FAMILY AND INDIVIDUAL CONSENT IN AN AI-GENERATED DELEB AD:

A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND BRAZIL

by

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(Under the Direction of Hye Jin Yoon)

ABSTRACT

This cross-cultural study investigated the impact of consent type (granted by the family vs. individual) in video ads featuring AI-generated delebs (deceased celebrities) on adults from two different countries: the United States and Brazil. Results show that individual consent was associated with significantly greater cultural acceptance among participants from the United States, while family consent did not lead to significant differences. Moderated mediation analyses revealed that cultural acceptance mediated the effect of country of nationality on attitudes toward the ad (A_{ad}), purchase intention for oneself, and purchase intention for others under the individual consent condition, but not on willingness to share the ad. This study offers insights for brands, practitioners, regulatory bodies, celebrities, and delebs' families as they navigate the strategic considerations of this emerging practice.

INDEX WORDS: Delebs, deceased celebrities, generative AI, individualism, relativism, cultural acceptance

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DEDICATION

In memory of my sweet and deeply beloved grandmother, Marilia, for always encouraging me in the pursuit of knowledge and the greater good, for being an inspiration of grit and kindness. And to my husband, Paulo, for always being by my side throughout this journey, offering immense support and encouragement.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Society has always looked for ways to communicate with and remember those who are no longer present, whether by preserving their writings, using spiritual telegraphs, or capturing moments in photographs (LSE, 2017). In 2023, the late Brazilian singer Elis Regina, who passed away in 1982, appeared in a video ad by the automobile manufacturer Volkswagen, where artificial intelligence (AI) was used to superimpose her likeness onto a body double. The two-minute video ad, shared by the brand on the social media platforms Instagram and YouTube, received a large number of positive and emotional comments, with some perceiving the ad as a tribute. Featuring elements that resonated across generations in Brazil, such as the car model, the song, and Elis Regina herself, the ad evoked a strong sense of nostalgia, resulting in praise and gratitude toward the brand. On the other hand, the use of a deceased celebrity (deleb) also sparked controversy. During her lifetime, Elis Regina opposed Brazil's historical dictatorship, a regime with which the advertised brand was accused of collaborating (Phillips, 2023).

This signals an emerging standard; AI is now widely accessible to advertising agencies. AI enables them to alter an individual's likeness or create entirely new content at minimal additional cost, and, it is worth noting that the intent of using it may not be to "fool, mislead, or trick audiences but to create humor and demonstrate the potential capabilities of this emerging technology" (Campbell et al., 2022). The creative possibilities and the attention provoked by AI's novelty make it an appealing tool for communication professionals. However, it is

problematic for brands and practitioners to adopt such practices without critical examination. Legal regulations, audience expectations, and cultural acceptance require careful consideration and more precise guidance. Among the many risks associated with AI, Stryker et al. (2024) highlight concerns such as data breaches and violations of privacy laws. This raises important questions: Is society prepared to accept the use of AI to generate entirely new representations of deceased individuals, especially public figures who resonate broadly and embody cultural identity? Is it culturally acceptable to use these AI-generated images of delebs in ads to promote brands and their products? Are some cultures more receptive to this practice than others? Furthermore, does cultural context influence audience perceptions of who holds the right to grant consent, that is, to decide and permit the use of these images, whether the authority lies with the delebs' families or with the delebs themselves?

To ground this discussion, it is essential to begin by defining key terms. According to Schlecht (2003), celebrities are people who differ from the social norms and "enjoy public recognition by a large share of a certain group of people." Celeb is a short, informal way to refer to a celebrity (Collins Dictionary, n.d.). In the same direction, the term deleb refers to a dead celebrity whose "appearance, gestures, image, likeness, mannerisms, name, photograph, signature, voice, and works continue to be used posthumously for various purposes, including commercial purposes" (D'Rozario et al., 2020). According to Cook (2005, as cited in D'Rozario et al., 2020), the market of delebs is so profitable that there are agencies focused on representing them. This practice reached a new level with the emergence and advancement of AI. According to Stryker et al. (2024), the concept of AI originated in the 1950s and refers to a technology that enables machines to learn from new information and experiences to serve humans, such as powering self-driving cars. However, it was not until the emergence of generative AI in 2020

that AI-generated delebs became a topic of discussion. Generative AI refers to "deep learning models that can create complex original content—such as long-form text, high-quality images, realistic video or audio, and more—in response to a user's prompt or request" (Stryker et al., 2024). Essentially, the technology operates in three stages: (1) training, (2) tuning, and (3) generation, evaluation, and further refinement.

The power of generative AI raised concerns surrounding its use. In 2024, for example, YouTube implemented a requirement for an "altered or synthetic content" disclosure (The YouTube Team, 2024). Nevertheless, the aforementioned ad featuring Elis Regina was released before this mandate and, as of now, remains without such a disclosure. Despite positive comments on social media, the Brazilian Advertising Self-Regulation Council (Conar) received complaints about it and launched an investigation. Although the singer's children, including her daughter who features in the ad alongside her late mother, consent to the AI-generated replica (Phillips, 2023), some were worried that the singer herself should have provided prior consent for the use of her image (Conar, 2023). Thus, Conar presented two legislative proposals to the National Congress for the use of a deceased person's image generated from AI: obtaining explicit consent from (1) the deceased while alive or, when that is not possible, from (2) the closest family members. The Senate Chamber even reviewed a bill requiring any ad featuring AI-generated images or audio to include a disclosure (Cunha, 2023), but that was later shelved.

Literature does cover the use of delebs in advertising. For example, Crutcher (2001) focused on how different generations in the United States respond to delebs in video ads. Boeuf et al. (2019) compared how a sample of unspecified origin perceived low- and high-equity brands in print ads featuring both living celebrities and delebs. Nevertheless, the literature lacks a

cross-cultural comparison of the acceptance of new AI-generated images of delebs in advertising, particularly considering who granted consent for such use.

Few celebrities have publicly discussed their wishes regarding the use of their images posthumously. In 2015, the late American actor Robin Williams drew attention when documents emerged prohibiting the use of his image (Ellis-Petersen, 2015). More recently, American actor Robert Downey Jr. also drew attention to his desire not to have a digital replica made after his death (Shoard, 2024). These examples, along with the debate surrounding the ad featuring the late Brazilian singer Elis Regina, consented to by her family (Phillips, 2023), highlight the importance of understanding how culture shapes audience responses to this practice. Thus, this study investigates whether cultural acceptance of ads featuring AI-generated delebs differs depending on the consent type (granted by the family vs. individual) and the country of nationality (United States vs. Brazil).

Both the United States and Brazil are prominent global spenders in the advertising sector (Navarro, 2024), and both have engaged in the practice of using delebs in ads. For example, the late American actress Marilyn Monroe appeared in a Snickers ad in 2016 (Schremph, 2016), and the late Brazilian singer Elis Regina appeared in a Volkswagen ad in 2023 (Phillips, 2023). On the other hand, the two countries differ in important ways. The United States is the largest economy in the world, while Brazil is an emerging economy (Silver, 2024). Culturally, the United States is a horizontal individualist (HI) society (Sivadas et al., 2008) that values equality and freedom (Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023). In contrast, Brazil, previously seen as a horizontal collectivist (HC) society, was more recently associated with vertical collectivism (VC), seeing themselves as unequal and being power-sensitive (Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023).

According to Reidenbach et al. (1990), within a relativistic framework, social and cultural systems play a key role in shaping how individuals perceive what is right and wrong. Taking into account both the similarities and especially the cultural differences between the United States and Brazil, this cross-cultural study sheds light on how audiences in these two countries respond to the emerging practice of using AI-generated delebs in video ads. Specifically, this study offers insights into the role of consent type, an aspect that brands, practitioners, regulatory bodies, celebrities, and delebs' families should carefully consider when using AI-generated deleb images in video ads. Examining this issue through a cultural lens broadens our comprehension of the implications of this practice. The findings contribute to a deeper theoretical understanding of culture and its influence on perception.

From a practical standpoint, many brands operate across both the United States and Brazil. This, combined with the popularization of generative AI technology, makes the object of this study essential knowledge for practitioners working on behalf of these brands. Specifically, brands running advertising campaigns and selling products in both countries may benefit from this study's findings, as it explores in which circumstances their audiences from both countries would accept an AI-generated deleb in video ads. Therefore, practitioners can tailor and plan accordingly, avoiding the launch of an ad that may work well in one country but backfire in another. In other words, to avoid unforeseen outcomes, brands active in both markets should account for cultural differences when planning their advertising strategies. This is key to effectively reach their target audience, build meaningful connections, and foster beneficial relationships with consumers.

In conclusion, this study aims to examine the effect of consent type (family vs. individual) in video ads featuring AI-generated delebs—that is, consent granted either by the

deleb before their passing or by their family—on two cultural contexts, specifically comparing audience responses based on country of nationality (United States vs. Brazil). It draws on the frameworks of individualism-collectivism and relativism to understand how cultural differences between individuals from the United States and Brazil may influence their reactions to the consent type and the ad itself. This study seeks to fill a gap in the literature by exploring how culture shapes adult audiences' perceptions of these consent types in ads featuring AI-generated delebs. In other words, it investigates whether the consent given by a specific entity (family vs. individual) affects audience responses across two cultural contexts (United States vs. Brazil).

CHAPTER 2

GENERAL LITERATURE REVIEW

Delebs in Advertising

Campbell et al. (2022) categorized ad manipulation evolution into three distinct generations that can coexist and combine. The first, “analog,” involves purely human or manual activities, with agencies relying on tools such as makeup, lighting, and camera lenses. The second, “digital,” is characterized by human-computer interaction, using tools like Computer-Generated Imagery (CGI), Photoshop, and Instagram filters. The third generation, “synthetic,” involves using AI to autonomously generate content through machine learning techniques such as deepfakes and Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs).

Deepfakes often employ GANs, which use two neural networks: a generator that creates fake images from random noise, and a discriminator that tries to distinguish authentic images from fake ones. These networks work like a game, competing with each other, to improve over time so that the generator can produce hyper-realistic media (Remya Revi et al., 2021). In other words, these networks mimic human cognition, enabling machines to simulate perception and pattern recognition (Stryker et al., 2024). Thus, deepfakes can digitally replace one person’s characteristics, such as their face or voice, with those of another using advanced neural networks (Floridi, 2018; Karnouskos, 2020; Kietzmann et al., 2020 as cited in Campbell et al., 2022).

As AI becomes more accessible in terms of operational complexity and cost, synthetic media is rapidly gaining notoriety in advertising, and its techniques offer an opportunity to

improve the quality of previously explored content featuring delebs. For instance, in 1997, the late dancer Fred Astaire appeared in a Dirt Devil ad. Its creation involved using CGI to replace the hat rack the dancer was holding in a movie scene he featured previously with a vacuum cleaner after his passing (Falls, 2021). In 2013, to celebrate its 60 years in Brazil and launch a new car model, Volkswagen released a campaign that included, among other assets, two video ads. Each featured a popular celebrity from the 1970s, both of whom had passed away by the time the ad was released: the late soccer player Rivelino and the late comedian Mussum. Both were created using footage of the delebs by 'cutting and pasting' them into the ad (Meio & Mensagem, 2013). A few years later, in 2016, the late actress Marilyn Monroe appeared in a Snickers commercial, where a living lookalike actress was digitally replaced with actual footage of Monroe (Schremph, 2016). In 2023, the hyper-realistic video ad featuring Elis Regina highlighted the aforementioned technological advancements by mapping thousands of photos and videos of the late singer and combining them with the image of an actress using AI and deepfake (Sacchitiello, 2023).

Overall, associating celebrities with brands and products ties the celebrity's values to the brand and product themselves, consciously or unconsciously. Celebrities symbolize cultures, enabling people to relate to them, and iconic celebrities can be even more persuasive. They bridge connections with multiple audiences that can go beyond their time (Alexander, 2010, as cited in Hudak, 2014). After passing, celebrities can continue to offer several advantages for advertisers. Delebs are easily recognizable, and producers can have more control over their aesthetics and unpredictability (D'Rozario and Bryant, 2013 as cited in Hudak, 2014). Even in different settings, delebs act as metaphors for what they once represented and evoke memories. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of deleb ads also depends on the quality of the piece itself, both

technically and contextually (Hudak, 2014), and the practice raises concerns regarding who inherits the rights to the profits.

Past Research on Delebs

While AI-generated deleb ads lack sufficient research, using delebs created through other methods helps address some common concerns.

Considering the entire market of delebs, not just advertising, D'Rozario et al. (2020) address the ethical aspects of the practice, balancing its benefits and harms. The benefits include nostalgia, connecting fans, preserving memory, and integrating delebs into the culture. On the other hand, the harms list includes disingenuous representations of delebs, the potential to scare customers, angering delebs' family members, and issues with unlicensed merchandisers. A sample of publications from specific sources between 1985 and 2015 was analyzed using the widely recognized Hunt and Vitell model of marketing ethics (1986 as cited in D'Rozario et al., 2020), considering both deontological and teleological perspectives, with the former focusing on actions and the latter on consequences. The results indicate that the number of benefits exceeds the harms, emphasizing that unlicensed use of delebs tends to harm stakeholders and society more than it benefits them. Some recommendations include ensuring a clear will, obtaining licenses for names, images, and likenesses, and ensuring that delebs and brands or products fit each other (D'Rozario et al., 2020).

Boeuf et al. (2019) conducted experiments to measure audience perceptions of brands in both celeb and deleb print ads. Considering both low- and high-equity brands and ads with and without agreement cues, Boeuf et al. (2019) drew on signaling theory to explain how consumers

react to uncertainty. As a result, low-equity brands are more susceptible to being perceived as unethical, and agreement cues help to enhance brands' ethical status (Boeuf et al., 2019).

Crutcher (2001) measured the attitudes of different generations in the United States toward three deleb video ads. The study relied on the Social Comparison Theory to support that people would put themselves in the deleb's shoes to determine whether they would consent to be reanimated, as well as the Self-perception Theory that explains how people perceive themselves–in this case, while or after watching the ad– and adjust their previous opinions only as much as needed to support their new opinions. The experiment did not specify to the participants that they would watch ads featuring delebs. Even so, most succeeded in recognizing them. It was found that "subjects aged 50 and over disapprove of deceased celebrities in advertising to a greater degree than subjects under the age of 30" and also have a lower evaluation of products endorsed by the delebs (Crutcher, 2001).

Posthumous Publicity Rights

Laws in the United States

Right of publicity is "an intellectual property right that protects against the misappropriation of a person's name, likeness, or other indicia of personal identity—such as nickname, pseudonym, voice, signature, likeness, or photograph—for commercial benefit" (INTA, n.d.). As Hopkins (2023) points out, in the United States, posthumous publicity rights fall under state jurisdiction, rather than federal, and less than half of the states have statutes granting it. These statutes vary in duration and scope, such as the right classification as property or privacy, creating an uneven legal landscape across the country. While in California, the right lasts for 70 years after death and applies to individuals who passed away before the law was enacted

(Townsend, 2022), in Illinois, it lasts for 50 years and applies only to individuals who passed away after the law was enacted (Illinois General Assembly, 1999). Some states secure this right for those domiciled or residing in the state at the time of death, and some apply only to individuals with "commercial value" (Townsend, 2022). These rights do not specifically mention the creation of new images through AI. On the other hand, laws regarding deepfakes and digital replicas cover the use of the technology but lack details regarding the delebs.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL, 2024), states have begun broadly addressing the issue of deceptive, manipulated content created without others' consent. At least 17 states have enacted laws targeting online impersonation intended to intimidate, bully, threaten, or harass others. For example, in Louisiana, it is a crime to distribute or sell AI-generated images of someone without their consent. In Tennessee, every individual now holds a property right over using their name, image, voice, or likeness in any form of media (NCSL, 2024).

Section 50-F of the Right of Publicity law in New York State is currently the only regulation that provides guidance regarding deceased performers and their digital replicas. In this case, a deceased performer means a person who was domiciled in the state at the time of death and was engaged in acting, singing, dancing, or playing a musical instrument for gain or livelihood. It states that anyone who uses a digital replica of a deceased performer without prior consent from the individuals holding the rights to the performer's image may be sued for damages, but only if the use is likely to mislead the public into believing the use was approved or authorized by the performer's heirs or estate. If a clear "conspicuous disclaimer" is included in the credits stating that the use was not authorized, then the use is not considered likely to deceive

the public. In addition, it allows some uses that do not require prior consent, such as literary works, parody, and satire (The New York State Senate, 2022).

The use of AI-generated content also became a major point of concern during the 2024 elections. The Federal Elections Commission (FEC) recognized no jurisdiction to address every aspect of this matter (FCC, 2024). The discussions led the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to take action on political TV and radio ads with Congress's support. According to the FCC (2024), around three-quarters of Americans are concerned about AI's misleading content. The Commission is proposing not to ban the use of AI but to bring transparency through a disclosure informing the use of such technology, making state laws more uniform (FCC, 2024).

