COLLECTIVE SELF-ESTEEM AND CULTURAL ORIENTATION

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Abstract

The present study explored the relationship between collective self-esteem and cultural orientation. It was hypothesized that one's collective self-esteem or one's judgment of being a member of one's ethnic group would predict their cultural orientation. Collective self-esteem or one's judgment of one being a member of one's ethnic group had 4 dimensions: private, public, membership and importance; cultural orientation also had 4 dimensions: horizontal individualism, horizontal collectivism, vertical individualism, and vertical collectivism. One-hundred and fifty-nine students participated in the present study. Public collective self-esteem positively predicted horizontal individualism (β = .217) and vertical individualism (β = .224); private collective self-esteem positively predicted vertical collectivism, (β = .273) and negatively predicted vertical individualism (β = -.234). Cultural factors, particular to the Indonesian context, need to be taken into account in regard to interpreting the collected data.

Keywords: collective self-esteem, horizontal and vertical individualism, horizontal and vertical collectivism

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi hubungan antara harga diri kolektif dan orientasi budaya. Terdapat hipotesis bahwa harga diri kolektif atau penilaian seseorang menjadi anggota kelompok etnis akan memprediksi orientasi budaya mereka. Harga diri kolektif atau penilaian seseorang menjadi anggota kelompok etnis tertentu memiliki 4 dimensi: pribadi, publik, keanggotaan, dan kepentingan; orientasi budaya juga memiliki 4 dimensi: individualisme horisontal, kolektivisme horisontal, individualism vertikal, dan kolektivisme vertikal. Seratus lima puluh sembilan siswa berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini. Harga diri kolektif publik

secara positif dapat memprediksi individualisme horisontal (β = 0,217) dan individualisme vertikal (β = 0,224); harga diri kolektif pribadi secara positif dapat memprediksi kolektivisme vertikal, (β = 0,273) dan secara negatif dapat memprediksi individualisme vertikal (β = -.234). Faktor budaya, khususnya konteks Indonesia, perlu dipertimbangkan dalam menginterpretasikan data-data yang ada.

Kata kunci: harga diri kolektif, individualisme horizontal dan vertikal, kolektivisme horisontal dan vertikal

Social identity theory defines the collective self as an aspect of one's self-concept which rooted on the knowledge, value, and emotional weigh that one attached to one's membership to a particular group (Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In general, collective identity implies having shared or common characteristics (Deaux, 1993). These shared characteristics might be determined by others, such as based on race or ethnicity, or chosen by oneself such as religion.As part of one's self-concept, it is also related with one's self-esteem or to be more accurate one's collective self-esteem. Self-esteem can be defined as the global feelings and beliefs one has about oneself as a person (Burnett, 1995), and it is associated with judgments of one's self-worth, which involves evaluation of oneself, favorable or unfavorable (Bandura, 1997). One' self-esteem has been found to relate to academic achievement (Tice & Gailliot, 2006) and other positive qualities in regard to academic success (DuBois & Flay, 2004; Koch, 2006). One's favorable judgment on his/her being a part of his/her collective group has been found to have a beneficial quality as high level of collective self-esteem and it is related to a better mental health (Crocker, Luhtanen, Blaine, & Broadnax, 1994).

Individuals in a multi-ethnic society might perceive themselves as part of their respective ethnic groups and thus their judgment of their membership would be considered as their collective self-esteem. As one is always a part of one's culture, so that

one's collective self-esteem would affect one's cultural orientation. Triandis & Gelfand (1997) proposed that instead of the dichotomy of individualistic and collectivistic culture, there are horizontal and vertical orientation for both individualism and collectivism. Horizontal refers to how people with this orientation lean toward egalitarian values, and vertical refers to how people with this type of orientation lean toward submission to authoritative figures. In a patriarchal society as Indonesia, where the role of men and women are clearly defined and orderly manners are highly respected, people who have high level or very favorable judgment on their collective self-esteem would be more likely to have a high vertical orientation rather than a horizontal orientation. Their collective self-esteem then would predict their cultural orientation.

