds continue until stable responses between rounds are achieved. Results are expected to be reached with minimum rounds in order to minimize expert taxation of effort (Novakowski & Wellar, 2008). The typical number of rounds to be reiterated using the Ranking-type Delphi method is six; involving three general steps: First, brainstorming for important factors; second, narrowing down the original list to the most important ones; and third ranking the list of important factors (Okoli, & Pawlowski, 2004).

The first round is typically used for brainstorming ideas regarding the topic, and the consolidation of ideas into a general pool of items (Okoli, & Pawlowski, 2004). During this stage, the respondents are encouraged to submit as many issues as possible in order to increase the pool of ideas provided; it is best to ask respondents to list at least 6 important issues (Schmidt, 1997). Once the results are received by the monitor, many items provided may be similar in their concept and need to be coupled into one item. For this, a validation stage needs to be added in order to make sure that the coupled items (conducted by the monitor) effectively reflect the opinions of the experts who wrote them (ibid).

The second round is then initiated in order to identify only the most important items in the list. An important issue to note here is that if the study compares the responses of multiple groups, these groups should be separated during this step after they have acquired a common list of consolidated items from round one. A randomly ordered, consolidated list from the first phase is sent to each participant coupled with a set of measures of central tendency (mean, median or mode) to assist the experts in their choice. Upon receipt of the second round, the experts are asked to consider the position of the measure of central tendency of the panel and are permitted to revise their initial responses if they choose. They are then asked to independently select at least 10% (or more if the list contains less than 100 items) of the issues as the most important. The researcher

then eliminates all issues that were not selected, and those that did not reach a simple majority, and with this, closes round two (Schmidt, 1997).

In round three, the panelists will receive their own list of items and would be asked to rank them from most important to least; it is always preferable not to allow ties during this process. Hence, each expert will individually submit a rank ordering of the items and submit comments justifying their choices (Okoli, & Pawlowski, 2004). Measuring agreement is a vital process during this round. After the experts rank the items based on their personal judgement, the monitor receives and summarizes the results. There are three main pieces of feedback that s/he can revert with: first, provide the panelists with the results of the Kendall's W values; if it were significant ($W > 0.7$), then the iterations stop and the round is concluded (Schmidt, 1997). If the results were not significant, the respondents will be informed of them, and another iteration (round 4) would be conducted. The panelists will be provided with the mean rank of the items of their unique responses, the panelist's ranking of the items in the former round, an indication of the current level of consensus, along with a paragraph summarizing the other panelists comments that explains the ranking choice. Multiple iterations will be conducted until either reaching consensus, the mean rankings for two successive rounds is not significantly different, or a total of 6 rounds has been attained based on the guideline provided to the experts during the beginning of the research (Okoli, & Pawlowski, 2004).

3.4 Methodology

3.4.1 Why is the Delphi the most appropriate instrument?

Amid the choice of the Delphi as being the best method for the scale creation, one important factor remained as to whether this technique has been previously used to create a scale, and more specifically a self-construal scale. After an extensive study in literature, results revealed that (to our knowledge), no article previously mentioned the creation of a self-construal scale using the Delphi method; something that reflects the originality of our research. Nevertheless, this same technique was implemented towards the creation of many scales in different academic literature like Medicine (Cheung et al., 2012), sustainable eco-tourism (Ocampo et al., 2018), eating disorder scales (Bauer et al., 2019), offshore wind farm citing (Ho et al., 2018), identifying the important

criteria for the selection of middle/top management in multinational companies (Hsu, Shish, and Pai, 2020), and in scales related to understanding the hotel corporate social responsibility performance (Wong et al., 2021).

As a matter of fact, based on an extensive meta-analysis conducted by Humphrey-Murto et al., (2017), the Delphi method was used throughout multiple domains including business; public policy; science and technology; and health care research in medicine, nursing, and health services. Moreover, most of the papers studied utilized this technique for assessment tool item development; something that validates our efforts into implementing the Delphi in this study.

SC has had been witnessing a lot of scrutiny revolving around the validity of the available measurement techniques, number of dimensions, and inconsistent results across same cultures (Vignoles et al., 2016, Levine et al., 2003). Multiple conflicting results throughout literature raised concerns regarding the validity of the available scales and provided evidence against the two-dimensional theory of Singelis (1994) (ibid). The following issues are deemed a complex one because even though research on the subject has initiated in the year 1991, three decades later, researchers haven't reached a unanimous agreement on what is the most effective tool to measure SC, and how many dimensions of the self concretely exist. Moreover, the interest in SC transcends one country and appeals to researchers from all over the world.

This research aims to attend to this issue by creating a Ranking-type Delphi survey that gathers experts from multiple cultures into a prespecified number of panels. This method will lead to the creation of a SC scale that best measures the SC of individuals from different cultures. The application of this instrument is vital for us to reach a solution based on the minimal judgmental information dispensable, the complexity of the issue, and its global reach. This technique facilitates communication amongst globally dispersed experts and is structured to seek consensus amongst the group (Okoli, & Pawlowski, 2004).

3.4.2 Identifying potential experts

An expert is an experienced individual who possesses multiple criteria that identifies him/her as a go-to person in the field of study. The criteria could be the educational degree the

individual holds, a publication record, extensive related work experience, or professional affiliations (Novakowski & Wellar, 2008). Typically, the first question that is raised revolves around the concept of choosing the appropriate number of experts that could provide valid and generalizable results. As contended by Novakowski & Wellar (2008), the typical Delphi is composed from 8 to 12 members; who most importantly should be able to ensure a collective perspective around the issue on hand.

Delbecq et al. (1975), reflected a multistep approach to identify experts for a Delphi panel. As a first step, the researcher has to categorize the experts on the subject into classes in order to prevent overlooking any important category. During this step, the most appropriate disciplines, organizations, and literature, will be identified and reviewed for ensuring world-class experts. In the second step, the researcher populates the categories with the names of potential experts to target (Okoli, & Pawlowski, 2004). The choice of experts in the Delphi technique relies on non-probability sampling that is either purposive or criterion based. Those chosen under the purposive criterion are selected on purpose as they hold extent knowledge on the specific area of study. On the other hand, the criterion sampling technique is used to review and study all cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance (Hasson et al., 2000). The last step involved ranking experts by qualifications. During this step, the experts are ranked based on experience, and then they will be sent emails by rounds; starting from the most important experts to the least, once the number of experts are enough, the selection process stops (Okoli, & Pawlowski, 2004). During the selection process, the participants could be either selected without any prior notice or via a face-to-face personal contact. While the first minimizes the response rate in the subsequent rounds, the second is in many cases logistically impossible to implement (Hasson et al., 2000).

The initial step for identifying the experts in the field of SC is to categorize them. Based on the aim of this research, the experts who are critical to the success of this research are those who created, evaluated, and implemented SC scales. Hence, the only group of experts identified for this research are academics. The academics would be populated through a scientific literature review of academic and practitioner journals through the medium provided by “Web of Science”. This medium was selected as it is known for its high impact and level of professionalism (Van den Heede & Van de Voorde, 2016).

As previously mentioned, the main aim of this research is to create a new SC scale, so the first step conducted by the researcher was to identify the seminal paper on this topic. It turns out that the seminal paper was that by Singelis (1994) who created the most used scale in history so far. As a result, this paper had the highest number of citations ever (1598 citations). The next step was to analyze the papers that cited this scale as these are the authors who used this scale and attempted to modify it. In order to refine only those papers that mentioned the measurement of SC, the search was refined to include only articles with the term “measur*” which would reap all the papers that discuss the term measurement/measures/measure, revealing 393 papers (research conducted in December, 2019). The bibliometrix of these 393 papers were extracted into an excel database using “R-studio” and then articles that contained in their titles and abstracts the following words were filtered: “*Self-construal*” (88 papers), “*Dependent*” (41), “*collectivism*” (45), “*individualism*” (6). After checking for duplicates, 149 papers were filtered. Then, the titles and abstracts of all the papers were analyzed, and 76 papers were chosen to contain experts who discussed the core of the SC construct based on the interests of this research. The email addresses of the corresponding authors of these papers were extracted, coupled with an extensive internet search for validating their email addresses, and acquiring those of their coauthors. Some coauthors were filtered out due to many reasons, mostly their work in fields other than marketing and psychology (like math and biology....), having only 1 paper published, being inactive, along with those email addresses could not be found. The result of this search lead to the identification of 105 experts on the topic (a list of these experts is displayed in Table 3 in the appendix).

In order to make sure that we didn’t miss any influential author for this study, the bibliometrix files from *Web of Science* were extracted and processed through “R-studio”. R-studio assists researchers in managing databases of information by being an open source programming language for data science, scientific research, and technical communication (RStudio, 2020). A list of the most productive authors was retrieved and displayed in Table 2 in chapter 2 above. As a result, all of the authors were contacted excluding: Han, S., Barry T., Kim S., Lam, B., and Okazaki, S. since their main research didn’t fall strategically under the creation of the self-construal scale and its application in the social sciences field. The research was able to receive the support of a panel of the world’s best and most productive experts, including professors Norasakkunkit, Gore, and Smith and Hardin from the Table. Having such a list of experts in our panel would enrich its results and increase their credibility. Moreover, while the remaining

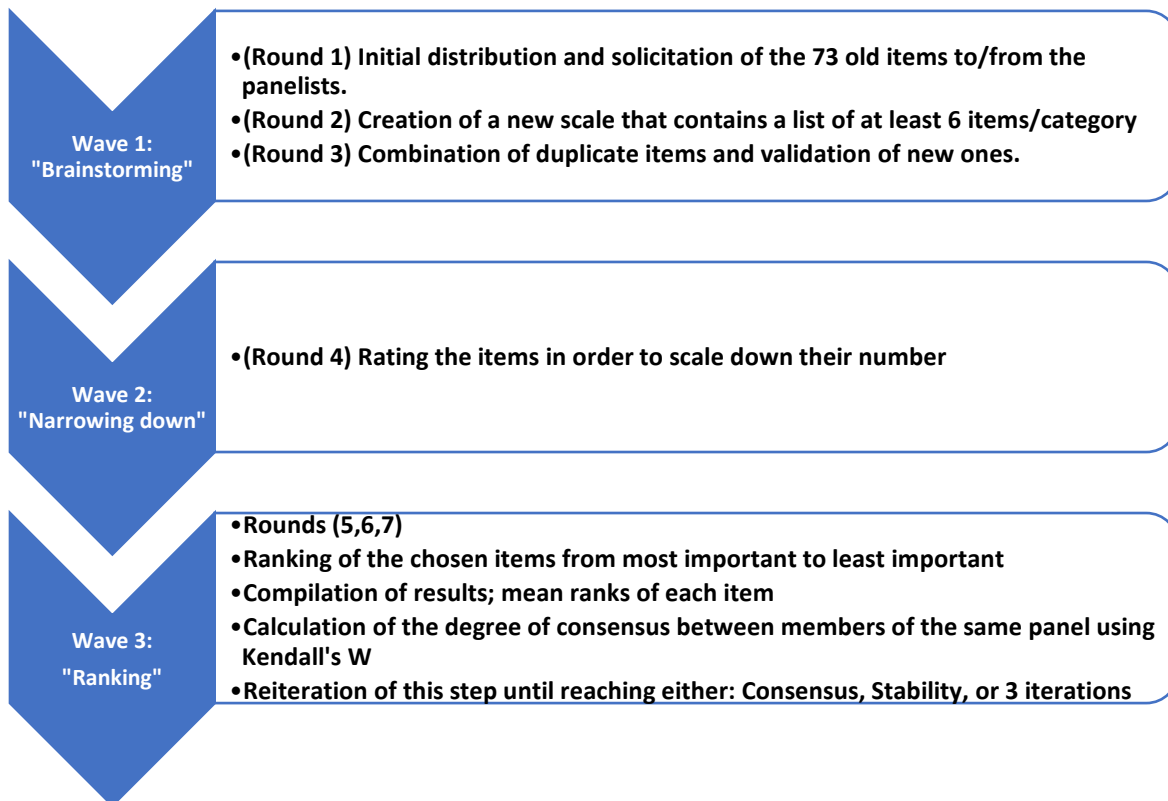
professors refrained from joining our research due to their other obligations, some of them delegated a colleague of theirs for this study.

Now that the experts were identified, the next step was to choose the medium for contacting them, in order to initiate the line of communication. Since the experts were located all over the world, the most efficient and effective mean of communication is via email. An email was created and sent to all of the 105 experts. Another important technicality to consider was how would the surveys be filled and delivered by the experts. Survey monkey was chosen as a medium for filling and analyzing questionnaires as it provides all the features and statistics needed for this research, specifically that of ranking items.

3.4.3 Scale creation

In the pre-phase of the creation of the SC scale, an action plan composed of three waves, and 7 rounds was created and displayed in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5. Summary of the Delphi action plan.



The first step of the scale creation process is the compilation of a sample email that is to be sent to the 105 experts. This email was written in order to introduce and explain the research interest and what will the experts be exactly asked to do throughout the collaboration process, how much time they will be expected to be spending, and what will be the result of their collaboration (Hasson et al., 2000). In this email, the authors were recommended to refer the researchers with the names of colleagues that they believe would be interested in participating in this research in order to further enrich the results; a practice known as the snowballing effect and introduced the researchers to 4 new unidentified experts in the field (Novakowski & Wellar, 2008). One of the main duties of the monitor was to respond quickly, unambiguously, and consistently to requests for information (bid). On January 20, 2020, the first contact with the experts was established. 109 emails were sent (including those referred). 38 experts were dropped (11 unreachable due to outdated emails, and 27 not interested to participate). While many of those who rejected to participate applauded the efforts exerted and provided support to this research, the majority were overwhelmed with work. On the other hand, 21 experts reflected their extreme interest in supporting this research, two of which failed to fill the survey (Table 4 in the appendix displays the list of those experts who participated along with important details about them). The moment these experts responded, the monitor directly emailed them the survey for Round one, along with a set of guidelines (Okoli & Pawlowski, 2004). Two very important elements of Round one are: anonymity assurance and the availability of open ended questions. The panelists are assured anonymity and thus their individual names and answers would be hidden from other panelists but not the monitor. Another important element of Round one is the inclusion of open-ended questions that intend to elicit feedback on any important relationship or variable that may have been overlooked, and which can later be incorporated into Round two (Novakowski & Wellar, 2008). 50 of the identified experts were silent, and thus, on February 7, 2020, they were targeted with a reminder email to revert with their interest in their participation in this study. This second attempt led to three authors apologizing from participating, and a fourth who reflected his interest, but then failed to complete the survey since he was traveling.

3.4.3.1 The survey

During the first round, the experts were provided with the items categorized based on the seminal work of Markus and Kitayama (1991), including the relational interdependence construct which was created later on by Cross et al., (2000). The items fell under 8 categories: three for collective interdependent: *Harmony seeking behavior, Deference, “Similance, affiliation, and abasement”*. Then Relational Interdependent was provided as a single category as per literature, and independent Self Construal had 4 categories: *Direct communication, Self-expression, “Independence, uniqueness, and consistency”, “Realizing & validating internal attributes”*. Independent and Interdependent Self-construal were considered reflective-reflective constructs in this research as contended by Hardin, Leong, & Bhagwat, (2004). Moreover, following the decision rules for determining whether a construct is formative or reflective as provided by Jarvis, Mackenzie, and Podsakoff (2003, p. 203): the direction of causality is from the constructs to the items, indicators are manifestations of the constructs, and the removal or addition of indicators would not cause change in the constructs, whereas changes in the construct do cause a change in the indicators. Moreover, indicators are interchangeable, correlated, and share a common theme. Some confusion could occur related to the nature of interdependent SC as it may seem to be a formative construct, built up using two independent constructs (relational and collective SC). But as a matter of fact, when Singelis created his scale, he used items that belonged to the relational and the collective construal interchangeably and was able to measure with validity the construct. meaning that these constructs share many similarities that even if one of them is not present, we will continue to be able to measure interdependent SC.

On the other hand, every individual has a combination of selves the two selves (independent & interdependent), which means that based on different priming situations, an individual will access a specific aspect of the self and react accordingly (Kashima & Hardie, 2000). As a result, Self-construal is expected to be a formative construct that is created as a combination of the two selves. Moreover, following the decision rules for determining whether a construct is formative or reflective as provided by Jarvis, Mackenzie, and Podsakoff (2003, p. 203): the direction of causality is from the items to the constructs, indicators are not manifestations of the constructs, and the removal or addition of indicators would cause a change in the constructs, whereas changes in the construct do cause a change in the indicators. Furthermore, indicators are

not interchangeable, and do not share a common theme. When it comes to the order of the constructs, SC was considered as a fourth order construct, Independent SC a second order construct, Interdependent SC a third order construct, collective interdependent a second order construct, and finally relational interdependent SC was considered as a first ordered construct as shown in Figure 6.

3.4.3.2 *The rounds:*

[Round One](#) was hence initiated with 19 experts from USA (6), UK (2), Germany (2), Italy (1), Spain (2), Lebanon (1), Turkey (1), and Japan (4). The experts' mean years of experience on the topic of self-construal was 17.68 years with a range of [3,30]. The experts were provided with a list of 73 items extracted from 5 highly used self-construal scales; Singelis (1994), Leung and Kim (1997), Gudykunst et al., (1994), Cross et al., 2000, and Hashimoto and Yamagishi, (2013), along with 5 demographical items. In order to avoid confusion, the items were grouped into a set of 8 categories based on the theories proposed by Markus & Kitayama (1991) and mentioned in the survey section. The experts were instructed to make use of these old items and select from them only those that were important for them for the creation of a new SC scale. The results were compiled and reverted to them during the beginning of Round two. An interesting result in this round was the minimal interest of experts in selecting items that belong to the category of "direct communication" which was one of the main characteristics of individuals with an independent SC (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). This phenomenon was reflected to the experts and an option to remove this category was provided to them in Round 2.

On February 28, 2020, [Round two](#) of this research was initiated with 16 experts from USA (4), UK (2), Germany (2), Italy (1), Spain (2), Lebanon (0), Turkey (1), and Japan (4). The experts were provided with summary statistics of the first round, and then were instructed to create at least 6 items per category (Schmidt, 1997). They had the freedom to disregard all previous items and create 6 items from scratch (as per the recommendation of Vignoles et al., 2016), choose only from old items, or a combination of the two. The aim of this step was to enrich the scale with new items that experts believe were missing in old scales; items that would boost the validity of the scale and increase its target range amongst cultures and generations. Two reminder emails were sent on the 9th of March, and the 20th, informing the experts in the latter that the next Round will be initiated

on the 23rd. 15 of the 19 experts successfully filled this survey by March 23, 2020, and the 16th on the 13th of April (the results of which were disregarded due to the failure to submit on time). The results were then compiled by the monitor. As a first step, a comparison between the percentages of choice amongst the old items from round one and round two was performed. Those items that were not chosen twice by 50% of our experts were eliminated from the research (Schmidt, 1997). In this step, we eliminated 18 items in total. On the other hand, the experts created 36 totally new items, and modified 12 of the previous ones. As a result of this round, we were left with 103 items. In this Round, the experts were provided with the opportunity to either maintain the category “direct communication” or drop it. As a result, 10 out of the 15 experts voted for keeping this category, and hence it was kept.

After round 2 was completed, the monitors were left with multiple new items. It was contended by Schmidt (1997) that the monitors need to couple the similar items into a unique one, in order to avoid repetitions. As a next step after the combination of the similar items, comes the validation round which is very crucial in the Delphi technique as the monitor, not the expert, will be coupling similar additions/changes into one item. The monitor needs to share the coupled items with the experts in this round in order to validate that the combined items had the same meanings, and that the expert’s opinion was correctly reflected (ibid). So, the 36 new items (displayed in Table 5, in the appendix) and the 12 modified ones (displayed in Table 6, in the appendix) were analyzed and check for any possible similarities between them. The authors realized that none of the items were similar and hence no combinations needed to be made. As a result, Round 3 was dropped and Round 4 was directly initiated.

[Round 4](#) was initiated on the 27th of March, 2020 with 12 experts from USA (2), UK (2), Germany (2), Italy (1), Spain (1), Lebanon (0), Turkey (0), and Japan (4). The panelists in this round were not split into two since the experts belonged to the same category of educators. The main aim of this round was to narrow the list of SCS items to the most important ones in each panelist’s opinion. The collective list of 103 items resulting from Round two were provided to the experts, and then they were instructed to rate the importance of each item on a 7 item Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree); an option of neutrality was provided to them as well. Only items scoring positively (5,6,7) by 70% of the respondents, and whose mean

value is over 5, were selected for the next round (Hsu & Sandford, 2007). As a result, 66 items were dropped, and 37 items remained for the ranking rounds (displayed in Table 7 in the appendix).

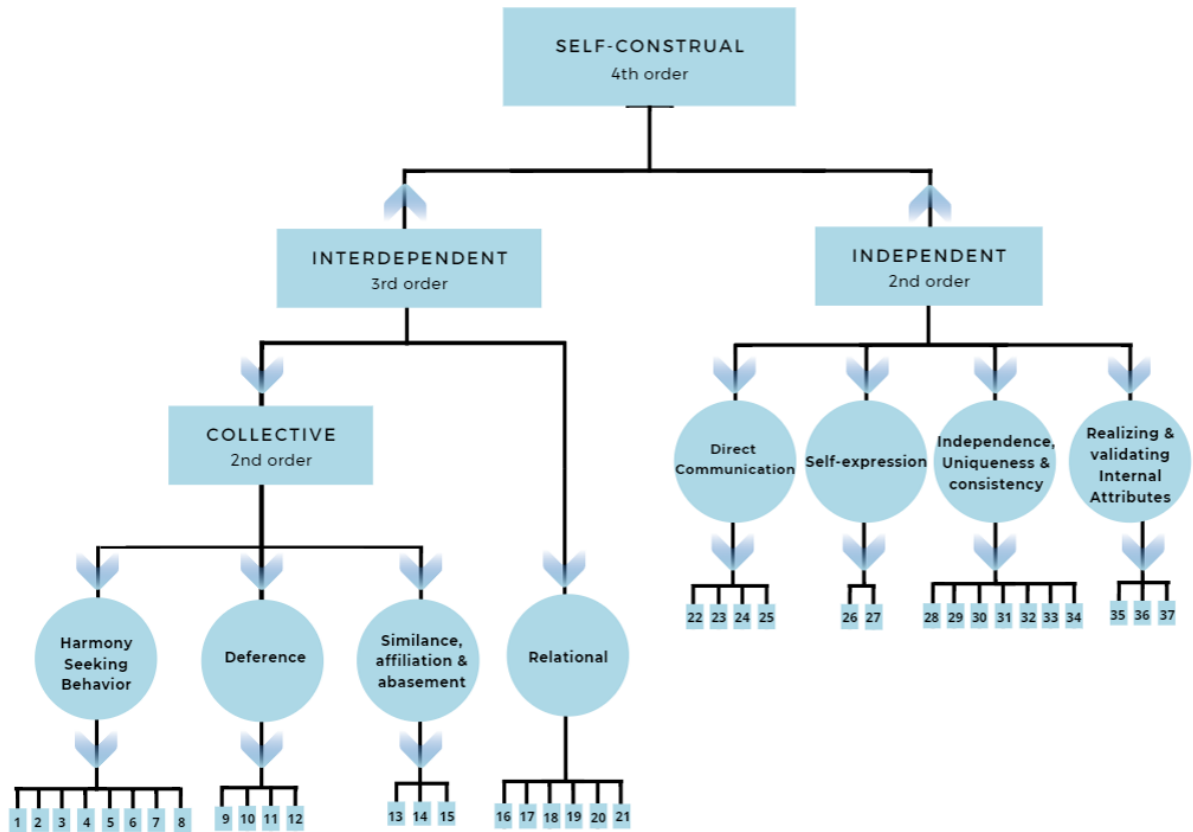
[Round Five](#) was initiated on the 20th of April, 2020 with the full panel of 12 experts. The main aim of this round was to rank the collective list of items from most important to least important. The items were now randomly arranged into the three dimensions as proposed by literature: collective interdependent, relational interdependent, and independent (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Singelis, 1994; Cross et al., 2000). In this phase, each expert was expected to individually submit a rank ordering of the items: one ordering for each of the three lists—Collectivists, relational, and individualists. The questionnaire also asked experts to submit comments explaining or justifying their rankings in an attempt to persuade the experts in their opinions in the later stages of the research. This round is extremely important as it is the step that will identify the level of consensus between the experts. In this round, it is also critical for the monitor to know when to stop polling. If the polling stops too soon, then the rankings may not reach the necessary level of consensus. On the other hand, if the researcher submitted too many rounds, s/he would waste the panel members' time (Schmidt, 1997). Kendall's *W* will be used as a measure of consensus; a value of 0.7 or greater would indicate satisfactory agreement, and the polling stops (ibid). In the event of the consensus not being reached, it is contended that the polling continues until reaching 3 consistent polls. The results of round 5 were compiled, and Kendall's *W* was calculated to be 35.34%, 33.51%, and 26.63% for Collective, Relational, and Independent SC respectively.

Based on the previous result, the panel were sent another poll ([Round 6](#)) on the 30th of April 2020, in which they all participated. In this round, the items were arranged from the highest to the lowest rank as per its category. The experts made use of the previous comments provided by their peers in the previous round, which boosted the consensus to 68.67%, 60.79%, 62.17% for Collective, Relational, and Independent SC respectively.

The increase in the consensus between the experts facilitated the submission of the [7th round](#). On the 12th of May, 2020, the experts received the third iteration of these 37 items, and were asked to re-evaluate their decisions regarding the rankings. In this round, 9 of the 12 experts were able to successfully fill the survey in due time. The results were compiled, and Kendall's *W* was calculated to be 76.66%, 83.77%, 86.42% for Collective, Relational, and Independent SC

respectively. As the results of Kendall’s W were above 70% in all dimensions, a consensus around this scale was hence registered and the ranking phase reached an end. This step concluded our Delphi research and successfully retained the 37-item scale for the measurement of SC.

Figure 6. The measurement of Self-construal



3.5 Discussion

The measurement of self-construal has been a hot topic in this 21st century. It is notable to say that the efforts of professor Vignoles and his colleagues were tremendous, and their result is to be reckoned as “the” scale for future researchers (Personal communication with Prof. Suzan Cross, January 2020). Nevertheless, this research attempted to build up on their work, and set off to create a new list of items that can measure SC, using a qualitative technique: the ranking Delphi. When it comes to consistency, this research was able to sustain more than 80% of its experts between rounds one and two, and 100% expert retrieval in all of the remaining rounds excluding the 7th

with 75%, and hence the results are considered rigorous (Sumsion, 1998). Moreover, all the experts remained unannounced to each other, and the monitors followed the directions of Schmidt (1997) in the most objective way, without reflecting their own opinions on the subject

As a result, this research was able to highlight 8 dimensions that form the self-construal construct, four of which were reflected by the interdependent construct, and the other four reflected the independent construct of the self. Finally, these two constructs formed the fourth ordered construct of self-construal. These results build up on the identity theory and solidifies the conception that the self-concept is made up of the individual self, the relational self, and the collective one; but as well broadens this scope by identifying eight first order dimensions. While this research mainly aimed towards unveiling new dimensions of the construct that allow its measurement internationally, and although the experts were provided with an opportunity to create new items and categories, they showed strong solidarity with the old ones and reflected a strong belief in their effectiveness. As a result, only one new dimension was created from totally new items, and hence this research provides future researchers with a scale formed up by a list of 37 items (containing 5 totally new items, 4 modified, and 28 old ones) that best measures the construct of SC. The participation of experts from various parts of the world (in comparison to the exclusivity of empirical research on the western and eastern societies) enriched literature with a measurement tool that facilitates the increased empirical focus on cultural systems of other parts of the world within the scientific discord of the culture and self. The resulting scale from this research is expected to be the answer to many questions, most importantly, those related to the multi-dimensionality of the construct and its ability to measure the construal of different individuals in multiple cultures.