According to Kramer (2024), 16 states have introduced bills to make the disclosure of AI content mandatory. Just like the rights of publicity, the disclosure bills vary from one state to another. For example, in political media, while in California, the CA AB 1824 applies for AI use in general, in Virginia, the VA SB 164 is valid only if the content portrays a person (Kramer, 2024), and in Illinois, the IL HB 3285 mandates a disclosure to warn that the content does not reflect the reality, "unless the person whose voice or likeness is being depicted consents to its use" (Illinois General Assembly, 2023). Furthermore, specific media must disclose the use of AI, such as newspapers, magazines, and others in New York and legal proceedings in Washington (Kramer, 2024). Even though bills are currently limited, the requirement can expand to other contexts.

In conclusion, posthumous publicity rights in the United States exist in fewer than half of the states and differ significantly in scope, duration, and eligibility. Similarly, AI-related legislation remains fragmented, with much of it focused on political content rather than commercial uses, and on the general use of AI-generated content rather than consent for doing

so. These pieces of regulation may create legal uncertainty, allowing for the potential use of AI-generated delebs in ads with or without consent. As AI use in media continues to grow, there is an increasing need for transparency and disclosure requirements to promote public trust and legal clarity across jurisdictions.

Laws in Brazil

In Brazil, the post-mortem laws addressed in this study fall under federal jurisdiction and apply nationwide. Following concerns regarding the 2023 Volkswagen AI-generated video ad featuring the late singer Elis Regina to promote a vehicle redesign, Conar (2023), supported by current legislation, closed the case, stating that the ad did not violate ethical principles.

Specifically, (1) the ad did not disrespect the artist's image or distort her personality, (2) her family members, who have the right to protect and consent to the use of her image, provided their consent, and (3) the ad did not pose a risk of misleading children and young adults, as they were not the target audience (Conar, 2023). Additionally, (4) the product was portrayed accurately, and (5) there were no hidden intentions; the concept of tradition and innovation was deemed valid. Conar (2023) noted that the use of AI was evident, and Elis Regina was depicted performing activities she did in life. They emphasized that, regardless of whether consent is given, the law protects the deceased from potential misuse of their image and holds advertisers responsible for their audience using celebrity testimonials. Conar (2023) acknowledged that, although ethical guidelines exist, no regulation in Brazil requires disclosure of AI use. They underscored the importance of transparency and suggested that disclaimers could help mitigate potential risks.

The Senate Chamber reviewed bill PL 3.592/2023, which aimed to preserve individuals' dignity, privacy, and rights after their death. The bill required that any advertisement featuring AI-generated images or audio include a disclosure indicating the use of AI whenever such content appears (Cunha, 2023). However, the bill was shelved after a broader proposal, PL 2.338/2023, addressing the general use of AI without specific reference to "delebs," was brought into discussion (Senado Federal, 2023). Despite the existence of laws regarding copyright and the use of images of deceased individuals, no laws have been identified in Brazil that authorize or prohibit heirs from profiting from new images generated by AI.

In conclusion, while Brazil does not yet have laws regulating AI-generated images of delebs, existing federal laws address related concerns. Such ads are permitted if they respect the individual's image by reflecting reality, obtaining consent from legal rights holders, and avoiding the deception of vulnerable audiences. Since the proposed legislation specifically targeting AI-generated delebs was archived and a broader AI-generated content bill is still under review, AI-generated deceased figures in advertising currently operate in a legal uncertainty scenario, leading to potential confusion and a lack of transparency.

Cross-Country Considerations

For the purpose of contextualization, it is important to present key background information regarding both the United States and Brazil. These two countries exhibit a range of similarities and differences that make them particularly interesting for comparative analysis.

To begin with, both nations are characterized by ethnically diverse populations, and in 2022, the average life expectancy at birth was approximately 77.4 years in the United States and 73.4 years in Brazil (Statista, 2024, 2025). The United States is the third-largest country in the

world by total area, while Brazil ranks fifth (Statista, 2025). In terms of population, the United States is the third-largest globally, and Brazil ranks seventh (Statista, 2024). Notably, both are the most populous countries in the Americas (Statista, 2025). The United States is the world's largest economy, while Brazil is an emerging market, currently ranked as the 10th-largest global economy (Silver, 2024). In the fourth quarter of 2024, the United States recorded a real gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 2.4%, where GDP refers to the "value of the goods and services produced by the nation's economy less the value of the goods and services used up in production" (Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2025). Brazil's real GDP growth during the same quarter was 3.5% (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 2024). By the end of 2024, the purchasing power parity (PPP) per capita of the two countries also differed considerably. According to the International Monetary Fund (2024), the United States had a PPP per capita of 89,110 international dollars, compared to just 23,240 in Brazil. These economic indicators also reflect in the advertising sector. The United States leads global spending while Brazil ranks ninth; the United States is the most awarded country at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity, while Brazil ranks third (Navarro, 2024).

These demographic and economic aspects of a country offer insight into how its society functions and the realities its individuals face. Life expectancy, for example, offers a glimpse into health and well-being, an area in which both countries show similarities. Additionally, although the United States stands out economically, creative industry awards suggest a shared expertise and interest between the two nations.

From a broader perspective, additional factors further distinguish the sociocultural contexts of the United States and Brazil. As The Economist (2009) notes, Americans are generally characterized as risk-takers, exposed from an early age to narratives of innovation and

groundbreaking accomplishments. Moreover, “American companies have an unusual freedom to hire and fire workers, and American citizens have an unusual belief that, for all their recent travails, their fate still lies in their own hands” (The Economist, 2009), suggesting a cultural inclination to view life outcomes as the result of individual effort rather than collective action. In contrast, although Brazil is the largest country in Latin America, it is marked by significant disparities in income and education (Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023). In professional settings, cultural norms may reflect a more collectivist orientation, for example, “an older and powerful member of a family is expected to ‘help’ a younger nephew to be hired for a job in his own company” (The Culture Factor Group, n.d.).

Thus, by comparing perspectives from two significant advertising markets, the United States and Brazil, this study aims to shed light on cultural particularities regarding combining delebs and the generative AI technology in advertising. Global brands operating in both countries, as well as regulatory bodies, celebrities, delebs’ families, consumers, and practitioners, can benefit from the findings about the American and Brazilian markets regarding consumers’ acceptance of the present object of study, the consent type in AI-generated deleb video ads. In other words, this study explores how cultural nuances influence perceptions surrounding using AI-generated delebs in video ads. The following chapter will further explore the theoretical foundations of cultural differences between the United States and Brazil.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This study investigates two consent types for the use of an AI-generated digital image of a deleb in a video ad–granted by the deleb's family members after their passing and consent given by the deleb themself prior to death (family vs. individual)–in two countries: the United States and Brazil. These countries were selected because, while they differ significantly in terms of economy and culture, both are influential players in the global advertising landscape and have engaged in the practice of using delebs in ads. Whereas the United States is frequently studied in cross-cultural research, Brazil remains underrepresented. By comparing the two, this study aims to provide insights into their perspectives, especially as both nations could benefit from a deeper understanding of cultural perceptions in the practice of using AI-generated delebs in ads.

Country of Nationality: United States and Brazil

The United States and Brazil share some similarities, yet also exhibit significant differences, making their comparison a particularly compelling subject of study. While demographic and economic indicators highlight these similarities and differences, the United States and Brazil also demonstrate distinct cultural characteristics that transcend those of individuals born in these countries. These differences encompass all citizens who hold the respective nationalities and adhere to the same social norms and legal frameworks; in other words, individuals who are embedded in the cultures of the United States and Brazil. Culture is

"the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others" and can be used to describe, for example, ethnic groups, nations, and organizations (Hofstede, 2011).

This study implements the framework of individualism and collectivism, which was later expanded to include the horizontal and vertical dimensions. The framework offers a broader perspective on culture, aiming to explain differences observed between cultural groups (Singelis, 1994). In individualistic societies, individuals are independent from one another, whereas in collectivist societies, groups bind and mutually obligate individuals (Oyserman et al. 2002, as cited in Germani, 2019). Exploring individualism-collectivism across cultures has proven reliable in predicting behavioral patterns and is widely applied in marketing and consumer behavior research (Sivadas et al., 2008).

The Culture Factor Group (n.d.) offers a publicly accessible Country Comparison Tool based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions, providing scores for various constructs, including individualism, across multiple countries. Its data are regularly updated and drawn from scientific journals. Currently, the United States scores 60, while Brazil scores 36 out of 100 on the individualism dimension (The Culture Factor Group, n.d.). Previous studies have reported similar findings. For instance, Zhu et al. (2022) conducted a cross-cultural experiment using Hofstede's cultural dimensions to measure the attitudes of American, Brazilian, and Chinese audiences toward humorous advertisements that ended either with suspense or with closure. Their results confirmed earlier research: American graduate students scored higher in individualism than their Brazilian counterparts, based on self-rating scores (Zhu et al., 2022). Given that consumers from individualist and collectivist cultures perceive the persuasiveness and effectiveness of ads differently and exhibit varying purchasing behaviors (Albers-Miller & Gelb,

1996; Alden et al., 1993; Han & Shavitt, 1994; Hoffmann et al., 2014; Wiles et al., 1996, as cited in Zhu et al., 2022), understanding this cultural difference is essential for the advertising field. Still, Triandis and Gelfand (1998) argued that the individualism and collectivism construct could be refined to encompass a more detailed understanding of the concept.

Triandis and Gelfand (1998) proposed the addition of horizontal and vertical perspectives into the individualist and collectivist construct, emphasizing how individuals weigh social relationships. The horizontal attribute emphasizes equality, viewing the individual as fundamentally similar to others, while the vertical attribute emphasizes hierarchy, viewing the individual as fundamentally different from others (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). Thus, the framework considers four dimensions: horizontal individualism (HI), vertical individualism (VI), horizontal collectivism (HC), and vertical collectivism (VC). In societies characterized by high levels of HI, like the United States (Sivadas et al., 2008), people value equality and freedom; they stress self-reliance and pursue uniqueness but are not particularly interested in status. In societies with high VI, individuals value freedom, but not equality; they stress competition and hedonism, and pursue both uniqueness and status. In societies with high HC, formerly associated with Brazil (Torres et al., 2015 as cited in Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023), people value equality but not freedom; they see themselves as equals, emphasize interdependence, and do not submit easily to authority. Finally, in VC, which has been associated with Brazil in recent findings (Torelli et al., 2015; Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023), individuals emphasize the integrity of the in-group and submit to authority, even if it means sacrificing their personal goals. They respect and honor those in a higher status position (Sivadas et al., 2008).

The following two sections outline how the literature describes these orientations in the contexts of the United States and Brazil.

The United States

Brewer et al. (2007) posit that while self-definition in the United States is rooted in individual autonomy and separation from others, Americans also tend to delineate their in-groups and exhibit group-enhancing and protective behaviors toward them. Indeed, numerous past studies have identified the United States as a highly individualistic (Adler et al., 1992, as cited in Sivadas et al., 2008; Choi et al., 2004; Jung et al., 2004; Zhu et al., 2022) and HI culture (Sivadas et al., 2008), as presented below.

According to Hofstede (2011), individuals from individualist societies have an "I" consciousness. In other words, they are 'me'-oriented, with individuals tending to view themselves as independent from others, and they typically behave according to personal attitudes and preferences, prioritizing personal goals over those of the in-group (Triandis, 1995 as cited in Sivadas et al., 2008). They focus on self-interest and prefer independent relationships (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede et al., 2010, as cited in Zhu et al., 2022). Connections are relatively loose, with people primarily focusing on themselves and their immediate family (Soares et al., 2007). Thus, while it is often difficult to develop deep friendships with Americans, they are not shy about approaching their prospective counterparts to obtain or seek information. Additionally, the United States has an exchange-based work scenario, where decisions are based on merit or evidence of what one has done or can do (The Culture Factor Group, n.d.).

Horizontal individualistic (HI) societies value autonomy and emphasize equality in status and power; thus, their sense of uniqueness is expressed through other means (Singelis et al., 1995 as cited in Sivadas et al., 2008). This is evidenced in the United States' premise of "liberty and justice for all," emphasizing equal rights in American society and government (The Culture

Factor Group, n.d.). In these societies, individuals tend to be "overconfident, self-reliant, self-directed, and unique" (Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023). Indeed, such a focus on equality and liberty reflects the contrast with principles of VI, which values hierarchical status over equality, and both HC and VC, where group harmony is valued over freedom.

Brazil

Past research suggests that Brazil is a collectivist country (Gouveia et al., 2000; Torres et al., 2007, 2015, as cited in Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023; Zhu et al., 2022). Individuals from collectivist societies have a "we" consciousness (Hofstede, 2011), prioritizing group interests and favoring interdependent relationships (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede et al., 2010, as cited in Zhu et al., 2022). In other words, they are 'we'-oriented, with individuals tending to view themselves as interdependent with others, typically behaving according to social norms, valuing group harmony, and prioritizing in-group goals over personal goals (Triandis, 1995 as cited in Sivadas et al., 2008). Thus, they are part of a tightly knit group, including extended family, and tend to uphold loyalty to one another (The Culture Factor Group, n.d.). Individuals represent their groups, and groups represent their individuals, as they are intrinsically connected. In Brazil, it is important to build trustworthy and long-term relationships even in business contexts, so meetings often begin with casual conversation to establish rapport (The Culture Factor Group, n.d.).

Although previous research has identified Brazil as a horizontal collectivist (HC) culture (Torres et al., 2015, as cited in Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023), more recent findings suggest a shift toward a vertical collectivist (VC) orientation (Torelli et al., 2015; Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023). Both fall under the broader collectivism framework, emphasizing in-group integrity, but they differ in how they structure social relationships. While people in HC societies are group-oriented

and perceive themselves as equal, VC societies are power-sensitive (Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023), meaning that individuals "accept inequality and relative status differentiation" (Singelis et al., 1995 as cited in Sivadas et al., 2008). This study adopts the VC classification for Brazil, based on recent findings that use updated methodologies and address limitations in earlier research. Accordingly, individuals from Brazil are expected to prioritize group goals over personal ones and to submit to authority.

Consent Type: Family and Individual

Transparency is frequently emphasized as a crucial attribute for ads to achieve their objectives. This can be reflected in the product image and description, the overall message, or even by clarifying why an ad on social media targeted a user. Since AI-generated content started spreading through digital media, it has not taken long for this type of content to raise concerns regarding transparency. As discussed in the previous chapter, the United States and Brazil are currently taking action to introduce regulations regarding the use of AI. Nevertheless, most of these do not address cases involving AI-generated delebs, nor do they consider whether consent from the individual or their family is preferable.

Family consent is tied to an intermediary that will make decisions on behalf of deceased individuals who did not formalize their wishes during their lifetime. In this case, family members are responsible for managing all assets and obligations left by a deceased person, including using their image, under the relevant laws in the United States and Brazil. This responsibility holds unless there is a formal document stating otherwise that was established while the deceased was still alive. The previously mentioned ad featuring the late Brazilian singer Elis Regina was made possible only because her family gave consent, as she did not leave any instructions regarding

the use of her image after death. Her daughter also appears in the ad, alongside the AI-generated image. Her son, in turn, praised the discussions the ad sparked, stating that it showcases "'a more emotional, playful and artistic' side to a technology more often associated with fake news and memes" (Phillips, 2023), highlighting the emotions the ad evoked not only in him but also in the general public. Following the phenomenon observed with the Volkswagen video ad, individuals from Brazil are expected to respond to the family consent condition with a high level of cultural acceptance.

On the other hand, individual consent is tied to the self. The decision is up to the individual on what others can or cannot do with their image after death. This type of consent involves planning ahead and providing formal and clear instructions during a lifetime. Otherwise, when it becomes confusing, it may lead to conflicts, as seen in the case of the late American dancer Fred Astaire. In the late 1980s, discussions regarding the rights to use his image and where to use it led to adjustments in legal gaps (Fassiotto, 2000) and caused conflicts between his widow and daughter (D'Rozario et al., 2020). One of the most notable cases of expressing such wishes comes from the late actor Robin Williams, who died in 2014. The deed filed by Robin Williams states that his image cannot be used for 25 years after his death and transfers the rights of his name, signature, photograph, and likeness to his foundation (Ellis-Petersen, 2015). More recently, another well-known American actor, Robert Downey Jr., has also expressed his unwillingness to be resurrected through AI after his death, noting that his legal team will still be active when the time comes (Shoard, 2024). According to the privacy lawyer Alexander (as cited in Ellis-Petersen, 2015), this practice is expected to become more popular, and other celebrities are already taking steps to protect their rights post-mortem by, for example, registering their names as trademarks. Considering previous issues involving the

American dancer Fred Astaire in a video ad, as well as American actors expressing their individual wishes regarding the posthumous use of their image, it is expected that Americans are more focused on safeguarding the individual's will. As a result, they are expected to respond with a higher level of cultural acceptance to the individual consent condition.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, laws in the United States vary across states. Some of these states, as well as Brazil as a whole, provide post-mortem publicity rights. However, current laws do not provide specific guidelines regarding consent for the use of AI-generated images of deceased individuals. This loophole makes family and individual consent viable, as it is not in conflict with the current rules, although the practice remains subject to ongoing scrutiny. This opens an opportunity for future amendments to post-mortem laws.