Collective Self-Esteem

One's collective self-esteem is an important part of one's self-concept which would make people identify themselves in terms of their group memberships (Tajfel, 1982). Collective self-esteem has been found to beneficial to one's self-esteem (Aberson & Howanski, 2002). Another study (Woods, Zuniga, & David, 2011) with Native Alaskan participants found that individuals who were culturally proud and connected, which translated into high collective self-esteem, had less psychological distress and depression. It seems that one's collective self-esteem relates to one's well-adjustment, or psychological well-being (Crocker et al., 1994). Collective self-esteem has also been found to increase one's ingroup bias which is a part of self-enhancement (Aberson & Howanski, 2002).

Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) proposed that one's collective identity is a relatively stable trait, which can be measured by one's private evaluation of one's own group (private), by how one perceive others evaluate one's group (public), and by how one perceives one's role in one's group (membership), and also how one's self-concept is

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influenced by one's membership role (importance). Previous study has shown that individuals who perceived that their group was positively viewed by others would be more likely to favor their own group than others, in other word, to have a greater in-group bias (DeCremer, 2001). Individuals who scored high on their private collective self-esteem were also found to show a greater in-group bias (Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990).

Horizontal and Vertical Cultural Orientation

In general, there are two known cultural dimensions: individualism and collectivism (Hofstede, 1980). It is commonly known that in an individualistic culture, one puts one own needs and goals before the group, whereas in a collectivistic culture one puts the needs and goals of their group before one's own. Individualism is usually associated with Western people, whereas collectivism is associated with Eastern people.

Triandis and Gelfand (1998) proposed that instead of having only individualism and collectivism, there are added dimensions to both cultures, namely horizontal and vertical orientation. People with a horizontal cultural orientation values equality whereas people with a vertical orientation values hierarchy. According Triandis & Gelfand (1998), there are vertical individualism and vertical collectivism, also horizontal individualism and horizontal collectivism. A previous study by Oishi, Schimmack, Diener, & Suh, 1998 shows that people with a vertical individualism orientation had been known to value achievement and power but not self-direction, whereas people with a horizontal individualism orientation valued self-direction but not achievement and power. The study shows that there are distinctive differences within individualistic culture due to the vertical and horizontal orientation. That there are unique qualities that differentiated a vertical orientation with a horizontal orientation in any specific culture is also supported by other studies. One study shows that people with a vertical collectivism

orientation chose a differential reward system based on hierarchy whereas people with a horizontal collectivism orientation leaned toward an egalitarian reward system based on interpersonal dependence within one's group, which also included shared responsibility (Chen, Meindl, & Hunt, 1997).

Indonesia, as one of the South-East Asian countries, has a collectivistic culture with mostly a patriarchal perspective. In a predominantly Javanese culture, deference to people who have a higher social and economy statusand also to the elderly is highly valued. Social relationship with interdependence between each other is encouraged. Such interdependence within one's group is fostered from the family unit, where it is common for adults to stay with their parents before marriage, no matter what their age is. Some will also stay to live with their parents after marriage, and it is common to see three or four generations living under the same roof with their extended family such as aunts and uncles.Indonesians would be more likely to have a

vertical orientation due to the deference value, along with collectivism which supports interdependence and good social relationships. Also, as part of one's social identity, Indonesians' collective self-esteem could be likely to predict their orientation. It seems that Indonesians' private and public collective self-esteem would predict their deference to their in-group.

METHOD
Participants

A total of one-hundred and fifty-nine students from two private universities in Jakarta participated for the present study. 78.6% were females and 21.4% were males. One-hundred and fifty-three students identified their ethnicity: 118 were Native Indonesians, 33 were Chinese Indonesians, and two students identified themselves as from other ethnic background.

Instruments

Participants' collective self-esteem were measured with the Collective Self-Esteem Scale (CSES; Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992) which

had four dimensions: membership, private, public and identity. The reliability coefficient for each dimensions respectively were .579, .645, .603, and .663. Horizontal and vertical orientation measurement (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998) originally had four dimensions: horizontal individualism ($\alpha = .652$), vertical individualism ($\alpha = .636$), horizontal collectivism ($\alpha = .428$), and vertical collectivism ($\alpha = .581$). As the reliability coefficient for horizontal collectivism in the present study was quite unacceptable, the result for this particular dimension need to be considered cautiously in the analysis.