3.6 Limitations and future recommendations

Although the study was a success, and consensus around the list of items was reached, this study was faced with multiple limitations. To start with, only 19 of the 109 experts that were identified participated in this research, which could be due to the retrieval of old, or wrong email addresses. Future researchers are advised to perform a more intensive research attempting to identify more potential experts in the field. Moreover, while 42% of our full list of experts were females, only 29% of the experts that participated were females. Although this shows a slight misrepresentation in the final sample, but the choice of participating is not in the hands of the researchers. The

response rate was calculated at 47% (9 respondents out of 19), which is the percentage of experts that started the Delphi process and continued until the end, which could be due to the length of the Delphi process.

A second limitation to this research was its inability to create totally new dimensions through a list of 100% new items. Nevertheless, this was the result of the collaboration with the experts who know best when it comes to which item to use and which category to create. Although it was advised by Vignoles et al. (2016) to use a bottom-up approach, it seems that such an approach will not lead to a vast change in the list of items and the number of dimensions. A second attempt using the Delphi method could be performed through the support of a different panel of experts to test this observation. Such an attempt could lead to a different set of items/categories or solidify the results of this research.

Another limitation for this research is the minimal use of reverse items. It was advised by Smith (2009) that the use of reversed items will improve the validity of the new SC scale. Future researchers are advised to ask the panelists about their opinion on the matter, which could stimulate them to focus more on such formats when choosing their items.

Finally, as the next research goal, this dissertation is going to validate this scale through a quantitative study implementing a confirmatory factor analysis on data retrieved from different contexts.

Chapter 4

Validating the Self-construal scale

4.1 Introduction:

Cause-related Marketing (CM) has had been a hot topic for the last three decades (Thomas et al., 2019), and has been considered as the ultimate strategy towards engaging consumers with a brand (Hamby and Brinberg, 2018). During our attempts to understand the factors that affect positive consumer engagement with CM campaigns it was contended that their view of their self in relation to the self of others around them plays an important role in the level of engagement with CM campaigns (Yang and Yen, 2017). But based on the multiple inconsistencies that has had been witnessed in research about the reliability and the validity of the available self-construal scales, specifically self-construal's number of dimensions and applicability amongst different cultures (Vignoles et al., 2016), an extensive Ranking-Delphi method was applied in a previous research in order to share the experiences of experts from different cultures around the world on the topic of self-construal (SC) and lead them towards creating a new scale that contains unbiased items to best explain the construal of multinational individuals (Okoli, & Pawlowski, 2004). Therefore, the new scale was created with high consensus between the experts, and it consisted of 8 dimensions that are expected to measure the self-construal construct, using 37 unique items.

However, although this scale was created by experts on the field of self-construal, it remains crucial to test it quantitatively amongst different cultures, to make sure that it is both reliable and valid amongst them.

Consequently, in order to provide researchers from different cultures with a self-construal scale that is valid for the individuals belonging to their country, this research sets-off to validate the proposed scale, hence enabling them to utilize it without concerns related to the limited number of dimensions and focus on student, as was evident in previous scales.

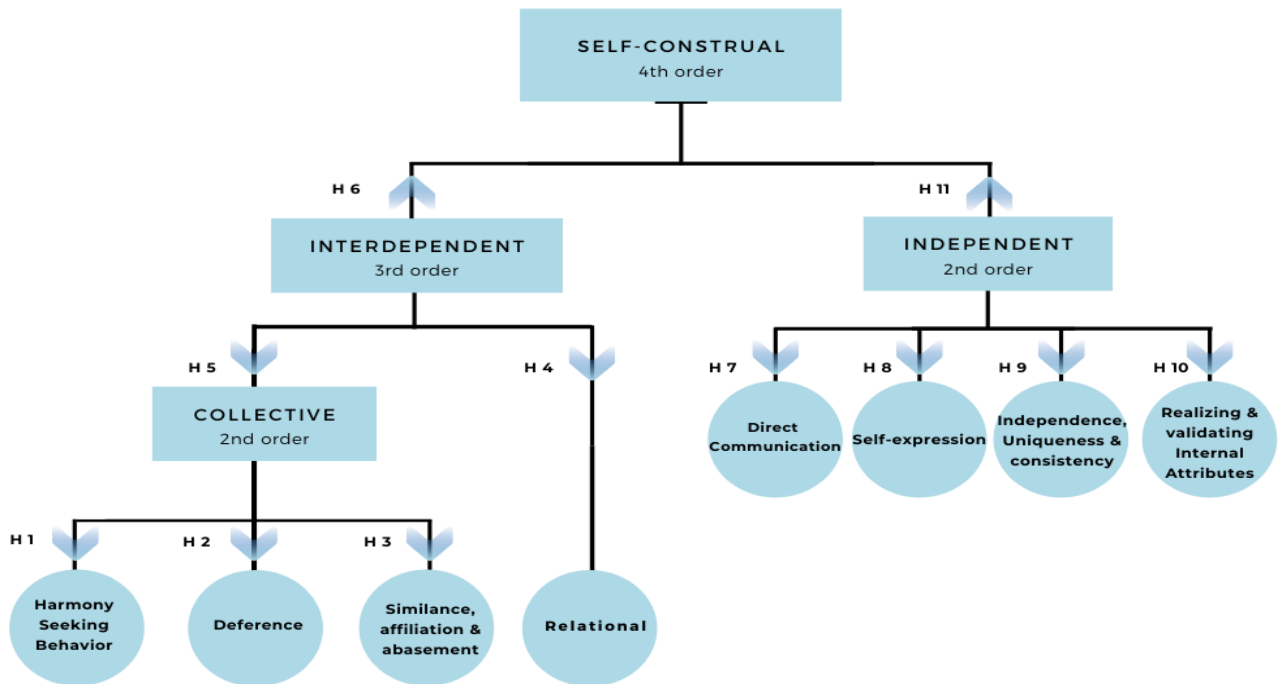
To validate this scale, a comparison between a collectivistic and an individualistic country was implemented. The United Kingdom was chosen to represent the Individualistic country based on the study by Hofstede (2001), which is specifically helpful in stirring away from the typical USA benchmarking that used to happen in the past. On the other hand, Lebanon was chosen as a

benchmark for collectivistic countries due to the high effect of religion on its citizens, and hence Lebanese individuals were raised on traditions like giving to others, taking care of their guests, and respecting authority (Minorityrights.org, 2019). As a result, a survey containing the 37 items of the SC scale was compiled using SurveyMonkey and then distributed in both countries.

Attending to the data collected, the analysis will allow us to answer the following research question: Is the newly proposed SC scale reliable and valid?

4.2 Hypothesis formulation

Figure 7. Hypothesis Formulation



While Markus and Kitayama (1991) proposed an interdependent SC as a counterbalance to the individual focus of the western societies, social identity theories emerged as a reaction to the individual focus of research in mainstream social psychology and developed a special emphasis on intergroup relationships and group dynamics (Harb & Smith, 2008). In recent years, several researchers have proposed a differentiation of the self along three dimensions: independent, relational, and collective (Harb & Smith, 2008; Kashima et al., 1995; Kashima & Hardie, 2000).

The Delphi study is at the base of these hypotheses. As a first step, and based on the results of the study, the first order constructs were expected to be composed of 8 dimensions, three under the collective dimension, then the relational dimension, and finally, 4 under the independent SC dimension. The first three hypotheses are related to the 2nd order Collective-interdependent self-construal construct, specifically that it is reflected by three dimensions: Harmony seeking behaviour, Deference, and “Similance, affiliation and abasement” represented by Hypothesis 1, 2, & 3, respectively. Lu and Gilmour (2007) explained that under the interdependent SC subscale, there are multiple facets that could be reflected by it. Themes like 1, belonging and fitting in; 2, occupying one’s proper place; 3, engaging in appropriate action; 4, promoting others’ goals; 5, being indirect; 6, family integration; and 7, interdependence with sociability are all consistent with the work of Markus and Kitayama (1991), who contended that Harmony seeking behavior, Deference, and Similance, affiliation and abasement reflect collective-interdependent self-construal.

Hypothesis 1: Harmony seeking behavior reflects collective-interdependent self-construal.

Hypothesis 2: Deference reflects collective-interdependent self-construal.

Hypothesis 3: Similance, affiliation and abasement reflect collective-interdependent self-construal.

After multiple studies conducted by Professor Cross, she contended that the interdependent SC could be split into two dimensions, based on the closeness of the relationships between the individuals. She focused on the difference in behavior towards those who we develop close relationship with, and that of other outer groups that we are in congruence with but may not feel the urgency to support. She called the dimension that reflects the closer relationships Relational self-construal and the other, collective self-construal. Hence hypotheses 4 & 5:

Hypothesis 4: The dimension of Relational-interdependent self-construal reflects Interdependent self-construal.

Hypothesis 5: Collective self-construal reflects Interdependent Self-construal

Our results in the Delphi study build up on the social identity theory and solidify the conception that the self-concept is made up of the individual and the interdependent self (Kashima

et al., 1995). Moreover, based on the detailed analysis of the constructs, specifically as per the teachings of Jarvis, Mackenzie, and Podsakoff (2003), Self-construal was contended to be a 4th order formative construct, formed by independent and interdependent construal.

Hypothesis 6: Interdependent self-construal forms Self-construal

Hypothesis 11: Independent self-construal forms Self-construal

Finally, based on Lu and Gilmour (2007), we can expect the independent SC to be formed of multiple facets of 1, being independent, unique and consistent; 2, expressing oneself; 3, realizing internal attributes; 4, promoting one's own goal; 5, being direct; 6, separation from in-group; 7, self-reliance with hedonism. These as well are in congruence with the teachings of Markus and Kitayama (1991) who contended that constructs of Direct communication, Self-expression, Independence, uniqueness, consistency, and Realizing and validating internal attributes reflects Independent self-construal. Hence, Hypotheses 7,8,9,10.

Hypothesis 7: Direct communication reflects Independent self-construal.

Hypothesis 8: Self-expression reflects Independent self-construal.

Hypothesis 9: Independence, uniqueness, and consistency reflects Independent self-construal.

Hypothesis 10: Realizing and validating internal attributes reflects Independent self-construal.

4.3 Sample

Culture plays an important role in shaping the behavior of individuals in a society (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). It provides guidelines on how to behave under various situations through a set of values and beliefs that are portrayed by customs (Gudykunst *et al.*, 1996). In psychological research, the individual differences between individualistic and collectivistic cultures received the lion's share of attention from researchers (Levine *et al.*, 2003), but nevertheless, empirical focus was on the main differences between the construal of north American individuals and that of east Asians (Vignoles *et al.*, 2016). As a result, this research aimed to stir away from these traditional comparisons and went for comparing UK with Lebanon.

Lebanon is a small middle eastern country that is enriched with a diverse cultural background based on the multiple religions, and religious sects that it embraces (Minorityrights.org, 2019). Due to the high effect of religion on its citizens, Lebanese individuals were raised on traditions like giving to others, taking care of their guests, respecting authority, and the like (ibid). This allows the researcher to consider Lebanese citizens in general to possess a collective nature. On the other hand, the UK was selected due to its Individualistic nature (Hofstede, 2001). Hence a comparison between an individualistic and a collectivistic culture would provide the necessary robustness to allow for the generalization that this scale is valid for countries with both construal. Another important factor that this research took into mind was the multiple discrepancies that surrounded previous scales, specifically based on the scales' overdependency on students (Smith et al., 2013). Hence this study succeeded in including a majority of consumers who are not students.

4.4 Data collection

A quantitative empirical research was conducted through the form of a questionnaire compiled on Survey Monkey. This questionnaire featured demographical items, along with the 37 items of the self-construal scale that was created using the Delphi study (Table 7 in the appendix).

For the Lebanese audience, this questionnaire was distributed using the convenience sampling method, and was disseminated using social media, specifically Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook and LinkedIn. Respondents were asked to send this questionnaire to their acquaintances in an effort to increase the number of respondents through the snowballing technique. As a result, we were able to fill 126 full questionnaires in a period of a month.

Although there exists no official census on the demographical representation of Lebanon since 1932 (Worldpopulationreview.com, 2019), available information from external agencies were used in order to validate the sample's representation of the Lebanese population. Two main demographical data were analyzed: gender and age range (the percentages from this research are displayed in Tables 8 & 9 in the appendix).

- In Lebanon, the current female citizens represent 51.2% of the population (Countrymeters.info, 2021), whereas in this study females represented 56% of the sample. Hence, the results reflect a good representation of the population with female respondents being slightly more represented than males.
- The available literature on the age brackets of Lebanese citizens does not split them in the same way as implemented in this research and hence details on the means is impossible to compare. One thing that was possible to compare was the median age of the population which was 28.5 years (ibid); belonging to the Millennial generation in this sample. In this research, 74% of the respondents were between the ages of 24 and 39, hence the median of this research will most probably belong to it; thus providing a correct representation of the population.

For the UK sample, a collaboration was created with Dr. Elaine Duncan from Glasgow Caledonian University who was able to secure 40 full questionnaires from the UK using the convenience sampling technique in a period of nearly one month.

Knowing that more surveys needed to be collected in order to perform a cross cultural analysis, we reached out to a Lebanese business owner in Manchester, who then promoted the questionnaire on his Business's Facebook page and offered those who fill the questionnaires a 1-month free subscription to his services. As a result, 58 questionnaires were filled (in a period of 1 month), providing us with a total of 98 complete questionnaires from the UK.

- In the United Kingdom, the current female citizens represent 50.8% of the population (Countrymeters.info, 2021), whereas in this study females represented only 42% of the sample. Hence, the results reflect a light misrepresentation of the population with female respondents being more represented than males. The main reason for this could be reflected by the fact that the business that promoted our survey is related to products that are usually purchased by males more than females.
- The available literature on the age brackets of the citizens of the United Kingdom does not split them in the same way as implemented in this research and hence details on the means is impossible to compare. One thing that was possible to compare was the median age of the population which was 40.2 years (ibid); barely belonging to Generation X in this

sample. In this research, nearly 38% of the respondents belonged to Generation X, and 35% were between the ages of 24 and 39, and 23% belonged to the baby-boomers generation. Hence the median of this research will most probably belong to Generation X based on the 98% concentration of respondents in these three categories: thus providing a correct representation of the population.

4.5 Measurement model

Self-Construal was measured using the scale that resulted from the Delphi study that revealed 37 items. To start with, Markus & Kitayama, (1991) recommended multiple themes that differentiate individuals with independent vs interdependent SC. Based on these recommendations, the items that were proposed in the Delphi study were closely monitored and grouped under 8 different themes. For example, with a quick look at items sc1 through sc8, you will directly realize keywords that reflect harmony seeking behavior either directly like in sc2 “it is important for me to maintain harmony within a group” or indirectly through the themes: Being accepted is important, making sure not to embarrass others, concealing negative emotions not to cause unhappiness in a group, choosing words carefully in order not to offend anyone, avoiding arguments, and maintaining good relations in the group. The full list of items could be found in Table 7 in the appendix and were theoretically split as follows: 21 indicators were used to measure Interdependent self-construal, 8 of which measured “Harmony seeking behaviour”, 4 “Deference”, 3 “Similance, affiliation and abasement”, and 6 “Relational SC”. The remaining 16 were split 4 for “Direct communication”, 2 for “self-expression”, 7 for “Independence, uniqueness and consistency”, and 3 for “realizing and validating internal attributes”, all of which reflected the Independent SC construct.

4.6 Results of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis

In order to decide which approach could be used for this step (variance-covariance or partial least square), we checked if the items were normally distributed. Shapiro-Wilk W test for normal data was performed using STATA15 revealing that the items were not normally distributed (Table 10

in appendix). As a result, the partial least square approach was selected and implemented through SmartPLS3.

The analysis of the PLS model was conducted through two basic steps: measuring the reliability and validity of the measurement model (in other words, analyzing the outer model), and by assessing the structural model (the inner model) (Henseler et al., 2009).

4.6.1 Construct reliability and validity

During the assessment of constructs' reliability and validity, “*Self-expression*” and “*Similance, satisfaction & abasement*” showed very low Cronbach’s Alpha (0.231 & 0.314 respectively) (Burns, & Burns, 2008). Although the Composite reliability for these constructs is reliable and valid with values over 0.6 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988) the correlation amongst their identifiers is low, which was reflected by the low figures witnessed in Cronbach’s Alpha as you can see in Table 5 below.

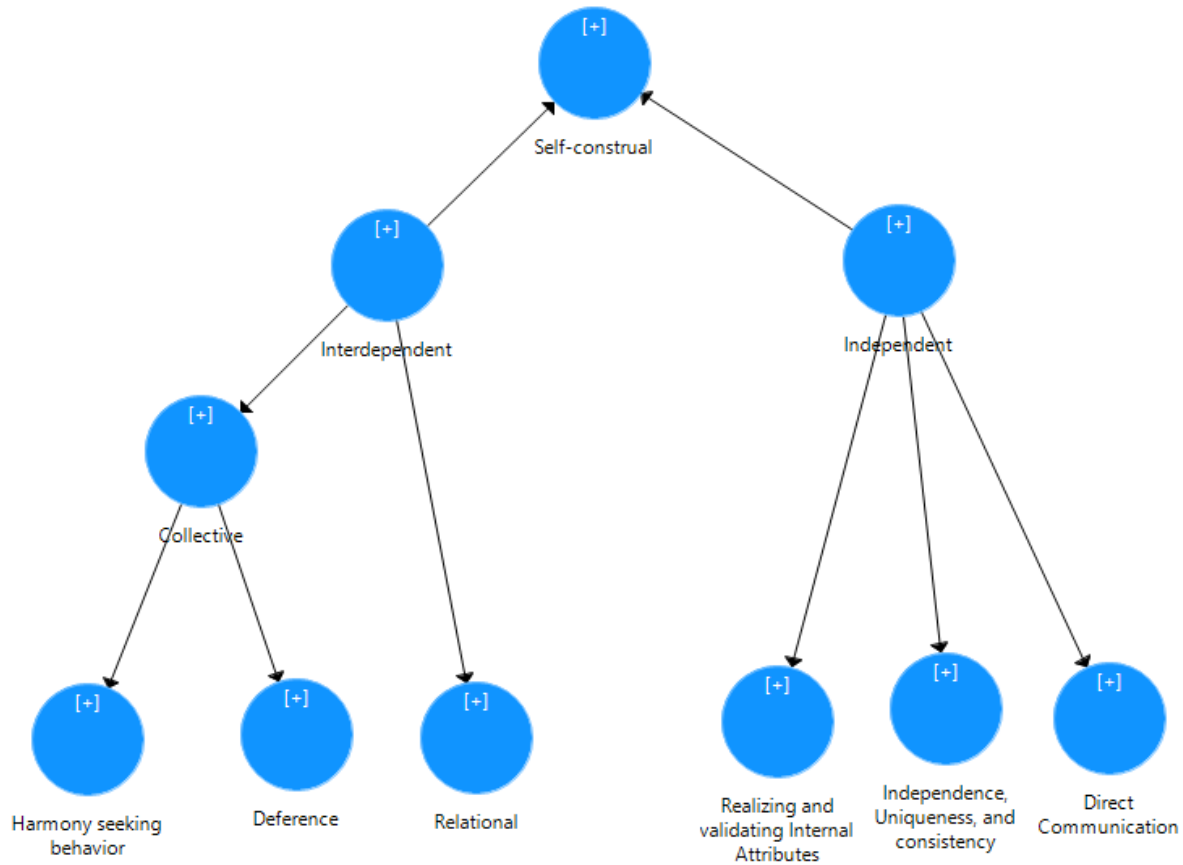
Table 5. Construct reliability and validity of the theoretical model

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Independent	0.843	0.854	0.872	0.306
Interdependent	0.761	0.783	0.812	0.18
Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency	0.74	0.764	0.821	0.407
Self-construal	0.737	0.844	0.217	0.143
Collective	0.709	0.724	0.785	0.201
Realizing and validating Internal Attributes	0.672	0.683	0.821	0.606
Relational	0.606	0.688	0.746	0.357
Harmony seeking behavior	0.591	0.598	0.735	0.261
Direct Communication	0.572	0.598	0.757	0.442
Deference	0.486	0.525	0.718	0.395
Similance, affiliation, and abasement	0.314	0.317	0.687	0.424
Self Expression	0.231	0.262	0.711	0.56

The items that are directly related to these two constructs were analyzed in detail, and as a result it was evident that items sc13, sc14, sc15 that belong to “*Similance, satisfaction & abasement*” fit perfectly with the items of deference. Moreover, those items belonging to Self-

expression (sc26, sc27) fit perfectly with those items in “direct communication”. As a result, the items of the unreliable constructs were added to their respective constructs and the modified model was then compiled. Figure 8 represents the model finally tested.

Figure 8. The structural model



We analyzed the construct reliability of the modified scale in order to realize if the constructs are good enough to be further analyzed, composite reliability and Cronbach’s Alpha were measured and displayed in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Modified Model results for Construct reliability and validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Independent	0.843	0.856	0.872	0.306
Interdependent	0.759	0.781	0.811	0.186

Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency	0.74	0.765	0.821	0.407
Self-construal	0.731	0.858	0.54	0.154
Collective	0.704	0.718	0.784	0.21
Realizing and validating Internal Attributes	0.672	0.682	0.821	0.606
Direct Communication	0.652	0.675	0.773	0.368
Relational	0.637	0.69	0.774	0.423
Harmony seeking behavior	0.598	0.599	0.742	0.292
Deference	0.566	0.593	0.728	0.284

As witnessed in Table 6 above, the data shows high reliability using composite reliability with a minimum measurement of $0.728 > 0.600$ amongst the reflective constructs; noting that Self-construal is a formative variable, hence its composite reliability is expected to be low. Cronbach's Alpha on the other hand show high reliability in the constructs of *Independent*, *Interdependent*, *“Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency”*, *Self-construal* and *Collective*. Moreover, moderate reliability was seen in *“Realizing and validating Internal Attributes”*, *Direct Communication*, and *Relational*. Finally, a low, but acceptable value was witnessed in the constructs of *Harmony seeking behavior* and *Deference* (Burns, & Burns, 2008). As a result, these figures show that our constructs are reliable and valid. Hence, this led us to drop the third and the eighth hypotheses that are related to the constructs of Self-expression, and “Similance, affiliation, and abasement”, and continue with this new modified scale.

4.6.1.1 Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity “is supported when the average shared variance of a construct and its indicators exceed the shared variance with every other construct of the model” (Assaker, 2014, p. 220). A construct is recognized as valid if the square root of AVE value in its own construct exceed that of others (Wardina, & Sandhyaduhita, 2016). Table 6 above shows the square root of AVE values and reflected an issue with the validity of the current reflective constructs. Nevertheless, it has been proposed to measure the Heterotrait-monotrait ratio of the correlations (HTMT) approach to assess discriminant validity (Henseler, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2016). HTMT is the average of the heterotrait-heteromethod correlations relative to the average of the monotrait-heteromethod correlations. The HTMT derives from the classical multitrait-multimethod matrix (Campbell &

Fiske, 1959). HTMT values smaller than 1 show that the true correlation between the two constructs should differ. As a criterion HTMT values are compared with a predefined threshold: If the value of the HTMT is higher than this threshold, there is a lack of discriminant validity. Some authors suggest a threshold of 0.85 (Kline 2011), whereas others propose a value of 0.90 (Teo et al. 2008). After running the HTMT results for this model, all of the values were below the 0.90 threshold (with only one value above 0.85) as seen in the below Table, and hence our results do not have issues related to discriminant validity.

Table 7. Discriminant validity test

	Deference	Direct Communication	Harmony seeking behavior	Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency	Realizing and validating Internal Attributes
Direct Communication	0.367				
Harmony seeking behavior	0.787	0.352			
Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency	0.4	0.786	0.274		
Realizing and validating Internal Attributes	0.264	0.746	0.265	0.888	
Relational	0.698	0.274	0.515	0.209	0.16

4.6.1.2 Convergent validity.

Convergent validity was conducted to test the correlation between indicators in a construct. This was done by looking at the AVE based on the result provided by the SmartPLS 3 (Table 6 above). Although Fornell & Larcker (1981) contended that a valid AVE value should exceed “0,5” they also mentioned that if AVE is less than 0.5, but composite reliability is higher than 0.6, the convergent validity of the construct is still adequate. Hence as a conclusion, we have no issues regarding convergent validity in our research.

4.6.1.3 Common method bias:

Knock (2015) contends that the technique of Partial Least Squares in SEM could cause some measurement bias that could be wrongfully reflected by the system of causes and effects in the examined model, which is known as common method bias. In order to check for this bias, VIFs were generated for all latent variables in the model using the SmartPLS software. All VIF values are expected to be less than 3.3 for the model to be free of common method bias (ibid). In this mode, all VIF values are less than 3.3, with the highest value being 2.135 as seen from Table 11 in the Appendix; therefore, this study is not contaminated with common method bias.

4.6.1.4 Validity of the formative construct:

While analyzing the difference between the structure of a formative construct and that of a reflective one, the most obvious difference is reflected by the fact that formative indicators should not be highly correlated. In fact, they should be low enough so that they are not redundant with each other in contributing to the latent construct (Diamantopoulos & Siguaaw, 2006). In order to test for the level of multicollinearity (hence redundancy), the VIF figures for the formative variables need to be checked. If the VIF values are less than 3.3 this would mean that we have no multicollinearity (ibid). As evident in Table 11 in the appendix, this formative variable has no issues of multicollinearity as the highest VIF value for the identifiers of the formative construct is $2.135 < 3.3$.

Another thing to test for the formative variable is the R², which indicates the extent to which the formative measurement model covers a construct's scope (Diamantopoulos, 2006). In this research, the R² of the formative variable is 0.994 (Table 8), therefore the constructs of Independent and Interdependent self-construal provide an acceptable coverage of the SC construct (Diamantopoulos & Siguaaw, 2006). Lastly, it is important to check for the validity of the two structural paths that forms the SC construct, and as is evident (from Table 9) the t-values are both above 1.96 with a p-value under 0.05. The results support the nomological validity of self-construal as a fourth-order formative construct (Thornton et al., 2014).

4.6.2 Structural model.

The structural model was tested using the bootstrapping technique at (2000 iterations Preacher & Hayes, (2008)) after the measurement model was validated. This study tested the path coefficient and t-statistics of the model. To be recognized as significant and therefore accept the hypothesis, a path should not have path coefficient value in between -0,1 and 0,1 also a path's t-statistics value should be higher than 1.96 since this research was analyzed using the two-tailed testing (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2012). Figure 4 in the Appendix and Table 9 below show all the t-values to be well above 1.96, while the same Table and Figure 5 shows the path coefficient values to be valid as well.

To assess the predictive ability of the structural model this research followed the approach proposed by Falk and Miller (1992) which contends that the R² value (variance accounted for) of each of the dependent constructs should exceed the 0.1 value. Table 8 shows that the R² values in the dependent variables are higher than the critical level mentioned.

Another test applied was the Stone-Geisser test of predictive relevance (Q²). This test can be used as an additional assessment of model fit in PLS analysis (Geisser 1975). The Blindfolding technique was used to calculate Q². Models with Q² greater than 0 are considered to have predictive relevance (Chin, 1988). In this case Q² is greater than 0 for all predicted variables (Table 8 below), and hence the predictive ability of this model is high.