Finally, all the aforementioned aspects, including demographic, economic, and regulatory, shape the unique cultural landscapes of the United States and Brazil. Consequently, these cultural contexts lead to audiences holding different perspectives. The consent types supporting the AI-generated video ad featuring a deleb add a crucial layer to these audiences' judgment on whether the practice is acceptable. In the case of individual consent, the deleb themself made the decision about their posthumous representation. This aligns more closely with cultures that emphasize individual autonomy and equal rights, such as the United States; thus, this country may exhibit greater cultural acceptance of individual consent compared to Brazil. In contrast, family consent involves the deleb's close family members deciding on their behalf. This resonates more with cultures that see the interconnectedness between group members and accept hierarchy between them, like Brazil; therefore, Brazil may show greater cultural acceptance of family consent compared to the United States.

Cultural Acceptance

In light of the cultural distinctions between the United States and Brazil, and supported by theoretical frameworks asserting that culture shapes individual behavior (Triandis, 1989, as cited in Singelis, 1994), this study ought to incorporate and investigate participants' cultural acceptance regarding the consent type (family vs. individual).

Reidenbach et al. (1990) suggest that individuals rely on multiple rationales when making ethical judgments and propose a tested Multidimensional Ethics Scale (MES) to measure and understand behavioral intention. That is, understand the extent to which individuals report they would behave similarly in a given scenario (Robin et al., 1996). Cultural acceptance is covered in one of the three dimensions underlying such judgments, specifically comprising traditional and cultural acceptance. The dimension is referred to as the relativistic dimension and will be further elaborated on next. For context, the first dimension is the moral equity dimension, which is rooted in early childhood experiences that shape an individual's understanding of morality and fairness. The third, the contractualism dimension, reflects perceptions of an implicit "social contract" between businesses and society (Reidenbach et al., 1990). Since this study focuses on cultural influences that can shape individuals by virtue of their nationality, regardless of where they were born, the first dimension, centered on early moral development, and the third dimension, focused on contractualism, were set aside. The analysis instead concentrates solely on culture, as addressed through the second dimension: the relativistic dimension.

The relativistic dimension is based on the relativistic framework, which holds that "ethical rules are relative to a specific culture; the values and behavior of people in one culture need not govern the conduct of people in another culture" (Reidenbach et al., 1990). Reidenbach et al. (1990) refer to the outcomes of this dimension as social acceptance and cultural acceptance.

For this study, and to enhance clarity, this dimension will hereafter be referred to as *cultural* acceptance. The dimension implies the two semantic differential items of traditionally acceptable and traditionally unacceptable, as well as culturally acceptable and culturally unacceptable. It focuses on how individuals consider community norms, rather than solely their personal beliefs, and these beliefs are considered relativist because they depend on what society deems acceptable. Moreover, it posits that tradition and culture shape individuals' beliefs, values, and attitudes, influencing their notion of what is wrong and what is right (Reidenbach et al., 1990). Specifically, the dimension is "more concerned with the guidelines, requirements, and parameters inherent in the social/cultural system than with individual considerations. These items suggest that the social and cultural systems are important in helping us define our ethical beliefs" (Reidenbach et al., 1990).

Given the potential relevance of this dimension's findings on cultural acceptance of the consent type, the dimension was incorporated in this cross-cultural study. This dimension, drawn from an ethics scale, examines whether individuals perceive a scenario as right or wrong through a cultural lens. Higher scores indicate a higher perceived level of ethicality (Snipes et al., 1999); in this study, specifically within the context of cultural norms. Higher scores in cultural acceptance reflect participants' belief that the scenario is ethically acceptable according to their cultural values. In addition, as Treise et al.'s (1994) findings suggest, higher scores show greater tolerance for many controversial advertising practices. Conversely, lower cultural acceptance scores indicate that individuals, shaped by the cultural system in which they are embedded, perceive the scenario as more wrong and unacceptable. When an ad is perceived as unethical, which in the cultural dimension would translate to culturally unacceptable, the audience may respond negatively to it, exhibiting indifference toward the advertised product, engaging in a

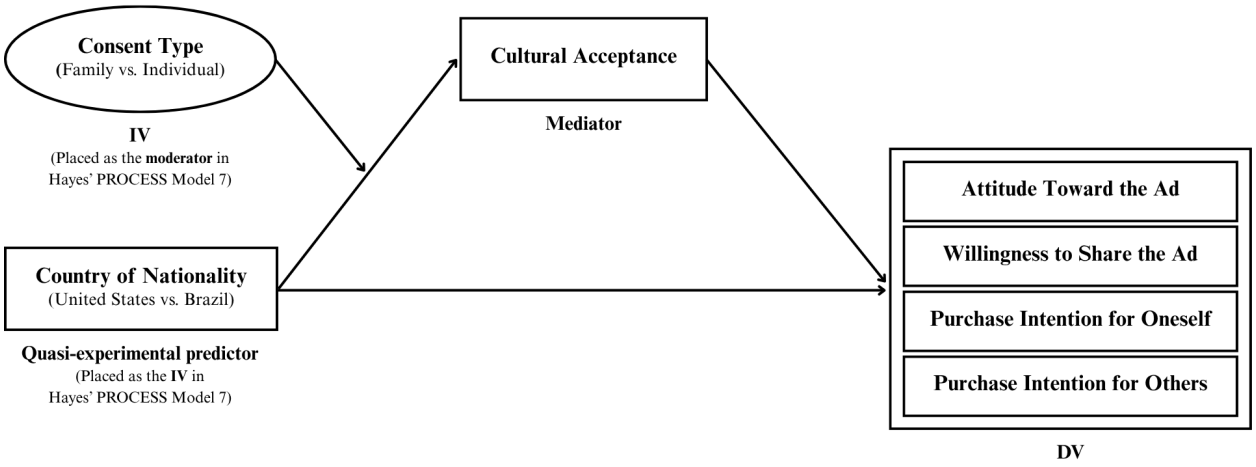
boycott, or demanding government regulation (Treise et al., 1994, as cited in Snipes et al., 1999). In conclusion, the intrinsic implications of family and individual consent examined in this study, arising from the source of permission for using an AI-generated image of a deleb, are expected to vary in light of the cultural differences between the United States and Brazil. Varying levels of cultural acceptance are anticipated to mediate the relationship between country of nationality and consent type, as further explained below.

Hypotheses

As seen in previous chapters, generative AI can create original and hyper-realistic content that is hard to distinguish from reality (Stryker et al., 2024). As a relatively new technology, it naturally raises uncertainties among people. Particularly when applied to creating digital replicas of delebs to feature profitable ads, this technology, along with a lack of clear legal regulations and cultural contexts, may further reinforce questions and distrust of such practices. The culture in which audiences are embedded shapes their perceptions and behavior toward ads (Sivadas et al., 2008; Zhu et al., 2022). Understanding these factors can help anticipate the performance of such ads featuring AI-generated delebs. Previous discussions provide a solid foundation for the assumption that individuals from the United States and Brazil, due to their cultural context, may respond differently to different consent types (family vs. individual) in ads featuring AI-generated delebs. Therefore, this study proposes the conceptual model illustrated in Figure 1. Country of nationality (United States vs. Brazil), serving as a proxy for culture, is treated as a quasi-experimental predictor. It is not manipulated, but measured and placed as the independent variable to reflect the study's theoretical focus on cultural context. Consent type (family vs. individual), while experimentally manipulated and thus the independent variable, is placed as a

moderator to reflect its hypothesized role in influencing the relationship between country of nationality and the dependent variables. Country of nationality is hypothesized to be mediated by cultural acceptance, which in turn is expected to influence attitude toward the ad (A_{ad}), willingness to share the ad, purchase intention for oneself, and purchase intention for others.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model



The individual consent indicates that the deleb themself decided to and granted permission for using AI to create their digital replica and feature it in the ad, emphasizing their personal autonomy and posthumous control over their own image. Additionally, this consent type affirms and confirms the individual's will, giving them the right to decide for themself. This aligns closely with values found in HI societies, as outlined below.

Individuals in individualistic societies are 'me'-oriented (Triandis, 1995 as cited in Sivadas et al., 2008), focus on self-interest (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede et al., 2010, as cited in Zhu et al., 2022), and present the need to function in accordance with personal choices (Walsh et al., 1997, as cited in Shulruf, 2003). Specifically, HI societies value autonomy and emphasize

equality in status and power (Singelis et al., 1995 as cited in Sivadas et al., 2008). Unlike VI societies, HI societies do not emphasize hierarchy; therefore, competition is not associated with it (Triandis, 1996; Singelis et al., 1995, as cited in Shulruf, 2003), and every individual is expected to be treated as having equal rights. Culture shapes individuals' perceptions of right and wrong, influencing the extent to which certain scenarios are accepted (Reidenbach et al., 1990); this acceptance, in turn, impacts behavior (Robin et al., 1996) and potentially reduces perceived risk and increases trust (Culnan et al., 1999, as cited in Limbu et al., 2012) in the scenario.

The United States is known as displaying HI orientations (Sivadas et al., 2008), whereas Brazil reflects these values to a lesser degree. Within the cultural context of this study, granting permission to use someone's image, even posthumously, is perceived as a decision that should rest with the individual concerned, not with others acting on their behalf. Therefore, the individual consent condition is expected to align more closely with the values held by the participants from the United States, who tend to prioritize personal autonomy and equal individual rights. Consequently, participants from the United States are likely to demonstrate higher levels of cultural acceptance toward the individual consent condition than participants from Brazil.

H1a: For the individual consent, participants from the United States will report greater cultural acceptance than participants from Brazil.

On the other hand, the family consent indicates that the deleb's family decided to and granted permission for using AI to create the deleb's digital replica and feature it in the ad, emphasizing close group control over the use of the deleb's image posthumously. Additionally,

this consent type shows the group's, in this case, the family's will and autonomy to decide for the deleb. This aligns closely with values found in VC societies, as outlined below.

Individuals in collectivist societies are 'we'-oriented, see themselves as interdependent with others (Triandis, 1995 as cited in Sivadas et al., 2008), and prioritize group interests (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede et al., 2010, as cited in Zhu et al., 2022). In other words, as members of a group, these individuals internalise the group's goals and values, giving these a higher priority (Hofstede, 1980; Hsu, 1983; Kim, 1994; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, Bontempo, Vilareal, Asai & Lucca 1988, as cited in Shulruf, 2003). Specifically, despite valuing the group, individuals in VC societies emphasize hierarchy; that is, they "accept inequality and relative status differentiation" (Singelis et al., 1995 as cited in Sivadas et al., 2008). As some group members carry more authority than others, they may be seen as having the right to make decisions on behalf of the others when they are unable to do so. As discussed earlier in this section, this cultural orientation can reflect on how people respond to certain scenarios.

Recent findings indicate that Brazil has a VC orientation (Torelli et al., 2015; Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023), whereas the United States reflects these values to a lesser degree. In the context of this study, a member of the group, in this case, the family, granting permission to use someone's image, even posthumously, could be perceived as an ordinary approach, as this reflects the group's will and group members hold the authority to act on their behalf. In other words, the decision is not coming from a person who does not belong to the deleb's group. Therefore, the family consent condition is expected to align more closely with the values held by the participants from Brazil, as this decision reflects the deleb's group desires. Consequently, participants from Brazil are likely to demonstrate higher levels of cultural acceptance toward the family consent condition than participants from the United States.

H1b: For the family consent, participants from Brazil will report greater cultural acceptance than participants from the United States.

The relativistic framework, behind the cultural acceptance dimension in the Multidimensional Ethical Scale (MES), suggests that judgments of ethicality depend on whether the scenario being judged aligns with an individual's cultural norms or values (Reidenbach et al., 1990). Additionally, cultural acceptance influences individuals' behavioral intentions (Robin et al., 1996). Culnan et al. (1999, as cited in Limbu et al., 2012) found that ethics, also a reflection of society's cultural norms (Reidenbach et al., 1990), perceived in online shopping, for example, reduces consumers' perceived risk and strengthens trust.

Applied to the present study, high levels of cultural acceptance mean the scenario is perceived as appropriate because individuals perceive that the consent condition they were exposed to closely aligns with their cultural values. That is, when an ad reflects the viewer's cultural expectations, whether the viewer centers on the self or the collective, they are more likely to connect the ad to their own realities and behave accordingly (Robin et al., 1996). Thus, the ad is culturally accepted as reflecting their own cultural contexts, as a representation of the society in which they are embedded. They may become less resistant and more receptive to the message, increasing the likelihood of a favorable attitudinal or behavioral response, which in this study was operationalized as A_{ad}, willingness to share the ad, and purchase intention for oneself and for others.

A_{ad} refers to an individual's overall predisposition to respond favorably or unfavorably to an ad during a specific occasion, and it does not evaluate cognitive evaluations or behavioral intentions (MacKenzie et al., 1989), as these are considered outcomes influenced by, rather than

constitutive of, the attitude itself. Individuals who experience greater cultural acceptance, those who feel that the ad resonates with their society, are expected to consequently be more likely to accept or demonstrate a more favorable predisposition response toward the ad.

Willingness to share the ad captures consumers' voluntary intention to disseminate an online video advertisement, whether through digital platforms or interpersonal communication (Choi, 2020). This construct does not distinguish between positive or negative motivations for sharing. Instead, it assesses general tendencies to engage with or avoid the ad. However, Choi (2020) suggests that this willingness is tied to the extent to which the ad reflects consumers' personal values and identity. Additionally, when individuals report greater cultural acceptance of an ad, they perceive the ad also aligns with their cultural values and ethical judgments, which in turn may increase their intention to share it with others.

Finally, as suggested by Lafferty et al. (1999), purchase intention refers to the likelihood that consumers will consider buying the advertised product or brand. Individuals who perceive the ad with greater cultural acceptance are more likely to see it as aligned with their everyday realities and to view the advertised brand as appropriate or socially endorsed within their cultural context. As a result, they are expected to be more likely to develop the intention to purchase the product, whether for themselves or for others.

H2: Greater cultural acceptance will lead to greater (a) A_{ad}, (b) willingness to share the ad, (c) purchase intention for oneself, and (d) purchase intention for others.

In summary, this study considers a scenario in which the cultural differences between the United States, as an HI society, and Brazil, as a VC culture, will result in different responses to consent type in a video ad featuring an AI-generated deleb. This study aims to investigate how

the culture context, applied to family vs. individual consent conditions in ads featuring AI-generated delebs, influences audiences' cultural acceptance in the United States and Brazil, and therefore, A_{ad}, willingness to share the ad, purchase intention for oneself, and purchase intention for others.

The next chapter presents the methodology, detailing the research design, sample, procedure, stimuli, and measures used to test the hypotheses and proposed model.

CHAPTER 4

METHOD

This study employs a 2 (country of nationality: United States vs. Brazil) x 2 (consent type: family vs. individual) between-subjects factorial experimental design to examine whether individuals from these two countries respond differently to an AI-generated ad featuring a deleb, depending on the consent type granted. These variables are placed respectively as the independent variable and the moderator in Hayes's PROCESS Model 7, reflecting the study's theoretical focus on cultural context and its aim to assess whether responses differ by consent type across cultures. A_{ad}, willingness to share the ad, purchase intention for oneself, and purchase intention for others were dependent variables. The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Georgia (UGA) (ID: PROJECT00010370). The following sections provide details on the research methodology and procedures.

Sample

A priori power analysis was conducted using G*Power 3.1 (Faul et al., 2009) to determine the minimum required sample size for the 2 x 2 between-subjects design to detect an interaction effect. Assuming a medium effect size ($f = 0.25$), $\alpha = 0.05$, and power = 0.95 (1- β error probability), the analysis indicated that a minimum of 210 participants was required.

A research fund of $500 was awarded by the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication at UGA and allocated to the research platform Prolific to serve as participant

incentives. Accordingly, part of the recruitment was conducted via Prolific, while additional participants were recruited through convenience sampling on social media using the snowball sampling method, due to the need for a larger sample. Participants recruited through Prolific were prescreened by the platform based on their nationality and current country of residence. Those recruited via social media were informed of the eligibility requirements regarding nationality and age. Regardless of the recruitment method, all participants were asked at the beginning of the survey to answer two screening questions to confirm their nationality and age. Participants from both recruitment sources were also asked to indicate their region of residence (Northeast, Midwest, South, and West in the United States; North, Northeast, Central-West, Southeast, and South in Brazil). This question was an additional indicator of their connection to the country and immersion in its culture. Country of nationality, the key quasi-experimental predictor, refers to an individual's citizenship. This does not necessarily correspond to the country of origin or where participants were born, but rather to the country with which they have legal and civic affiliation. By confirming both nationality and country of residence, it is possible to identify individuals who are embedded in the governmental systems, laws, and social norms that regulate their rights and responsibilities. These elements shape the immediate cultural context participants are exposed to, including prevailing media consumption patterns and everyday behaviors.

