Linking the Environmental and Moral Self:
The interplay between environmental and moral values in environmental decision-making.

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BACKGROUND

Previous research has suggested that both environmental and moral values predict sustainable behavior[1],[2]; however, the link between these two self-aspects, together with their dynamic impact over decision-making, have not yet been investigated. To address this limitation, we developed a task based on a choice dilemma framework. We examined how the interplay between one's self-representation of environmental and moral values (measured via self-report questionnaires) drove prosocial and sustainable decision making.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

HOW ARE ENVIRONMENTAL AND MORAL VALUES STRUCTURED AMONG THE REPRESENTATION OF THE SELF?

HOW DOES THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL AND MORAL VALUES DRIVE ENVIRONMENTAL DECISION-MAKING?

METHODS

- Phase 1: self-report measures of environmental[2] and moral[3] values
- Phase 2: purchase decision-making task
- N_{phase1}= 376; N_{phase2}= 308 (18.9% dropout rate)

WELCOME TO THE T-STORE CUSTOMIZATION PROJECT!
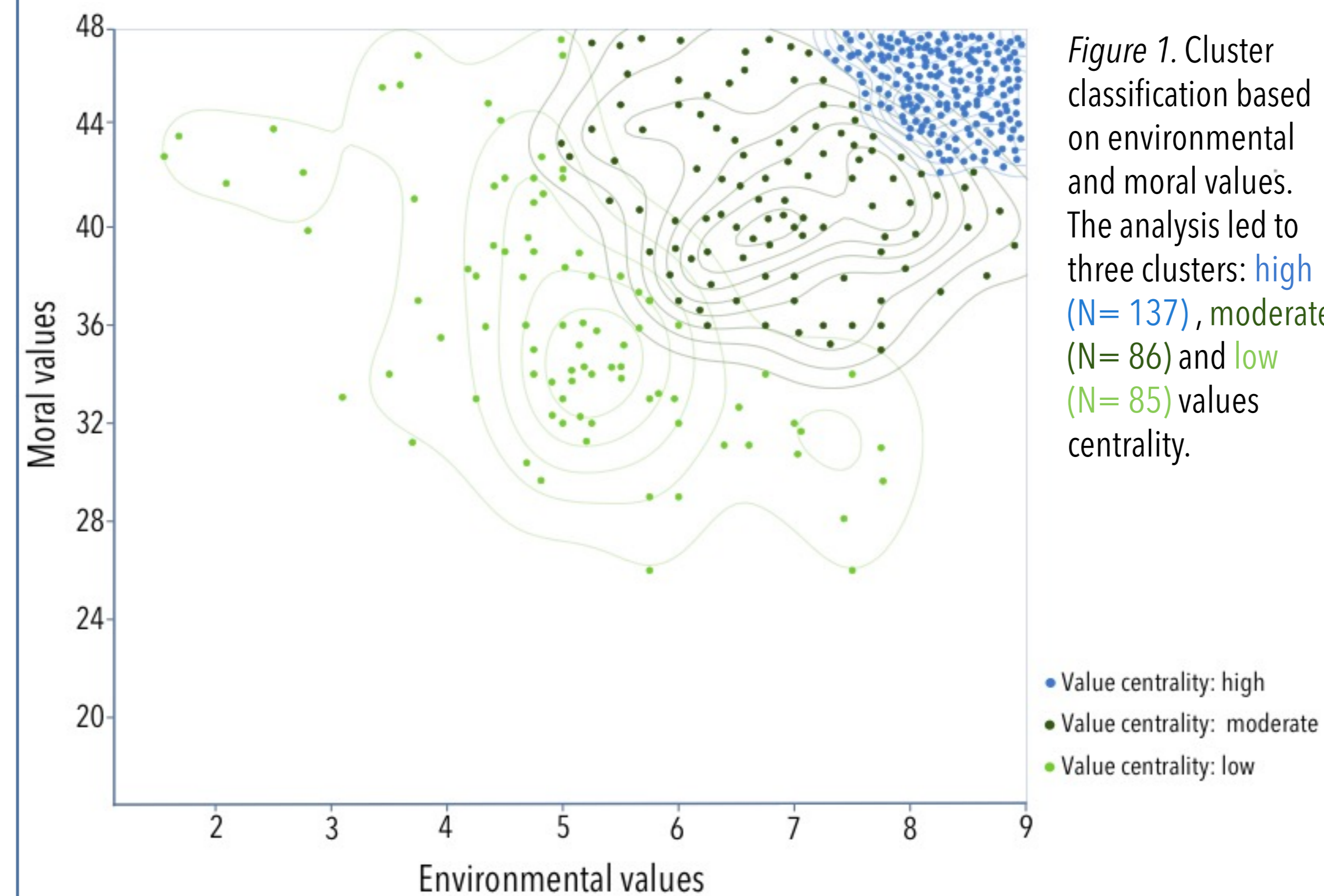Here you have the opportunity to personalize the production of your purchases.

For the personalization of **your TV** the budget is **280£**.

