

**GLOBAL ETHICS VERSUS LOCAL ETHICS:
HOW DO MARKETING MANAGERS MAKE ETHICAL DECISIONS ACROSS CULTURES**

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ABSTRACT

This study (1) investigates the moderating effects of culture and cultural factors on the ethical decision-making process of marketing managers, to better understand whether their ethics is guided by global norms ("when in Rome, do as you would at home") or group-specific norms ("when in Rome, do as Romans do"), (2) examines the separate and competing effects of key cultural traits regarding ethical behavior, such as religious practice, spiritual values and social values, on the same process, and (3) compares relevant groups as defined by cultural contexts in order to ascertain which one is more or less ethical.

Results show that marketing managers follow similar deontological routes when making ethical decisions and thus would "do in Rome as they would at home" when adopting ethical principles. However, the implementation of ethics is not uniform across cultures. Western cultures (as exemplified by American and Latin cultures) add teleological criteria to make ethical judgments, whereas Eastern cultures (as exemplified by Indian and Turkish samples) ignore them. Moreover, Western cultures open the door wide to the influence of religious practice, spiritual values, and social values on ethical decision-making mainly because they also use teleological evaluations in the formation of ethical judgments.

Finally, the answer to the question of whether Western managers are more ethical than Eastern managers, or vice versa, is determined by the nature of ethics in each context, that is, deontological and teleological in Western cultures while deontological only in Eastern cultures. For instance, purely teleological managers in Eastern cultures may not be ethical because ethical judgments for them do not include teleological norms. Conversely, purely teleological managers in Western cultures may be partially ethical because ethical judgments include teleological along with deontological norms; yet they cannot be fully ethical when deontological norms are lacking. Some managerial implications for international marketing are considered.