In total, 252 adults from the United States and Brazil completed the survey. After data cleaning, the final sample consisted of 231 participants. Those who selected another country of nationality and answered the manipulation check incorrectly were excluded from the analyses. Nevertheless, the final sample size provided more than sufficient statistical power for the planned analyses. Participants in both countries were recruited simultaneously during the first

two weeks of February 2025 to minimize temporal effects. They completed the experiment using the online survey tool Qualtrics. Most participants, those recruited through Prolific, were compensated an average of $2.07, depending on their completion time, following the platform's policies. A smaller number of participants, recruited through social media, volunteered to participate in the experiment and did not receive financial compensation.

As mentioned above, to ensure participants met the eligibility criteria for this study, they were asked to provide specific information. First, they reported their country of nationality to confirm their citizenship, as well as their connection to and immersion in the cultures of interest. Second, participants were asked to report their age in years. Only adults from the United States and Brazil were eligible to proceed. For the purposes of this study, adults are defined as individuals who have reached the age of majority, which is 18 years old in most states of the United States (except Alabama, Nebraska, and Mississippi) (Legal Information Institute, n.d.) and throughout Brazil (Superior Tribunal de Justiça, 2019). Finally, demographic and psychographic information was collected, including gender, region of residence, educational background, screen time, and comfort level with digital media, to ensure a diverse and representative sample. The region of residence also served as an additional indicator of cultural immersion.

Among the valid responses (N = 231), 50.65% (n = 117) were from the United States and 49.35% (n = 114) were from Brazil. In the United States sample, 80.3% (n = 94) were recruited through Prolific and 19.7% (n = 23) through social media. In the Brazil sample, 79.8% (n = 91) were recruited through Prolific and 20.2% (n = 23) through social media. Among the participants from the United States, all four census regions were represented: 13.7% (n = 16) were from the Northeast, 14.5% (n = 17) from the Midwest, 42.7% (n = 50) from the South, and 29.1% (n = 34)

from the West. Among the participants from Brazil, all five regions were also represented: 0.9% (n = 1) were from the North, 16.7% (n = 19) from the Northeast, 9.6% (n = 11) from the Central-West, 50% (n = 57) from the Southeast, and 22.8% (n = 26) from the South.

Of the participants, 51.1% (n = 118) were female, 46.3% (n = 107) were male, 0.9% (n = 2) preferred not to say, and 1.7% (n = 4) identified as another gender. Participants aged 18-24 accounted for 16.9% (n = 39), those aged 25-34 accounted for 42.4% (n = 98), 35-44 accounted for 19.9% (n = 46), 45-54 accounted for 13.9% (n = 32), and those aged 55 and above accounted for 6.9% (n = 16). The average age of participants was 34.60 years (SD = 11.80). In terms of education, 2.2% (n = 5) reported incomplete primary or secondary school, 23.8% (n = 55) had completed secondary school, 43.3% (n = 100) had completed an undergraduate degree, and 26.4% (n = 61) had completed a graduate degree. Additionally, 0.4% (n = 1) preferred not to answer, and 3.9% (n = 9) reported having a different educational level. In terms of time spent daily on screen (smartphones, tablets, computers, TV, etc.), 6.5% (n = 15) reported spending 1-3 hours, 22.1% (n = 51) spent 4-6 hours, 30.7% (n = 71) spent 7-9 hours, another 30.7% (n = 71) spent 10-12 hours, and 10% (n = 23) spent 13 hours or more, with an average of 8.42 hours per day (SD = 3.37). Among the participants, 17.8% (n = 41) reported an average daily AI usage of 0 hours; 67.5% (n = 156) spent 1-3 hours, 8.7% (n = 20) spent 4-6 hours, 3.9% (n = 9) spent 7-9 hours, 1.7% (n = 4) spent 10-12 hours, and 0.4% (n = 1) spent 13-17 hours. For a breakdown by country, please see Table 1.

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Gender, Age, Educational Level, Daily Screen Time, and Daily AI Usage

Demographic	United States Total (%)	Brazil Total (%)	Total (%)
Gender			
Female	70 (59.8%)	48 (42.1%)	118 (51.1%)
Male	43 (36.8%)	64 (56.1%)	107 (46.3%)
Prefer not to say	0 (0%)	2 (1.8%)	2 (.9%)
Another	4 (3.4%)	0 (0%)	4 (1.7%)
Age			
18-24 years old	21 (18%)	18 (15.8%)	39 (16.9%)
25-34 years old	47 (40.2%)	51 (44.7%)	98 (42.4%)
35-44 years old	24 (20.5%)	22 (19.3%)	46 (19.9%)
45-54 years old	19 (16.2%)	13 (11.4%)	32 (13.9%)
55-70 years old	6 (5.1%)	10 (8.8%)	16 (6.9%)
Educational Level			
Incomplete primary or secondary school	5 (4.3%)	0 (0%)	5 (2.2%)
Completed secondary school	30 (25.6%)	25 (21.9%)	55 (23.8%)
Completed an undergraduate degree	47 (40.2%)	53 (46.6%)	100 (43.3%)
Completed a graduate degree	28 (23.9%)	33 (28.9%)	61 (26.4%)
Prefer not to say	1 (.9%)	0 (0%)	1 (.4%)
Another	6 (5.1%)	3 (2.6%)	9 (3.9%)
Daily Screen Time			
1-3 hours	5 (4.3%)	10 (8.8%)	15 (6.5%)
4-6 hours	34 (29.1%)	17 (14.9%)	51 (22.1%)
7-9 hours	39 (33.3%)	32 (28.1%)	71 (30.7%)
10-12 hours	31 (26.5%)	40 (35.1%)	71 (30.7%)
13-17 hours	8 (6.8%)	15 (13.1%)	23 (10%)
Daily AI Usage			
0	28 (23.9%)	13 (11.4%)	41 (17.8%)
1-3 hours	80 (68.4%)	76 (66.7%)	156 (67.5%)
4-6 hours	4 (3.4%)	16 (14%)	20 (8.7%)
7-9 hours	2 (1.7%)	7 (6.1%)	9 (3.9%)
10-12 hours	2 (1.7%)	2 (1.8%)	4 (1.7%)
13-17 hours	1 (.9%)	0 (0%)	1 (.4%)
Total	117 (100.0%)	114 (100.0%)	231 (100.0%)

Procedure

The experimental materials were created in English. The consent form, instructions, and scales unavailable in both languages were translated into Brazilian Portuguese. To achieve this, as proposed by Brislin (1970), a combination of techniques — back-translation and pretesting — was applied. These steps are intended to minimize errors and produce a translation equivalent to the original. First, a native Brazilian fluent in English and Portuguese translated the survey from English to Portuguese. A separate bilingual contributor, with extensive cultural experience in the United States and Brazil, conducted a back-translation from Portuguese to English. Both proficient speakers reviewed the materials to identify and implement necessary cultural or linguistic adaptations. In addition, a pretest for both the English and Portuguese versions was conducted to evaluate the efficacy of the questionnaire and stimuli, and to identify potential issues such as confounding effects related to the attractiveness of the model featured in the stimuli. Thus, participants from the United States completed the self-report in English, while participants from Brazil completed it in Brazilian Portuguese.

Prolific prescreened participants who currently live in the United States or Brazil and hold the nationality of the respective country. Participants recruited through social media were informed of the eligibility requirements of being American or Brazilian and over 18 years old before being given the link to the survey. In the survey, potential participants were first presented with a consent form that detailed the study's purpose, potential risks, and confidentiality measures. It also emphasized that participation was voluntary, with the option to withdraw anytime. Those who agreed to the terms answered two questions to confirm their country of nationality and age to ensure that only individuals aged 18 or older from the United States or Brazil proceeded to the next step. Participants were instructed to turn up the volume, pay close

attention to their screens while watching the upcoming video, as they would with any online content, and then answer questions about it.

Participants were then presented with background information highlighting the rapid advancements in AI, noting that the technology is being used to generate videos that recreate the presence of delebs. To mitigate potential discomfort or confusion arising from unfamiliarity with the model, participants were informed that they would soon view a video in which "AI has made it possible for a well-known deceased celebrity to appear in a video ad in her home country, engaging with the audience as if she were alive today." Then, to bring the scenario within the participants' cultural framework, they were asked to imagine that the person in the video ad was a widely recognized deleb from their own country. Analyses presented in the next chapter confirmed that participants could similarly imagine the scenario regardless of nationality or consent condition. Subsequently, participants were randomly assigned to one of two stimulus conditions that varied in the consent type (family vs. individual). Participants' responses were automatically saved upon survey completion. No personal identifying information was collected, as Prolific handles compensation independently, and participants recruited via social media were not compensated.

A total of 252 participants completed the survey, with 125 from the United States and 127 from Brazil. Among participants from the United States, 64 were assigned to the family consent condition and 61 to the individual consent condition. Among participants from Brazil, 65 were assigned to the family consent condition and 62 to the individual consent condition. Of the 252 participants, 231 correctly recalled the consent type they were exposed to: 117 from the United States and 114 from Brazil. Thus, the final sample included 61 participants from the United

States in the family consent condition and 56 in the individual consent condition, 65 participants from Brazil in the family consent condition and 49 in the individual consent condition (Table 2).

Table 2: Final Participant Distribution by Condition and Country

Country of nationality	Family consent	Individual consent	Total
United States	61	56	117
Brazil	65	49	114
Total	126	105	231

Stimuli

To measure participants' responses to an AI-generated deleb video ad, this study used a real video ad from Levi's, a well-known clothing brand recognized in both the United States and Brazil. The featured brand has operated in the fashion industry for over a century and was selected because the clothing sector was identified as a popular category for online purchases in both countries as of June 2024 (Bashir, 2024). The brand and ad content were selected to appeal to a wide demographic (ages 18 and up, across all genders), making it easier for participants to envision the scenario as relevant to their lives. Additionally, the ad was carefully selected to be culturally neutral yet relatable to American and Brazilian audiences, as participants were later instructed to imagine it was from their own country. Thus, the setting, ethnic diversity, and music track were chosen to encourage broad relatability. In the same way, the ad did not include dialogue since the two countries do not share the same language. A disclosure regarding the year of the celebrity's death was considered unnecessary, as it is not the focus of the study.

The original one-minute ad was shortened to 30 seconds to emphasize scenes featuring a leading woman and supporting dancers. The individuals represented diverse genders, races, and

physiognomies in supporting roles to relate to as broad an audience as possible. Although the leading woman was neither a real, well-known celebrity, a deleb, nor AI-generated, participants were informed that she was. The country of origin of both the ad and the deleb was intentionally left unspecified to prevent participants from forming cultural preconceptions or questioning their unfamiliarity with the fictional deleb. Subsequently, participants were asked to imagined they were browsing the internet as they normally do, came across the video ad they were about to see, and that the person featured in it was a widely recognized deceased celebrity from their own country, whose presence had been recreated using AI to engage with the audience as if she were alive today. Two-way ANOVAs, presented in the next chapter, confirmed that participants, regardless of nationality or consent condition, were similarly able to imagine the scenario and perceive the ad as AI-generated with comparable levels of credibility.

The video begins with several individuals sitting bored in an ordinary living room, gathered on a couch, with the leading woman positioned at the scene's center. An instrumental beat song starts playing on the TV, and the leading woman begins to dance. She inspires the others to join her, shifting the mood to a more upbeat atmosphere, while she consistently remains the focal point of the scene. A close-up of her face is followed by a zoom-out that reveals the group is part of a television scene. The ad ends with a fade out to a plain black background and the slogan "Live in Levi's," displaying the brand's logo. There is no spoken dialogue between the individuals. Frames from the video ad are included in the Appendix.

Consent Statements

Before the ad scenes began, but still as part of the video, a written consent disclosure (family vs. individual) was presented as white text on a plain black background to enhance

legibility. Three short sentences appeared sequentially, guiding participants through the information before the ad starts. In total, they remained on screen for 20 seconds, allowing participants sufficient time to read carefully. The texts for both conditions were designed to be as similar as possible, with the only variation being the terms related to either family or individual consent. The first sentence was identical in both conditions: "You are about to see a deceased celebrity." The following sentences were designed to reflect values aligned with the study's conditions and hypotheses.

In the family consent condition, the message aligned with collectivistic values, stating in bold text that the deleb's family allowed the brand to generate a replica of her using AI to honor her legacy. The following sentence emphasized that the decision and permission to use her image posthumously rested entirely with her family. The full consent message displayed to participants was as follows:

You are about to see a deceased celebrity.
With the consent of her family, we used Al to
bring her back and honor her legacy.
The decision and permission to use her image
posthumously were entirely up to her family.

In the individual consent condition, the message aligned with individualistic values, stating in bold text that the deleb herself, before passing, had granted the brand permission to generate her replica using AI to honor her legacy. The following sentence emphasized that her decision and permission to use her image posthumously were entirely hers. After reading the

consent, participants were immediately shown the 30-second ad. The full consent message displayed to participants was as follows:

You are about to see a deceased celebrity.
With her consent given before passing, we
used Al to bring her back to honor her legacy.
The decision and permission to use her
image posthumously were entirely up to her.

Measures

Measures were adopted to assess the study's key variables, perform a manipulation check, and control for potential confounding effects. All measures were presented in a self-report format, with questions designed to capture participants' cultural values, their responses to the ad, and the overall effectiveness of the study design. The measures employed a combination of multiple-choice, Likert-scale, and semantic differential scale items.

After watching the video ad, participants completed a manipulation check and questions designed to assess potential confounding effects. The manipulation check was designed to verify whether participants paid attention to and accurately recalled who granted consent in the video ad they were exposed to. In a multiple-choice question, they were asked to select one option between: "the deceased celebrity," "the deceased celebrity's family," or "other (please specify)." This question also functioned as a filter; participants who answered incorrectly were excluded from subsequent analyses. Then, participants' ability to visualize the scenario they were asked to imagine was assessed with the following question: "How would you describe your imagination

of the scenario presented earlier, where you were asked to imagine the person in the ad as a celebrity from your country?" They rated three items on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree): "Vivid," "Detailed," and "Dim" (reverse-coded) ($\alpha = .79$). Participants' belief that the ad was created using AI was assessed with the question: "How convinced are you that the video ad was generated by AI?" Answers were also recorded on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = not convinced at all, 7 = extremely convinced). The results of the two-way ANOVAs examining these factors are presented in the following chapter.

Two other questions were included to account for brand familiarity and model attractiveness, and were measured using 7-point Likert scales. For brand familiarity, the scale ranged from "not familiar at all" to "extremely familiar," while for model attractiveness, it ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The results of the independent samples t-tests examining these factors are presented in the following chapter. Additionally, brand familiarity and model attractiveness were later tested as covariates during the analysis process; however, they had no significant impact on the results and were excluded from further analyses.

Cultural acceptance of the consent type was measured using an adaptation of the second dimension, called the relativism dimension, of the Multidimensional Ethics Scale (MES) (Reidenbach et al., 1990). The question, worded as "How would you describe the consent?", was adapted to focus on the manipulated variable and align with the study's objectives, as cultural variation was expected to be more prominent in that factor. Additionally, the question aimed to capture participants' personal perceptions rather than their beliefs about how others in their culture would respond. The items were kept as originally written. The dimension consists of two semantic differential items, measured with a 7-point Likert scale: Traditionally

acceptable–Traditionally unacceptable and Culturally acceptable–Culturally unacceptable (r = .74, $p < .001$).

Attitude toward the ad (A_{ad}) was measured using a three-item scale developed by MacKenzie et al. (1989). In this scale ($\alpha = .96$), participants rated the following items on a 7-point semantic differential ranking: bad–good, unpleasant–pleasant, and unfavorable–favorable. Willingness to share the ad was assessed using Choi's (2020) adapted, three-item scale ($\alpha = .85$), in which participants rated their willingness to share the video ad on social media, show it to others in person, and talk about it with others. This scale employed a 7-point Likert scale ranging from extremely unlikely to extremely likely. Purchase intention was evaluated using an adapted portion of Yi's scale (1990, as cited in Lafferty et al., 1999). The same scale was used in two slightly different questions. In both, participants rated how likely they were to consider purchasing from the brand featured in the video ad; however, the first question asked them to consider purchasing for themselves ($\alpha = .92$), while the second asked them to consider purchasing for someone else ($\alpha = .94$). Responses were given on a 7-point semantic differential scale with the items: unlikely–likely, impossible–possible, and improbable–probable.