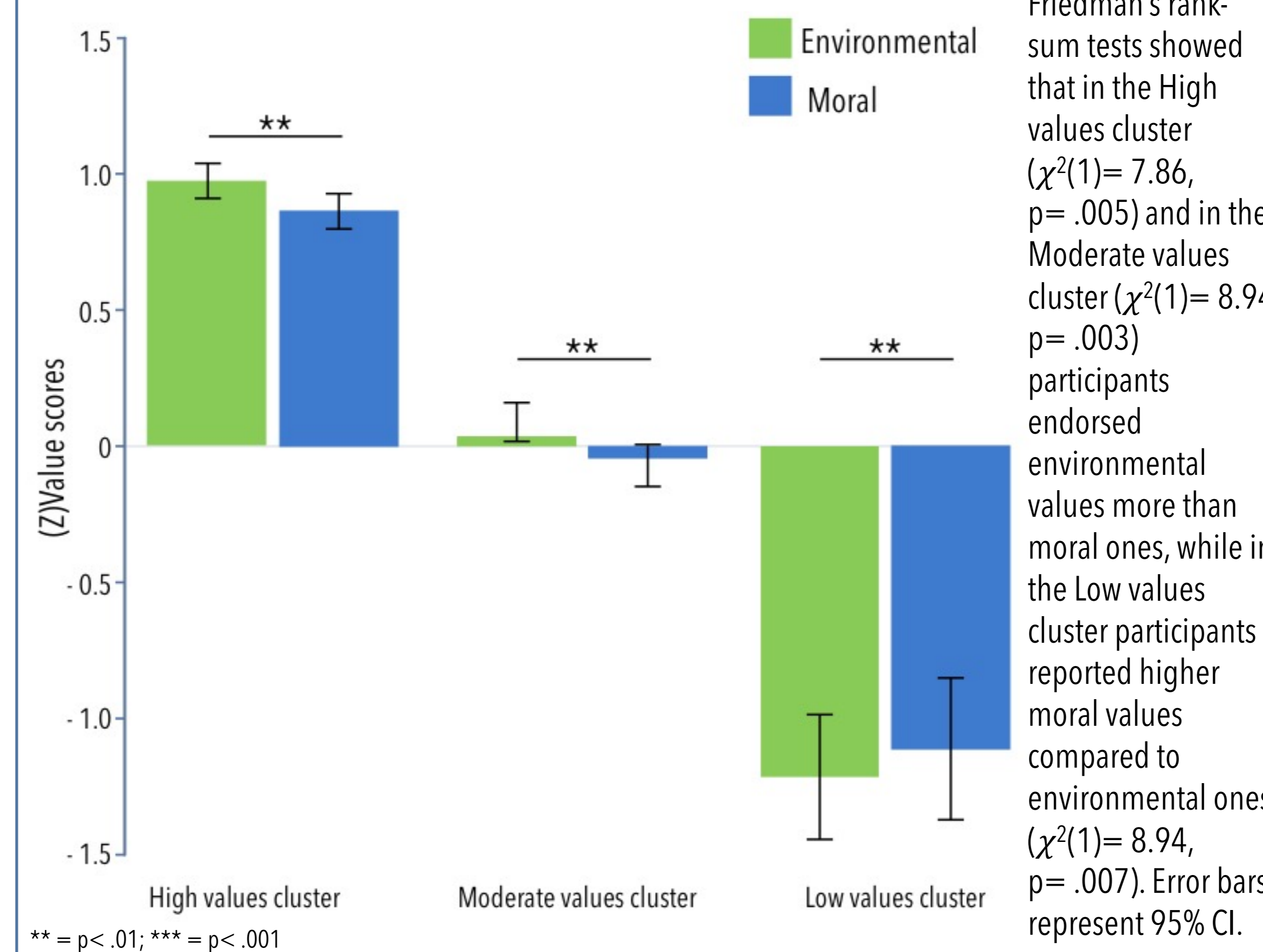|	
Eco-friendly materials and reduced CO2-emissions	29.30£
Eco-sustainable production methods	59.40£
Worker's health protection measures	57.50£
Equal opportunities policies	22.00£
Enhanced viewing experience	60.70£
Entertainment and storage capacity	10.20£
Privileged warranty coverage	15.10£
VIP customer program	25.80£
	Total: 280£