Table 8. Table of accounted for variances:

	R Square	Q ² (=1-SSE/SSO)
Realizing and validating Internal Attributes	0.668	0.395
Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency	0.808	0.317
Relational	0.59	0.236
Direct Communication	0.632	0.219
Harmony seeking behavior	0.729	0.199
Deference	0.742	0.196
Collective	0.827	0.164
Self-construal	0.994	0.141

In order to test for the hypotheses, the path coefficients were measured using the bootstrapping technique. The path coefficients are displayed in Table 9 below.

Table 9. Structural model measurement.

	Hypothesis	Summary	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics ((O/STDEV))	P Values
Collective -> Harmony seeking behavior	H1	Significant	0.892	31.915	0,000
Collective -> Deference	H2	Significant	0.868	37.918	0,000
Interdependent -> Relational	H4	Significant	0.782	16.672	0,000
Interdependent -> Collective	H5	Significant	0.907	45.589	0,000
Interdependent -> Self-construal	H6	Significant	-0.240	2.024	0,046
Independent -> Direct Communication	H7	Significant	0.803	28.724	0,000
Independent -> Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency	H9	Significant	0.916	50.141	0,000
Independent -> Realizing and validating Internal Attributes	H10	Significant	0.860	25.588	0,000
Independent -> Self-construal	H11	Significant	0.919	18.135	0,000

4.6.3 Measurement invariance of composite Models (MICOM)

One of the main interests of this research is that it is not limited to one audience, but as a matter of fact is creating a comparison between two different countries belonging to two distinct cultures. When using structural equation modelling (SEM), group comparisons can be misleading unless researchers establish the invariance of their measures, and this occurs in three steps (Henseler et al., 2016).

Step one, configural invariance. This is established by SmartPLS3 directly; however, we need to make sure that we have an adequate sample size in each group. Knowing that the maximum number of arrows pointing towards/from a construct is 7, hence we need a sample size of 166 questions at 95% degree of confidence, which we easily fulfilled in this research with 224 questionnaires (Cohen, 1992; Hair et al., 2016).

Step two, compositional invariance. To establish compositional invariance, we need to compare original correlations with those values at 5% quartile. If they exceed this value, and moreover permutation P-values are not significant, then compositional invariance is established.

As seen in Table 10 below, all values of the original correlations are greater than or equal to those values at 5%, and none of which are significant; hence we do have compositional invariance, and so we could move to step three.

Table 10. Results of MICOM Step two.

	Original Correlation	Correlation Permutation Mean	5.00%	Permutation p-Values
Collective	0.983	0.983	0.966	0.432
Deference	0.988	0.981	0.961	0.712
Direct Communication	0.972	0.988	0.97	0.064
Harmony seeking behavior	0.965	0.974	0.931	0.2
Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency	0.993	0.996	0.991	0.136
Independent	0.994	0.996	0.993	0.08
Interdependent	0.981	0.984	0.97	0.28
Realizing and validating Internal Attributes	0.996	0.998	0.993	0.168
Relational	0.991	0.99	0.975	0.52
Self-construal	0.755	0.947	0.735	0.056

Step three, composite equality. Here we need to check the mean original difference and make sure that it falls between the 2.5% and the 97.5% boundaries. Moreover, we need to check the variance original difference if it falls between the same range. If both conditions are met, then we can say that we have full invariance, if one of them is met, then we will have a valid partial invariance (Hair et al., 2016). In order to test for composite equality, the below Table was analyzed, and it was evident that the mean original difference was falling between 2.5 and 97.5% in all of the constructs, but on the other hand, the values of the variance of the original difference does not; hence we have a valid partial invariance.

Table 11. Results of MICOM Step three

	Mean - Original Difference (UK - Lebanon)	Mean - Permutation Mean Difference (UK - Lebanon)	2.50%	97.50%	Permutation p-Values
Collective	0.162	0.012	-0.237	0.304	0.300
Deference	0.231	0.015	-0.241	0.328	0.312
Direct Communication	-0.125	-0.006	-0.311	0.246	0.317
Harmony seeking behavior	-0.198	0.005	-0.252	0.332	0.150
Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency	-0.324	-0.025	-0.325	0.208	0.250
Independent	-0.18	-0.016	-0.288	0.219	0.167
Interdependent	0.159	0.014	-0.231	0.31	0.250
Realizing and validating Internal Attributes	0.096	-0.002	-0.297	0.193	0.458
Relational	0.071	0.01	-0.198	0.255	0.558
Self-construal	-0.228	-0.019	-0.295	0.239	0.117

	Variance - Original Difference (UK - Lebanon)	Variance - Permutation Mean Difference (UK - Lebanon)	2.50%	97.50%	Permutation p-Values
Collective	-0.114	-0.014	-0.516	0.401	0.608
Deference	-0.11	-0.026	-0.44	0.371	0.575
Direct Communication	-0.499	-0.005	-0.618	0.535	0.108
Harmony seeking behavior	-0.04	0.002	-0.541	0.44	0.808
Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency	-0.649	-0.003	-0.539	0.506	0.006
Independent	-0.744	-0.009	-0.636	0.661	0.008
Interdependent	-0.221	-0.025	-0.433	0.298	0.292
Realizing and validating Internal Attributes	-0.668	-0.001	-0.51	0.504	0.017
Relational	-0.25	-0.026	-0.458	0.39	0.217
Self-construal	-0.706	-0.012	-0.572	0.596	0.017

4.6.4 Analyzing and interpreting permutation results.

When we established that there exists invariance amongst the construct, the next focus will be on determining if the path coefficients of the theoretical models for the two groups are actually significantly different. So as a first step, we shall start by analyzing the results of each group (Lebanon and UK) separately prior to determining if there are group-specific differences (Matthews, 2017).

Using the guidelines set out for evaluation of a measurement model by (Hair et al. 2014), we ran the model for each group separately. In Table 12 below it is evident from the “t” and “p” values that the relationship between all constructs in both countries are valid at a 95% confidence level.

Table 12. Bootstrapping results for Lebanon and UK separately.

	LEBANON			
	Path Coefficients Original	Path Coefficients Mean	t-Value	p-Value
Collective -> Deference	0.868	0.874	33.429	0,000
Collective -> Harmony seeking behavior	0.892	0.893	35.131	0,000
Independent -> Direct Communication	0.804	0.808	19.737	0,000
Independent -> Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency	0.915	0.914	45.596	0,000
Independent -> Realizing and validating Internal Attributes	0.859	0.858	27.119	0,000
Independent -> Self-construal	0.853	0.839	8.964	0,000
Interdependent -> Collective	0.909	0.91	36.029	0,000
Interdependent -> Relational	0.78	0.78	12.683	0,000
Interdependent -> Self-construal	-0.365	-0.349	2.666	0.021

	UK			
	Path Coefficients Original	Path Coefficients Mean	t-Value	p-Value
Collective -> Deference	0.872	0.879	26.853	0,000
Collective -> Harmony seeking behavior	0.854	0.864	19.507	0,000
Independent -> Direct Communication	0.792	0.809	19.877	0.002

Independent -> Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency	0.858	0.863	22.473	0.004
Independent -> Realizing and validating Internal Attributes	0.751	0.752	14.662	0,000
Independent -> Self-construal	0.884	0.621	2.075	0.002
Interdependent -> Collective	0.88	0.894	9.442	0,000
Interdependent -> Relational	0.766	0.746	8.921	0,000
Interdependent -> Self-construal	0.354	0.204	8.28	0.014

Next, it is necessary to determine if the difference between the two groups is significant. This can be accomplished by running a multigroup analysis with both the UK and Lebanon, and the results are displayed in the Table below.

Table 13. Permutation test path coefficients-difference results.

	Path Coefficient s Lebanon	Path Coefficient s UK	Path Coefficients-diff (Lebanon - UK)	p-Value new (Lebanon vs UK)
Collective -> Deference	0.868	0.872	-0.004	0.898
Collective -> Harmony seeking behavior	0.892	0.854	0.038	0.43
Independent -> Direct Communication	0.804	0.792	0.012	0.824
Independent -> Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency	0.915	0.858	0.057	0.149
Independent -> Realizing and validating Internal Attributes	0.859	0.751	0.108	0.057
Independent -> Self-construal	0.853	0.884	-0.031	0.34
Interdependent -> Collective	0.909	0.880	0.029	0.774
Interdependent -> Relational	0.78	0.766	0.014	0.946
Interdependent -> Self-construal	-0.365	0.354	-0.719	0.263

Using the information from the group-specific bootstrapping as well as the above permutation test, we can now indicate that there is no significant difference between results in Lebanon and the UK when it comes to the relationship between the constructs in the SC scale model as none of the P-values of the difference between the path coefficients were valid under 95% confidence.

4.7 Discussion

This chapter set out to validate the result of the Delphi study that revealed a 37-item self-construal scale. Through rigorous confirmatory factor analysis using SmartPLS3, this research was able to validate a new modified version of the theorized scale. While theorized that the SC scale is formed with 8 dimensions, each represented by the 1st order constructs, the data showed that the model is better explained using 6 dimensions (shown in Figure 1 in the appendix). Deference and Harmony seeking behavior together form a second order construct of Collective-interdependent SC. Then Relational SC, which combined with collective interdependent SC forms our third order construct of Interdependent SC. On the other hand, we have the other first order constructs represented by the three dimensions of “Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency”, “Realizing and validating Internal Attributes”, and “Direct Communication” who together form the second order construct of Independent SC, which in its turn, along with Interdependent SC construct form the 4th order construct of Self-construal.

This scale was deemed valid after extensively testing for construct reliability and validity including convergent and discriminant validity. Moreover, we tested for construct reliability and validity along with common method bias, and all of these tests revealing positive results. Furthermore, this study aimed to test this model for rigorousness amongst individuals of different cultures, and as seen in the results, it could be said that there is no significant difference between the results in both cultures (Lebanon vs. UK), and hence this scale is applicable in both collective and individualistic communities. Hence this allows us to implement this scale for individuals in both individualistic and collectivistic countries alike, specifically since the two chosen benchmarks were not that of the typical one that used to compare USA and the east Asian countries in the past. Moreover, this study was able to measure the reliability of these indicators amongst an audience

with a majority of non-students (90.18% of the sample), as a comparison to previous literature that used to focus mostly on university students.

4.8 Limitations and recommendations for future research:

The main limitation for this study is related to the low Cronbach's Alpha values for the theoretical constructs of "Self-expression" and "Similance, affiliation and abasement". It turns out that items representing these constructs were not enough to make them hold, hence future researchers could attempt to add multiple items to each construct, and then test them as stand-alone constructs in an attempt to unveil more dimensions than this research could. In case these items continue to have low Cronbach's Alpha figures, then literature could be receiving an important piece of information in terms of proof that these constructs are not dimensions of the SC construct.

As a conclusion, this chapter was able to provide future researchers in the areas of social sciences with the ability to test for the effect of self-construal on the behavior of individuals belonging to multiple cultures. Moreover, this allowed us to measure our main model for this research which is basically measuring the effects of the self-construal of individuals belonging to different cultures on consumer engagement in Cause-related Marketing campaigns.

Chapter 5

The Effect of Self-construal on Engagement in Cause-related Marketing Campaigns

5.1 Introduction

In an era of competitive markets, the consistent innovation of marketing strategies is always anticipated from a company for it to maintain its competitive edge. As contended by Kotler & Keller (2012), strategies that promote consumer engagement with the brand form the cornerstone of the firm's marketing efforts to assist it in achieving its goals; a mission that was well achieved by Cause-related Marketing (Lafferty, Lueth, & McCafferty, 2016). During the strategy's inception, firms' views towards CM were split into two: Scrupulous firms with genuine intentions towards supporting the society (Stroup, & Neubert, 1987), and mercenary firms who forcefully participated into corporate giving (Morris, & Biederman, 1985). As consumers' social conscious transcended from being just a flurry into becoming a salient part of their identity, CM became a seminal strategy adopted by marketers for the engagement of consumers with their brand (Andreasen, 1996; Hamby, & Brinberg, 2018). As a matter of fact, in our modern times, corporate social support is now considered as an economic necessity (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Forbes, 2020). It is currently evident that CM is universally spread, with its popularity increasing yearly amongst marketers (Forbes, 2018), and the main reason for this is its success in boosting short-term sales combined with an enhanced brand equity in the long run (Krishna, & Rajan, 2009). As a matter of fact, in 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, corporate giving accounted to nearly two-thirds of the total philanthropic funding at \$7.9 billion (EngageForGood.com, 2020).

Managers armed with the strategy of CM had a primary interest of appealing to their socially conscious consumers along with the engagement of the less involved. It had been evident in literature, specifically in the seminal paper by Markus and Kitayama (1991) on the theory of self-construal, that consumers could be clustered into two categories: Independent and interdependent self-construal (SC). The independent individuals separate their view of their self to that of others. They tend to identify and pursue their own goals of self-growth and accomplishment and are usually less involved in social welfare. However, the interdependent individuals view their self as a part of that of the larger group in their society, so they tend to emphasize collective

harmony and social connectiveness hence making them more involved in doing social good (Yang, & Yen, 2017). As contended by Xiaojun et al., (2020), an individual's SC influence a CM campaign's success. More specifically, interdependent consumers are prone to be more supportive to such events. Such support is shown in three important ways: actual participation in such campaigns, a boost in company reputation (Demetriou, Papasolomou, & Vrontis, 2010), and the dissemination of positive electronic word of mouth and traditional word of mouth (Christofi et al., 2019).

While CM has had witnessed an increased growth in the practical world, it has received limited attention among academics. Such a phenomenon necessitates an increased focus on this subject matter (Mora and Vila, 2018). More specifically on the factors that affect consumers' behavior towards CM campaigns as they are reaping an increased interest amongst modern scholars (Vrontis et al., 2020). As a matter of fact, the influence of culture on such campaigns is an under-researched topic, and there is relatively little research that focuses solely on self-construal as being the only dimension under investigation with the CM context (ibid).

To widen the scope of research on the factors affecting consumer engagement in CM campaigns, this research studied the role of Self-construal in stimulating positive attitudes and behaviors towards such campaigns. Therefore, this study provides evidence that SC plays a role on the level of positive engagement in CM campaign with company reputation playing a mediating role between participating in CM campaigns and the dissemination of positive e/WOM. Finally, this research also proves that SC stimulates positive engagement with CM campaigns in different country contexts.

Knowing that individuals of different construal should react differently to CM campaigns (Christofi et al., 2019), it was evident that an intercultural study between an individualistic country and a collective one should be conducted. This research focuses on the collective country of Lebanon and the Individualistic one of the United Kingdom (Hofstede, 2001).

Based on the construal theory and that of planned behavior, it is expected that the higher the level of SC, the better the attitude, participation intentions, and the higher their level of participation in CM campaigns. Moreover, based on the associative learning theory, we hypothesize that participation in CM campaigns will raise the level of positive word-of-mouth (including electronic), then the stakeholder theory contended that an increased level of

participation in CM campaigns will lead to a higher company reputation, and finally, company reputation positively mediates the relationship between participation and the dissemination of electronic/word of mouth as advised by the social identity theory.

Research questions:

- 1- Is there a positive causal relationship between SC, CM, Company reputation, eWOM, WOM, and Culture?
 - a. Does self-construal play a causal role on attitudes, participation intentions, and the level of participation in CM campaigns?
 - b. Does participation in CM campaigns affect the level of WOM and (eWOM)?
 - c. Does company reputation play a mediating role in the relationship between participation and eWOM/WOM?
 - d. Will SC have the same effect on the level of engagement in CM campaigns for individuals from different cultures?

5.2 Literature review

5.2.1 CM definition:

Although many researchers tackled the topic of CM, there was unanimity on the provided definition in the seminal paper by Varadarajan and Menon (1988) who provided the following definition:

“Cause-related marketing is the process of formulating and implementing marketing activities that are characterized by an offer from the firm to contribute a specified amount to a designated cause when customers engage in revenue-providing exchanges that satisfy organizational and individual objectives.” (Varadarajan & Menon, 1988, p. 60).

5.2.2 *Birth of CM:*

The sustainability of a firm is highly dependent on the performance of its daily operations of converting resources into profits. The cornerstone for the success of a business has had always been the consumer; the more a consumer is satisfied, the more operations these businesses could perform, and the more wealth they could accumulate. Firm owners realized how precious their consumers are and hence felt the urge to be genuinely involved in solving social issues and problems to improve the standards of life in their society (Izquierdo, & Vicedo, 2012). Others though were not truly interested in solving social issues, but realized the consequences of being outcasted by consumers, and hence forcefully participated in corporate giving (Porter & Kramer, 2002; Morris, & Biederman, 1985). Eventually firms realized the importance of being an active member in the society to maintain their competitive advantage, which led them to increase their level of participation in corporate giving (Porter, & Kramer, 2002).

Once this concept was adapted, it was evident that firms used social responsibility as an investment that will sustain their existence and improve their performance in the long run but the high costs that were incurred by the firms' social acts pushed managers to innovate a new technique that stimulate short term wealth along with the long-term wealth that was originally anticipated (Agudelo et al., 2019;). In 1983, Jerry Welsh, the vice president of worldwide marketing and communications for American Express credit card came up with the perfect solution and called it Cause-related Marketing (Walsh, 1999). In their attempt to boost sales, American Express launched a sales campaign with a social twist. They promised to donate a dollar for every new credit card subscription, and a penny from every purchase made using their charge cards which boosted sales by 28% and lead to the donation of 1.7 million dollars to the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation (Ferraris et al., 2019; Wall, 1984).

As a matter of fact, in our current modern times, corporate social support is not anymore considered as a simple act of charity, it transcended into becoming an economic necessity (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Forbes, 2020). Ever since the 1990's, firms were faced by the increased consumer social conscience, which forced them to participate in such practices to maintain their competitive advantage (Ferraris et al., 2019). Today, numerous companies are involved in CM and its popularity is strictly on a rise (CauseGood, 2017; Forbes, 2018) since it presents the perfect tool that solves the issue of identifying the lucrativeness of doing social good

through boosting short-term sales while at the same time strengthen their reputation, and developed goodwill amongst their consumers (Hamby, & Brinberg, 2018).

5.2.3 Evolution of consumer involvement with the brand

Before the birth of CM, consumers used to purchase a product based on the level of their involvement with its brand. As Johnson and Eagly (1989) explain, a consumer's involvement with the brand is either based on *impression-relevant involvement*, *value-relevant involvement*, or *outcome-relevant involvement* (Parcha, 2020). They also contend that the type of an individual's involvement influences the nature of his or her attitude change in response to different persuasion strategies (ibid). Impression-relevant brand involvement is defined as an involvement with an intention to create a positive impression amongst their peers. Consumers with high impression-relevant involvement care a lot to show their communities that they share similar interests, and hence they will purchase a selected brand simply because it provides a desirable status amongst other members of the society (Parcha 2020; Leippe & Elkin, 1987). Outcome-relevant brand involvement reflects the consumers interest in achieving an outcome through the focus on the utilitarian aspect of the brand (Parcha & Westerman, 2020; Katz, 1960). Last but not least, value-relevant involvement is an ego involved attitude that is based on the persons own values, which reflects their attitude and behavioral intentions towards a brand; if a brand is matching their values, they will buy it (Cho & Boster, 2005).

The introduction of CM created a shift in preferences amongst consumer categories. After its inception, the presence of support to a social cause became an additional factor to stimulate consumers' purchase intentions. While consumers have previously reported that the product's performance and price were solely important factors to stimulate purchase, today the presence of support for social good became a third stimulus that leads consumers to switch brands even for a price premium (Yang and Yen, 2017). Another reason for consumers to participate in a CM campaign is their increased feeling of guilt from excess consumption of luxury goods. Once a donation has been made through their consumption to a social cause, this diminishes the level of guilt and anxiety and justify their choices (Barone and Winterich, 2011).

5.2.4 Growth of CM:

Ever since its inception, CM has been flourishing as a marketing tool especially in the USA. According to the IEG (2009), CM spending grew from roughly \$100 million in 1990 to more than \$1.5 billion in 2009. Up until 2014, CM expenditure kept growing reaching close to \$1.85 billion in the USA (Sponsorship Spending, 2014), then grew to \$1.9 billion in 2015 (Hamby, 2016). In 2016, the estimated global spending on CM was \$2 billion, a 3.7% increase over 2015 spending (IEG, 2016) and finally today, based on a Unilever consumer study, an estimate of 1.2 trillion-dollar opportunity exists for brands that make their sustainability credentials clear. These figures, accompanied by the fact that more than 90% of Fortune 500 companies' websites addressed corporate social responsibility (Lim, Sung, & Lee, 2015).

5.2.5 Advantages of CM:

The success and growth of CM in the marketplace is primarily based on its positive appeal on its three main constituents; the for-profits through competitive differentiation, the nonprofit organizations who benefit from the donations and marketing publicity (Soni, 2016), as well as by consumers who in addition to enjoying the consumption of the products, can now feel the warmth of participating in improving someone's life through their donation to a social cause (Strahilevitz, & Myers, 1998; Hamby, & Brinberg, 2018). Such warmth will create a positive spillover to the firm that is considered to be only financially driven, creating a mutual benefit between a nonprofit that is filled with warmth but minimal financing, and a firm that is rich in finances but not in warmth (Hamby, & Brinberg, 2018).

Consumers are the main pillar for CM success; hence an increased marketing effort has been conducted to continuously engage them with the brand and support the firm's efforts in reaching their financial goals (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Consumers actually appear to enjoy the process of participating in CM campaigns (Landreth, Pirsch, & Garretson 2004; Forbes 2018), which acts as a primary drive for firms to continue adapting it. CM has many advantages for the firm, the majority of which are summarized in the below three contributions:

5.2.5.1 The creation of goodwill and differentiated image within the community:

Companies has had always been interested in advertising their social activities to maintain a positive attitude towards their businesses. As a matter of fact, CM has also been becoming extremely attractive in recent literature as well. CM is considered as an effective and valuable marketing tool as it has a direct role in improving performance, reputation, sales, but most importantly, the brand image (Ferraris et al., 2019). It was contended that an alliance between a firm and a reputable cause could help improve the image of a sponsoring firm due to this partnership (Josephson, 1984; Liu, Ko, & Chapleo, 2018). Such popular causes will transfer their own reputation and visibility to the sponsoring firm through the conveyed CM campaign, and hence allow firms to gain national visibility as a social contributor. When consumers embrace the firm's products as socially responsible and favor their support to the cause, such outcome can be the cornerstone of differentiating a firm's brand from other competitors through its social image (Murphy, 1997; Porter, & Kramer, 2002). Firms' social actions will attract the attention of the socially responsible consumers based on their shared traits which provokes a sense of social identification with the firm (Lichtenstein, Drumwright, & Braig, 2004) enhancing its brand's favorable evaluation, and promoting loyalty (Hoeffler, & Keller, 2002).

5.2.5.2 Immunizing against criticism in times of crisis:

Although CM seems to be a very positive framework for a company, there has had been some negative complaints from consumers, specifically due to the company's motivation for the initiatives that they are supporting. The main source of skepticism is the expectation that a company is exploiting the cause to simply improve its sales (Boenigk and Schuchardt, 2013). But nevertheless, once an alliance is formed between a firm and a cause, the reputation of this social enterprise, along with its legitimacy can be highly precious for business enterprises (Nelson, & Zadek, 2000), especially when trying to mitigate the effect of potential negative allegations surrounding the corporation in the future. Trust is pivotal for the success of a firm and in case it was shook by any scandal, it would become extremely difficult for them to reclaim their consumers' loyalty (Webb, & Mohr, 1998; Kim, Kim, & Kim, 2018). Once this company achieves its social identity as a responsible and caring organization, consumers will sympathize with the

firm based on their history of social support which will minimize the allegation's negative effect based on the increased consumer perception of the company's sincerity in engaging in CM (Youn, & Kim, 2008). As a matter of fact, a famous example was that of the boycott organized by the British Hotels, Restaurants and Caterers Association on American Express in 1981. American Express' response to this negative campaign was an offer to contribute to the Duke of Edinburgh Award (a charity for young people that was named for Prince Philip) which eventually led to the end of the boycott (Varadarajan, & Menon, 1988).

5.2.5.3 Increased sales and market performance

As reported by "Edelman's 2018 Earned Brand Study", 64% of consumers choose, switch, avoid or boycott a brand based on its stand on societal issues (Engage-for-good, 2020). Moreover, based on a recent study by Porter Novelli, when a company leads with purpose, respondents were: 78% more likely to want to work for that company; 76% more likely to trust that company; 72% more likely to be loyal to that company; 70% more likely to defend that company if someone spoke badly of it and 72% more likely to forgive that company if it makes a misstep (ibid). Consumers tend to adopt a more positive attitude toward the company and a greater willingness to purchase a company's product (Vrontis et al., 2020; Robinson, Irmak, & Jayachandran, 2012), consumer brand advocacy (Bigne et al., 2021; Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2007), brand loyalty (Pfitzer, Bockstette, & Stamp, 2013), as well as stronger consumer-brand identification (Bhattacharya & Sen 2003; Torelli, Monga, & Kaikati, 2012). As a result, CM efforts are associated with increased sales and market performance (Katsikeas, Leonidou, & Zeriti, 2016; Leonidou et al., 2013; Strahilevitz & Myers, 1998).

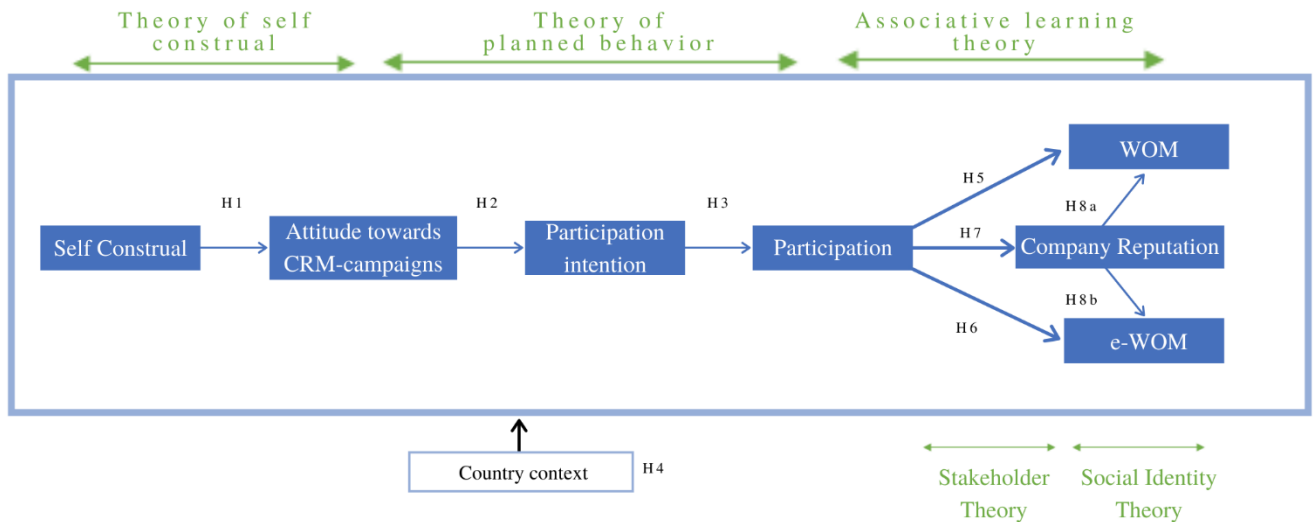
5.2.6 Model formulation:

The lack of academic research on CM has been witnessed (Mora and Vila, 2018), while an increased interest in understanding the factors that affect the consumers' behavior towards such campaigns was on a rise (Vrontis et al., 2020). One specific field of interest was the influence of culture on such campaigns; hence this study started by measuring the effect of consumer SC on the level of participation in CM campaigns.