Finally, although not directly part of the design of the present study, the concepts of individualism-collectivism, along with the horizontal and vertical perspectives, was examined and measured to provide a deeper theoretical understanding, observe if past research on these countries is still applicable, and to build a more robust background regarding cultural aspects of the United States and Brazil. These attributes were measured using the short 16-item version of the Individualism-Collectivism Scale (HVIC) (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998, as cited in Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023), which includes a scientifically validated Brazilian-Portuguese version. This scale

measures the four dimensions: horizontal individualism (HI) (α = .68), vertical individualism (VI) (α = .66), horizontal collectivism (HC) (α = .74), and vertical collectivism (VC) (α = .79). Additionally, based on prior research by Pérez-Nebra et al. (2023), which confirmed the model through confirmatory factor analysis, a model in which item 16 was reclassified from VC to HC was used. This assessment used a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The Cronbach's α coefficients for the aforementioned scales are presented in Table 3, and the corresponding items are provided in the Appendix.

Table 3: Internal Consistency

Variable	n	Number of items	Cronbach's α
Perceived Imagination Level	231	3	.79
A_{ad}	231	3	.96
Willingness to share	231	3	.85
PI (oneself)	231	3	.92
PI (others)	231	3	.94
HI	231	4	.68
VI	231	4	.66
HC	231	5	.74
VC	231	3	.79

The next chapter details the full analysis process, presents the results, and explores the key insights and discussions that emerged from them.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

Before analyzing the main hypothesis testing, independent sample t-tests were conducted to assess descriptive analysis of the sample, specifically HVIC levels across the United States and Brazil participants. Afterwards, analyses of variance (ANOVA) and t-tests were conducted to perform manipulation and confound checks, ensuring that participants perceived the experimental elements as intended. These checks separately assessed participants' awareness of the consent type they were exposed to, perceived imagination level, credibility of the ad as being AI-generated, brand familiarity, and model attractiveness. Finally, Hayes' PROCESS Model 7 was conducted to test the study's hypotheses.

Background Descriptive Analysis and Discussion

To assess whether theoretical assumptions and findings from previous research align with the background of this study's sample, participants were asked to answer questions regarding HVIC (Table 6). Independent samples t-tests revealed that participants from the United States scored significantly higher on HI ($M = 5.77$, $SD = .88$) than participants from Brazil ($M = 5.39$, $SD = 1.07$), $t(218.04) = 2.97$, $p = .003$. No significant differences were found on the remaining dimensions.

Table 4: HVIC levels by Country

		M	*SD*	*t*	*df*	*Two-sided p-value*
HI	**US**	5.77	.88	2.968	218.035	.003
	BR	5.39	1.07			
VI	**US**	4.02	1.18	-.699	229	.485
	BR	4.13	1.21			
HC	**US**	5.38	.93	-1.146	229	.253
	BR	5.52	.98			
VC	**US**	5.19	1.36	.100	229	.920
	BR	5.18	1.41			

Discussion of Background Descriptive Analysis

The significant results on HI confirm what this study expected, supporting the premise that the United States indeed values autonomy and emphasizes equality in status and power to a greater degree than Brazil. The same pattern was found by scholars in previous studies (Sivadas et al., 2008; Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023) and suggests that the United States is consistent in this cultural dimension. On the other hand, VI, HC, and VC results were not significant, raising some questions.

Firstly, participants were prescreened based on nationality and current country of residence; however, country of birth was not controlled for. While the study did not specifically focus on participants' early cultural exposure, failing to account for country of birth may have introduced unexpected variability, potentially contributing to cultural differences.

Additionally, these non-significant findings suggest that although previous evidence identified the United States as high in the HI dimension (Sivadas et al., 2008; Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023), the country may also score highly across other dimensions. This could lead the United

States to align more closely with Brazil in other dimensions and values that are theoretically expected to be more prominent in Brazil. Despite being generally individualistic, research suggests that individuals from the United States also prioritize immediate family interests over personal ones (Fischer, 2000, as cited in Shulruf, 2003). Consequently, the family context presented in the other dimensions, such as the item "It is my duty to take care of my family, even when I have to sacrifice what I want" in VC, may have resonated with participants from both countries. Moreover, while Brazil is often described as collectivist and family-oriented, as many scholars have noted (Gouveia et al., 2000; Torres et al., 2007, 2015, as cited in Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023; Zhu et al., 2022), the country may not be as hierarchical as the VC dimension assumes. These factors may shed light on recent cultural shifts and help explain the non-significant differences in VI, HC, and VC between the United States and Brazil.

Multiple factors can influence cultural change. As Varnum et al. (2017) argue, cultures are not static; they can be profoundly altered by factors such as emerging technologies or shifts in political systems–and both the United States and Brazil have recently experienced significant political changes (Block, 2024; Boadle, 2024). While the non-significant results introduce an element of uncertainty for further analysis, it remains relevant to explore how these potential cultural changes may be reflected in the object of study. More importantly, the significant results in HI are substantial evidence of cultural differences between the United States and Brazil in at least one of the cultural dimensions. Therefore, the analyses proceeded.

Manipulation Check

Country of Nationality

Some steps were taken to ensure that the sample was representative of the target population. The research platform Prolific's prescreening filters screened participants based on their nationality and current country of residence. Participants recruited via both Prolific and social media were informed, in recruitment materials and in the consent form, of the requirement to hold nationality from either the United States or Brazil. Additionally, questions at the beginning of the survey were included to allow only individuals from these countries and over 18 years old to move forward. A follow-up question asked participants to confirm their region of residence, further verifying their connection to the specified country.

Consent Type

This study tested two types of consent: one stating that the decision and permission to use AI to generate a deleb's digital replica were made by the deleb's family, and another stating that the decision and permission were made by the deleb herself before passing.

After watching the video ad, participants answered a follow-up manipulation check question to confirm their attention and recall of the consent type (family vs. individual) they were exposed to. The question "According to the ad you watched, who gave consent to create the AI-generated content?" was in a multiple-choice format, and participants had to select one answer between "The deceased celebrity," "The family of the deceased celebrity," and "Other (please specify)." In SPSS, a new binary variable was created to filter those who answered correctly: those who responded in line with their assigned condition or those who failed the

check. Participants who failed this check ($n = 21$) were excluded from all subsequent analyses, resulting in a final sample of $N = 231$.

Confound Checks

Perceived Imagination Level

Participants' ability to visualize the scenario they were asked to imagine—that the person featured in the ad was a celebrity from their own country—was assessed to ensure the task was comprehended and experienced equally across participants from both countries. A two-way ANOVA (Table 5) was conducted to examine the effects of country of nationality and consent type on perceived imagination level. There was no significant main effect of country of nationality, $F(1, 227) = 1.73$, $p = .189$, $\eta p^2 = .008$. Participants from the United States ($M = 4.91$, $SD = 1.28$) and Brazil ($M = 5.12$, $SD = 1.32$) reported similar levels of imagination. The main effect of consent type was also not significant, $F(1, 227) = 0.92$, $p = .338$, $\eta p^2 = .004$. Participants in the family consent condition ($M = 4.94$, $SD = 1.41$) and individual consent condition ($M = 5.10$, $SD = 1.16$) reported similar levels of imagination.

The interaction between country of nationality and consent type was also not significant, $F(1, 227) = 0.17$, $p = .680$, $\eta p^2 = .001$. Among participants from the United States, those in the family consent condition ($M = 4.86$, $SD = 1.40$) and those in the individual consent condition ($M = 4.96$, $SD = 1.16$) reported similar levels of imagination. Among participants from Brazil, those in the family consent condition ($M = 5.02$, $SD = 1.43$) and those in the individual consent condition ($M = 5.26$, $SD = 1.16$) also reported similar levels of imagination.

In conclusion, regardless of nationality or consent type, participants were similarly able to imagine the scenario, minimizing the risk that differences in imagination ability would threaten the validity of the further results.

Table 5: Two-Way ANOVA Results for Perceived Imagination Level

DV	*F*	*Sig.*	ηp^2
Perceived Imagination Level			
Country of Nationality	1.73	.189	.008
Consent Type	0.92	.338	.004
Country of Nationality * Consent Type	0.17	.680	.001

Credibility of the Ad as being AI-Generated

Similarly, participants' belief that the ad was created using AI was assessed to ensure that the stimuli were perceived as AI-generated in an equivalent way across participants from both countries. A two-way ANOVA (Table 6) was conducted to examine the effects of country of nationality and consent type on the credibility of the ad as being AI-generated. There was no significant main effect of country of nationality, $F(1, 227) = 0.00$, $p = .951$, $\eta p^2 = .000$. Participants from the United States ($M = 4.02$, $SD = 1.73$) and Brazil ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 2.00$) reported similar levels of credibility. The main effect of consent type was also not significant, $F(1, 227) = 1.23$, $p = .268$, $\eta p^2 = .005$. Participants in the family consent condition ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 1.94$) and individual consent condition ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 1.77$) reported similar levels of credibility.

The interaction between country of nationality and consent type was also not significant, $F(1, 227) = 0.46$, $p = .498$, $\eta p^2 = .002$. Among participants from the United States, those in the family consent condition ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 1.85$) and those in the individual consent condition (*M*

= 3.79, *SD* = 1.56) reported similar levels of credibility. Among participants from Brazil, those in the family consent condition (*M* = 4.05, *SD* = 2.02) and those in the individual consent condition (*M* = 3.94, *SD* = 2.00) also reported similar levels of credibility.

In conclusion, regardless of country of nationality or consent type, participants similarly believed that the ad was AI-generated, minimizing the risk that differences in credibility would threaten the validity of the further results.

Table 6: Two-Way ANOVA Results for Credibility of the Ad as being AI-Generated

DV	*F*	*Sig.*	ηp^2
Credibility of the Ad as being AI-Generated			
Country of Nationality	0.00	.951	.000
Consent Type	1.23	.268	.005
Country of Nationality * Consent Type	0.46	.498	.002

Brand Familiarity & Model Attractiveness

Independent samples t-tests showed a statistically significant difference in brand familiarity, with participants from the United States (*M* = 6.04, *SD* = 1.21) reporting slightly higher familiarity with Levi's compared to participants from Brazil (*M* = 5.01, *SD* = 1.95), $t(187.80) = 4.81$, $p < .001$. There was no significant difference in perceived model attractiveness between participants from the United States (*M* = 5.20, *SD* = 1.19) and Brazil (*M* = 4.95, *SD* = 1.65), $t(205.59) = 1.30$, $p = .192$.

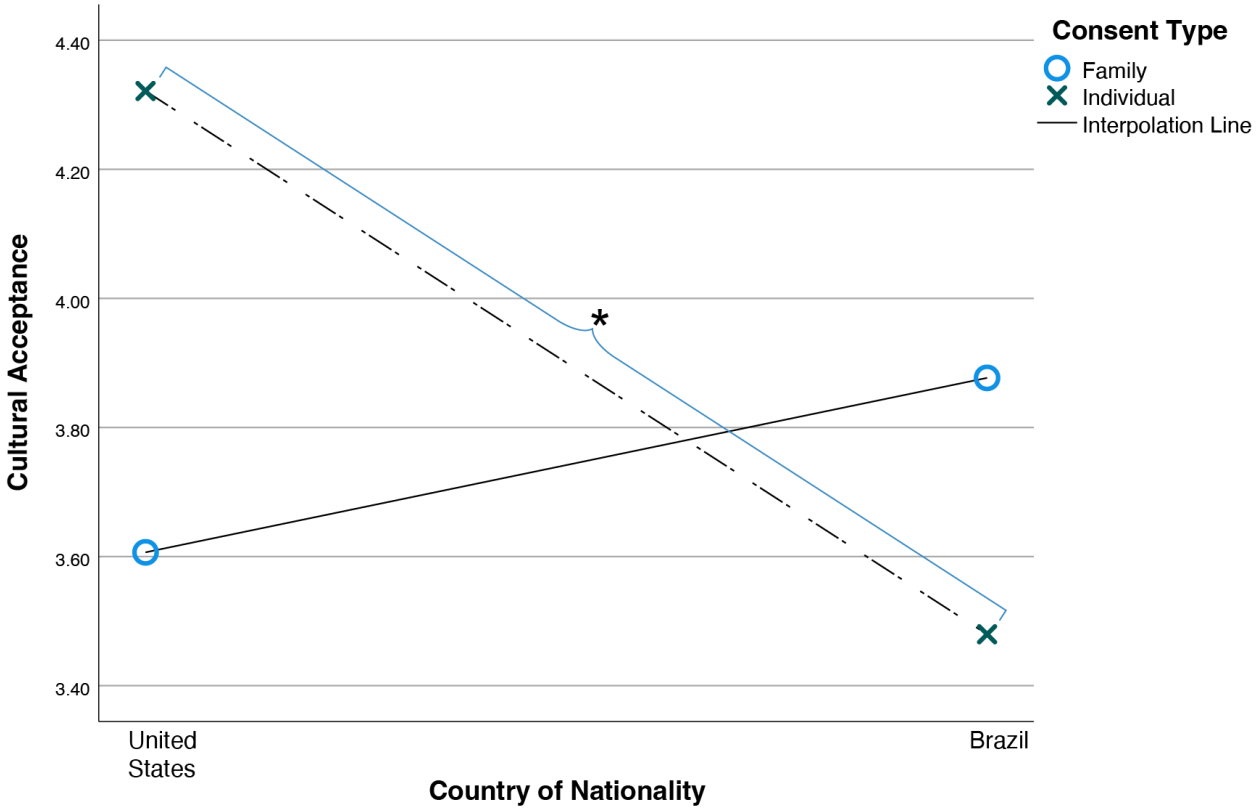
Hypothesis Testing

The hypotheses were tested using Hayes' PROCESS (v.4.2) Model 7 with 10,000 bootstrapped samples and a 95% confidence level. Country of nationality, the quasi-experimental

predictor, was placed as the independent variable; cultural acceptance as the mediator; and consent type, the manipulated independent variable, was placed as the moderator. A_{ad}, willingness to share the ad, purchase intention for oneself, and purchase intention for others were tested one by one as dependent variables in separate models. Brand familiarity and model attractiveness were also tested as covariates, but they had no significant impact on the results, so they were excluded from the analyses.

H1a predicted that, for the individual consent, participants from the United States will report greater cultural acceptance than participants from Brazil. H1b predicted that, for the family consent, participants from Brazil will report greater cultural acceptance than participants from the United States. To test them, the conditional effect of country (1 = United States, 2 = Brazil) on cultural acceptance at each level of consent type (1 = family, 2 = individual) was examined using the outcome model from PROCESS Model 7. The interaction between country of nationality and consent type was significantly associated with cultural acceptance (β = -1.11, p = .011) (Figure 2). For the individual consent type, participants from Brazil reported significantly lower cultural acceptance than those from the United States (β = -0.84, SE = 0.32, p = .010, 95% CI [-1.48, -0.20]), supporting H1a. On the other hand, for the family consent type, the difference in cultural acceptance between Brazil and the United States was not statistically significant (β = 0.27, SE = 0.30, p = .361, 95% CI [-0.31, 0.85]), and thus H1b was not supported.

Figure 2: Interaction between Country of Nationality and Consent Type on Cultural Acceptance (H1a and H1b)

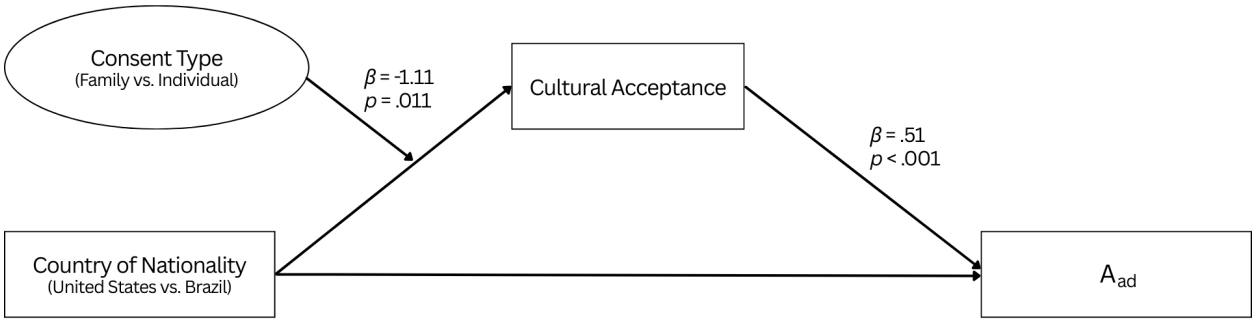


*Significant effect, (β = -0.84, p = .010).