Analysis

The data in the present study were analyzed with a multiple regression model which had the collective self-esteem dimensions (membership, private, public, and identity) as the independent variables, and the horizontal-vertical dimensions (horizontal and vertical individualism, vertical collectivism) as the dependent variables, and $p < .01$.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Out of the four dimensions of collective self-esteem, only two dimensions predicted the dependent variables. Membership and identity self-esteem did not predict any of horizontal nor vertical dimensions. Public collective self-esteem positively predicted horizontal individualism ($\beta = .217$). Students who had positive judgment on how their ethnic group was perceived by others were more likely to have equality values. Public collective self-esteem also positively predicted vertical individualism ($\beta = .224$). Students who perceived that others perceive their ethnic group positively were also more likely to think that status and distinction are important. Private collective self-esteem negatively predicted vertical individualism ($\beta = -.234$), and positively predicted vertical collectivism ($\beta = .273$). Students who had positive feelings of their own ethnic group were less likely to perceive that status and distinction are important, and more likely to consider interdependency as important.

The present study proposed that one's collective self-esteem would predict one's cultural orientation. Some of the results support the present study's hypothesis. Two dimensions from collective self-esteem, namely public and private collective self-esteem were indeed a good predictor for cultural orientation. The present study also assumed that in a society which favored orderly deference, these dimensions would be more likely to predict vertical orientation. This assumption was supported by the results, in which out of four significant results, two were for vertical individualism, one for vertical collectivism, and one for horizontal individualism. This result supported previous study's finding by DeCremer (2001) in which public collective self-esteem has been found to correlate positively to in-group bias, where individuals favor their own group above other groups. As the participants of the present study were part of the Indonesian culture, the result of how public and private collective self-esteem predicted vertical orientation might be due to

the nature of the Indonesian society which value deference to the orderly. Although due to the nature of the collective self-esteem measurement, where it was a continuous instead of a dichotomy, it is not surprising to find that there are individual tendencies toward horizontal individualism orientation.

It is intriguing to find that students who perceived that their own ethnic group was viewed favorably by others would be more likely to have horizontal and vertical individualism. It seems that the individualism factor is an important key piece in this finding. This would support previous study where one's self-esteem was found to be positively related to in-group bias (Aberson, Healy, & Romero, 2000; Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990). When one has greater value on individualism than collectivism then their perceiving how well their ethnic group is perceived by others would relate to them as an individual. For further reference, adding self-esteem as a mediating factor between collective self-esteem and cultural

orientation might give a deeper understanding on the matter.

Private collective self-esteem refers to one's personal evaluations of one's in-group. In a collectivistic and patriarchal society like Indonesia which values social deference, it is not unexpected to see that participants' favorable judgment of their in-group would predict vertical collectivism orientation which favors deference, complying with authorities, and interconnectedness and interdependency, instead of vertical individualism which favors improving one's individual status through power, achievement and others. This could also relate to a culture of "face" which is prevalent among Asian societies, not to lose face (in social situations) is an important aspect in most Asian countries, which might explain why students who considered their group to be positively judged by others might need to confirm this by not changing the status quo, which mean to stay compliance to enhance the cohesion and status of their group. Horizontal collectivism was not predicted by any dimension of

collective self-esteem. As the results of the study show, it could be due to the prevalent orderly compliance in the Indonesian society which is known as a collectivistic culture with heavily religious values which emphasize on patriarchal values. Also, to be taken into consideration is that horizontal collectivism dimension's reliability was quite low. As such, it would be best for further study to improve the dimension measurement to increase its reliability.

CONCLUSION

The present study shows that collective self-esteem could indeed predict cultural orientation. As one is influenced by one's culture, the findings show that within the Indonesian culture, vertical orientation is important. As one has positive feelings of their own ethnic group, it would increase the probability of wanting to be interdependence and connected by complying with the authorities (in-group). When individuals perceive that their ethnic group is well favored by others, this could lead to

increased self-esteem, which might explain why they would be more likely to lean toward individualism instead of collectivism, both in horizontal and vertical orientation. The present study shows that dimensions of collective self-esteem predicted cultural orientation in a different way, and that there might be other factors such as (personal)self-esteem that need to be taken into consideration as it could be a mediating factor between the two variables.Further study related to collective self-esteem within the Indonesian culture could look into such factors and might well considering the diversity of sub-cultures within the Indonesian culture.

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