Another scarce research in this domain is WOM, specifically that which places WOM as an outcome of participating in CM campaigns (Christofi et al., 2019). A main limitation of extant literature is the failure to consider the effects of culture on consumers in their responses toward CM and thus, create a contextual foundation within the CM domain.

As a result of the above phenomena, this research attempts to measure the causal relationship between SC and participation in CM campaign, along with the effect of participation on consumer eWOM/WOM that can be mediated by company reputation (as seen in the below figure).

Figure 9. Self-construal and CM Success Nexus



Self-Construal:

While focusing on the SC construct, Markus and Kitayama (1991) reflected that SC is formed out of two main dimensions, Independent and Interdependent Self-construal. One of the major means of differentiation between independent and interdependent self-construal is through measuring the degree to which individuals view themselves as connected or separate to others by reference to their own internal repertoire of thoughts, feelings, and action, rather than those of others (ibid).

Throughout their research, Markus, & Kitayama (1991), continued to highlight that both construal co-exists in every individual, but one of them is usually dominant over the other. This is

important news for marketers of CM campaigns as this means that an effort could be exerted to stimulate a reaction from those less involved independent consumers. Interdependent individuals are proven to hold a positive attitude towards a CM campaign, as well as being more inclined to participate in social roles, obligations and social campaigns due to their high interest in appealing in a positive way to their societies (Xiaojun et al., 2020; Yang and Yen, 2017). Moreover, based on the theory of self-construal, this research expects a higher positive attitude towards CM campaigns by consumers with an interdependent self-construal.

Hypothesis 1: The higher the consumers' level of self-construal, the more positive their attitude towards a CM campaign.

According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, human behavior is guided by three kinds of considerations: Behavioral beliefs, as in beliefs about the likely consequences of the behavior, normative beliefs, as in beliefs about the normative expectations of others, and control beliefs as in beliefs about the presence of factors that may facilitate or impede performance of the behavior. It is contended that behavioral beliefs produce a favorable/unfavorable attitude towards a certain behavior. The effects of attitude toward the behavior and subjective norm on intention are moderated by perception of behavioral control. So, the more favorable the attitude and subjective norm, and the greater the perceived control, the stronger should be the person's intention to perform the behavior in question. Finally, given a sufficient degree of actual control over the behavior, people are expected to carry out their intentions when the opportunity arises. Intention is thus assumed to be the immediate antecedent of behavior. To the extent that perceived behavioral control is veridical, it can serve as a proxy for actual control and contribute to the prediction of the behavior in question (Ajzen, 2019).

Yuriev et al., (2020) contend that the Theory of Planned Behavior is one of the most used frameworks for studying consumer behavior. The Theory considers the relationships between the individuals, as well as the social and environmental aspects, to explain consumer behavior. Several studies have confirmed that attitudes, perceived behavioral control, and subject norms affected intention indirectly, while it influenced the behavior directly (Abadi et al., 2020). As a result, this positive attitude is then expected by the theory of planned behavior to be translated into positive intentions and participatory behavior. This theory has been notably applied in the CM context as it has been utilized as a useful framework in predicting individuals' decision to participate in

prosocial behaviors (Kim, Youn, & Lee, 2019). It has been contended that consumers' prosocial behaviors are positively influenced by their attitudes (Mayrhofer-Reinhartshuber et al., 2006). Azjen (1991) explains the theory of planned behavior and contends that intentions to perform behaviors can be predicted with high accuracy from attitudes towards the behavior. Moreover, there intentions account for considerable variance in actual behavior.

Hypothesis 2: The more positive the attitude towards a CM campaign is, the higher the consumers' participation intention in them.

Hypothesis 3: As the intention to participate in a CM campaign increases, participation in CM campaigns increases.

Markus and Kitayama (1991) contended that individual construal are inherited by the overall culture of the country in which they reside. Hence, different prevailing cultures would lead to different levels of self-construal. This is important because different construal is expected to reflect different interested towards supporting the society and this will have a direct relationship with the level of engagement with CM campaigns. Hence it is expected by this research to find different reactions towards CM campaigns by individuals belonging to different cultures (collectivistic vs individualistic).

Hypothesis 4: Different cultures moderate differently the relationships between level of self-construal and participation in CM campaigns.

Participation in CM campaigns and its effect on WOM and eWOM

Associative learning has had been highly implemented for both human and nonhuman beings alike. Think of how dogs, chimps, and other animals are trained, this is usually done through the association of one stimulus to an action. A simple ring of a bell could mean the food should be delivered, customers on the reception should be greeted, you should leave school, and multiple other possible outcomes that are shaped by your experience with this stimulus (Randall et al., 2012). This theory has had been important in literature for researchers on human behavior as it could allow the anticipation of the response the moment a stimulus appears. This makes the

associative learning theory a crucial framework for understanding the antecedents and consequences of successful CM partnerships for both brand and firm. Associative learning theory develops principles such as, belongingness and reputation that set the foundation for incorporating partnership fit and long-term brand/cause relationships as antecedents that should link the relationship to benefits for both brand and firm. These benefits, increased word-of-mouth, improved image for the firm, consumer attitudes towards the brand, and greater purchase likelihood, thus form the desired consequences completing the framework (Thomas, 2007). Simply said, when consumers are subjected with a CM campaign (stimulus) they will directly recall from their memory a heartwarming feeling that would directly engage them by either liking a post, following a page, and even sharing the news about this campaign's existence.

Word-of-mouth

WOM is defined to be a form of informal personal communication between consumers that reflects the level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction towards a certain brand/product (Zaheer et al., 2021). Probably one of the most differentiating factors of WOM is the fact that it is spontaneous, non-paid, and is originating from a trusted source (Pruden and Vavra, 2004). WOM messages are based on personal experiences and thus are delivered in a story telling manner which makes way for personal interpretation and an enhanced experience (Delgadillo and Escalas, 2004). Ever since 1971, WOM has been considered a more effective way than that of traditional advertising techniques in creating a positive attitude towards the brand (Day, 1971). The main reason behind this is because 90% of consumers found traditional advertising to be non-credible, while 90% of WOM to be credible (Zaheer et al., 2021). While comparing WOM to other forms of advertising techniques, it is evident that WOM is more trusted, and disseminates faster than traditional techniques. When consumers are delighted in their experience with a brand, they are most likely to tell 3-5 people about their experience and thus through the multiplier effect, the positive impression will grow exponentially (Pruden and Vavra, 2004). Realizing the importance of WOM to the success of their marketing campaigns, firms are doing their utmost best to find different ways to harness positive WOM. Be it through advertising testimonials, celebrity endorsements, and hosted chatrooms, firms create multiple attempts into engaging consumers in positive WOM (Thomas, 2004).

After experiencing the product/service, consumers form a certain attitude towards their experience, which they recall when faced with the decision of purchasing this item/service in the future. As a matter of fact, consumer attitudes are grouped into three: Dissatisfied, Satisfied, and Delighted. Dissatisfied consumers are those who had a negative experience with the brand, and are furious enough to engage in negative WOM, advising their friends and families to stay away from this brand to protect them from the negative experience that they endured. Satisfied consumers are those who had a pleasant experience with the firm, and the product/service they consumed appealed to their expectations. Such consumers will usually show repetitive purchase of the brand but will not be stimulated enough to engage in positive WOM. Delighted consumers are those who received more than they expected from their experience with a brand and are thus willing to engage in WOM by advising those who they influence in engaging with the brand. While consumers are conscious about the main aim of firms, which is to make profit, they may receive a positive shock when they learn of a CM campaign being adopted; this positive shock will be enough to delight them and lead to their engagement in positive WOM (Lee Thomas, Mullen, & Fraedrich, 2011).

Associative learning theory provides a foundation to explain the eWOM/WOM via CM phenomenon. It is a psychological theory which posits that people form links between objects and the stronger these links, the stronger is the transfer of feelings about one object to another. Therefore, CM partnerships should create a strong associative link between the campaign and the individual, allowing for a positive transfer of cause affect to the individual creating a favorable environment for stimulating positive WOM and eWOM towards the CM campaigns (Christofi et al., 2019; Lee Thomas, Mullen, & Fraedrich, 2011).

Hypothesis 5: Participation in CM campaigns induces positive word of mouth.

Electronic Word of Mouth

While the only difference between electronic and traditional word of mouth is simply the medium of transmission, there are multiple differences between the two; the main one being the closeness strength between the sender and the receiver (Zaheer et al., 2021). When you are providing advice

face to face, you must have a closer relationship than providing advice on your Facebook page that will be seen by people who you may never have met before. As a result, a higher level of skepticism towards this message could rise in the form of mistrust in the advice being disseminated leading to a lower level of influence on purchase behavior (ibid).

Product consumption has been regarded as an important tool for expressing an individual's personal identity. Moreover, consumers tend to publicize their social identity amongst their communities to gain an enhanced social prestige (O'cass, & McEwen, 2004). Firms caught up with this phenomenon and invested in the digital platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram when they marketed their CM campaigns (Malaquias, Malaquias, & Hwang, 2016). Some consumers tend to buy CM products with the main aim of enhancing their social figure in their societies; in many cases without having a sincere interest in the cause that they are supporting. Having such a drive meant that the more visibility they can receive from participating in CM, the more they will be motivated to engage in it (Choi, Sung, & Cho, 2018). On the other hand, it is also contended that consumers within a collectivistic community will be highly interested in supporting a CM campaign to help a social cause stimulate higher social wellbeing; and so, they will be motivated by their underlying social pattern to engage in positive e/WOM persuasion toward other consumers in their society, in favor of the donor organization conducting the CM campaign. It is hence expected that once consumers participate in CM campaigns, they tend to communicate their participation through traditional and social media platforms.

This expectation is as well fortified by the associative learning theory as we are now conditioned by our experiences to behave in a certain way on online channels. The moment we browse ticktock, we directly swipe up, when we see a post by a relative/loved one, we directly like it (without even reading). As a result, our personal experiences and drives will also condition our behavior online, and thus it is expected that those positive feelings of participating in CM campaigns would continue to stimulate the same behavior online.

Hypothesis 6: Participation in CM campaigns induces positive electronic word of mouth.

Company reputation

The journey for building positive corporate reputation starts from the fact that companies are expected to fulfill their promises to the society, specifically when it comes to its main business offering. Companies are expected to provide consumers with quality products and services that should surpass their expectations, and based on their performance while doing so, consumers formulate opinions about the company, which will develop into positive reputation (Anca & Roderick, 2007).

Fombrun et al. (2000, p. 243) define corporate reputation as “a collective assessment of a company’s ability to provide valued outcomes to a representative group of stakeholders.” This assessment is built based on previous actions of the firm, that build onto their stakeholders’ perceptions, who in their turn will provide an opinion about the level of respect and trustworthiness of this company in the marketplace (Chun, 2005; Williams et al., 2005; Fombrun & Shanley, 2018). This feedback is essential for the success of the company as it influences the level of engagement between the consumer and the company (Fatmawati, & Fauzan, 2021). It is contended that a company with high positive reputation is expected to profit from an increased financial performance, increased consumer loyalty, and an ease in accessing capital markets (Hong, & Yang, 2009).

Companies realized the importance of building their reputation but were faced with an increased level of competition in the market, specifically from the increased level of advertising and the limited possibilities for product differentiation, and so they continued to seek other ways to improve their reputation; one of which was cause-related marketing (Fatmawati, & Fauzan, 2021).

As per a report by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2011), an organization may derive a range of benefits by investing in socially responsible initiatives, one of which is company reputation. As a matter of fact, consumers are now more aware of companies’ crucial role in supporting the society and so their perceptions of the companies’ reputation became directly linked to that of their socially responsible activities (Fombrun & Shanley, 2018).

It has had been the case that consumers view companies as money making machines with minimal ethics, and the history of many companies worldwide like Enron, WorldCom, and Tyco, supported this phenomenon. The stakeholder theory contends that companies need to make

decisions with the benefits of its stakeholders at heart and by so, it tries to solve two main managerial problems- First, understanding how value is created and traded, and then how to manage ethics vs. capitalism considerations. So, managers need to focus on the relationship between the company and the groups of individuals who can affect or be affected by the business activities in order to solve the above two issues (Parmar et al, 2010).

While thinking about the ethical aspect of this theory, one cannot but link it to corporate social responsibility (CSR), which is a concept that pressures the company away from the fixation about the financial aspects and towards broader social obligations. As a result, CSR touches base on the topics of ethics and capitalism, and moreover, Stakeholder theory aims to connect a concern for moral conduct with the process of value creation (ibid). This fact solidifies the integration of this theory in this field.

A result of the company's sincere interest in the wellbeing of its stakeholders, consumers will now be less skeptic towards their CM activities. It is hence confirmed that when the stakeholder theory is taken into consideration, it has a direct effect on consumers' opinions towards these companies, specifically when it comes to the level of skepticism towards their activities. Furthermore, it was evident by the social identity theory, that the moment consumers realize that a company has their interest in mind, a strong connection between them will be formed, and they tend to affiliate themselves with the firm and its corporate social performance (Pérez, López-Gutiérrez, García-De Los Salmones, & San-Martín, 2019). This affiliation occurs because of the two-way positive feelings harnessed by doing social good whereby as the company gains more reputation, there will be additional positive spillover to its stakeholders. When a social bond is created between a group of consumers and a company, this value will continue to be exploited throughout time, and this will reflect on future generations of consumers participating in the company's CM campaigns, hence creating a positive cycle of increased participation, increased trust and positive reputation. In other words, participating in socially responsible initiatives positively affect corporate reputation (Su et al., 2015).

Hypothesis 7: Participation in CM campaigns leads to a higher perception of the reputation level of a company.

Ever since our existence, human beings realized the importance of forming a community. As a matter of fact, there exist a social psychological perspective that highlights our fundamental evolutionary-based need for forming interpersonal relationships with others (Haji, McKeown, and Ferguson, 2016). These relationships if shared by the group could solidify their connection and motivate them towards harmony, else if not existent, could create severe divisions amongst groups and motivate harm.

It was evident by the social identity theory that our behavior and emotional wellbeing are directly affected by our knowledge and emotional attachment to our groups. We tend to directly identify different groups through a process called intergroup differentiation and aspire to become part of the group that resembles us the most. After identifying with a group, we now share its success and reputation, something that will increase the level of our discrimination towards it; it was contended that members of a certain group will favor their own colleagues even in reward allocation as they feel like they have won the reward themselves (Tajfel, 1970).

Tajfel believed that our social identity is “an individual’s knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of this group membership” (Tajfel,1972, p. 292). These social groups provide their members with a shared identity that allows members of the group, along with external viewers to understand their values, beliefs and anticipate their potential behavior.

The social identity theory also contends that people use their social identity to increase their level of confidence (Maxwell & Knox, 2009). One source for such a boost is through linking their experiences with those of a company with high reputation (Bhattacharya & Elsbach, 2002). It is contended that when individuals realize that an organization is harnessing an increased level of positive reputation, they will directly associate with them to generate a positive social identity for themselves; hence reputation leads to identification (Hong, & Yang, 2009). Such favorable reputation will directly satisfy their needs for self-enhancement (Dutton et al., 1994) due to the transfer of positive emotions based on the built identification (Fombrun and van Riel, 2003). Ahearne et al. (2005) then explained that the customers who identify with a company express their identification by performing extra role behaviors, such as engaging in WOM activities, as they

will be willing to give something to contribute to the welfare of the organization (Mowday et al., 1979).

It was contented by multiple authors that companies need to obtain a favorable socially responsible reputation in order to stimulate consumer engagement with their brand through the form of positive eWOM/WOM (Hong, & Yang, 2009; Walsh et al., 2009; Tong, 2014; Jalilvand et al., 2017).

Hypothesis 8a: The higher the perceived level of corporate reputation the more is positive WOM

Hypothesis 8b: The higher the perceived level of corporate reputation the more is positive EWOM.

5.3 Methodology:

5.3.1 Sample:

Consumers are defined as people who purchase products/services with the sole intention of consuming, not reselling (Marketbusinessnews.com, 2019). Consumers are the main focus of this research and hence, this study targets individuals from all age ranges, education levels, genders, and social backgrounds.

Culture plays an important role in shaping the behavior of individuals in a society (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). It provides guidelines on how to behave under various situations through a set of values and beliefs that are portrayed by customs (Gudykunst *et al.*, 1996). In psychological research, the individual differences between individualistic and collectivistic cultures received the lion's share of attention from researchers (Levine *et al.*, 2003), but nevertheless, empirical focus was on the main differences between the construal of north American individuals and that of east Asians (Vignoles *et al.*, 2016).

The sample of this chapter is the same as that of the previous one. We targeted audiences in Lebanon and the UK through a questionnaire that was electronically distributed and filled by 226 individuals. These samples were representative of their populations and hence we were able to conduct a valid generalization based on our results.

Lebanon:

Although there exists no official census on the demographical representation of Lebanon since 1932 (Worldpopulationreview.com, 2019), available information from external agencies were utilized to validate the sample's representation of the Lebanese population. Two main demographical data were analyzed: gender and age range (the percentages from this research are displayed in Tables 8 & 9 in the appendix).

- In Lebanon, the current female citizens represent 51.2% of the population (Countrymeters.info, 2021), whereas in this study females represented 56% of the sample. Hence, the results reflect a good representation of the population with female respondents being slightly more represented than males.
- The available literature on the age brackets of Lebanese citizens does not split them in the same way as implemented in this research and hence details on the means is impossible to compare. One thing that was possible to compare was the median age of the population which was 28.5 years (ibid); belonging to the Millennial generation in this sample. In this research, 74% of the respondents were between the ages of 24 and 39, hence the median of this research will most probably belong to it; thus providing a correct representation of the population.

UK:

- In the United Kingdom, the current female citizens represent 50.8% of the population (Countrymeters.info, 2021), whereas in this study females represented only 42% of the sample. Hence, the results reflect a slight misrepresentation of the population with female respondents being more represented than males. The main reason for this could be reflected by the fact that the business that promoted our survey is related to products that are usually purchased by males more than females.

The available literature on the age brackets of the citizens of the United Kingdom does not split them in the same way as implemented in this research and hence details on the means is impossible to compare. One thing that was possible to compare was the median age of the population which was 40.2 years (ibid); barely belonging to Generation X in this sample. In this research, nearly 38% of the respondents belonged to Generation X, and 35% were between the ages of 24 and 39, and 23% belonged to the baby-boomers generation. Hence the median of this research will most

probably belong to Generation X based on the 98% concentration of respondents in these three categories: thus providing a correct representation of the population.

5.3.2 Data Collection:

Following the path of previous literature, this paper's constructs were measured through quantitative measurement techniques (Thomas, Kureshi, & Vatavwala, 2019). Hence a quantitative empirical research was conducted through the form of a [questionnaire](#) compiled on Survey Monkey during the months of February and March, 2021. The questionnaire was compiled using previously measured variables in multiple previous literature and deduced to be valid and reliable as seen in Table 12 in the appendix.

For the Lebanese audience, this questionnaire was distributed using the convenience sampling method, and was disseminated using social media, specifically Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook and LinkedIn. Respondents were asked to send this questionnaire to their acquaintances in an effort to increase the number of respondents through the snowballing technique. As a result, we were able to fill 126 full questionnaires.

For the UK sample, a collaboration was created with two British citizens¹, one from Scotland and the other from England and through their connections and social media accounts we were able to receive 98 complete questionnaires from the UK in a month.

5.3.3 Measurement Variables

To measure the constructs of this research, multi-item scales were generated based on previous literature. Scales has been carefully selected from seminal papers that has been highly tested for reliability and validity throughout literature. All these measures used a 7-point Likert scale response format where one corresponded to “strongly disagree”, four to “neutral”, and seven to “strongly agree” (scales can be found in Table 12 in the appendix). It is important to note that the

¹ A special thanks to Professor Elaine Duncan from Caledonian University and Mr. Rami Morad for their support in distributing the Questionnaires in the UK.

construct of SC that was previously developed in this research was used in this chapter, hence, Deference and Harmony seeking behavior together formed a second order construct of Collective-interdependent SC. Then Relational SC, which combined with collective interdependent SC formed the third order construct of Interdependent SC. On the other hand, we have other first order constructs represented by the three dimensions of “Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency”, “Realizing and validating Internal Attributes”, and “Direct Communication” who together formed the second order construct of Independent SC, which in its turn, along with Interdependent SC construct formed the 4th order construct of Self-construal. During this research, the values of all the dimensions were extracted to excel and then two first order dimensions were created to best reflect the interdependent and the independent constructs. This was done in order to stay consistent with previous literature that considers SC to be formed of two constructs, while keeping the dimensions that we proposed. As a result, the construct of SC was portrayed in the form of a first order construct with interdependent and independent SC as its formative variables.

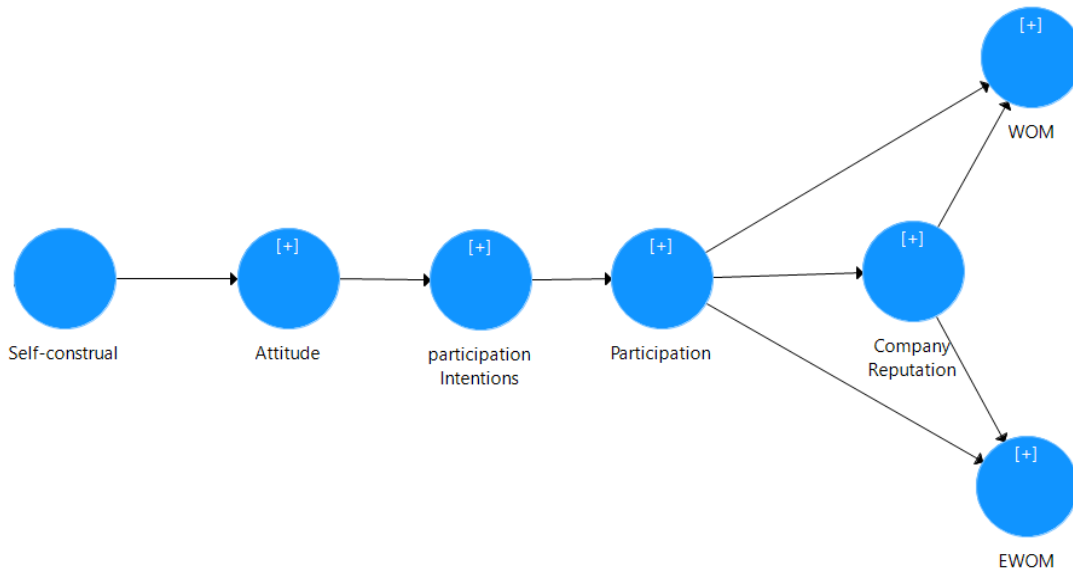
5.3.4 Technique of analysis:

To decide which approach could be used for this step (variance-covariance or partial least square), we checked if the items were normally distributed. Shapiro-Wilk W test for normal data was performed using STATA15 revealing that the items were not normally distributed (Table 10 in appendix). As a result, the partial least square approach was selected and implemented through SmartPLS3.

5.4 Results

The analysis of the PLS model was conducted through two basic steps: measuring the reliability and validity of the measurement model (in other words, analyzing the outer model), and by assessing the structural model (the inner model) (Henseler et al., 2009).

Figure 10. The Structural Model



5.4.1 Common method bias

Knock (2015) contends that the technique of Partial Least Squares in SEM could cause some measurement bias that could be wrongfully reflected by the system of causes and effects in the examined model, which is known as common method bias. In order to check for this bias, VIFs were generated for all latent variables in the model using the SmartPLS software. All VIF values are expected to be less than 3.3 for the model to be free of common method bias (ibid). In this model, all VIF values are less than 3.3, with the highest value being 3.15 as seen from Table 13 in the Appendix; therefore, this study is not contaminated with common method bias.

Another test for Common method bias was inspired by Chin et al., (2013) who contended that construct level correlations should be addressed to check for the presence of common method variance (CMV). This process involves a control construct, linking it to every construct of the model, and checking for the level of correlation between them. For this research, the constructs related to shopping experience (as found in Table 12 in the appendix) have been used as inspired by Keh and Pang, (2010). A high correlation between this latent marker variable and any other construct present in this study would confirm an issue of CMV. The lowest absolute correlation between the latent marker variable and the other constructs present in this research (*RS*) is the CMV estimate (Lindell & Whitney, 2001). The *RS* is a conservative estimate because an

unadjusted correlation is influenced by the true covariance and by the CMV (Lindell & Whitney, 2001). In this study (Figure 6 in the appendix), the *RS* is 0.001, which is associated with an *R*² of 0.049, indicating a low common source effect shared between constructs. It is evident in Table 14 below that none of the relationships between Shopping experience and the constructs is valid based on the P-values, and so, this solidifies our data and proves that we have no common method bias.

Table 14. Structural Model including CMV construct.

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Shopping Experience -> CR	-0.001	0.013	0.99
Shopping Experience -> EWOM	0.023	0.304	0.761
Shopping Experience -> Participation	-0.036	0.539	0.59
CR -> EWOM	0.042	0.563	0.573
Shopping Experience -> Self-construal	0.095	0.71	0.478
Shopping Experience -> WOM	0.089	0.777	0.437
Shopping Experience -> participation Intentions	0.113	0.805	0.421
Shopping Experience -> Attitude	0.205	0.911	0.362
CR -> WOM	0.16	2.593	0.01
Self-construal -> Attitude	0.202	2.841	0.005
Participation -> CR	0.252	3.939	0
Attitude -> participation Intentions	0.514	8.515	0
Participation -> EWOM	0.566	10.781	0
Participation -> WOM	0.511	9.972	0
participation Intentions -> Participation	0.55	10.084	0

5.4.2 Construct reliability and validity

We analyzed the construct reliability of the model to check if the constructs are good enough to be further analyzed, composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha were measured and displayed in the Table below.

Table 15. Results for Construct reliability and validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Attitude	0.767	0.797	0.849	0.585
Participation Intentions	0.760	0.771	0.839	0.514
Participation	0.789	0.816	0.875	0.700
Company Reputation	0.685	0.717	0.825	0.613
WOM	0.814	0.822	0.870	0.575
EWOM	0.913	0.918	0.939	0.793

As witnessed in Table 15 above, the data shows high reliability using composite reliability with a minimum measurement of $0.825 > 0.600$ (Burns, & Burns, 2008). Cronbach's Alpha as well show high reliability in all of the constructs with a value of at least $0.685 > 0.6$ (ibid). As a result, these figures show that our constructs are reliable and valid.

5.4.2.1 Convergent validity.

Convergent validity was conducted to test the correlation between indicators in a construct. This was done by looking at the AVE based on the result provided by the SmartPLS 3 (Table 15 above). Fornell & Larcker (1981) contended that a valid AVE value should exceed "0,5" and this is the case with all of the results. Hence as a conclusion, we have no issues regarding convergent validity in our research.

5.4.2.2 Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity "is supported when the average shared variance of a construct and its indicators exceed the shared variance with every other construct of the model" (Assaker, 2014, p. 220). Table 16 below provides proof that we have no discriminant validity based on the Fornell-Larcker Criterion.