H2 predicted that greater cultural acceptance will lead to greater (a) A_{ad}, (b) willingness to share the ad, (c) purchase intention for oneself, and (d) purchase intention for others. Cultural acceptance was positively related to A_{ad} (β = .51, p < .001) (Figure 3). The indirect effect of country of nationality on A_{ad} via cultural acceptance was not significant for the family consent condition (β = .13, 95% CI [-.182, .450]). However, participants from Brazil showed significantly lower cultural acceptance under the individual consent condition compared to those from the United States (β = -.43, 95% CI [-.750, -.127]). The moderated mediation was

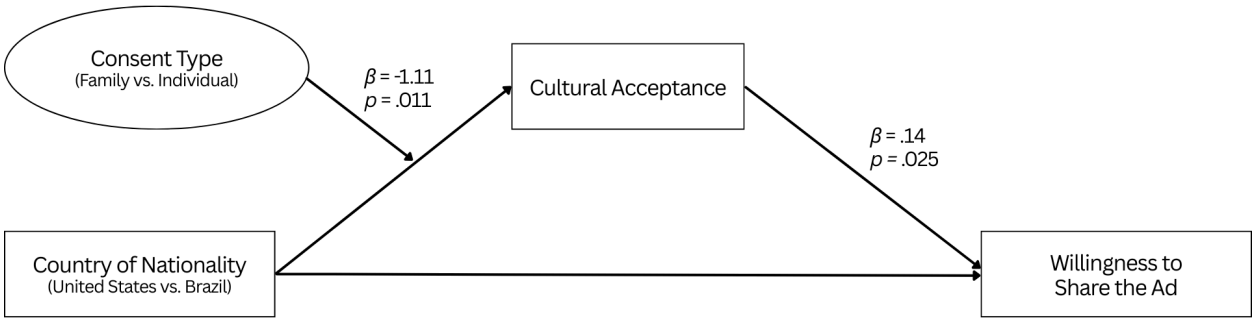
significant (index = –.57, 95% CI [–1.029, –.137]), indicating that the indirect effect depended on the level of the moderator.

Figure 3: Moderated Mediation Effect on A_{ad}



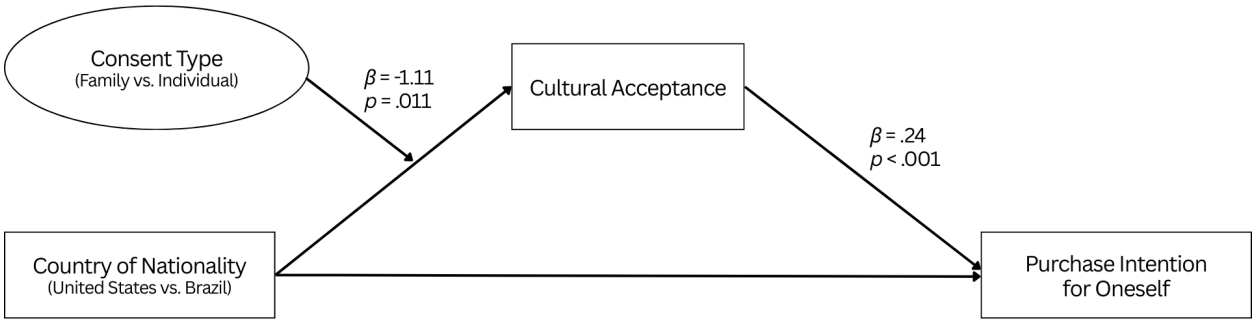
Cultural acceptance was positively related to willingness to share the ad (β = .14, p < .025) (Figure 4). The indirect effect of country of nationality on willingness to share the ad via cultural acceptance was not significant for the family consent condition (β = .04, 95% CI [-.058, .168]), and was also not significant for the individual consent condition (β = -.12, 95% CI [-.316, .003]). The moderated mediation was also not significant (index = –.16, 95% CI [–.419, .002]).

Figure 4: Moderated Mediation Effect on Willingness to Share the Ad



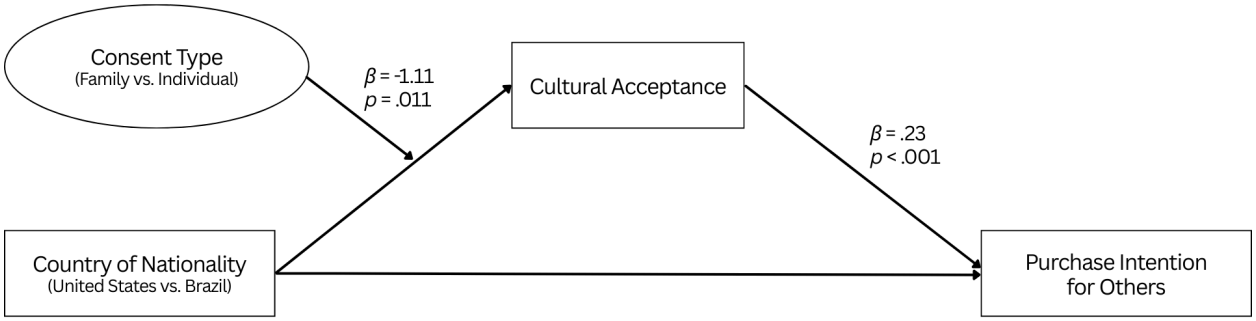
Cultural acceptance was positively related to purchase intention for oneself (β = .24, p < .001) (Figure 5). The indirect effect of country of nationality on purchase intention for oneself via cultural acceptance was not significant for the family consent condition (β = .06, 95% CI [-.089, .222]). However, participants from Brazil showed significantly lower cultural acceptance under the individual consent condition compared to those from the United States (β = -.20, 95% CI [-.411, -.045]). The moderated mediation was significant (index = -.26, 95% CI [-.539, -.051]), indicating that the indirect effect depended on the level of the moderator.

Figure 5: Moderated Mediation Effect on Purchase Intention for Oneself



Cultural acceptance was positively related to purchase intention for others (β = .23, p < .001) (Figure 6). The indirect effect of country of nationality on purchase intention for others via cultural acceptance was not significant for the family consent condition (β = .06, 95% CI [-.081, .238]). However, participants from Brazil showed significantly lower cultural acceptance under the individual consent condition compared to those from the United States (β = -.19, 95% CI [-.417, -.037]). The moderated mediation was significant (index = -.26, 95% CI [-.561, -.042]), indicating that the indirect effect depended on the level of the moderator.

Figure 6: Moderated Mediation Effect on Purchase Intention for Others



The results provide partial support for H2, as cultural acceptance significantly predicted (a) A_{ad}, (c) purchase intention for oneself, and (d) purchase intention for others, but not (b) willingness to share the ad.

Discussion of Hypothesis Testing

A significant interaction between country of nationality and consent type on cultural acceptance was found, suggesting that individuals from the United States and Brazil differ in cultural acceptance depending on the consent type. Specifically, the individual consent condition was significant, and participants from the United States reported significantly higher cultural acceptance for it than those from Brazil, supporting H1a. This aligns with the Descriptive Analysis findings, which showed that the United States scored higher in HI than Brazil, supporting the premise that participants from the United States place a greater emphasis on autonomy and equality (Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023). Furthermore, it reinforces the idea that cultural systems shape individuals' perceptions of cultural acceptance (Reidenbach et al., 1990).

On the other hand, in the family consent condition, there was no significant difference, and H1b, expecting greater cultural acceptance among Brazilian participants, was not supported. This non-significant result, along with similar findings on VC, may reinforce the belief that

although the United States is generally more individualistic (Adler et al., 1992, as cited in Sivadas et al., 2008; Choi et al., 2004; Jung et al., 2004; Zhu et al., 2022), it may still place value on immediate family. That is, in the United States, the value placed on autonomy may coexist with strong ties to immediate family, and the relevance of family also influenced participants' acceptance of the family consent condition to a similar degree as in Brazil.

Although cultural acceptance significantly predicted all four dependent variables, the indirect effects of country of nationality through cultural acceptance were only significant under the individual consent condition for A_{ad}, purchase intention for oneself, and purchase intention for others, supporting H2a, H2c, and H2d. That is, while cultural acceptance did predict willingness to share the ad, the indirect effects of nationality were not significant under either consent condition, and the moderated mediation was also not significant, so H2b was not supported. Instead, sharing behavior might extend beyond acceptance and be more closely linked to individual-level factors, requiring a greater level of personal commitment to openly engage with others. Even though participants accept the practice itself, they may still perceive sharing or discussing it as taboo or socially sensitive. For instance, Choi (2020) found that individual personality traits, such as extraversion and openness to experience, positively influenced sharing intentions, while agreeableness, that is, more cooperative people, did not show a significant relationship with sharing intention. Thus, sharing intention might depend more heavily on individual disposition and personal motivation than on collective cultural acceptance.

These findings are explored in greater depth in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSIONS

Although the video ad featuring the late singer Elis Regina elicited numerous emotional responses from Brazilian audiences on social media, it also sparked concerns regarding who holds the right to grant permission to the use of generative AI to recreate delebs' digital replicas (Phillips, 2023; Conar, 2023). AI is changing the contemporary idea of advertising from analog and digital tools to synthetic advertising, a highly advanced form of manipulated advertising (Campbell et al. 2020; Li 2019; Qin and Jiang 2019, as cited in Campbell et al. 2022). Understanding societal responses to this practice and potential cultural differences in its acceptance is essential for protecting stakeholders, especially brands operating in multiple markets, and fostering a responsible advertising environment.

This cross-cultural study investigated whether audiences from two countries, the United States and Brazil, respond differently to two types of consent in a video ad featuring an AI-generated deleb. Both consent scenarios involve the decision and permission to use the deleb's image posthumously: one granted by the deleb herself before passing, and the other granted by the deleb's family. Specifically, the study examined how consent type moderates and cultural acceptance mediates the effects of nationality on A_{ad}, willingness to share the ad, purchase intention for oneself, and purchase intention for others. It addresses the underexplored influence of cultural contexts in the United States and Brazil on the use of AI-generated delebs in video ads. The goal was to understand how these two cultures respond to different consent types

and provide empirical evidence on audience perspectives, thereby informing best practices for brands, practitioners, and regulatory bodies.

Summary of Findings

To learn how the country of nationality (United States vs. Brazil), moderated by consent type (family vs. individual) through cultural acceptance, influences audience responses to an ad featuring an AI-generated deleb, Hayes' PROCESS Model 7 was conducted in SPSS.

For the individual consent condition, participants from the United States reported greater cultural acceptance than those from Brazil (H1a). However, for the family consent condition, there was no significant difference between participants from the United States and Brazil (H1b). Cultural acceptance significantly predicted greater A_{ad} (H2a), purchase intention for oneself (H2c), and purchase intention for others (H2d), but not willingness to share the ad (H2b). However, moderated mediation analyses revealed that the indirect effects of nationality on A_{ad}, purchase intention for oneself, and purchase intention for others via cultural acceptance were significant only for the individual consent condition, not for the family consent condition.

Overall, the results partially support the hypotheses, demonstrating that cultural acceptance mediates certain outcomes, particularly when consent is granted by the deleb herself rather than her family.

Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the cross-cultural advertising literature by examining how cultural perceptions shape responses to ads featuring AI-generated digital replicas of delebs. Generative AI is an increasingly accessible technology for advertising agencies (Campbell et al.,

2022), signaling its growing potential in marketing contexts. While prior research has compared the United States and Brazil, as well as the general use of delebs in advertising (Zhu et al., 2022; Boeuf et al., 2019), cross-cultural studies specifically involving these countries and the use of AI-generated images of delebs remain, to the best of our knowledge, unexplored. This study shows that cultural acceptance of using such AI-generated content, framed through different consent types, is not uniform across the United States and Brazil.

By drawing on the cultural differences between the United States and Brazil, this study reinforces the premise that the United States presents greater scores in HI when compared to Brazil, as previous research indicates (Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023). Specifically, in the current study's Background Descriptive Analysis, the mean score for the United States was well above the scale midpoint ($M = 5.77$, $SD = 0.88$). While the mean score for Brazil was also above the midpoint, it was comparatively lower ($M = 5.39$, $SD = 1.07$), $t(218.04) = 2.97$, $p = .003$. This statistically significant difference highlights that, although both countries exhibit high HI, participants from the United States align more strongly with HI values than those from Brazil. According to Singelis et al. (1995, as cited in Sivadas et al., 2008), HI societies value autonomy and emphasize equality in status and power; each individual is unique, but one individual is morally equal to others (Pérez-Nebra et al., 2024). Participants from the United States reported stronger agreement with statements such as "I rely on myself most of the time; I rarely rely on others." Furthermore, cultural norms tend to guide behaviors, even when members do not endorse those norms, and perceptions of having personal autonomy, for example, lead to better well-being in individualistic cultures (Hartanto et al. 2020, as cited in Schermer, 2023).

Accordingly, this difference may represent essential implications for how consent is perceived. One-sample t-tests revealed that, for the individual consent condition, participants

from the United States reported higher cultural acceptance ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 1.37$), which was not significantly different from the neutral midpoint of 4, $t(55) = 1.74$, $p = .086$. Participants from Brazil reported lower cultural acceptance ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.64$), which was significantly different from the neutral midpoint of 4, $t(48) = -2.21$, $p = .032$. Thus, whereas the United States presented a moderate level of acceptance, Brazil presented a significantly low level of acceptance of the consent.

This can be seen in the current cultural landscape of the United States, marked by what Ehring (2024) describes as hyper-individualism. This intensified form of individualism is fueled by online isolation, increasingly mobile lifestyles, material branding, and a consumerist culture. Social media has transformed the self into a product, and the emphasis on personal identity and ego has contributed to decreased empathy for others. As a result, relationships are increasingly being replaced by the need to project a perfect online self-image (Ehring, 2024). Additionally, Routledge (2024) notes that the United States is experiencing a declining birth rate that is not attributed to economic or policy factors, but rather potentially reflects shifting personal values. Americans are increasingly encouraged to pursue independent goals, such as education and career advancement, over interdependent goals like marriage and parenthood. Interestingly, while many Americans believe that marriage and having children are not essential for a fulfilling life, most still identify family as the most meaningful aspect of their lives (Routledge, 2024).

This supports that the audience from the United States is more culturally oriented to accept individual consent and feel it is more appropriate because it states a self-expression; the decision and permission to use generative AI to create a digital replica posthumously were made autonomously by the deleb herself. As expected, the audience from Brazil places relatively less value on that autonomy and may consider other aspects when evaluating the acceptance of such

practice. The insight into how these cultural orientations shape audiences' responses to consent types in ads featuring AI-generated delebs sheds light on the importance of respecting cultural values when using this approach.

Nonetheless, even if a country predominantly aligns with one of the four cultural dimensions, these dimensions collectively represent a composite of culture (Sivadas et al., 2008). A country may exhibit a high score in one individualistic dimension while simultaneously displaying scores in other dimensions that are comparable to those of more collectivist countries. Therefore, this study's results shed light on the importance of considering the coexistence and interplay of multiple cultural dimensions rather than focusing solely on a single predominant trait when conducting cross-cultural studies.

From that maximized perspective, this study suggests that while the United States maintains its individualistic orientation, it may still exhibit high levels of other, more collectivist dimensions and show sensitivity to some relational contexts. The United States might align more closely with Brazil in certain aspects of collectivism. Individuals from individualist cultures are primarily concerned with their own interests and the welfare of their immediate family (Hofstede, 1980, as cited in Beekun et al., 2003). Previous scholars have even argued that relationships with extended family are more closely tied to collectivist cultures, so individuals in these societies often stay connected to a broader family network; while the closeness and importance of immediate family, like parents and children, tend to be similar in both collectivist and individualist cultures (Shulruf et al., 2003). Considering this potential relational sensitiveness, participants from the United States may perceive the family consent in the experimental scenario as involving another individual's immediate family (e.g., parents, siblings, and children) decision, even though the situation does not pertain to participants' own immediate

families. Thus, participants from the United States could culturally accept the family consent type at a level comparable to that in Brazil.

The non-significant results observed in the present study may underscore the dynamic nature of Brazil's cultural orientation, particularly concerning the HVIC dimensions. Brazil was characterized as an HC society (Torres et al., 2015, as cited in Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023), emphasizing interdependence and sociability without the need for submission to authority (Germani et al., 2019). However, more recent studies suggest a shift towards VC (Torelli et al., 2015; Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023), where individuals prioritize group integrity and accept hierarchical authority structures (Germani et al., 2019). This apparent volatility in Brazil's cultural dimensions highlights the need for further research focusing on the Brazilian population as well as comparative studies between Brazil and the United States to elucidate underlying cultural patterns and singularities to enhance clarity.

For VC, unlike past theoretical discussions, participants from the United States (M = 5.19, SD = 1.36) and Brazil (M = 5.18, SD = 1.41), $t(229) = 0.10$, $p = .920$, did not show any meaningful difference. One-sample t-tests revealed that, for VC, scores for both countries were significantly higher than the neutral midpoint of 4. Participants from the United States (M = 5.19, SD = 1.36), $t(116) = 9.43$, $p < .001$ and Brazil (M = 5.18, SD = 1.41), $t(113) = 8.88$, $p < .001$ indicated a significantly higher level than the mid-point of 4 of VC. Nonetheless, for both countries, cultural acceptance for the family consent condition was slightly below the midpoint of 4 and not statistically significant. Results for participants from the United States (M = 3.61, SD = 1.54), $t(60) = -1.98$, $p = .052$ and Brazil (M = 3.88, SD = 1.96), $t(64) = -.50$, $p = .615$ suggest a moderate level of acceptance of family consent. Even with high VC scores, results suggest that in contexts involving culture, AI, and ethical decision-making, Brazilians may not

uniformly accept family authority, as previously expected. These nuanced outcomes contribute to theoretical frameworks in cross-cultural advertising by highlighting that the influence of cultural values is dynamic and context-dependent rather than absolute.