RESULTS I

HOW ARE ENVIRONMENTAL AND MORAL VALUES STRUCTURED AMONG THE REPRESENTATION OF THE SELF? We applied a model-based cluster analysis[4] to identify distinguishable profiles based on environmental and moral values.
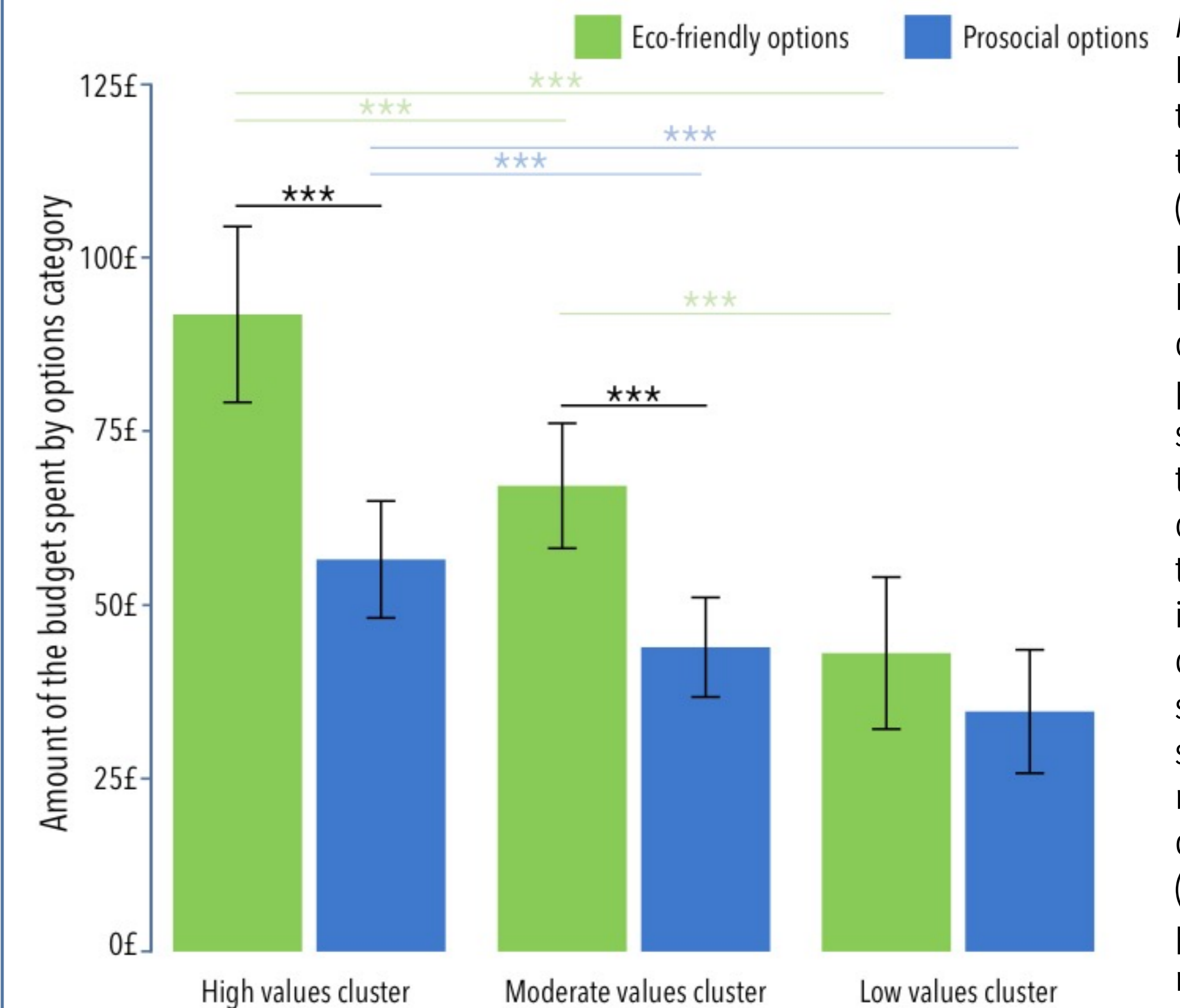

Figure 1. Cluster classification based on environmental and moral values. The analysis led to three clusters: high (N= 137), moderate (N= 86) and low (N= 85) values centrality.

- Value centrality: high
- Value centrality: moderate
- Value centrality: low

Next, we looked at the relative differences in environmental and moral values centrality within each cluster.

Figure 2. A series of Friedman's rank-sum tests showed that in the High values cluster ($\chi^2(1)$= 7.86, p= .005) and in the Moderate values cluster ($\chi^2(1)$= 8.94, p= .003) participants endorsed environmental values more than moral ones, while in the Low values cluster participants reported higher moral values compared to environmental ones ($\chi^2(1)$= 8.94, p= .007). Error bars represent 95% CI.

** = p< .01; *** = p< .001

RESULTS II

HOW DOES THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL AND MORAL VALUES DRIVE ENVIRONMENTAL DECISION-MAKING?

- Eco-friendly options
- Prosocial options

Figure 3. A series of Friedman's rank-sum tests showed that in the High values cluster ($\chi^2(1)$= 20.75, p< .001) and in the Moderate values cluster ($\chi^2(1)$= 16.74, p< .001) participants spent more money on the eco-friendly options compared to the moral ones, while in the Low values cluster participants spent on average the same amount of money for the two categories ($\chi^2(1)$= 1.33, p= .25). Error bars represent 95% CI.

DISCUSSION

- Environmental and moral values are distinguishable dimensions in the representation of the self;
- The link between these two dimensions goes beyond a simple correlative relationship;
- Different profiles based on environmental and moral values led to different environmental and prosocial choice patterns.

In conclusion, this research sheds new light on the on the specific impact of environmental and moral values on decision-making as a function of their representation in the self. Future research will investigate through the same choice dilemma task how self-representation interacts with changes in the decision context (e.g. information framing, presence of a default) as well as cognitive processes (e.g. mental accounting).

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Questions and feedback welcome!
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