Table 16. Discriminant validity test; Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	Attitude	CR	EWOM	Participation	Self-construal	WOM	participation Intentions
Attitude	0.765						
CR	0.261	0.783					
EWOM	0.199	0.188	0.89				
Participation	0.249	0.273	0.526	0.837			
Self-construal	0.305	0.307	0.247	0.134			
WOM	0.414	0.278	0.61	0.504	0.284	0.758	
participation Intentions	0.361	0.247	0.426	0.499	0.218	0.513	0.717

Nevertheless, it has been proposed to measure the Heterotrait-monotrait ratio of the correlations (HTMT) approach to assess discriminant validity (Henseler, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2016). HTMT is the average of the heterotrait-heteromethod correlations relative to the average of the monotrait-heteromethod correlations. The HTMT derives from the classical multitrait-multimethod matrix (Campbell & Fiske, 1959). HTMT values smaller than 1 show that the true correlation between the two constructs should differ. As a criterion HTMT values are compared with a predefined threshold: If the value of the HTMT is higher than this threshold, there is a lack of discriminant validity. Some authors suggest a threshold of 0.85 (Kline 2011), whereas others propose a value of 0.90 (Teo et al. 2008). After running the HTMT results for this model, all of the values were below the 0.85 threshold as seen in Table 17 below, and hence our results do not have issues related to discriminant validity.

Table 17. Discriminant validity test; Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio

	Attitude	CR	EWOM	Participation	WOM
CR	0.348				
EWOM	0.260	0.241			
Participation	0.311	0.358	0.603		
WOM	0.520	0.372	0.705	0.601	
participation Intentions	0.449	0.341	0.517	0.620	0.650

5.4.2.3 Validity of the formative construct:

While analyzing the difference between the structure of a formative construct and that of a reflective one, the most obvious difference is reflected by the fact that formative indicators should not be highly correlated. In fact, they should be low enough so that they are not redundant with each other in contributing to the latent construct (Diamantopoulos & Siguaaw, 2006). To test for the level of multicollinearity (hence redundancy), the VIF figures for the formative variables need to be checked. If the VIF values are less than 3.3 this would mean that we have no multicollinearity (ibid). As evident in Table 13 in the appendix, the Self-construal formative variable has no issues of multicollinearity as the highest VIF value for the identifiers of the self-construal construct is $1.022 < 3.3$.

Another thing to test for the formative variable is the R², which indicates the extent to which the formative measurement model covers a construct's scope (Diamantopoulos, 2006). In this research, the R² of SC is 1, therefore the constructs of Independent and Interdependent self-construal provide a perfect coverage of the SC construct (Diamantopoulos & Siguaaw, 2006). Lastly, it is important to check for the validity of the two structural paths that forms the SC construct, and this is evident from (Figure 7 in the appendix) the t-values that are both above 1.96. The results support the nomological validity of self-construal as a fourth-order formative construct (Thornton et al., 2014).

5.4.3 Structural model.

The structural model was tested using the bootstrapping technique at (2000 iterations Preacher & Hayes, (2008)) after the measurement model was validated. The first thing to be checked is the predictive validity of the model. To assess the predictive ability of the structural model this research followed the approach proposed by Falk and Miller (1992) which contends that the R² value (variance accounted for) of each of the dependent constructs should exceed the “0.02” value to be valid, and 0.26 to be having a high effect (Cohen, 1988). Table 18 shows that the R² values in the dependent variables are higher than the critical level mentioned.

Another test applied was the Stone-Geisser test of predictive relevance (Q²). This test can be used as an additional assessment of model fit in PLS analysis (Geisser 1975). The Blindfolding technique was used to calculate Q². Models with Q² greater than “0” are considered to have predictive relevance (Chin, 1988). In this case Q² is greater than “0” for all predicted variables (Table 18 below), and hence the predictive ability of this model is high.

Table 18. Table of accounted for variances:

	R Square	Q ² (=1-SSE/SSO)
Attitude	0.049	0.025
CR	0.063	0.032
EWOM	0.337	0.261
Participation	0.294	0.206
WOM	0.337	0.22
participation Intentions	0.292	0.166

This study then tested the path coefficient and t-statistics of the model. To be recognized as significant and therefore accept the hypothesis, a path should not have path coefficient value in between -0,1 and 0,1 also a path’s t-statistics value should be higher than 1.96 since this research was analyzed using the two-tailed testing (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2012). Figure 7 in the Appendix and Table 19 below show all the t-values to be well above 1.96 for all relationships except that between company reputation and electronic word-of-mouth; in addition, Table 19 shows the path-coefficient values to be valid as well.

To test for the hypotheses, the path coefficients were measured using the bootstrapping technique. The path coefficients are displayed in Table 19 below.

Table 19. Structural model measurement.

	Hypothesis	Summary	Path coefficient Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Self-construal -> Attitudes	H1	Significant	0.222	3.798	0.000
Attitudes -> Participation Intentions	H2	Significant	0.541	9.993	0.000

Participation Intentions -> Participation	H3	Significant	0.542	10.869	0.000
Participation -> WOM	H5	Significant	0.519	9.669	0.000
Participation -> EWOM	H6	Significant	0.568	10.566	0.000
Participation -> CR	H7	Significant	0.252	4.06	0.000
CR -> WOM	H8a	Significant	0.16	2.724	0.005
CR -> EWOM	H8b	Not Significant	0.042	0.561	0.575

As seen in the above Table, Hypothesis 4 was not tested yet as we need to create a multigroup analysis and test the permutations to do so; this is accomplished by studying the measurement invariance of the composite models.

5.4.4 Measurement invariance of composite models (MICOM); Lebanon vs UK.

One of the main interests of this research is that it is not limited to one audience, but as a matter of fact is creating a comparison between two different countries belonging to two distinct cultures. When using structural equation modelling (SEM), group comparisons can be misleading unless researchers establish the invariance of their measures, and this occurs in three steps (Henseler et al., 2016).

Step one, configurational invariance. This is established by SmartPLS3 directly; however, we need to make sure that we have an adequate sample size in each group. Knowing that the maximum number of arrows pointing towards/from a construct is 7 (as seen in Table 12 in the appendix), and a minimum R2 of 0.049 (as seen in Table 18 above); hence we need a sample size of 166 observations at 95% degree of confidence, which we easily fulfilled in this research with 224 questionnaires (Hair et al., 2016).

Step two, compositional invariance. To establish compositional invariance, we need to compare original correlations with those values at 5% quartile. If they exceed this value, and moreover permutation P-values are not significant, then compositional invariance is established. As seen in Table 20 below, all values of the original correlations are greater than or equal to those values at 5%, and none of which are significant; hence we do have compositional invariance, and so we could move to step three.

Step three, composite equality. Here we need to check the mean original difference and make sure that it falls between the 2.5% and the 97.5% boundaries. Moreover, we need to check the variance original difference if it falls between the same range. If both conditions are met, then we can say that we have full invariance, if one of them is met, then we will have a valid partial invariance (Hair et al., 2016).

Table 20. Results of MICOM Step two.

	Original Correlation	Correlation Permutation Mean	5.00%	Permutation p-Values
Attitude	0.997	0.996	0.988	0.525
CR	0.969	0.957	0.866	0.446
EWOM	1	0.999	0.999	0.909
Participation	0.999	0.999	0.996	0.693
Self-construal	0.988	0.816	0.378	0.844
WOM	0.999	0.998	0.996	0.45
participation Intentions	0.998	0.998	0.994	0.578

In order to test for composite equality, the below Table was analyzed, and it was evident that the mean original difference was not falling between 2.5% and 97.5% in all of the constructs and some permutation p-values are lower than 0.05. But on the other hand, the values of the variance of the original difference did; hence we have a valid partial invariance. If partial invariance exists, we can continue and evaluate the moderation effects on the relationships proposed (Hair et al., 2016). Therefore, we can proceed to evaluate the moderator effects, through a multi-group analysis (Henseler et al., 2016).

Table 21. Results of MICOM Step three

	Mean - Original Difference (Lebanon vs UK)	Mean - Permutation Mean Difference (Lebanon vs UK)	2.50%	97.50%	Permutation p-Values
Attitude	0.277	-0.003	-0.271	0.249	0.035
CR	0.077	-0.007	-0.296	0.235	0.567
EWOM	0.459	0.007	-0.247	0.272	0.000

Participation	0.472	0.003	-0.261	0.256	0.000
Self-construal	0.024	-0.003	-0.281	0.265	0.864
WOM	0.286	0.001	-0.256	0.262	0.032
participation Intentions	0.508	-0.003	-0.269	0.294	0.001

	Variance - Original Difference (Lebanon vs UK)	Variance - Permutation Mean Difference (Lebanon vs UK)	2.50%	97.50%	Permutation p-Values
Attitude	0.488	0.002	-0.56	0.563	0.084
CR	-0.119	0.002	-0.546	0.497	0.637
EWOM	-0.11	0	-0.443	0.416	0.609
Participation	-0.196	0	-0.346	0.35	0.254
Self-construal	0.238	0.009	-0.356	0.389	0.214
WOM	0.382	0.011	-0.482	0.539	0.165
participation Intentions	0.204	0.007	-0.549	0.558	0.465

5.4.5 Analyzing and interpreting multigroup results.

When we established that there exists partial invariance amongst the construct, the next focus will be on determining if the path coefficients of the theoretical models for the two groups are significantly different. So as a first step, we shall start by analyzing the results of each group (Lebanon and UK) separately prior to determining if there are group-specific differences (Matthews, 2017).

Using the guidelines set out for evaluation of a measurement model by (Hair et al. 2014a), we ran the model for each group separately. In Table 22 below it is evident from the “t” and “p” values that the relationship between all constructs (excluding EWOM) in both countries are valid at a 95% (with CR-WOM at 90% in the UK sample) confidence level.

Table 22. Bootstrapping results for Lebanon and UK separately.

	LEBANON			
	Path Coefficients Original	Path Coefficients Mean	t-Value	p-Value
Self-construal -> Attitudes	0.187	0.209	2.35	0.019
Attitudes -> Participation Intentions	0.625	0.63	9.366	0.000
Participation Intentions -> Participation	0.535	0.534	6.812	0.000
Participation -> CR	0.247	0.271	3.037	0.002
Participation -> EWOM	0.572	0.571	8.353	0.000
Participation -> WOM	0.548	0.54	6.979	0.000
CR -> EWOM	0.049	0.069	0.418	0.676
CR -> WOM	0.181	0.199	2.216	0.027

	UK			
	Path Coefficients Original	Path Coefficients Mean	t-Value	p-Value
Self-construal -> Attitude	0.305	0.327	3.705	0.000
Attitude -> participation Intentions	0.361	0.383	4.526	0.000
Participation Intentions -> Participation	0.499	0.507	5.968	0.000
Participation -> CR	0.273	0.284	2.703	0.005
Participation -> EWOM	0.513	0.515	5.691	0.000
Participation -> WOM	0.462	0.47	5.836	0.000
CR -> EWOM	0.048	0.059	0.534	0.593
CR -> WOM	0.152	0.162	1.727	0.084

Next, it is necessary to determine if the difference between the two groups is significant. This can be accomplished by running a multigroup analysis with both the UK and Lebanon, and the results are displayed in the Table below.

Table 23. Permutation test path coefficients-difference results.

	Original Sample (LEB)	Original Sample (UK)	Path Coefficients-diff (Lebanon vs UK)	p-Value new (Lebanon vs UK)
Attitude -> participation Intentions	0.625	0.361	0.264	0.015
CR -> EWOM	0.049	0.048	0.001	0.997
CR -> WOM	0.181	0.152	0.029	0.809
Participation -> CR	0.247	0.273	-0.026	0.817
Participation -> EWOM	0.572	0.513	0.059	0.621
Participation -> WOM	0.548	0.462	0.086	0.438
Self-construal -> Attitude	0.187	0.305	-0.118	0.286
participation Intentions -> Participation	0.535	0.499	0.036	0.751

Using the information from the group-specific bootstrapping as well as the above permutation test, we can now indicate that there is only one general significant difference between results in Lebanon and the UK when it comes to the relationship between the constructs in the model as none of the p-values of the difference between the path coefficients were significant under 95% confidence; except for that of the relationship between attitudes and participation intentions ($p = 0.015$). This indicated that different cultures acted similarly when it comes to the relationship between SC and CM engagement; with the main difference being reflected in the intensity of their attitudes towards these campaigns and participation intentions in CM (both being positive); as a result, we were able to prove Hypothesis 4 and say that different cultures moderate differently the relationships between level of self-construal and participation in CM campaigns because the relationship between attitudes towards CM campaigns and their level of participation intentions differ in their intensity.

5.5 Discussion:

This research set-off to understand the factors that affect positive consumer engagement with CM campaigns, specifically to prove the existence of a causal relationship between a consumer's self-construal and his/her attitudes and behaviors towards a CM campaign. This study's claims that

there is a positive causal relationship between Self-construal, attitudes, participation intentions, participation, company reputation, and the dissemination of positive e/WOM, and after detailed analysis, the relationship between SC and engagement in CM was proven to be existent. On the other hand, in its attempt to measure the causal relationship between company reputation and electronic word of mouth, this research failed to obtain a significant relationship. Such results provide us with a conclusion that while company reputation directly stimulated positive WOM, this wasn't the case with EWOM. This means that there must be a difference in the factors that stimulate positive EWOM, away from company reputation.

Finally, the last hypothesis focused on testing the model under different cultures, the collective culture of Lebanon and the individualistic one of the UK (Hofstede, 2001). It was theorized that due to the difference in the level of construal, that of Lebanon being higher than that of the UK, there must be a difference between the level of engagement of their consumers with such campaigns. This hypothesis was proven to be correct as members of both communities responded differently to CM campaigns, specifically when it comes to the intensity of the relationship between attitudes and participation intentions, favoring those of an interdependent society. Once again, these results highlighted the strength of such campaigns in convincing even those independent individuals in the importance of buying products and donating to the community.

This research provides the empirical proof that self-construal plays an important role in stimulating positive attitudes towards CM campaigns, elevating both participation intentions and participation, which in its own would promote positive company reputation along with eWOM/WOM towards the campaigns in both developing and developed countries; an important phenomenon for firms looking to improve their financial wellness, brand image and loyalty.

5.6 Managerial Implications:

In their efforts to improve their brand's image and promote loyalty, marketers focus highly on stimulating positive eWOM/WOM (Thomas, 2004) and company reputation (Kim, Youn, & Lee, 2019) through their CM campaigns (Fatmawati, & Fauzan, 2021). This research provides evidence that CM campaigns can be extremely effective in stimulating positive company reputation and

eWOM/WOM in both developing and developed countries with a high level of collectivistic/individualistic cultures; thus, highlighting the importance of the CM campaigns for contemporary marketers as an important antecedent to understanding the level of positive engagement through both eWOM and WOM.

As was expected, Lebanese individuals (being interdependent in nature) were highly interested in CM campaigns, and so, this study provides Lebanese marketing managers with enough evidence of the presence of collectivist consumers who possess a positive attitude towards these campaigns and are willing to participate in them. This fact should push for the promotion of CM campaigns and their implementation by firms all over Lebanon. The same goes for the companies in the UK; although they were expecting their consumers to be resistant to CM campaigns based on their individualistic nature, it turns out that most of their consumers are interested in CM campaigns and are moreover willing to improve the company's reputation and participate in spreading positive word of mouth about them in both the traditional and electronic sense.

5.7 Limitations and recommendations for future research:

The first limitation of this study is that the data were collected via convenience sampling; therefore, the findings should be interpreted with caution to avoid overgeneralization. This occurred due to our inability to manually distribute the questionnaires due to the corona virus pandemic; hence future research should focus on non-convenience sampling through the distribution of the questionnaire amongst individuals in public areas.

The second limitation of this study is linked to the number of questionnaires analyzed. Although the number of questionnaires analyzed are enough for SmartPLS3 to provide a reliable result but providing a generalization that the 224 individuals who participated represent 100% the population under study is risky. Now that we have proven the existence of a positive causal relationship between SC and engagement in CM campaigns, and specifically the positive engagement of those individuals in independent communities, future researchers should be fueled by this phenomenon and study this model in multiple countries and with a higher number of participants. The above two limitations could be easily addressed today, especially since the

restrictions against Covid-19 are now minimal. One strategy researchers could implement is simply spending money on websites like survey monkey, which would allow them to reach a definite larger number of responders. Another strategy could be contacting local and international corporations inside the targeted market, and have them participate in the research in return for a certain value which could range from enlisting the company's name on the research, to a random gift to responders.

Finally, this study tried to prove that a company's reputation will play a mediating role between participating in CM campaigns and the dissemination of both eWOM and WOM. While this was the case with WOM, it turned out that the relationship between CR and eWOM was not valid. As for future research, a wider research surrounding the factors that could play a moderating role in the relationship between CR and eWOM should be studied in an attempt to fulfill this model. Factors like lower moral online emotions, low levels of identification and involvement with the brand, and the level of skepticism towards these campaigns, could be affecting the relationship between company reputation and the level of positive dissemination of electronic word of mouth. It is hence imperative that a deeper analysis on eWOM should be created, specifically understanding the factors that affect this construct. Once these factors are dissected, and depending on the unveiled theories from the relationships, the researcher will be able to solve this dilemma.

5.8 Conclusion:

Self-construal has proven to be an important element for the success of CM campaigns. Managers all over the world need to understand how their individuals construe themselves to anticipate their response towards their campaign. But on a positive note, their response will be always positive, and would lead to a positive company reputation and dissemination of word of mouth, but the intensity of this relationship will differ in favor of collective communities. These results should seek the attention of researchers and motivate them into being more engaged in this topic.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

6.1 Summary of the dissertation

Academic interest on SC has increased incrementally ever since the seminal works of Markus and Kitayama (1991) and Singelis (1994). This growth could be linked to its effect on the behavior of individuals, specifically its effect on cognition, motivation, and emotions. Although SC was a construct in psychology, marketers all over the world did not refrain from implementing it in their research. As a matter of fact, this dissertation mentions tens of world class scholars who applied this construct amongst their target audience in an attempt to measure the effect of SC on multiple business concepts like social networking, fundraising, corporate image and reputation, consumer support, consumer satisfaction... to name a few. But throughout an extensive meta-analysis, this research came to a roadblock regarding the reliability and validity of the available scales that measure the SC construct for a wide multi-cultural audience.

Before jumping to conclusions, the authors communicated with the creator of the seminal measurement scale (professor Singelis) and it was his advice to “start fresh” that stirred the motivation towards the creation of a new SC scale. During the second chapter of this dissertation, the authors present critical information about the construct of SC, how it is stimulated by culture, its effect on emotion, cognition, and motivation, its known measurement scales, and a detailed explanation explaining the need for a new SC scale. The next step was to initiate the creation of this new scale, and this process was motivated by professor Vignoles and his colleagues (2016) where they reflected the need for the creation of a scale that could better measure the construct through a qualitative method that will allow experts on the subject to create new items that could measure new dimensions of the construct. In response to their advice, this research implements the qualitative Delphi method that intends to provide panelists with exactly that. Through a rigorous Delphi study, chapter three of this dissertation was capable of managing the participation of 19 experts from different countries in the world leading to a new SC scale that measures 8 dimensions of the construct through 37 different items.

After the scale was created, it was important to validate it, and this was done through a confirmatory factor analysis using the SmartPLS3 software. This validation process occurred on 224 questionnaires collected from the individualist country of the UK and the collectivistic one of Lebanon. The results were displayed in chapter four of this dissertation, and they reflected the validation of a new modified version of the SC scale composed of 35 items and 6 different dimensions, with SC being a fourth order formative one.

After successfully creating a validated SC scale, it was time to apply this construct and measure its effect on the level of engagement in CM campaigns. Chapter 5 set-off to understand the factors that affect positive consumer engagement with CM campaigns, specifically to prove the existence of a causal relationship between a consumer's self-construal and his/her attitudes and behaviors towards a CM campaign. This dissertation claims that there is a positive causal relationship between Self-construal, attitudes, participation intentions, participation, company reputation, and the dissemination of positive e/WOM, and after detailed analysis, the relationship between SC and engagement in CM was proven to be existent. On the other hand, in its attempt to measure the causal relationship between company reputation and electronic word of mouth, this research failed to obtain a significant relationship. Such results provide us with a conclusion that while company reputation directly stimulated positive WOM, this wasn't the case with eWOM. This means that there must be a difference in the factors that stimulate positive eWOM, away from company reputation. As a matter of fact, electronic word of mouth lacks the personal relationship between the provider of the opinion and the receiver due to it being communicated to the masses. Knowing that, this lack of personal knowledge could raise the level of skepticism towards the opinion specifically since consumers would first think that this could be the business that is providing positive reviews about itself. This lack of trust, hence high level of skepticism towards a brand, could be at the base of this phenomena and requires further study about the moderators that would allow company reputation to be boosted via electronic word of mouth.

Finally, the last hypothesis focused on testing the model under different cultures, the collective culture of Lebanon and the individualistic one of the UK (Hofstede, 2001). It was theorized that due to the difference in the level of construal, that of Lebanon being higher than that of the UK, there must be a difference between the level of engagement of their consumers with such campaigns. This hypothesis was proven to be correct as members of both communities

responded differently to CM campaigns, specifically when it comes to the intensity of the relationship between attitudes and participation intentions, favoring those of an interdependent society. Once again, these results highlighted the strength of such campaigns in convincing even those independent individuals in the importance of buying products and donating to the community.

This research provides the empirical proof that self-construal plays an important role in stimulating positive attitudes towards CM campaigns, elevating both participation intentions and participation, which in its own would promote positive company reputation along with eWOM/WOM towards the campaigns in both developing and developed countries; an important phenomenon for firms looking to improve their financial wellness, brand image and loyalty.

6.2 Academic implications

Cause-related marketing has had been growing as a crucial marketing strategy ever since its inception by Varadarajan and Menon (1988). It is a fact that this topic continues to attract the current attention of academics (Fan et al., 2020), where most studies show that CM is a useful marketing tool with multiple benefits for all the actors involved (Chang et al., 2018). But as a matter of fact, researchers were not all agreeing on the positive effect of such campaigns on its supporting businesses, to the extent that it was contended that CM campaigns could hurt the brand instead (Berglind, & Nakata 2005), specifically since multiple measurements of CM success fail to take into consideration the heterogeneity of the consumers (Arora, & Henderson, 2007). In our effort to understand the base for this heterogeneousness it turned out that people possess different forms of cognitions, emotions, and behaviors; something that was well discussed by Markus and Kitayama in the year 1991 when they introduced the idea of Self-construal.

Based on the theory of SC, it was explained that individuals with an interdependent SC attach more importance to social activities, while those with an independent one are only interested in their own personal goals than social relationships (Youn, & Kim 2018). But while Chen and Huang (2016) indicated that interdependent consumers react more favorably than independent ones, others believed that CM is less altruistic as it is conditioned, and hence interdependent individuals will not react positively towards these campaigns, as opposed to those with an

independent SC. All of this confusion in literature necessitated a more in-depth analysis of the construct of SC, and its true causal relationship with CM campaigns. During an extensive study on the SC construct, the authors realized that a lot of controversy was surrounding this construct, specifically in its measurement scales (Vignoles et al., 2016). This fact could be the source of all inconsistencies surrounding SC and its effect on CM campaigns. To solve this issue, the authors created and validated a new SC scale using the Ranking Delphi method, which is now expected to measure the true causal relationship between SC and the success of CM campaigns. This is important for the theory because it proves once and for all if SC has a positive direct causal relationship on CM campaigns, and the intensity of this relationship between independent and interdependent individuals.

It was contended by the theory of planned behavior that individuals with a good attitude towards an activity, would have high intention in participating in it, and moreover, a high level of participation in this activity. Hence it was expected that an individual with a high level of interdependent SC will possess a positive attitude towards CM campaigns, and in comparison to those with an independent SC, would participate more in these campaigns. This dissertation was able to confirm the fact that individuals with an interdependent SC do possess a positive attitude towards CM campaigns and do participate in them. But on the contrary to previous literature, although individuals with an independent SC had a lower positive attitude towards CM campaigns, but the level of their participation in them was similar to that of interdependent individuals. This phenomenon explains the controversy that was in literature by explaining that all individuals, regardless of their construal, are interested in participating in CM campaigns. This phenomenon was linked to the overspill of positive reputation that would eventually help individualists' personal image.

Just like research was interested in understanding the antecedents of engagement in CM campaigns, it was also analyzing the consequences of participating in these campaigns. It was based on the associative learning theory, that individuals who participate in CM campaigns are expected to positively engage in both word of mouth and electronic word of mouth. This research was able to confirm this by proving that individuals with both construal are ready to positively engage with the brand that promoted a CM campaign. The contribution to literature here was in terms of fortifying the scarce literature with extended proof.

It was contended by Lafferty et al., (2016), that company reputation is an outcome of participating in CM campaigns, and it was evident through the stakeholder theory that individuals who participate in CM campaigns become interested in identifying more with them, to the extent that they start linking their own reputation to that of the campaign, and this is expected to improve the reputation of the company. This dissertation provides extra support to this theory by proving that it works with consumers of different cultures, age ranges, and education level.

Finally, based on the social identity theory, when the company's reputation is boosted, consumers would identify more with this company and hence promote it increasingly using both eWOM and WOM. This research was capable of affirming these expectations when it comes to the mediating role of company reputation with traditional WOM, but on the contrary, it found out that this theory could not apply to eWOM and the relationship between them was not significant. This is an important revelation to academic literature as it proves that electronic WOM has a different structure than traditional WOM, and hence this theory could not be applied while measuring this relationship. We expect that the lack of personal connection in the process of spreading opinions over the internet would break the cycle of identification with the participating companies, something that would decrease the interest of individuals in communicating. When conversations happen face to face, there are more emotions and more status affirmation than when leaving a comment over the internet. Another factor that could affect the dissemination of eWOM is skepticism towards the information that is displayed online. Consumers usually have less trust to random comments by random individuals over the internet, and this would break the cycle of social identification as well. This is an important revelation for theory as it became clearer that for the for individuals to identify with a brand, and consider themselves having shared reputations, the communication needs to happen face to face and not online.

6.3 Managerial Implications:

In their efforts to improve their brand's image and promote loyalty, marketers focus highly on stimulating positive eWOM/WOM (Thomas, 2004) and company reputation (Kim, Youn, & Lee, 2019) through their CM campaigns (Fatmawati, & Fauzan, 2021). This research provides evidence that CM campaigns can be extremely effective in stimulating positive company reputation and

eWOM/WOM in both developing and developed countries with a high level of collectivistic/individualistic cultures; thus, highlighting the importance of the CM campaigns for contemporary marketers as an important antecedent to understanding the level of positive engagement through both eWOM and WOM.

As was expected, Lebanese individuals (being interdependent in nature) were highly interested in CM campaigns, and so, this study provides Lebanese marketing managers with enough evidence of the presence of collectivist consumers who possess a positive attitude towards these campaigns and are willing to participate in them. This fact should push for the promotion of CM campaigns and their implementation by firms all over Lebanon. The same goes for the companies in the UK; although they were expecting their consumers to be resistant to CM campaigns based on their individualistic nature, it turns out that most of their consumers are interested in CM campaigns and are moreover willing to improve the company's reputation and participate in spreading positive word of mouth about them in both the traditional and electronic sense.

This interest is important for the companies simply because now they can make use of CM campaigns in order to boost not only their sales, but their consumers' loyalty and company's reputation as well. This trifecta is very profitable for all the actors involved and would push the consumers to buy from the company, and while doing this, they will be emotionally satisfied that they are contributing to the sustainability of their communities, while the company will enjoy profits and the reputation of being humane; in comparison to the current widely known fact that companies are money making machines without a soul. As a result, this is expected to create a sustainable source of positive engagement with CM campaigns, along with an increased interest in their sustainability, which eventually would lead to a healthier community and society.