Findings extend the utility of the Multidimensional Ethics Scale (MES) (Reidenbach et al., 1990), particularly the relativism dimension measuring cultural acceptance, in the context of cross-cultural research. The dimension played an essential role in offering a more significant explanation for the effects of participants' country of nationality and consent type on the outcome variables. Specifically, cultural acceptance captured the extent to which participants perceived the consent types as traditionally and culturally acceptable. By using the cultural acceptance dimension, this study shows that acceptance of consent type in ads featuring AI-generated delebs is not merely a function of universal principles, but is significantly shaped by deep cultural perspectives. Thus, this study reinforces the relativism framework, which posits that culture significantly influences individuals' acceptance of scenarios by shaping their judgments of right and wrong (Brandt, 1984; Reidenbach et al., 1990). Furthermore, individuals use their existing beliefs and values in the 'yielding' process of ad messages (Smith et al. 2008, as cited in Lee et al., 2013).

Considering the significant results, this study confirms that responses to consent types in ads featuring AI-generated delebs are indeed culturally influenced; specifically, mediated by individuals' cultural acceptance. In other words, cultural acceptance is a meaningful factor for understanding how these consent types are considered across countries. Moreover, the more participants culturally accepted the consent, the more favorable their responses were toward the ad, showing that the perceived cultural fit influenced their receptivity and message effectiveness. The audience's cultural background helps explain those acceptance levels, and it is essential to

consider cultural acceptance when it comes to deciding about consent types in the AI-generated delebs context, especially given the sensitive nature of posthumous representation and the emotional resonance delebs often evoke in the public (D'Rozario et al., 2020). Thus, these insights also contribute to the literature on cultural ethics and regulations in the context of consent types in digital media, AI technology, and digital replicas of delebs.

Finally, the moderated mediation framework employed in this study suggests that consent type and cultural acceptance might also be key factors preceding A_{ad} and leading to behavioral intentions of purchasing for oneself and others, but not for sharing the ad. The construct of cultural acceptance helps understand consumer cognitive processing, while the outcome variables measure the effectiveness of the ad. When individuals perceive a message as consistent with themselves, they are more likely to accept it than be skeptical (Sen et al., 2001; Hemingway, 2005; Youn et al., 2008; Lee et al., 2010, as cited in Lee et al., 2013). Furthermore, socially responsible communications allow consumers to emotionally align with companies, which, in turn, increases the likelihood that they will purchase from those companies (Sen et al., 2001, as cited in Lee et al., 2013). Accordingly, this study shows that when the audience feels culturally aligned with the consent type, they likely feel more open to and involved with the ad, resulting in greater A_{ad} and intention to purchase from the brand.

On the other hand, although social and individual factors can influence sharing intentions, this outcome was non-significant in the present study. Social factors include the closeness of interpersonal relationships and the consumer's relationship with the brand, while individual factors refer to personal motives, such as pleasure, affection, self-enhancement, extraversion, and openness to experience, which may vary according to personality traits (Chu & Kim, 2018; Chiu et al., 2007; Hayes & King, 2014; Shan & King, 2015; Phelps et al., 2004; Taylor et al., 2012, as

cited in Choi, 2020). This study suggests that, in the context of consent for using an AI-generated image of a deleb in a video ad, cultural acceptance, associated with social factors, may wield less influence on sharing intention than individual-level drivers. In other words, such content may not evoke a sufficient sense of personal comfort or interest to motivate individuals to share it with others.

As Hudak (2014) points out, "reviving" a deleb can be controversial. This type of content blurs the line between reality and fiction, potentially misleading vulnerable audiences such as children, teenagers, and seniors (Philips, 2023). As a result, while individuals may accept the practice themselves and even be interested in purchasing from the brand, they may still perceive the use of AI to generate a deleb's digital replica as a complex or sensitive issue. It may feel like a taboo to openly share or discuss with others, thereby adding a layer of perceived social risk. People share content to communicate their identity (Berger et al., 2012), which may lead them to avoid publicly sharing certain types of content to avoid, for example, "being seen as either conformist or weird" (Berger et al., 2007). In this context, sharing the ad may represent a further step beyond cultural acceptance, requiring a higher level of social comfort or commitment. This feeling of uncertainty or apprehension about how others will react to the video ad can make people less inclined to share the ad, even if they personally approve of it.

Practical Implications

The practice of using deleb in advertising is not a novelty. As mentioned in a previous chapter, in 1997, the late dancer Fred Astaire already appeared in a Dirt Devil ad using CGI technology (Falls, 2021). However, the growing accessibility to the emerging generative AI (Campbell et al., 2022) brings another layer to it, with brand new digitally created images as

delebs. This study sheds light on this phenomenon and draws attention to aspects that not only brands and communications practitioners should note, but also regulatory bodies, celebrities, and deleb's families. Specifically, this study focuses on and provides insights to the markets of the United States and Brazil, two significant players in the advertising field (Navarro, 2024) that are already engaging with delebs in advertising.

This study highlights the need for regulatory bodies in both countries to establish clearer and more detailed legislation to guide brands, communicators, celebrities, and delebs' families in navigating this emerging practice. The current legal frameworks are not uniform, have loopholes, and lack specific regulations on the use of AI to generate new images of delebs, and can potentially cause confusion. This scenario makes the practice possible but fraught with potential ethical and legal risks. In light of these gaps, regulatory bodies have the opportunity to address the issue, providing clear guidance to protect all stakeholders. Furthermore, this study urges celebrities to take proactive legal steps in preparing for the future, including formal declarations on whether their likeness may be used posthumously in AI-generated content. The precautionary approach should also extend to delebs' families. Clear legislation and educated parties might prevent image abuse and avoid the spread of misleading content.

Operating in the absence of clear legal regulations can be risky for brands. Besides legal support and guidance, they need proper planning; otherwise, this practice can backfire. Perceived unethical ads, for example, may lead to negative responses from the audience (Treise et al., 1994, as cited in Snipes et al., 1999). Therefore, besides considering legal frameworks, brands and practitioners should remain attuned to their audiences, particularly those operating across both markets. This study shows that brands and practitioners should be cautious about relying too heavily on the HVIC framework when determining which type of consent to apply in

AI-generated deleb advertising targeting audiences from the United States and Brazil. Although these cultural dimensions are well-established, they may not accurately predict whether consumers in these countries prefer individual over family consent. While the HVIC framework offers a valuable and organized structure for understanding cultural values, it may have limitations in capturing the evolving cultural contexts. For example, scholars have noted concerns about its reliability (Oyserman, 2006; Li & Aksoy, 2007, as cited in Sharma, 2010) and found that certain items load more strongly onto different constructs than proposed initially (Soh & Leong, 2002, as cited in Germani, 2019; Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023). These complexities were also reflected in the present study. While HI aligned with expectations, VC did not show significant differences between groups. This lack of difference may help explain why the family consent condition did not yield a significant effect, despite theoretical assumptions grounded in collectivist values. Nonetheless, cultural acceptance emerged as a significant mediator, showing that complex backgrounds, shaped by the norms, traditions, and regulations of individuals within that culture, influence how they perceive a stimulus and affect subsequent ad response outcomes. Rather than replacing the HVIC framework, cultural acceptance offered an additional layer that accounted for variations across diverse audiences. It was found that audiences from the United States tend to be more accepting of individual consent, and higher cultural acceptance leads to more favorable A_{ad} and purchase intention.

By considering these factors, brands and communication professionals can better tailor their messaging to meet the expectations of their target audiences, reducing the risk of an ad resonating in one country but backfiring in another. Brands operating across multiple markets, in particular, should account for cultural differences when planning their strategies. This approach

might not only help prevent missteps but also enhance audience engagement, strengthen brand-consumer connections, and cultivate positive relationships.

Limitations and Future Research

Despite efforts to account for relevant factors, this research has limitations. One notable challenge was the unexpected patterns observed in HVIC scores. Cultural shifts that both the United States and Brazil have been experiencing were not primarily accounted for. These findings added some challenge to the initial assumption that these countries represent opposing cultural orientations.

Besides the HVIC scale, future research could benefit from incorporating other instruments to measure cultural values. For example, the Rokeach Value Survey (RVS) (1973, as cited in Lenartowicz et al., 1999) is based on the theory of the universal structure of human values. In this model, participants are presented with two lists of 18 values each and are asked to rank them according to their importance in their own lives. Later, the Schwartz Value Survey (SVS) was developed as an alternative framework to Hofstede's dichotomy of values (Schwartz, 1994, as cited in Gouveia et al., 2000) and also built upon the RVS (Lenartowicz et al., 1999). The SVS identifies four higher-order values: (1) Self-Transcendence, (2) Conservation, (3) Self-Enhancement, and (4) Openness to Change, which are organized in a circular structure reflecting motivational compatibilities and conflicts (Schwartz, 2021). Finally, Hui developed the Individualism-Collectivism (INDCOL) scale (1998, as cited in Khoury, 2006). It proposes that individuals tend to behave more collectivistically when interacting with those who are emotionally or socially closer to them. Relevant relational groups were consolidated into (1)

Colleagues and friends, (2) Parents, (3) Kin and neighbors, (4) Parents and spouse, and (5) Neighbors (Khoury, 2006).

Scholars suggest that individuals' values emerge through interactions with others and that cultural patterns are shaped through their socialization (Markus et al., 1996; Torres et al., 2015, as cited in Pérez‐Nebra et al., 2023), though they do not specify whether or how specific timing of interactions across the lifespan influences the formation of such cultural patterns. In line with this perspective, the present study focused on cultural aspects shaped through socialization and ongoing exposure, and therefore controlled for participants' nationality and current country of residence. On the other hand, Reidenbach et al. (1990) suggest that early-life experiences also play a significant role in shaping an individual's normative beliefs. This raises the matter of whether not controlling for country of birth or residence in early childhood, especially with a rising international migration to the United States (United States Census Bureau, 2024), is an indicator of early cultural exposure. As Mesoudi (2018) suggests, individuals who migrate after the age of 14 typically do not fully acculturate to the host country's values, with significant cultural shifts more commonly seen in the second generation. For better experimental control and cleaner results, future studies could screen for participants who migrated before that age. Additionally, a study comparing stricter control with loose control, where the latter considers the country with which the participant identifies themselves, could help clarify potential differences in cultural alignment.

Another limitation of this study concerns the limited availability of Brazilian participants on the research platform Prolific, especially when compared to the larger pool of participants from the United States. This disparity may have restricted the diversity of the Brazilian sample. Future research should address this issue by considering alternative recruitment strategies, such

as partnering with Brazilian universities or utilizing other research platforms more known in Brazil, to obtain a more representative sample.

Although the credibility of the video advertisement was tested and revealed no significant differences between participants from the United States and Brazil, the use of a non-AI-generated stimulus remains a notable limitation. Future studies should consider employing an actual AI-generated video to enhance validity and more realistic findings. Furthermore, the model featured in the video ad was neither famous nor a true deleb to control participants' prior familiarity with her. Future research could use a real deleb, with cultural recognition or emotional resonance, to examine how such familiarity influences responses.

The brand used in this study, Levi's, is well-known in both the United States and Brazil, it derives from the United States, potentially introducing a bias. Participants from the United States ($M = 6.04$, $SD = 1.21$) reported higher familiarity with Levi's compared to participants from Brazil ($M = 5.01$, $SD = 1.95$), $t(187.80) = 4.81$, $p < .001$. Brand familiarity was tested as a covariate and had no significant impact on the results; however, employing a fictitious brand unfamiliar to participants from both countries could allow for a more equitable cross-cultural comparison.

The product category used in this study was chosen based on existing research reflecting the most popular type of online purchases in both countries (Bashir, 2024). Additionally, this study did not measure participants' income, which may directly influence their responses and act as a confounding factor in the outcomes of purchase intention. Instead of solely reflecting participants' interest in the brand and its products, purchase intention might also reflect their financial ability to afford them. Future studies could explore different product categories and

assess participants' income to account for individual variances, further testing the robustness of the findings.

The present study found that individual consent, granted by the deleb herself, in ads featuring AI-generated delebs elicits differing levels of cultural acceptance in the United States and Brazil. Future research could broaden this investigation by including other countries and cultural contexts. That is, it could expand the understanding of how consent type and cultural acceptance function as moderating or mediating variables in other countries, particularly in cultures that differ across multiple HVIC dimensions. This approach may clarify even more whether diverse cultural orientations influence responses to both types of consent, granted by the family or the individual, involving AI-generated delebs.

Moreover, given the public's emotional attachment to delebs (D'Rozario et al., 2020) and the hyper-realistic nature of generative AI content (Remya Revi et al., 2021), future studies could benefit from incorporating emotional engagement and perceived creepiness as additional variables. The use of physiological measures may also provide more nuanced insights into participants' responses. Similarly, considering the novelty and growing accessibility of AI technologies (Campbell et al., 2022), perceived authenticity could offer further explanatory power in understanding public acceptance of this practice. These further adaptations may contribute to a deeper understanding of the intersection between digital media, AI technologies, and cultural values, particularly regarding posthumous representation and cultural acceptance across diverse cultural settings.

Conclusions

Discussions surrounding AI-generated content, such as political concerns in the United States (Kramer, 2024) and especially the video ad featuring the late singer Elis Regina in Brazil (Phillips, 2023), highlight the importance of not only establishing clear legal guidelines about it but also considering the cultural factors that shape audience acceptance of such practices. This study contributes to these discussions by offering empirical insights, specifically into how audiences from different cultural contexts respond to ads featuring AI-generated delebs.

This study's findings contribute to the literature on cross-cultural advertising by highlighting how culture mediates audiences' responses, as well as cultural ethics in the context of consent types in digital media, AI technology, and digital replicas of delebs. They serve as a practical resource and a cautionary note for brands and practitioners engaging or aiming to engage with posthumous AI-generated digital replicas. Additionally, it may assist regulatory bodies concerned with consumers, celebs, and delebs' integrity, as well as celebs themselves and delebs' families, as they navigate this evolving practice with strategic considerations.

Looking into the future, it is essential to maintain an open dialogue among stakeholders to better understand and address the interplay between cultural orientations and emerging technologies. As AI continues to evolve more rapidly than regulations and influence cultures globally, society faces the challenge of remaining mindful of both the legal and ethical implications in order to establish best practices. While technological innovation enables new and creative approaches to advertising, societies inherently possess a sense of what is acceptable when it comes to preserving their memories. Thus, finding a balance between what can be done and what should be done is crucial. The responsibility falls on brands, practitioners, and authorities to ensure that this balance is maintained.

