

# Fostering Ethical Consumption: How Construal Level Minimizes Ingroup Bias in Ethical Decisions

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## **Abstract**

Extant research suggests that consumers usually prefer to engage in ethical decisions from an ingroup member than from an outgroup (i.e., ingroup bias). In five studies (one field observation and four experiments), this research extends previous findings by revealing that construal level moderates the influence of identity cues (ingroup vs. outgroup) on ethical consumption. Our conceptualization argues that ingroup cues lead to more ethical consumption than outgroup cues (ingroup bias) only when people process information in concrete construal. However, when people process information in abstract construal, ingroup and outgroup cues will lead to the same level of ethical consumption (no ingroup bias). The paper also reveals that social goodwill (i.e., the importance of giving back to society) mediates these effects. The findings have important implications for the literature on ethical consumption and social influence.

**Keywords:** *ethical consumption; ingroup bias; construal level theory*

**Track:** Social Responsibility & Ethics