6.4 Limitations and future research lines

With research being a continuous process, this dissertation reflects some limitations that need to be addressed by future researchers. The first limitation was in the Delphi study. Starting with the fact that although we were able to identify 109 experts, only 21 showed interest, and eventually 19 participated. To add onto this, these 19 were mostly males with only 29% female participation

rate. Another limitation for the Delphi study was the fact that although the main aim behind this research was to create new dimensions from fully new items, and even though the experts were provided with this option, only one new dimension was created from 100% new items. Finally, there was the minimal use of reverse items as advised by Smith (2009) to improve the validity of the new SC scale. These phenomena could motivate future researchers to reattempt the Delphi study and expand the list of experts, specifically females, while attempting to unveil more dimensions. This new research could also include a stage in which the panelists could be indirectly asked about their opinions on the matter of the reversed item wordings. This research could have a higher response rate from the experts since today the restrictions around the Covid19 pandemic are much less. The future researchers are to identify and target all the experts who used the SC scale by Singelis (1994) and Vignoles et al., (2016), and contact them explaining the aim of the Delphi study. Although we list this as a limitation, the authors highly believe that this could be a futile exercise since the current scale was validated and tested on important marketing concepts successfully. This activity could only support the skeptic researchers who would be interested in confirming this dissertation's results.

The next step after creating this new scale was to validate it. This step by itself had a main limitation as well. The main limitation for this study is related to the low Cronbach's Alpha values for the theoretical constructs of "Self-expression" and "Similance, affiliation and abasement". Future researchers could attempt to add multiple items to each construct, and then test them as stand-alone constructs in an attempt to unveil more dimensions than this research could. This could be easily done in the first stage of the Delphi when presenting the experts with the list of most used scales.

While studying our model, multiple limitations surfaced as well, one of which was related to the convenient sampling method, and the second was related to the actual number of questionnaires analyzed. We mentioned that although 224 questionnaires are enough for SmartPLS3 to provide a reliable result but providing a generalization that the 224 individuals who participated represent 100% the population under study is risky. Now that we know that there exists a positive causal relationship between SC and engagement in CM campaigns, and specifically for those countries with higher independent construal, future researchers should be

fueled by this phenomenon and study this model in multiple countries hence bringing in a higher number of participants. This could be conducted with the support of multinational organizations by sending an internal email, explaining the importance of this questionnaire to modern research on CM, and hoping for their employees' positive response through filling out these questionnaires. Moreover, collaborations could be conducted in the form of providing consumers of random businesses with free services in return to filling these questionnaires. All these techniques and more could be helpful in bringing in more responses. Finally, this study tried to prove that a company's reputation will play a mediating role between participating in CM campaigns and the dissemination of both eWOM and WOM. While this was the case with WOM, it turned out that the relationship between CR and eWOM was not valid. As for future research, a wider research surrounding the factors that could play a moderating role in the relationship between CR and eWOM should be studied in an attempt to fulfill this model. Factors like lower moral online emotions, low levels of identification and involvement with the brand, and the level of skepticism towards these campaigns, could be affecting the relationship between company reputation and the level of positive dissemination of electronic word of mouth. An extensive meta-analysis on the effect of these factors on electronic word of mouth should be conducted. This analysis will provide researchers with information related to the effects of these construct on eWOM through the support of theories that it uncovers.

6.5 Discussion

Contemporary literature on corporate social responsibility focuses on the concept of creating shared value in the sense that due to the increased level of competition in business nowadays, companies cannot force anymore their products on the consumer, but instead need to show the consumer the value of that they are receiving for their money. Cause-related Marketing went an extra step in the value creation chain by externalizing the value given to consumers, from originally being the value received by the use of the product, towards being an emotional charged received by supporting social causes. This trifecta attracted the attention of managers, researchers and consumers alike; all of which could benefit from this research.

When it comes to consumers, this research was capable of explaining to them the psychological reasons behind their impulses and behaviors. Consumers could now categorize

themselves as holding an independent or interdependent SC, from which they will understand why they care (or don't) about participating in CM campaigns. Furthermore, consumers are now more knowledgeable about the importance of successful CM campaigns to companies, something that would decrease their skepticism towards participating in such campaigns. Finally consumers could now as well understand the importance of partnering with companies that are serious in their CM efforts, as this will reflect on their own reputation as well.

When it comes to managers, companies are now aware about the importance of being ethical and serious in their CM efforts, else they will face extreme negative consequences related to brand reputation, and negative consumer word of mouth. Moreover, managers of international organizations could now better segment their audiences based on their collective level of SC. Finally, managers are now more confident that CM is a very important strategy in marketing as it boosts short sales, company reputation, and level of engagement with the brand.

Researchers are probably benefiting the most from this dissertation as they now possess a new valid SC scale that measures 6 dimensions of the construct using 35 validated items that could better categorize individuals in the spectrum between interdependent and independent. Removing the fuzziness surrounding the validity of the construct is crucial for all domains in literature that uses this scale as it will now be used as a base for reevaluation of previous results; hence solving the current discrepancies.

A second contribution literature for future researchers is based on the theory of self-construal, this research solidifies the causal relationship between SC and CM and opens the door towards future investigation on other similar antecedents that could similarly affect the attitude towards CM campaigns; like Moral identity, Identification, and Skepticism.

A third contribution to literature revolves around the theory of planned behavior This dissertation was able to provide extra support for this theory in terms of validating the hypothesis as previously theorized, using a valid SC scale, hence removing any doubt of its validity.

Fourth, this dissertation reflected the intersection of the stakeholder theory and the social identity theory in the field of CM, specifically in their direct role of participating in CM campaigns and the promotion of positive reputation to the brand and then how this reputation positively effects the level of engagement in WOM. What is specifically beneficial is the extra support to the validity

of the stakeholder theory as a theory and not just a framework in the business field as proposed by multiple scholars in the past. This research hence provides extra support for this “theory” and motivates future researchers towards finding different uses for it in the field of CM.

A fifth contribution is related to the associative learning theory and its application in the CM field. This dissertation provides extra support to the importance of this theory in explaining the effects of participating in CM campaigns on the level of disseminated e/WOM. We prove that the increased level of participation in CM campaigns would push consumers towards engaging in positive WOM.

Finally, while the social identity theory was used interchangeably in forecasting the mediating effect of reputation on e/WOM, this research was able to point out an important phenomenon related to the validity of the mediation effect of reputation on electronic word of mouth. While it was expected that this theory works similarly on both WOM and eWOM, it turns out that the mediating relationship between reputation and eWOM is not valid. This allows us to contend that eWOM has a different structure than WOM, which does not allow for the mediation to successfully occur. This opens the door for the reevaluation of this theory in the digital world, along with the constructs that could validate this relationship.

As a conclusion, this dissertation opens the door to researchers in multiple research line to reconsider the factors that effect consumer engagement with CM campaigns. The first recommendation to future researchers would be to start by validating previous intercultural studies with the new version of the SC scale that was proposed by this study. Furthermore, other antecedents (specifically skepticism) that affect the attitudes of consumers towards CM campaigns could now be considered after the established positive role of SC. Finally, researchers could look into the different moderators that could under the social identity theory could improve the validity of the relationship between company reputation and eWOM.

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Appendix

Figure 1. The constructs of the SC scale

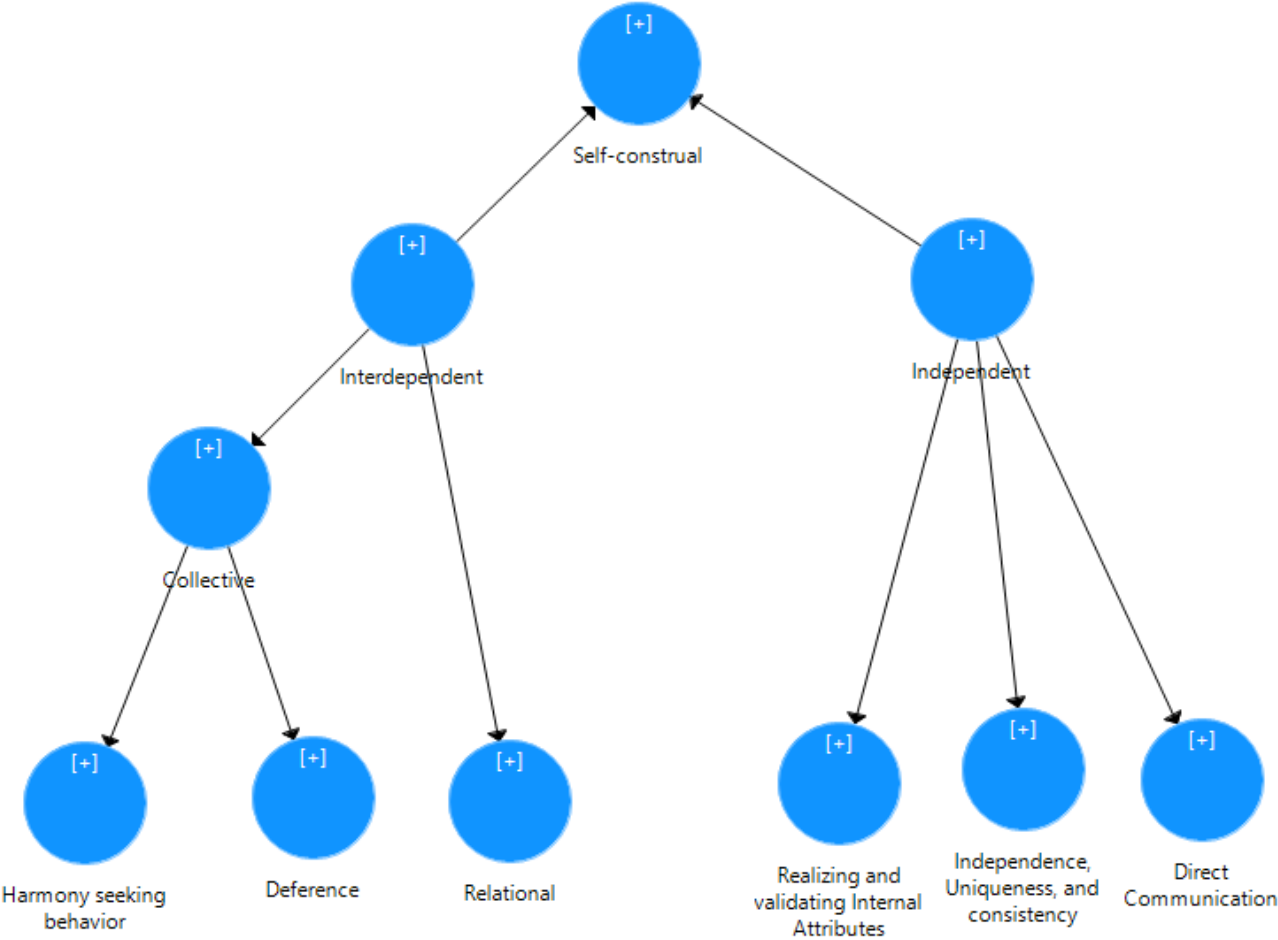
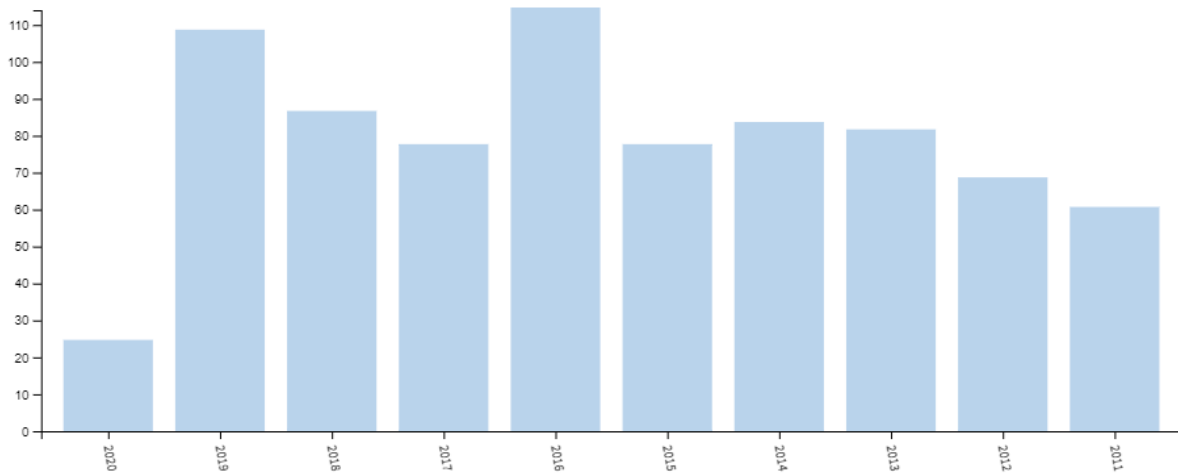


Figure 2. Total records on the topic of “self-construal”



Source: Extracted online on April 16, 2020, from: www.webofknowledge.com.

Figure 3. Citation report:

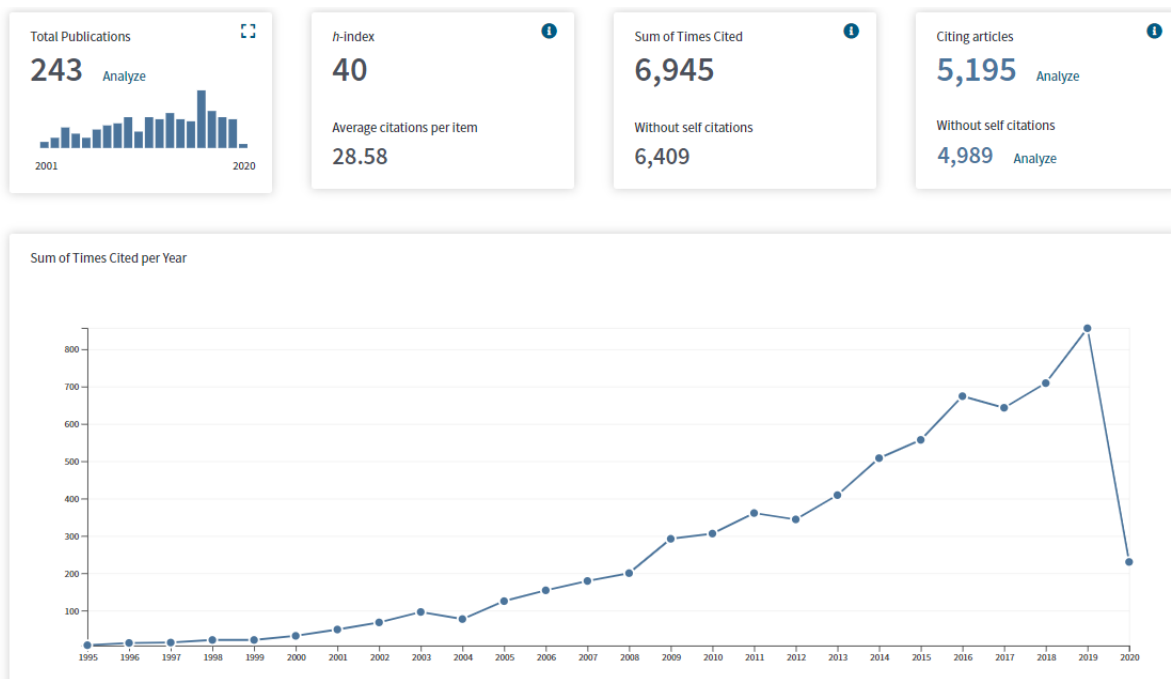


Figure 4. Structural model with T statistics

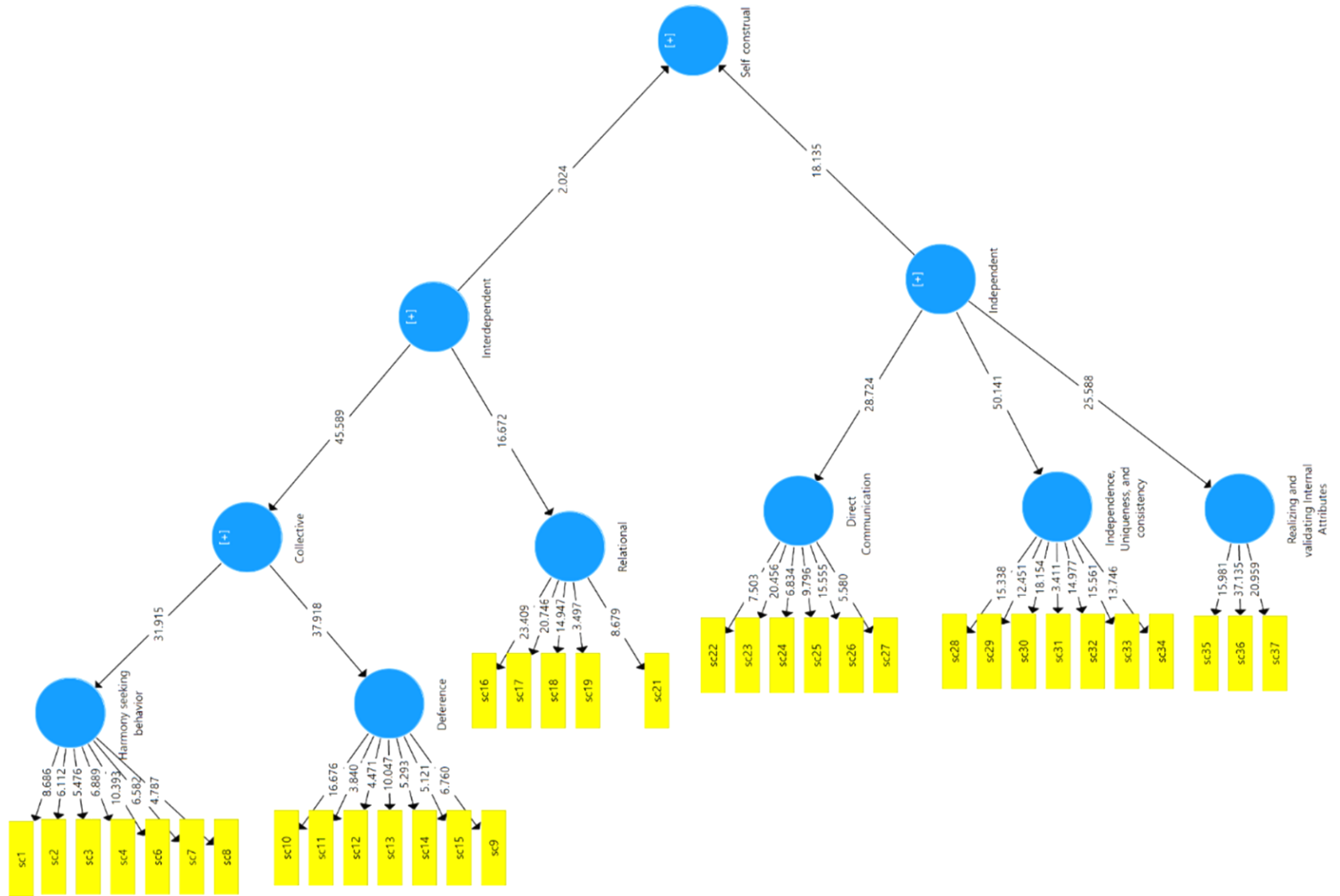


Figure 5. Structural model with path coefficient values

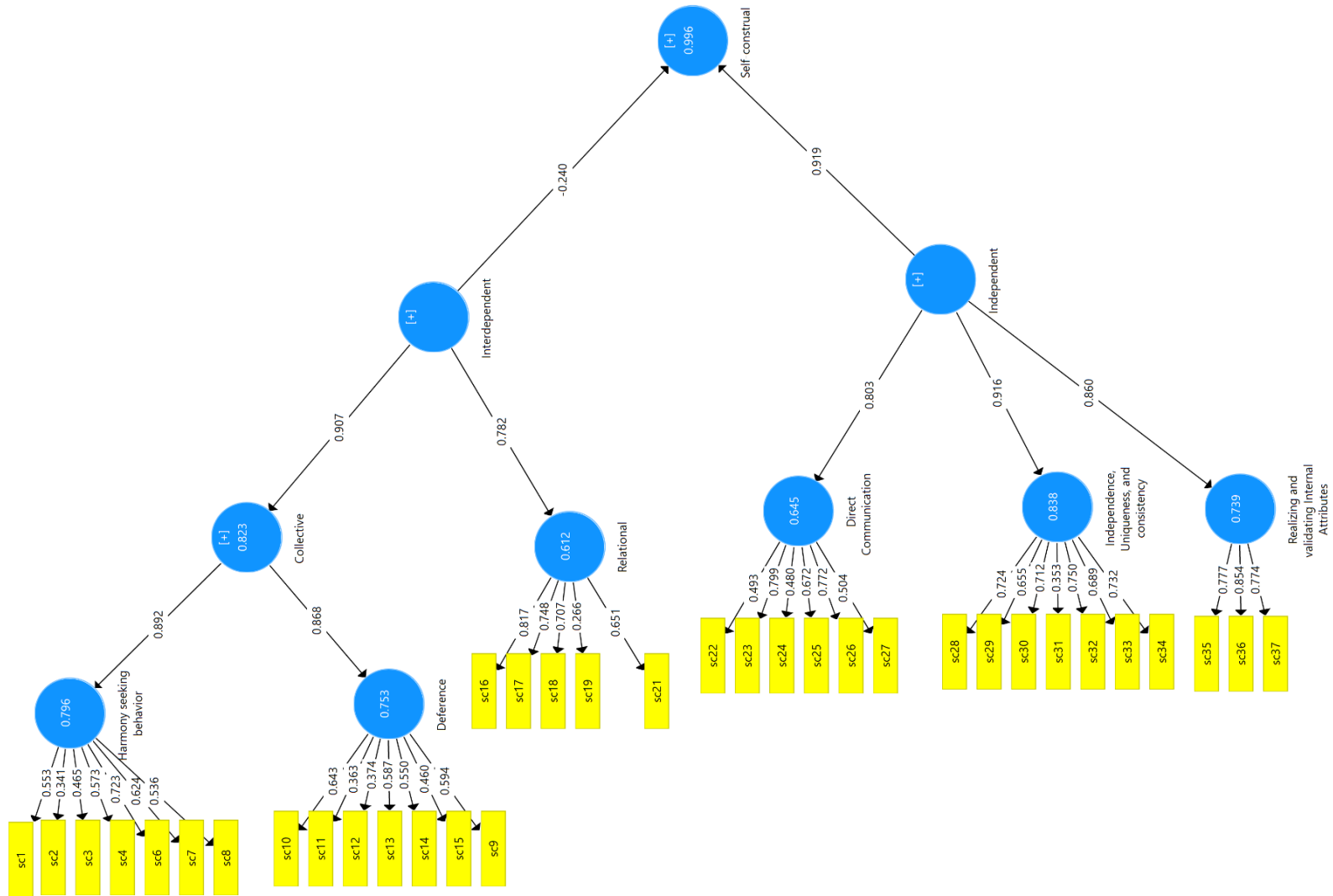


Figure 6. Common Method Variance.

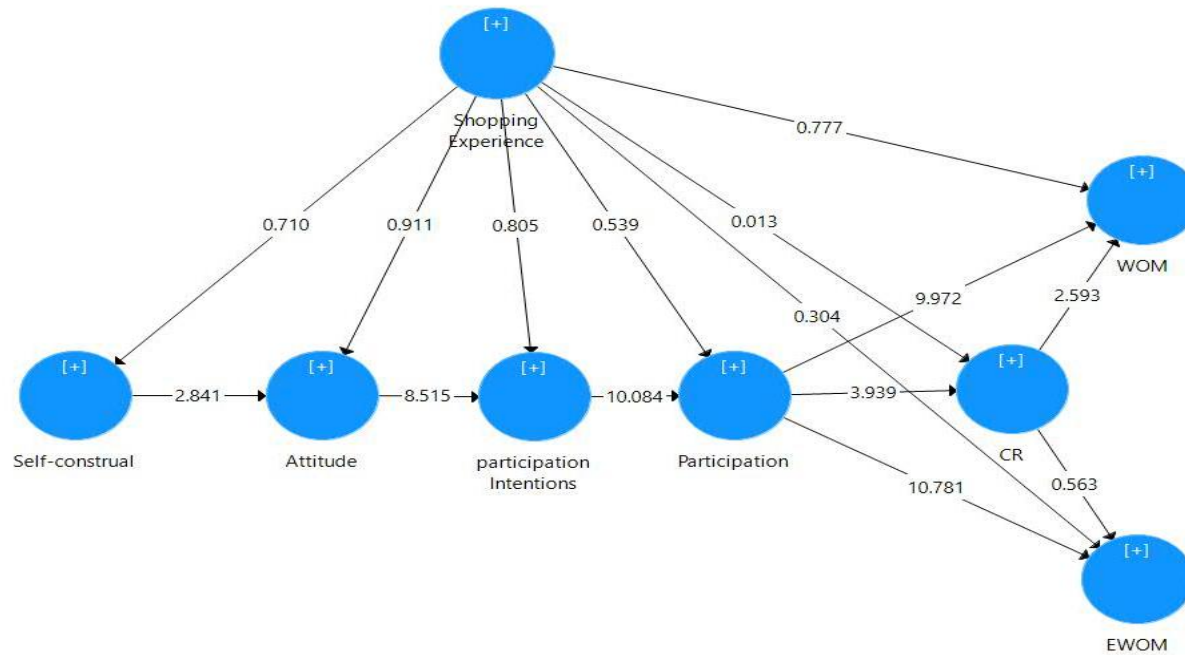
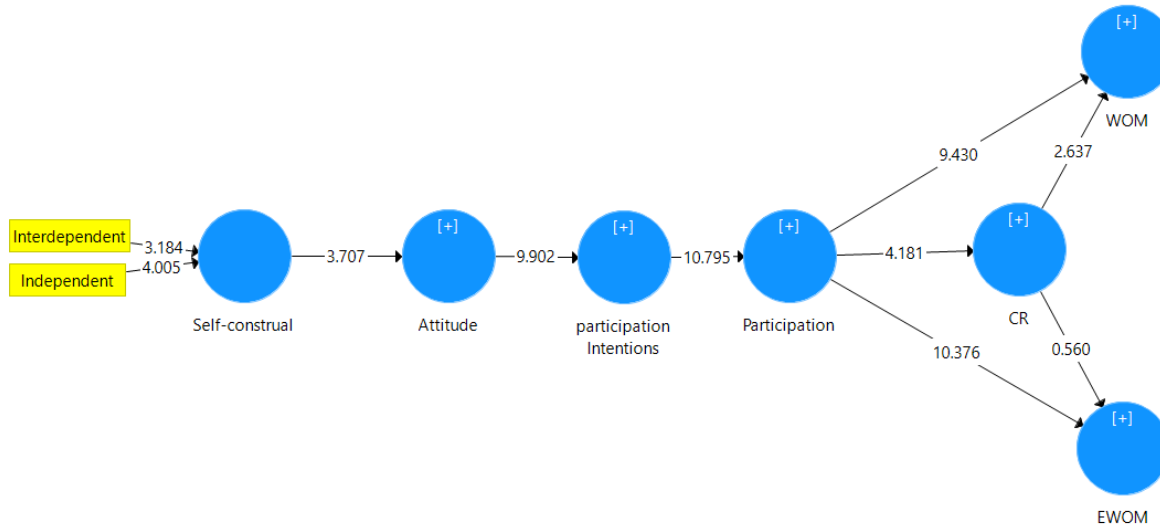


Figure 7. Structural Model t-values.



List of Tables

Table 1. List of papers analyzed for extracting the literature.

