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## **WORKING PAPER**

# **Consumer Ethics: The Role of Self-Regulatory Focus**

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## **Consumer Ethics: The Role of Self-Regulatory Focus**

ABSTRACT. The present study investigates the influence of self-regulatory focus on consumer ethical beliefs (i.e., consumers' judgment of various unethical consumer practices). The self-regulatory focus framework is highly influential and applies to an impressively wide spectrum of topics across a diverse array of domains. However, previous research has not yet examined the link between this personality construct and the consumer ethics field. Findings indicate that promotion affects one's attitude toward questionable consumer practices with those having a stronger (versus weaker) promotion focus being more likely to believe these consumer misbehaviors to be acceptable. Further, this study shows that prevention influences one's perception of morally dubious consumer practices with those having a stronger (versus weaker) prevention focus being more inclined to believe these questionable consumer activities to be unacceptable.

KEYWORDS: consumer ethical beliefs, consumer ethics, consumer ethics scale, personal characteristics, self-regulatory focus