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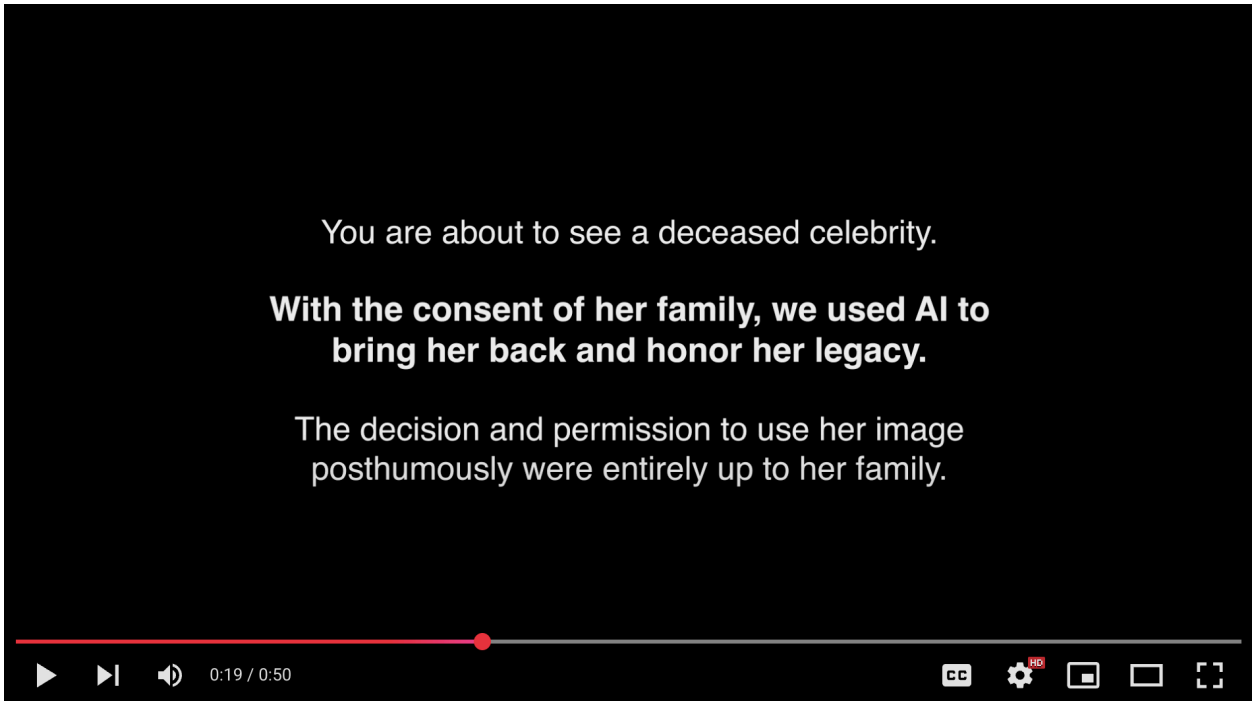
APPENDICES

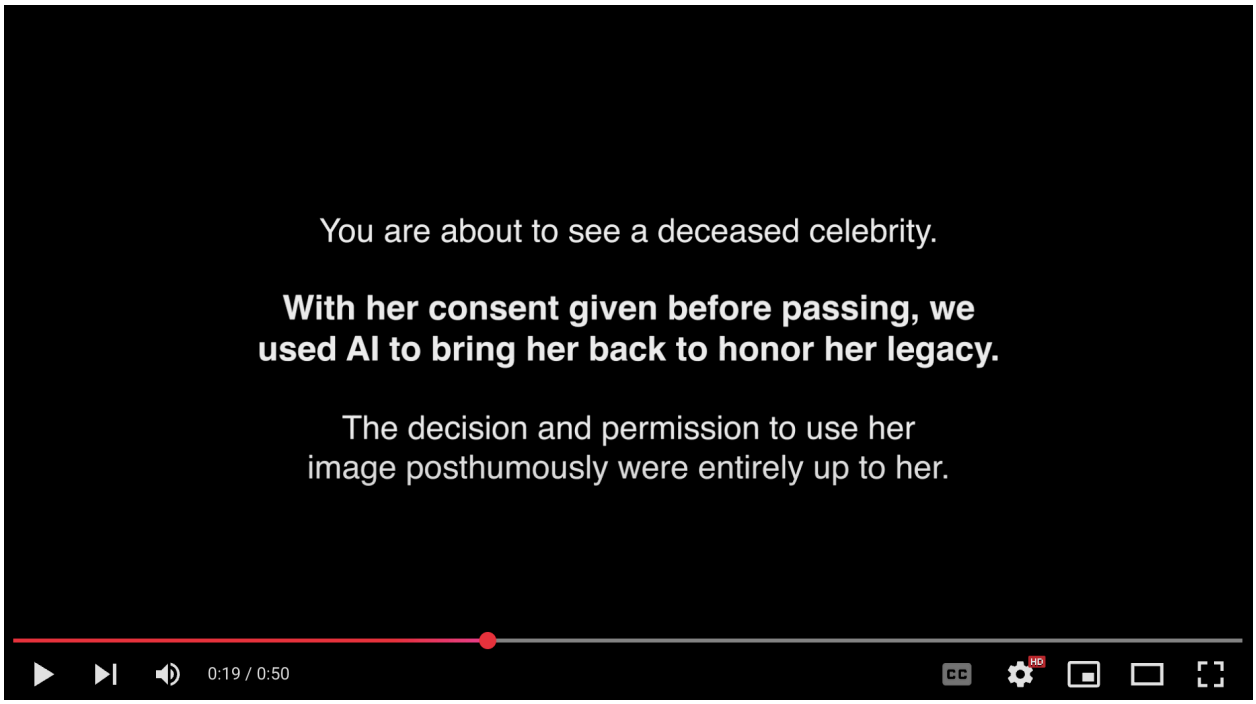
Appendix A: Stimuli

Consent Types

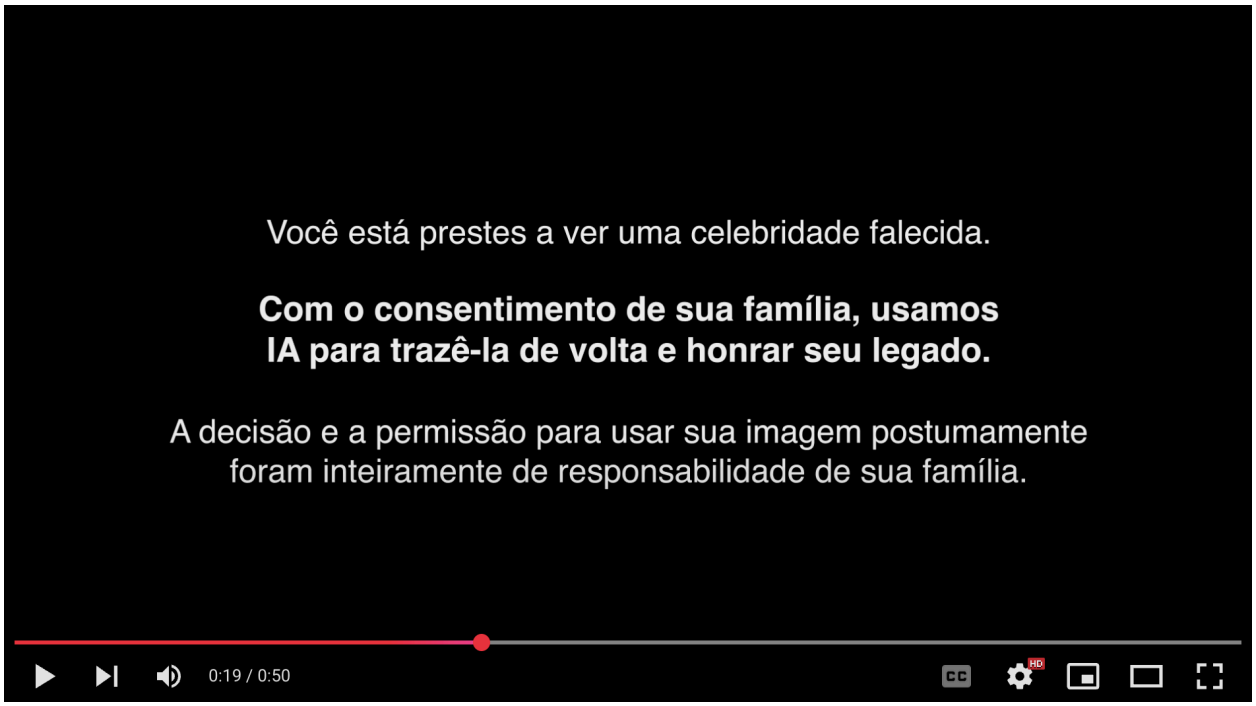
a) United States + Family Consent



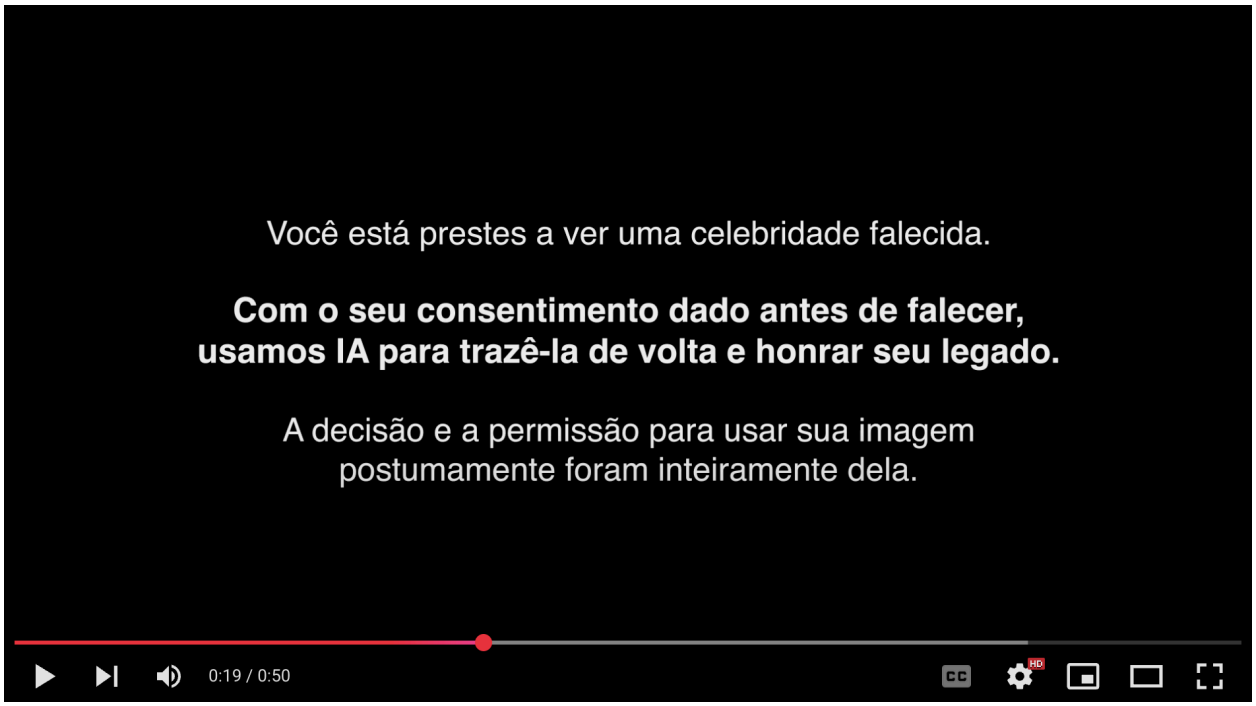
b) United States + Individual Consent



c) Brazil + Family Consent

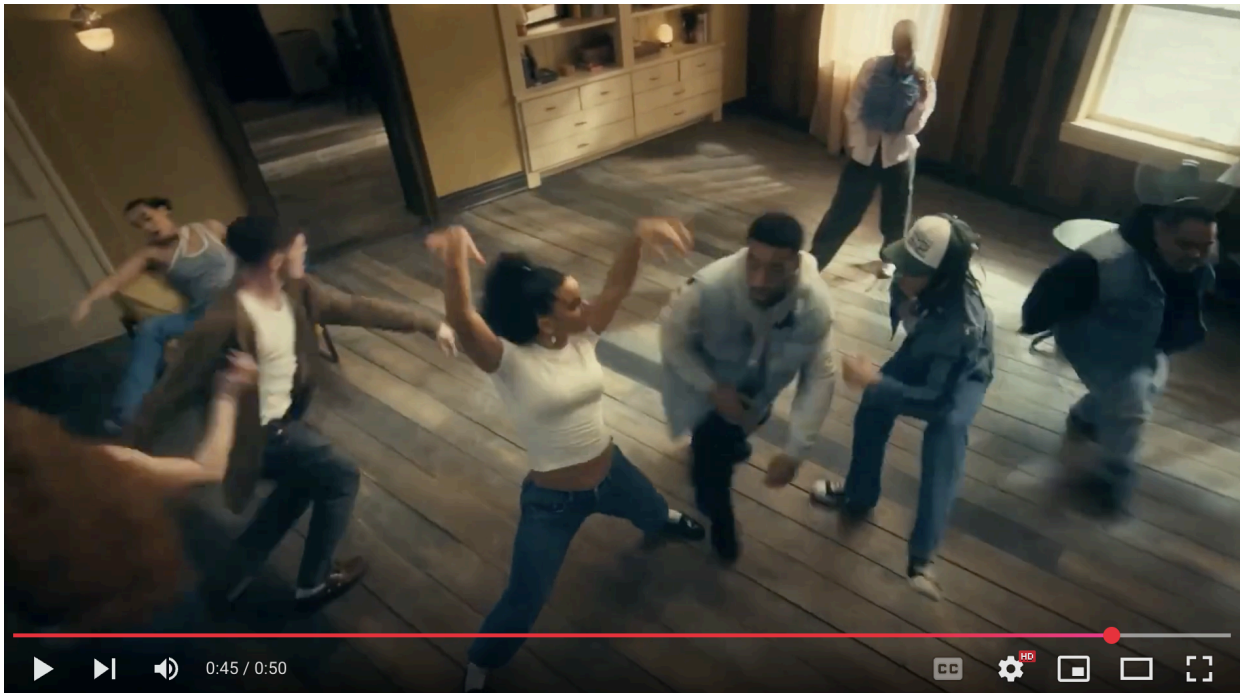


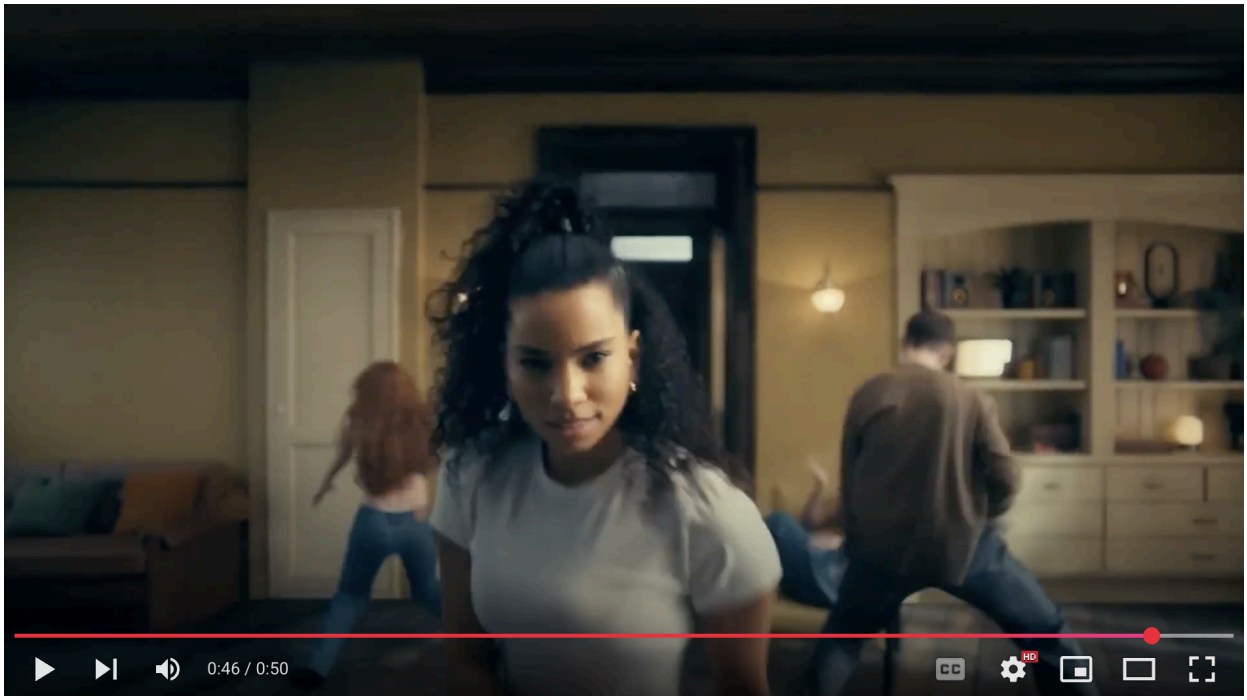
d) Brazil + Individual Consent



Video Ad (similar to all conditions)


0:32 / 0:50


0:45 / 0:50


0:46 / 0:50


LIVE IN LEVI'S®
0:49 / 0:50

Appendix B: Measures' items

Measure	Items	Reference
Perceived Imagination Level	Vivid Detailed Dim	
Cultural Acceptance	Traditionally acceptable - Traditionally unacceptable Culturally acceptable - Culturally unacceptable	Reidenbach et al., 1990
A_{ad}	Bad - Good Unpleasant - Pleasant Unfavorable - Favorable	MacKenzie et al. (1989)
Willingness to Share the Ad	You will share it with others through social media. You will show it to others in person. You will talk about it with others.	Choi (2020)
Purchase Intention	Unlikely - Likely Impossible - Possible Improbable - Probable	Yi (1990, as cited in Lafferty et al., 1999)
HVIC	**HI** I'd rather depend on myself than others. I rely on myself most of the time; I rarely rely on others. I often do "my own thing." My personal identity, independent of others, is very important to me. **VI** It is important that I do my job better than others. Winning is everything. Competition is the law of nature. When another person does better than I do, I get tense and aroused. **HC** If a coworker gets a prize, I would feel proud. The well-being of my coworkers is important to me. To me, pleasure is spending time with others. I feel good when I cooperate with others. It is important to me that I respect the decisions made by my groups.*	Triandis & Gelfand (1998, as cited in Pérez-Nebra et al., 2023)

VC

Parents and children must stay together as much as possible.

It is my duty to take care of my family, even when I have to sacrifice what I want.

Family members should stick together, no matter what sacrifices are required.

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* Originally in VC.