	Author	Year	Title	Purpose	Contribution
1	Theodore Singelis	1994	The measurement of interdependent and independent self-construals	The main purpose of this paper is the creation of an individual level measurement of self-construal (SC) using two dimensions (interdependent and independent).	The paper provided research with a 24-item scale for validly measuring SC amongst college students. This turned out to be the seminal paper amongst all of the SC measurement research.
2	Hazel Markus & Shinobu Kitayama	1991	Culture and the Self: Implications for Cognition, Emotion, and Motivation	This paper set out to characterize SC and understand its subparts, causes and effects, especially on emotions, behavior, and cognition.	This paper introduced the topic of SC and its subparts (dimensions). It defined independent and interdependent construals and was the cornerstone for future research on the topic.
3	Jesus Alfonso D. Datu	2014	Validating the Revised Self-Construal Scale in the Philippines	They dwelled on the scale done by Hashimoto and Yamagishi 2013 (18 measurements) in order to check if this scale is valid for the Philippines.	This paper proved that the SC scale of Singelis best measured the individuals SC in the Philippines.
4	Hardin, E. E., Leong, F. T., & Bhagwat	2004	Factor structure of the self-construal scale revisited: Implications for the multidimensionality of self-construal	Prove the multidimensionality of the SC construct and introduce the dimensions.	The results of the current study support the original data on the SCS (Singelis, 1994), showing that a two-factor structure adequately fits the SCS. multiple factors may underlie the SCS items, suggesting that self-construal itself may be a multidimensional construct. Further results suggest that the factors labeled Autonomy/Assertiveness, Individualism, Behavioral Consistency, and Primacy of Self represent specific types of Independence, whereas the factors labeled Relational Interdependence and Esteem for Group represent specific types of Interdependence.

5	Gudykunst, W. B., & Lee, C. M	2003	Assessing the validity of self construal scales: A response to Levine et al	This paper was a response to Levine et al.,(2003) who claimed that the current scales don't measure the SC construct, providing evidence on the topic.	They argue that the results of Levine et al.'s meta-analysis and priming studies do not raise problems with the validity of self-construal scales, in part, because their results are compatible with theorizing about self-construals. They also contend that Levine et al.'s measurement studies do not necessarily lead to the conclusion that there are problems with the validity of the scales. They conclude that the 2-dimensional model of self-construals and the current scales are viable for use in future research.
6	Levine, T. R., Bresnahan, M. J., Park, H. S., Lapinski, M. K., Wittenbaum, G. M., Shearman, S. M., ... & Ohashi, R	2003	Self-construal scales lack validity	Test the reliability and validity of current SC scales through testing for variances amongst results in research through a meta-analysis.	the 3 self construal scales currently in use have "severe" or "fatal" flaws and cant be used.
7	Harb, C., & Smith, P.	2008	Self-construals across cultures: independence—interdependence Beyond	This article reviews the literature on cross-cultural assessment of self-construals and proposes to refine their conceptualization by incorporating principles derived from self-categorization theory and a critique of cross-cultural research	A Sixfold SC Scale is devised to measure six subcategories of SC: the personal self, relational horizontal and relational vertical selves, collective horizontal and collective vertical selves, and humanity-bound self-construal.
8	Levine, T. R., Bresnahan, M. J., Park, H. S., Lapinski, M. K., Lee, T. S., & Lee, D. W	2003	The (in) validity of self-construal scales revisited	This paper was written as a response to that of Gudykunst et al., to reprove that the constructs cannot be measured.	The paper provides more evidence that the SC construct is not being measured effectively.
9	Grace, S. L., & Cramer, K. L.	2003	The elusive nature of self-measurement: The self-construal scale versus the twenty statements test	the authors compared 2 frequently used measures to operationalize the construct of the self, namely, the Self-Construal Scale (SCS; T. M. Singelis, 1994) and the Twenty Statements Test	In a sample of 324 male and female undergraduate psychology students of diverse ethnocultural backgrounds. Results demonstrated low intercorrelations between the 2 measures, suggesting that the qualitative

				(TST; M. Kuhn & T. S. McPartland, 1954),	and quantitative measures did not evaluate the same construct. A factor analysis of the SCS scale revealed 3 constructs-an independent construct, an interdependent construct, and a power distance or hierarchy construct.
10	Hardin, E. E.	2006	Convergent evidence for the multidimensionality of self-construal	The author wanted to test the multidimensionality of the SC construct through two studies.	The results regarding the 6 dimensions provided a better validity than that of the broad two dimensions, but didn't provide an ideal fit.
11	Christopher, M. S., Norris, P., D'Souza, J. B., & Tiernan, K. A.	2012	A test of the multidimensionality of the Self-Construal Scale in Thailand and the United States	Authors examined a series of nested confirmatory factor analytic models to assess the multidimensionality of the Self-Construal Scale (SCS) in Thailand and the United States.	Results suggested a substantially better fit to the data for the six-factor model in the American sample, replicating Hardin et al.'s findings.
12	Guo, X., Schwartz, S. J., & McCabe, B. E.	2008	Aging, gender, and self: Dimensionality and measurement invariance analysis on self-construal.	The dimensionality of self-construal, and the consistency of this dimensionality across age and gender, was examined using confirmatory factor and measurement invariance analyses.	a four-factor solution, including vertical and horizontal interdependence and vertical and horizontal independence, fitted the data better than a two-factor solution with vertical and horizontal dimensions posited as single factors. These results support the hypothesized individual-level multidimensionality of self-construal and suggest that it is structurally similar to the dimensionality of individualism – collectivism at the cultural level.
13	Cross, S. E., Hardin, E. E., & Gercek-Swing, B.	2011	The what, how, why, and where of self-construal	The authors review the history of the SC construct, their measurement and manipulation, and their roles in cognition, emotion, motivation, and social behavior.	This paper is a very important one in literature as it contains important information regarding the SC construct, subparts, and ideology.
14	D'Amico, A., & Scrima, F.	2016	The Italian validation of Singelis's Self-Construal Scale (SCS): A short 10-item	The study attempted to validate the SC scale of Singelis.	They came up with a short 10-item SC scale.

			version shows improved psychometric properties		
15	Hashimoto, H., & Yamagishi, T.	2013	Two faces of interdependence: Harmony seeking and rejection avoidance	Interdependent SC should contain two dimensions, rejection avoidance and harmony seeking.	Japanese respondents showed lower independence and higher rejection avoidance than Americans, while no cultural difference was found in harmony seeking. They believe that the failure to measure rejection avoidance lead to the previous inconsistencies in research.
16	Cross, S. E., Bacon, P. L., & Morris, M. L.	2000	The relational-interdependent self-construal and relationships.	They believed that the interdependent self construal is a second order dimension, with two first order constructs: collective and relational interdependent SC.	They created the new Relational interdependent SC scale.
17	Cross, S. E., & Morris, M. L.	2003	Getting to know you: The relational self-construal, relational cognition, and well-being	Further testing of the Relational SC construct.	Persons with a highly relational self-construal were better able than others to predict a new roommate's values and beliefs; and they tend to think optimistically about a new roommate's feelings about the relationship.
18	Cross, S. E.	2009	Relational Self-Construal: Past and Future	I distinguish relational self-construal from collective-interdependent self-construal and from other similar-sounding constructs	More details on the difference between the ingroup and outgroup is presented, along with that of the effect of SC on emotion, cognition and behavior.
19	Bresnahan, M. J., Levine, T. R., Shearman, S. M., Lee, S. Y., Park, C. Y., & Kiyomiya, T.	2005	A multimethod multitrait validity assessment of self-construal in Japan, Korea, and the United States	The paper sets to test the validity of three measurement scales: Singelis, Cross, and the TST scale.	The data showed that the Singelis (1994) Self-Construal Scale, the Cross, Bacon, and Morris (2000) Relational Interdependent Self-Construal Scale (RISC), and the Kuhn and McPartland (1954) Twenty Statements Test (TST) lacked convergent and discriminant validity, both pan-culturally and within each of the three countries included in the study.

20	Pöhlmann, C., & Hannover, B.	2006	Who shapes the self of independents and interdependents? Explicit and implicit measures of the self's relatedness to family, friends and partner	This paper tries to prove that social relationships shape the self in different ways, depending on whether persons define themselves as independent or interdependent.	Both explicit and implicit measures indicated that mental representations of family members were more strongly associated with the interdependent self than with the independent self, while romantic partners and friends were connected with both the independent and interdependent self.
21	Fiske, A. P	2002	Using individualism and collectivism to compare cultures--A critique of the validity and measurement of the constructs: Comment on Oyserman et al.(2002)	Point out limitations in research on individualism and collectivism.	There is a need to find a better way to study culture.
22	Brewer, M. B., & Chen, Y. R.	2007	Where (who) are collectives in collectivism? Toward conceptual clarification of individualism and collectivism	Better clarify the topics of individualism and collectivism.	The authors argue that there is a conceptual confusion about the meaning of ingroups that constitute the target of collectivism. Collectives are rarely referred to in existing measures to assess collectivism. Instead, networks of interpersonal relationships dominate the operational definition of "ingroups" in these measures.
23	Gabriel, S., & Gardner, W. L	1999	Are there "his" and "hers" types of interdependence? The implications of gender differences in collective versus relational interdependence for affect, behavior, and cognition	Test if gender differences affect, behavior, and cognition	Women focus more on the relational aspects of interdependence, whereas men focus more on the collective aspects of interdependence.
24	Kashima, E. S., & Hardie, E. A.	2000	The development and validation of the Relational, Individual, and Collective self-aspects (RIC) Scale	The authors set of to create a new measurement scale for SC.	They created the RIC scale that uses ten questions to rate the three categories.
25	Gudykunst, W. B., Matsumoto, Y., Ting-Toomey, S.,	1996	The influence of cultural individualism-collectivism, self construals, and individual	Create a SC scale based on that of Singelis.	They Created a seminal scale in literature that measured the two dimensions of sc.

	Nishida, T., Kim, K., & Heyman, S.		values on communication styles across cultures		
26	Bresnahan, M. J., Chiu, H. C., & Levine, T. R.	2004	Self-construal as a predictor of communal and exchange orientation in Taiwan and the USA	The study investigated whether self-construal systematically related to exchange and communal orientation	Independent self-construal was related to exchange orientation and relational interdependent self-construal was related to communal orientation. This paper presented the rare scale of Kim and Leung, 1997.
27	Lu, L., & Gilmour, R	2007	Developing a new measure of independent and interdependent views of the self.	Two studies were conducted to develop and test a new scale to measure individualism and collectivism, each with its seven constituent facets.	The proposed two-dimensional structure was supported by exploratory factor analyses of Chinese and British samples of general populations. The new Independent and Interdependent Self Scale (IISS) was found to have satisfactory reliability and validity
28	Kemmelmeier, M., Burnstein, E., Krumov, K., Genkova, P., Kanagawa, C., Hirshberg, M. S., ... & Noels, K. A.	2003	Individualism, collectivism, and authoritarianism in seven societies.	the authors examined the relationship between individualism-collectivism and orientations toward authority at the individual level.	Both at the individual level and the societal level of analysis, authoritarianism was correlated with vertical individualism and vertical collectivism but unrelated to horizontal collectivism. Horizontal individualism was unrelated to authoritarianism except in post-Communist societies whose recent history presumably made salient the incompatibility between state authority and self-determination
29	Gouveia, V. V., Clemente, M., & Espinosa, P.	2003	The horizontal and vertical attributes of individualism and collectivism in a Spanish population.	The authors examined the dimensionality and factorial structure of individualism and collectivism in Spanish participants	Consistent with earlier data, the best fitting model was multidimensional: a vertical versus a horizontal attribute crossed with individualism and collectivism dimensions. Whereas the overall fit of the data to a LISREL model was moderate, additional self-report data on respondents' interpersonal experiences supported the construct validity of the 4 factors. The authors suggest that the additional complexity is useful in explaining Spanish social behavior.

30	Chen, F. F., & West, S. G.	2008	Measuring individualism and collectivism: The importance of considering differential components, reference groups, and measurement invariance	A new instrument of individualism and collectivism (I/C) was developed and three key issues in I/C measurement were addressed: differentiating components of I/C, understanding the impact of reference groups, and testing of measurement invariance.	Results indicate that Chinese participants are less unique but more independent and competitive than their counterparts in the U.S. These results suggest that individualism is a multidimensional construct, whereas the dimensionality of collectivism appears to be a function of social distance.
31	Huda Ayyash-Abdo, Rana Tayara, Satoko Sasagawa	2016	Social anxiety symptoms: A cross-cultural study between Lebanon and the UK	The purpose of the study was to compare the frequency of social anxiety symptoms among young adults in Lebanon and young adults in the UK and to investigate the relationship between social anxiety, self-construals, and perceived social norms	Lebanese young adults scored higher than UK participants on independent and interdependent self-construals. Compared to participants, Lebanese participants showed a greater acceptance of attention seeking behaviors. Though independent self-construal was negatively correlated with social interaction anxiety for both samples, cultural norms were negatively correlated with social anxiety only for the UK sample. The correlation between independent/interdependent self-construals and cultural norms/values was higher in the UK sample.
32	Kam, C., Zhou, X., Zhang, X., & Ho, M. Y	2012	Examining the dimensionality of self-construals and individualistic–collectivistic values with random intercept item factor analysis	The current research re-visits the dimensionality of self-construals and I–C values using random intercept item factor analysis	Acquiescence bias exists consistently in the self-construal measure and the I–C values measure, and that independence and interdependence, as well as I–C values, correlate slightly negative with but are not entirely opposite to each other. This result supports the bi-dimensionality model for both self-construals and I–C values.
33	Kiuchi, A. K. I.	2006	Independent and interdependent self-construals: Ramifications for a multicultural society	This study examined American students, Japanese students in Japan, and Japanese students in the USA. First, it examined whether respondents' scale for independent and interdependent construals of the self	The results of this study showed that there was a difference between the American students and both groups of Japanese students in their preference for three communication styles (independent, mixed, interdependent-type). Moreover, Intercultural sensitivity was shown

				(SII) scores would vary depending on the type of relationship	to have a positive correlation to general self-efficacy.
34	Lam, B. T.	2005	Factor structure of the self-construal scale in a Vietnamese-American adolescent sample	This study investigated the factor structure of the Self-construal Scale	This paper showed support to Singelis two dimensional model and scale.
35	Magid, K., Sarkol, V., & Mesoudi, A.	2017	Experimental priming of independent and interdependent activity does not affect culturally variable psychological processes	Test that the eco-cultural hypothesis explains the difference between cultures in the east and west.	This paper failed to prove so.
36	Oyserman, D., Coon, H. M., & Kemmelmeier, M.	2002	Rethinking individualism and collectivism: evaluation of theoretical assumptions and meta-analyses	The authors summarize plausible psychological implications of individualism– collectivism (IND-COL), metaanalyze cross-national and within-United States IND-COL differences, and review evidence for effects of IND-COL on self-concept, well-being, cognition, and relationality.	European Americans were found to be both more individualistic—valuing personal independence more—and less collectivistic—feeling duty to in-groups less—than others. However, European Americans were not more individualistic than African Americans, or Latinos, and not less collectivistic than Japanese or Koreans. Among Asians, only Chinese showed large effects, being both less individualistic and more collectivistic. Moderate IND-COL effects were found on self-concept and relationality, and large effects were found on attribution and cognitive style.
37	Vignoles et al.	2016	Beyond the ‘east–west’ dichotomy: Global variation in cultural models of selfhood	The authors revisited the conceptualization and measurement of independent and interdependent SC in two large-scale multinational surveys, using improved methods for cross-cultural research.	a new seven-dimensional model of self-reported ways of being independent or interdependent. This paper is a seminal paper for future research.

38	Cross, S. E., Gore, J.S., & Morris, M.L.	2003	The Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal, Self-Concept Consistency, and Well-Being	Examination of the assumptions underlying consistency perspectives in social and personality psychology	Using a variety of measures of well-being, the studies showed that there is a weaker relation between consistency and well-being for individuals with a highly relational self-construal than for those with a low relational SC
39	Locke, K.D. & Christensen, L.	2007	Re-construing the relational-interdependent self-construal and its relationship with self-consistency	This study sought to tie the relational self-construal to the nomological net of the interpersonal circumplex and show that prior self-construal research confounded consistent with desirable descriptions of self and others.	Contrary to past research, the relational self-construal only predicted socially desirable types of consistency and did not moderate the effect of self-consistency on well-being.
40	Stapel, D.A., & Van der Zee, K.I.	2006	The Self Salience Model of Other-to-Self Effects: Integrating Principles of Self-Enhancement, Complementarity, and Imitation	In a series of studies the Self Salience Model of other-to-self effects is tested. This model posits that self-construal salience is an important determinant of whether other-to-self effects follow the principles of self-enhancement, imitation, or complementarity.	Self-construal salience is an important determinant of whether social comparison shows self-enhancement, complementarity, or imitation patterns.
41	Heine, S.J., Lehman, D.R., Peng, K., & Greenholtz, J.	2002,	What's Wrong With Cross-Cultural Comparisons of Subjective Likert Scales?: The Reference-Group Effect	Investigation of Cross cultural comparisons of Likert scales.	One strategy to avoid reference-group effects is to avoid measuring culture through individual-level responses. Another strategy is to have people compare themselves with an arithmetic standard. Another strategy is to determine how different cultures respond to information that is either consistent or inconsistent with implicit theories that are hypothesized to be shared by members of a culture. A final strategy is to use a forced-choice framework that includes items with concrete, objective response options.
42	Barak, B., Guiot, D., & Mathur, A.	2011	An Empirical Assessment of Cross-Cultural Age Self-Construal Measurement:	This study investigated which age measures, independent or interdependent, were better for cross-cultural consumer research.	Results indicate that interdependent decade scales are better than independent age scales for cross-cultural consumer behavior studies.

			Evidence from Three Countries	Specifically, it assessed the fit between the “actual” and “ideal” self-concept model within the framework of self-construal theory	
43	Church et al.	2003	Measuring Individual and Cultural Differences in Implicit Trait Theories	An attempt to measure individual and cultural differences in implicit trait theories.	A new measure of implicit theories or beliefs regarding the traitedness versus contextuality of behavior was developed and tested across cultures.
44	Brian Trung Lam	2006	Self-construal and socio-emotional development among Vietnamese-American adolescents: An examination of different types of self-construal	This study examined how four different types of self-construal affected perception of socio-emotional adjustment (i.e., anxiety, depression, distress, self-esteem, family cohesion, peer support, pro-substance abuse attitude) and perception of relationship with community	The bicultural students reported greater perceived adjustment across all measures except anxiety when compared to other groups (marginal, interdependent, and independent)
45	Long, K., & Zhang, X.	2014	The Role of Self-Construal in Predicting Self-Presentational Motives for Online Social Network Use in the UK and Japan	Self-presentational motives underlying online social network (OSN) use were explored in samples of British and Japanese users.	There were some differences in the patterns of prediction between the samples, but overall self-construal measures contributed to the explanation of the majority of the motivations, whereas narcissistic or modest personality variables did not.
46	Yampolsky M.A, Amiot, C.E., De la Sablonnière, R.	2016	The Multicultural Identity Integration Scale (MULTIIS): Developing a Comprehensive Measure for Configuring One’s Multiple Cultural Identities Within the Self	The research investigating how one’s multiple cultural identities are configured within the self has yet to account for existing cultural identity configurations aside from integration, and for identifying with more than 2 cultural groups at once.	The factorial structure along with the integration subscale of the Multicultural Identity Integration Scale was validated. Whereas compartmentalization negatively predicted well-being.
47	Kruger, G.	2015	A TEST OF SHARKEY AND SINGELIS’ (1995) MODEL OF SELFCONSTRUAL AND EMBARRASSABILITY: SITUATIONAL VERSUS	The current study repeated the analysis but measured embarrassability as a disposition on a diversified sample.	Sharkey and Singelis’ model may be more applicable to the explanation of situational embarrassability than dispositional embarrassability. The scale found low Cronbach alfa for the SC scale.

			DISPOSITIONAL FACTORS		
48	Singelis, T.M., Triandis, H.C., Bhawuk, D.R.S., & Gelfand, M.J.	1995	Horizontal and Vertical Dimensions of Individualism and Collectivism: A Theoretical and Measurement Refinement	Develop a new scale for measuring collectivism and individualism	This paper resulted with a semina scale for measuring SC of a culture. They differentiated between veticle and horizontal.
49	Burton, K. A., Gore, J. S., & Sturgeon, J.	2012	The role of relational self-construal in reactions to charity advertisements	Three studies examined the effect of relational self-construal on attitudes and behaviors toward charity advertisements after controlling for sex	The results demonstrated that those with a highly relational self-construal had more favorable attitudes toward the advertisements and were more likely to help. This indicates that charities may consider targeting individuals who have a highly relational self-construal to receive more donations.
50	Li, Y.I., Hazler, R.J., & Trusty, J.	2017	Relational Self-Construal as a Moderator of Social Support in Career Decision Making	The authors examined relational self-construal as a moderator of the influence of social support on career decision-making difficulties among 352 college students (65% women, 63% Caucasian).	Results of hierarchical regression analyses supported the hypothesis that individuals with higher relational self-construal reported fewer difficulties in terms of lack of information and inconsistent information in career decision making as social support increased.
51	Shulruf, B., Hattie, J. & Dixon, R.	2007	Development of a New Measurement Tool for Individualism and Collectivism	A new measurement tool for individualism and collectivism has been developed to address critical methodological issues in this field of social psychology	psychology. This new measure, the Auckland Individualism and Collectivism Scale (AICS), defines three dimensions of individualism: (a) responsibility (acknowledging one's responsibility for one's actions), (b) uniqueness (distinction of the self from the other), and (c) competitiveness (striving for personal goals is one's prime interest). The scale also defines two dimensions of collectivism: (a) advice (seeking advice from people close to one, before taking decisions) and (b) harmony (seeking to avoid conflict).

52	Skarmeas, D., & Shabbir, H. A.	2011	Relationship quality and giving behaviour in the UK fundraising sector	The current study aims to examine the extent to which donor religiosity and self-construal encourages the development of donor-perceived relationship quality and intention to give in the future. Donor-perceived relationship quality is conceptualized as a higher-order construct composed of trust, commitment, and satisfaction	The study results indicate that religiosity and self-construal are important contributors of relationship quality, while religiosity and relationship quality have a direct impact on intention toward future giving.
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Table 2. Most important Self Construal Items across literature: R=reversed item; M: modified item; X: Same item.

	Item/Scale	Singelis 1994	Leung & Kim 1997	Gudykunst et al. 1994	Hashimoto & Yamagishi, 2013	Vignoles et al, 2016
	<i>Interdependent items:</i>					
1	I will sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of the group I am in	X	x	x	X	
2	I often have the feeling that my relationships with others are more important than my own accomplishments	X	x	x	X	RXM
3	It Is important for me to maintain harmony within a group	X	x	x		
4	I should take into consideration my parents' advice when making education/career plans	X	x			XR
5	If my brother or sister fails, I feel responsible	X	x			RM
6	I will stay in a group if they need me, even when I'm not happy with the group	X		x	X	
7	It is important to me to respect decisions made by the group	X		x		
8	I respect the majority's wishes in groups of which I am a member			x	X	
9	It is important to consult close friends and get their ideas before making decisions.		x	X		
10	I act as fellow group members would prefer me to.		x		X	
11	My happiness depends on the happiness of those around me	X				R

12	I would offer my seat in a bus to my professor	X				
13	I respect people who are modest about themselves	X				
14	I have respect for the authority figures with whom I interact	X				
15	Even when I strongly disagree with group members, I avoid an argument	x				
16	I feel uncomfortable disagreeing with my group.		x			R
17	I conceal my negative emotions so I won't cause unhappiness in my group		x			RM
18	My happiness depends on the happiness of those in my group.		x			
19	I often consider how I can be helpful to specific others in my group.		x			
20	When I'm with my group, I watch my words so I won't offend anyone.		x			R
21	I try to meet demands of my group, even if it means controlling my own desires.		x			
22	The security of being an accepted member of a group is very important to me.		x			
23	I consult others before making important decisions			x		
24	I consult with co-workers on work-related matters			x		
25	I stick with my group even through difficulties			x		
26	I try to abide by customs and conventions at work			x		
27	I give special consideration to others' personal situations so I can be efficient at work			x		
28	It is better to consult others and get their opinions before doing anything			x		
29	I think it is important not to disturb good relations among one's close acquaintances				X	
30	I feel good when I cooperate with others				x	

	Item/Scale	Cross et al., (2000)
	<i>Relational interdependent Self-construal items:</i>	

31	My close relationships are an important reflection of who I am	X
32	When I feel very close to someone, it often feels to me like that person is an important part of who I am	X
33	I usually feel a strong sense of pride when someone close to me has an important accomplishment	X
34	I think one of the most important parts of who I am can be captured by looking at my close friends and understanding who they are	X
35	When I think of myself, I often think of my close friends or my family	X
36	If a person hurts someone close to me, I feel personally hurt as well	X
37	In general, my close relationships are an important part of my self-image	X
38	Overall, my close relationships have very little to do with how I feel about myself (item reflected in scoring)	X
39	My close relationships are unimportant to my sense of what kind of person I am (item reflected in scoring)	X
40	My sense of pride comes from knowing who I have as close friends	X
41	When I establish a close relationship with someone, I usually develop a strong sense of identification with that person	x

	Item/Scale	Singelis 1994	Leung & Kim 1997	Gudykunst et al. 1994	Hashimoto & Yamagishi, 2013	Vignoles et al, 2016
	<i>Independent items:</i>					
42	My personal identity independent of others, is very important to me	X	x	x		
43	I should be judged on my own merit.		x	x		
44	I prefer to be self-reliant rather than dependent upon others.		X	x		XR
45	I act as a unique person, separate from others.		X	x		M
46	I don't like depending upon others.		X	x		XR
47	I take responsibility for my own actions.		X	x		
48	It is very important for me to act as an independent person.		X	x		
49	I enjoy being admired for my unique qualities.		X	x		R
50	I am comfortable with being singled out for praise or rewards	X		x		R
51	Being able to take care of myself is a primary concern for me	X		x		
52	I prefer to be direct and forthright when dealing with people I've just met	X			x	
53	I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects	X	x		x	M

54	I don't change my opinions in conformity with those of the majority.		x		x	
55	I am the same person at home that I am at school	X				MMR
56	I act the same way no matter who I am with	X				MRR
57	I feel comfortable using someone's first name soon after I meet them, even when they are much older than I am	X				
58	I value being in good health above everything	X				
59	I'd rather say "No" directly, than risk being misunderstood	X				
60	Speaking up during a class is not a problem for me	X			x	
61	Having a lively imagination is important to me	X				
62	I have an opinion about most things; I know what I like, and I know what I don't like		X			
63	Speaking up in a work/task group is not a problem for me.		X			
64	Having a lively imagination is important to me.		X			
65	Understanding myself is a major goal in my life.		X			
66	I voice my own opinion in group discussions.		x		x	
67	If there is a conflict between my values and values of groups of which I am a member, I follow my value			x		
68	I should decide my future on my own			x		
69	I help acquaintances, even if it is inconvenient			x		
70	I don't support a group decision when it is wrong			x		
71	I always express my opinions clearly				X	
72	I am not concerned if my ideas or behavior are different from those of other people				X	
73	If I am committed to my own ideas, then I do not really care what others think of them				X	

Table 3. List of contacted experts and their email addresses.

	<i>Name of Author.</i>	<i>Email 1st cor.</i>		<i>Name of Author.</i>	<i>Email 1st cor.</i>
1	Hazel Rose Markus	hmarkus@stanford.edu	54	Fang Fang Chen	xiyu@udel.edu
2	Shinobu Kitayama	kitayama@umich.edu	55	Stephen G. West	Steve.West@asu.edu

3	Dharm R S. Bhawuk	Bhawuk@Hawaii.Edu	56	Ya-Ru Chen	ychen8@stern.nyu.edu
4	Michele J. Gelfand	mgelfand@umd.edu	57	Joel Brockner	jb54@gsb.columbia.edu
5	Shira Gabriel	sgabriel@buffalo.edu	58	Kristy K. Dean	deankr@gvsu.edu
6	Wendi L. Gardner	wgardner@northwestern.edu	59	Elaine Duncan	edu@gcu.ac.uk
7	Emiko S. Kashima	E.kashima@latrobe.edu.au	60	Ilaria Grazzani	Ilaria.Grazzani@unimib.it
8	Elizabeth A. Hardie	ehardie@swin.edu.au	61	Cecilia A. Essau	c.essau@roehampton.ac.uk
9	Susan E. Cross	scross@iastate.edu	62	Valdiney V. Gouveia	vgouveia@cchla.ufpb.br
10	Pamela L. Bacon	pbacon@csbsju.edu	63	Miguel Clemente	miguel.clemente@udc.es
11	Michael L. Morris	mmorris@cpp.com	64	Pablo Espinosa	pespinosa@udc.es
12	Alan Page Fiske	afiske@ucla.edu	65	Kristina Haberstroh	kristina.nickel@ae.uni-kiel.de
13	Timothy R. Levine	levinet111@gmail.com	66	Ulrich Orth	uorth@ae.uni-kiel.de
14	Mary Jiang Bresnahan	bresnah1@msu.edu	67	Roberta Crouch,	roberta.crouch@flinders.edu.au
15	Hee Sun Park	heesunpark321@gmail.com	68	Pa Her	pher@citytech.cuny.edu
16	Maria Knight Lapinski	lapinsk3@msu.edu	69	Julie C. Dunsmore	jdunsmor@vt.edu
17	Gwen M. Wittenbaum	gwittenb@msu.edu	70	Keiko Ishii	ishii@lit.kobe-u.ac.jp
18	Sachiyo Shearman	morinaga@msu.edu ;	71	Yukiko Uchida	uchida.yukiko.6m@kyoto-u.ac.jp
19	Rie Ohashi	ohashiri@u-air.ac.jp	72	Chester Kam	ckam@uwo.ca
20	Tai Sik Lee	cmtsl@hanyang.ac.kr	73	Xiaolin Zhou	xz104@pku.edu.cn
21	Carmen M. Lee	carmenml@usc.edu	74	Man Yee Ho	my.ho@cityu.edu.hk
22	Erin E. Hardin	erin.hardin@utk.edu	75	Markus Kimmelmeier	markusk@unr.edu
23	Frederick T. L. Leong	fleong@msu.edu	76	AKI Kiuchi	akiuchi@obirin.ac.jp
24	Aditya A. Bhagwat	drsurya69@gmail.com	77	Arnulf Kolstad	arnkol@alumni.ntnu.no
25	Toru Kiyomiya	kiyomiya@seinan-gu.ac.jp	78	Kuba Krys	kuba@krys.pl
26	Cheong-YI Park	cheongyi@inha.ac.kr	79	Brian Trung Lam	blam3@csulb.edu
27	Betina Hannover	bettina.hannover@fu-berlin.de	82	Luo Lu	luolu@mgt.ncu.edu.tw
28	Kenneth D. Locke	klocke@uidaho.edu	83	P. Priscilla Lui	plui@smu.edu
29	Marilynn B. Brewer	brewer.64@osu.edu	84	Janetta Lun	jlun@virginia.edu
30	Charles Harb	charles.harb@aub.edu.lb	85	Kesson Magid	kesson.magid@durham.ac.uk
31	PETER B. Smith	psmith@sussex.ac.uk ;	86	Alex Mesoudi	a.mesoudi@exeter.ac.uk

32	XIAOHUI Guo	XGuo@med.miami.edu	87	VINAI Norasakkunkit	g4479vnora@umbsky.cc.umb.edu
33	Seth J Schwartz		88	Egin Ozturk	ENGIN.OZTURK@DEU.EDU.tr
34	Sherry L. Grace	sherry.grace@uhn.on.ca	89	Selcen Kilicaslan	SELCEN.KILICASLAN@DEU.EDU.TR
35	Berna Gercek-Swing	bgercekswing@uwlax.edu	90	Nihan	NK.NIHAN@GMAIL.COM
36	K. Alex Burton	Kelly_burton25@eku.edu	91	Stephanie L. Paquet	spaquet@knightsbridge.ca
37	Jonathan S. Gore	jonathan.gore@eku.edu	92	Irene J. K. Park	ikim1@nd.edu
38	Michael S. Christopher	mchristopher@pacificu.edu	93	Andrés Santamaría	asantamaria@us.es
39	Hirofumi Hashimoto	hashimotohakubun@gmail.com	94	Manuel L. de la Mata	mluis@us.es
40	Jesus Alfonso D. Datu	jadatu@eduhk.hk	95	Tia G. B. Hansen	tia@hum.aau.dk
41	Antonella D'Amico	antonella.damico@unipa.it	96	Margarita V. Shafiro	mshafiro@moreheadassociates.com
42	Fabrizio Scrima	fabrizioscrima@hotmail.com	97	Minsun Shim	mshim@inha.ac.kr
43	GERT H. J. Kruger	gkruger@uj.ac.za	98	Roselyn J. Lee-Won	lee-won.1@osu.edu
44	Yaoshan I. Li,	yaoshanl@gmail.com	99	Sang Hee Park	sangheepark@chungbuk.ac.kr
45	Jerry Trusty	jgt3@psu.edu	100	BOAZ SHULRUF	b.shulruf@auckland.ac.nz
46	STELLA TING-TOOMEY	sting@fullerton.edu	101	SKARMEAS Dionysis	dkarmeas@aueb.gr
47	Min-Sun Kim	kmin@hawaii.edu	102	Fons J.R. Van de Vijver	fons.vandevijver@uvt.nl
48	H AYYASH Abdo	HABDO@LAU.EDU.LB	103	David Watkins	hrfewda@hku.hk
49	Benny Barak	BENNY.BARAK@HOFSTRA.EDU	104	Ziqiang Xin	xinziqiang@sohu.com
50	Denis Guiot	denis.guiot@dauphine.fr	105	Jiaxi Peng	pengjx880124@sina.com
51	Anil Mathur	Anil.Mathur@Hofstra.edu	106	Micheal H. Bond	ssmhb@polyu.edu.hk
52	Yong Zhang	Yong.Zhang@Hofstra.edu	107	Vivian Vignoles	V.L.Vignoles@sussex.ac.uk
53	Keun Lee	Keun.S.Lee@hofstra.edu	108	Amrita Maitreyi	amritama@stanford.edu
80	Troy E. Beckert	troy.beckert@usu.edu	109	Hidefumi Hitokoto	hideckn@gmail.com
81	Karen Long	k.m.long@sussex.ac.uk			

Table 4. List of experts who participated in this research.

Expert's Name	Years of experience in the topic of SC	Domain of experience	Country of Origin	Rounds Participated in					
				1	2	4	5	6	7
Peter B. Smith	30	Cross-cultural psychology	UK	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bettina Hannover	27	Self and identity, educational psychology	Germany	X	X	X	X	X	X
Markus Kemmelmeier	25	Cultural psychology	Germany	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hidefumi Hitokoto	20	Culture, self, and well-being	Japan	X	X	X	X	X	X
Keiko Ishii	15	Culture and cognition	Japan	X	X	X	X	X	X
Manuel L. de la Mata Benítez	12	Culture, self, identity & autobiographical memory	Spain	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sachiyo Shearman	10	Education	Japan	X	X	X	X	X	X
Maria Lapinski	5	Communication Research	USA	X	X	X	X	X	X
Antonella D'Amico	5	Psychology	Italy	X	X	X	X	X	X
Min-Sun Kim	30	Intercultural Communication	USA	X	X	X	X	X	
Vinai Norasakkunkit	29	Intersection of cultural and clinical psychology; psychology of globalization and cultural change (especially among youth in post-industrial economies)	Japan	X	X	X	X	X	
Elaine Duncan	10	Emotional wellbeing	UK	X	X	X	X	X	
Wendi Gardner	25	Social psychology	USA	X	X				
Jonathan Gore	22	Self, Culture and Motivation	USA	X	X				
Andrés Santamaría	15	Cultural self construal, identity, gender, and cultural practices	Spain	X	X				
Selcen Kilicaslan-Gokoglu	3	Management & Organization	Turkey	X	X				
Charles Harb	20	Social psychology across cultures	Lebanon	X					
Pa Her	18	Self, Emotions	USA	X					
Seth J. Schwartz	15	Acculturation, identity, cultural stress	USA	X					

Table 5. List of New Items created by the experts in round 2.

	Item	Category
1	I feel that people who are close to me are part of me	Harmony Seeking Behavior
2	Even if I do not feel a positive emotion, when my group requires me to, I can pretend as if I feel it	
3	I worry about being fine with those who are close to me	
4	It is important not to disturb good relations among my close friends.	
5	To maintain interpersonal harmony, some complicated problems are better to be kept ambiguous.	
6	I conceal my negative emotions so that I will create an impression of being harmonious	
7	Those who are close to me make me feel safe and at peace	
8	Even if it is superficial, harmony should be kept as a norm.	
9	I make decisions about my life on my own	Deference
10	It is important to consult the elderly in difficult times	
11	My parents advice is important to me in making decisions in life	
12	I prefer to do what I want without letting my family influence me	
13	When I have made a decision I don't think it's important to consult it with others	
14	I like being different from other people	Similance, affiliation, and abasement
15	Being similar to my friends makes me comfortable	
16	I see myself as unique and different from others	
17	There will be less trouble when I act similarly to my friends	
18	Being different from others makes me feel uncomfortable	
19	I try to avoid being noticeably different from others	
20	Those who are very close to me are my top priority	Relational Interdependent SC
21	"Sometimes people need to hear the truth about themselves, even when they don't want to hear it" [Rationale: should be fairly self-evident; endorse most direct from of communication]	Direct Communication
22	I honestly tell others what I think even when this may make them uncomfortable	
23	If there is a disagreement between my opinion and opinions of groups of which I am a member, I express my opinion.	Interpersonal communication and sticking to own opinions
24	I only take into account the opinions of the closest	
25	I prefer to say what I am thinking, even if it is inappropriate for the situation	
26	I act myself as unique and different from others.	
27	I fear what close others might think if my opinion is different from them	
28	If I can not decide things on my own, I tend to follow what close others do	

29	I feel being disrespected if others do not recognize me as a full-fledged person.	Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency
30	I am the same with known and unknown people	
31	I generally regard people to have their own inner personalities that are not influenced by others or situations.	
32	I am always the same	
33	I don't need anyone to do things right	Self-interests, potential and capabilities
34	I usually work to fulfill my potential	
35	I typically try to figure out what I want, and then pursue my goal as best as I can	
36	I am concerned about my own interests.	

Table 6. List of items modified by the experts in round 2.

	Item	Category
1	Being accepted by other members of my group is important to me. [Rationale: Need for security may not be the only motivation behind wanting to be accepted. Leaving specific motivation open gives the item a broader reach]	Harmony Seeking Behavior
2	I am conscious that I am often aware of others' personal situations when I am interacting with them. [Rationale: the question isn't neutral - it relies on work being available to all, engaged in by all who may answer this]	
3	It is important to me to maintain a good relationship with my friends and acquaintances [Rationale: "close acquaintances" seems an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms; friends would be more appropriate. The phrase to "not disturb" sounds like the person is seeking to avoid negative aspects only. "maintain a good relationship" includes both advancing positive elements in the relationship and avoiding negative ones]	
4	When I disagree with another member of my group, I make sure that I don't offend or embarrass them [Rationale: Many items regarding harmony seeking assume that the person does not disagree. However, it is much plausible that disagreement is expressed; yet, it depends HOW disagreement is expressed. Disagreement can be expressed, but in a way that takes into account the relationship, and signals that the disagreement is not an affront to others. Further, offense is not the only concern; often, it is important that someone is not getting shamed or embarrassed.]	

5	" It is important to consult my friends and get their opinions before making important decisions." [Rationale: "ideas" of #3 seems a bit general, if not awkward; also, this applied primarily to important decisions. "My friends" presumes a certain level of closeness.]	Deference
6	I try to abide by customs and conventions that I am aware of in social contexts [Rationale] not neutral	
7	"I abide by the norms and customs of my group." [Rationale: The work context may not be generally applicable as a reference to the group, which may include groups at work. I also think the "try" is not necessary. This makes this item akin to Item 6, but without implying full surrender.]	
8	"If my brother or sister fails, I feel it is my responsibility to support them." [Rationale: item is limited in its generality because it presumes that the respondents feel somehow causally responsible for having brought about the failure. However, the sense of responsibility might be simply that the person feels they need to look out for the family member.]	Similance, affiliation, and abasement
9	if my family member fails, i feel responsible	
10	I often have the feeling that my relationships with others are more important than my own contentment and competencies	
11	I am the same person at home as I am at work or at school	
12	I help others, even if it is inconvenient	Self-interests, potential and capabilities

Table 7. List of final items for the measurement of SC.

Dimension	Category	Item
	Harmony Seeking Behavior	1 [Modified Item] Being accepted by other members of my group is important to me
		2 It Is important for me to maintain harmony within a group
		3 [Modified Item] When I disagree with another member of my group, I make sure that I don't offend or embarrass them
		4 I conceal my negative emotions so I won't cause unhappiness in my group
		5 Even when I strongly disagree with group members, I avoid an argument
		6 When I'm with my group, I watch my words so I won't offend anyone
		7 I think it is important not to disturb good relations among one's close acquaintances

Collective Interdependent SC		8	[Modified Item] It is important to me to maintain a good relationship with my friends and acquaintances
	Deference	9	It is important to me to respect decisions made by the group
		10	[Modified Item] I abide by the norms and customs of my group
		11	I have respect for the authority figures with whom I interact
		12	I should take into consideration my parents' advice when making education/career plans
	Similance, affiliation, and abasement	13	I will sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of the group I am in
		14	I often have the feeling that my relationships with others are more important than my own accomplishments
15		[New Item] I try to avoid being noticeably different from others	
Relational Interdependent SC		16	My close relationships are an important reflection of who I am
		17	When I feel very close to someone, it often feels to me like that person is an important part of who I am
		18	In general, my close relationships are an important part of my self-image
		19	I usually feel a strong sense of pride when someone close to me has an important accomplishment
		20	If a person hurts someone close to me, I feel personally hurt as well
		21	I think one of the most important parts of who I am can be captured by looking at my close friends and understanding who they are
Independent SC	Direct Communication	22	I'd rather say "No" directly, than risk being misunderstood
		23	I always express my opinions clearly
		24	[New Item] I honestly tell others what I think even when this may make them uncomfortable
		25	Speaking up in a work/task group is not a problem for me
	Self Expression	26	[New Item] If there is a disagreement between my opinion and opinions of groups of which I am a member, I express my opinion.
		27	[New Item] I prefer to say what I am thinking, even if it is inappropriate for the situation
	Independence, Uniqueness, and consistency	28	It is very important for me to act as an independent person
		29	My personal identity independent of others, is very important to me
		30	I don't like depending upon others
		31	I act the same way no matter who I am with
		32	I prefer to be self-reliant rather than dependent upon others
		33	I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects
	34	I enjoy being admired for my unique qualities	

	Realizing & validating Internal Attributes	35	I should be judged on my own merit
		36	I take responsibility for my own actions
		37	[New Item] I typically try to figure out what I want, and then pursue my goal as best as I can

Table 8. Distribution of gender per country

```
. table gender, contents(freq ) by(COUNTRY)
```

What is your nationality of Origin? and Gender	Freq.
Lebanon	
Female	71
Male	55
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Nort	
Female	41
Male	57

Table 9. Distribution of generations per country

. table GENERATION, contents(freq) by(COUNTRY)

What is your nationality of Origin? and GENERATION	Freq.
Lebanon	
The Silent Generation: Born 1928-1945 (7	
Baby Boomers: Born 1946-1964 (56-74 year	1
Generation X: Born 1965-1980 (40-55 year	18
Millennials: Born 1981-1996 (24-39 years	93
Post-Millennials: Born 1997-Present (0-2	14
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Nort	
The Silent Generation: Born 1928-1945 (7	3
Baby Boomers: Born 1946-1964 (56-74 year	22
Generation X: Born 1965-1980 (40-55 year	37
Millennials: Born 1981-1996 (24-39 years	34
Post-Millennials: Born 1997-Present (0-2	2

Table 10. Shapiro-Wilk W test for normal data

```
. swilk sc1-sc37
```

Shapiro-Wilk W test for normal data

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob>z
sc1	224	0.97226	4.569	3.516	0.00022
sc2	224	0.95138	8.007	4.814	0.00000
sc3	224	0.96872	5.152	3.793	0.00007
sc4	224	0.98026	3.251	2.728	0.00318
sc5	224	0.98325	2.759	2.348	0.00944
sc6	224	0.97444	4.210	3.326	0.00044
sc7	224	0.98336	2.740	2.332	0.00984
sc8	224	0.94235	9.496	5.208	0.00000
sc9	224	0.94933	8.346	4.910	0.00000
sc10	224	0.96883	5.133	3.785	0.00008
sc11	224	0.97094	4.786	3.623	0.00015
sc12	224	0.98910	1.796	1.354	0.08781
sc13	224	0.98065	3.187	2.682	0.00366
sc14	224	0.99004	1.640	1.145	0.12603
sc15	224	0.99070	1.531	0.986	0.16219
sc16	224	0.97602	3.949	3.178	0.00074
sc17	224	0.96257	6.165	4.209	0.00001
sc18	224	0.98740	2.075	1.689	0.04557
sc19	224	0.96440	5.863	4.092	0.00002
sc20	224	0.94084	9.743	5.268	0.00000
sc21	224	0.98012	3.275	2.745	0.00303
sc22	224	0.97743	3.718	3.039	0.00119
sc23	224	0.94279	9.423	5.191	0.00000
sc24	224	0.97160	4.678	3.570	0.00018
sc25	224	0.97034	4.885	3.670	0.00012
sc26	224	0.95013	8.214	4.873	0.00000
sc27	224	0.98209	2.949	2.503	0.00617
sc28	224	0.96509	5.749	4.047	0.00003
sc29	224	0.97055	4.851	3.654	0.00013
sc30	224	0.97334	4.390	3.423	0.00031
sc31	224	0.97976	3.334	2.786	0.00266
sc32	224	0.95952	6.667	4.390	0.00001
sc33	224	0.97795	3.632	2.984	0.00142
sc34	224	0.97081	4.807	3.633	0.00014
sc35	224	0.96883	5.134	3.786	0.00008
sc36	224	0.95536	7.353	4.617	0.00000
sc37	224	0.96369	5.981	4.139	0.00002

Table 11. Common method bias- VIF values

VIF			
sc32	2.135	sc17	1.459
sc36	2.111	sc26	1.458
sc30	1.921	sc23	1.451
sc32	1.89	sc33	1.447
sc36	1.885	sc27	1.443
sc28	1.849	sc16	1.431
sc30	1.715	sc4	1.428
sc34	1.712	sc25	1.421
sc23	1.71	sc34	1.419
sc29	1.698	sc6	1.412
sc32	1.677	sc18	1.408
sc28	1.672	sc10	1.399
sc37	1.652	sc14	1.396
sc30	1.652	sc33	1.384
sc33	1.624	sc7	1.373
sc35	1.607	sc1	1.372
sc26	1.603	sc20	1.369
sc10	1.558	sc15	1.368
sc23	1.55	sc31	1.363
sc28	1.547	sc13	1.349
sc1	1.543	sc17	1.34
sc16	1.538	sc10	1.34
sc18	1.537	sc21	1.338
sc29	1.528	sc29	1.317
sc36	1.525	sc35	1.315
sc37	1.519	sc9	1.309
sc24	1.514	sc24	1.307
sc3	1.497	sc4	1.302
sc35	1.485	sc25	1.299
sc34	1.478	sc22	1.297
sc17	1.475	sc3	1.29
sc1	1.472	sc2	1.289
sc6	1.289	sc6	1.289
sc10	1.279	sc10	1.279
sc12	1.278	sc12	1.278
sc6	1.274	sc6	1.274
sc4	1.273	sc4	1.273
sc21	1.268	sc21	1.268
sc13	1.266	sc13	1.266
sc37	1.265	sc37	1.265
sc19	1.265	sc19	1.265
sc18	1.265	sc18	1.265
sc26	1.258	sc26	1.258
sc27	1.252	sc27	1.252
sc7	1.252	sc7	1.252
sc3	1.249	sc3	1.249
sc24	1.239	sc24	1.239
sc15	1.235	sc15	1.235
sc6	1.232	sc6	1.232
sc11	1.228	sc11	1.228
sc2	1.226	sc2	1.226
sc13	1.226	sc13	1.226
sc14	1.217	sc14	1.217
sc22	1.209	sc22	1.209
sc25	1.205	sc25	1.205
sc12	1.201	sc12	1.201
sc3	1.198	sc3	1.198
sc9	1.195	sc9	1.195
sc21	1.195	sc21	1.195
sc7	1.195	sc7	1.195
sc31	1.193	sc31	1.193
sc15	1.191	sc15	1.191
sc2	1.183	sc2	1.183
sc9	1.176	sc9	1.176
sc22	1.176	sc22	1.176
sc14	1.175	sc14	1.175
sc2	1.172	sc2	1.172
sc20	1.167	sc20	1.167
sc7	1.165	sc7	1.165
sc27	1.161	sc27	1.161
sc13	1.157	sc13	1.157
sc19	1.154	sc19	1.154
sc9	1.144	sc9	1.144
sc4	1.14	sc4	1.14
sc12	1.135	sc12	1.135
sc11	1.132	sc11	1.132
sc8	1.124	sc8	1.124
sc11	1.118	sc11	1.118
sc1	1.117	sc1	1.117
sc8	1.113	sc8	1.113
sc14	1.106	sc14	1.106
sc8	1.095	sc8	1.095
sc12	1.088	sc12	1.088
sc15	1.072	sc15	1.072
sc11	1.058	sc11	1.058
sc19	1.034	sc19	1.034
sc31	1.027	sc31	1.027
sc11	1.118	sc11	1.118
sc8	1.113	sc8	1.113
sc14	1.106	sc14	1.106
sc8	1.101	sc8	1.101
sc12	1.088	sc12	1.088
sc15	1.072	sc15	1.072
sc11	1.058	sc11	1.058
sc19	1.034	sc19	1.034
sc31	1.027	sc31	1.027

Table 12. Constructs’ measurement scales.

Construct	Indicator	Adapted From
Self-Construal	HSB1-Being accepted by other members of my group is important to me	The Delphi study by Rialp & Merhi (2021)
	HSB2-It Is important for me to maintain harmony within a group	
	HSB3-When I disagree with another member of my group, I make sure that I don't offend or embarrass them	
	HSB4-I conceal my negative emotions so I won't cause unhappiness in my group	
	HSB5-When I'm with my group, I watch my words so I won't offend anyone	
	HSB6-I think it is important not to disturb good relations among one's close acquaintances	
	HSB7-It is important to me to maintain a good relationship with my friends and acquaintances	
	DEF1-It is important to me to respect decisions made by the group	
	DEF2-I abide by the norms and customs of my group	
	DEF3-I have respect for the authority figures with whom I interact	
	DEF4-I should take into consideration my parents' advice when making education/career plans	
	DEF5-I will sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of the group I am in	
	DEF6-I often have the feeling that my relationships with others are more important than my own accomplishments	
	DEF7-I try to avoid being noticeably different from others	
	RI1-My close relationships are an important reflection of who I am	
	RI2-When I feel very close to someone, it often feels to me like that person is an important part of who I am	
	RI3-In general, my close relationships are an important part of my self-image	
	RI4-I usually feel a strong sense of pride when someone close to me has an important accomplishment	
	RI5-I think one of the most important parts of who I am can be captured by looking at my close friends and understanding who they are	
	DC1-I'd rather say "No" directly, than risk being misunderstood	
DC2-I always express my opinions clearly		

	DC3-I honestly tell others what I think even when this may make them uncomfortable	
	DC4-Speaking up in a work/task group is not a problem for me	
	DC5-If there is a disagreement between my opinion and opinions of groups of which I am a member, I express my opinion.	
	DC6-I prefer to say what I am thinking, even if it is inappropriate for the situation	
	IUC1-It is very important for me to act as an independent person	
	IUC2-My personal identity independent of others, is very important to me	
	IUC3-I don't like depending upon others	
	IUC4-I act the same way no matter who I am with	
	IUC5-I prefer to be self-reliant rather than dependent upon others	
	IUC6-I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects	
	IUC7-I enjoy being admired for my unique qualities	
	RIA1-I should be judged on my own merit	
	RIA2-I take responsibility for my own actions	
	RIA3-I typically try to figure out what I want, and then pursue my goal as best as I can	
Attitude	A CM campaign is highly beneficial for the community	Grau & Folse (2007)
	I would feel pleasure or gratitude for participating in charity-linked campaigns	Hammad & El-Bassiouny (2014)
	Participating in CM promotion is good for me	Grau & Folse (2007)
	I have a positive attitude toward participating in CM promotion	
Participation Intentions	It is very likely that I will participate in CM campaigns in the future	Grau & Folse (2007)
	I would consider purchasing a product in order to provide help to a cause	
	I will search for a cause-connected brand the next time I visit the supermarket	Hammad & El-Bassiouny (2014)
Word of Mouth	I would recommend a CM promotion to someone who seeks my advice	Price and Arnould (1999)
	I would say positive things about a CM promotion to other people	
	I would recommend the company implementing a CM campaign to my relatives and friends	De Matos et al. (2009)
	I would recommend a product on the basis of its cause-related connection	

E-WOM	I would recommend a CM promotion to someone who seeks my advice over social media	Adapted from Price and Arnould (1999)
	I would say positive things about a CM promotion to other people on social media	
	I would recommend the company implementing a CM campaign to my online connections	Adapted from De Matos et al. (2009)
	I would recommend a product on the basis of its cause-related connection to my online connections	
Participation	I buy cause-related products regularly	Hammad & El-Bassiouny (2014)
	I participate in cause-related marketing campaigns regularly	Grau & Folse (2007)
	I usually volunteer in cause-related marketing campaigns	
Shopping Experience	The thought of shopping makes me tense.	(Keh & Pang, 2010)
	Grocery shopping is an enjoyable experience for me	
	I worry a lot when deciding between items in the supermarket	
Company reputation	It is important that a company's CM practices surpass the consumer's expectations.	Lee & Iii 2012
	Companies that are always committed to using a substantial portion of their profits to help community groups have a good CM reputation	
	I respect a company when its reputation for socially responsible behavior exceeds that of the industry.	

Table 13. Variance Inflation Factor.

Identifier	VIF
ATT1	1.597
ATT2	1.816
ATT3	1.895
ATT4	1.473
CR1	1.175
CR2	1.414
CR3	1.41
EWOM1	2.85
EWOM2	2.482
EWOM3	3.15
EWOM4	2.842
Interdependent	1.022
P1	1.922
P2	1.75
P3	1.789
PI1	1.877
PI2	1.648
PI3	1.946
PI4	1.656
PI5	1.535
WOM1	2.245
WOM2	1.901
WOM3	1.928
WOM4	2.262
WOM5	1.94
Independent	1.022