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Differences in Narratives of Discrimination and National Identity Among Chinese and Non-Chinese Adolescent in Jakarta

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ABSTRACT

The experience of Chinese indonesian discrimination often occurs because of doubts about their nationalism. This research aims to highlight this. The study was conducted in Jakarta involving 160 adolescent participants aged between 17-19 years. We collected our data through questionnaire consists of a national identity variable consisting of four dimensions, namely fundamental, instrumental, natural, actualization. Discrimination narrative variables consist of master narrative, and counter narrative. The selection of those subjects was done by means of convenience sampling technique. The result of the study found that the master narrative and counter narrative to national identity were not correlated in the Chinese group. In the non-Chinese group, only counter narrative correlated with national identity ($p = 0.010 < p = 0.05$), with a correlation coefficient of 0.313. National identity between Chinese and non-Chinese groups there is no significant difference. Meanwhile, master narrative and counter narrative have significant differences between Chinese and non-Chinese groups. The mean master narrative value in the Chinese group (98.90) was higher than the non-Chinese group (54.30). On the other hand, the mean counter narrative value in the Chinese group (78.18) was lower than the non-Chinese group (90.40). This means that discrimination is still felt in the Chinese group, while in the non-Chinese group it is not felt.

Keywords: *National identity, adolescent Chinese Indonesian, narrative discrimination*

1. INTRODUCTION

Formal Every individual in a society owns a culture which became his or her identity. The interaction between individuals will be a meeting between different cultures. This situation also occurred when Chinese Indonesians interact with other ethnicities.

Chinese Indonesians have a unique environment in which no other ethnicities have experienced [1]. The social environment here refers to complicated social, politics, and historical experience that already happed for generations. The Dutch colonial authority ruled Indonesia using *devide at impera* system which resulted in tripartite racial system. Based on this system, the Europeans hold the highest position in the society in which Chinese Indonesians and locals (or *pribumi*) lived in the lower hierarchy. Chinese Indonesians were positioned as a middleman and tax collector between the Europeans and the *pribumi*. This condition put ethnic minority in a fragile position [1].

Chinese Indonesian is one of the minorities in Indonesia who often experiences discrimination [2]. According to [3], discrimination against Chinese Indonesian is an uneven treatment based on ethnicity. This treatment includes personal, social, and citizenship issues. Chinese Indonesians keeps receiving this discriminative treatment from time to time [4].

During the New Order regime (1966-1998), Chinese Indonesians were categorised outside the list of national ethnicities and considered as non-indigenous (non-*pribumi*). As a result, Chinese Indonesians received different legal treatment compared to other ethnicities that considered as *pribumi* or indigenous [5].

Some examples of those discriminations were banning of the use of Chinese name during New Order era, and business activities limitation due to Government Rule No. 1959/10. Besides that, Chinese Indonesians experience administrative discrimination, such as identity card, birth certificate, and marriage certificate [6]. Chinese Indonesian also mostly felt reluctance to study in public universities due to fear of prejudice and discrimination. In addition, Chinese Indonesians often became targets of criminal activity [6]. The peak of those discriminations was the May 1998 riot as noted by [7].

The relation between individuals with different identity might produce stereotyping perception. The interaction between Chinese Indonesians and non-Chinese Indonesians often resulted in minorities stereotyping and

triggering negative discrimination. However, stereotyping can produce positive discrimination at the same time [8]. Chinese Indonesians live in a complex situation which can be seen from the historical development of Indonesian society. Chinese Indonesian is perceived different compared to other Indonesian ethnicities.

Giddens defined identity as differentiating elements of individual characteristics, in which the differences have meanings for the individual. The identity sources include gender, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnic, or social class [9]. Giddens also noted: self-development and defining personal identity were achieved when an individual formulating his or her uniqueness with the surrounding environment. Besides self-identity, there is also cultural identity which is consisted of dialect, living place, family name, politics, and generation as argued by [10].

An individual will form culture that received from the previous generation (parents). Technological advancement and socialisation allow vast access to knowledge and cultures that originating from outside the family. Thus, discriminatory experience did not always originate from own experience, but also from the environment (i.e., friends and family). This experience in return can form individual identity. Chinese Indonesians' identity that experienced

discrimination consequently indicated different behaviours. Thus, Chinese Indonesian's identity differences require a thorough examination.

The various historical events that related to Chinese Indonesians consequently produced some questions. How those historical events affect Chinese Indonesians? Did discriminative narration influence national identity?

2. RESEARCH METHODS

We employed qualitative as our research design. This research included 160 participants who consisted of 94 Chinese Indonesians and 66 non-Chinese Indonesians. The participants are university students in a private university in Jakarta, aged between 17 to 19 years old. We picked the participants using convenience sampling technique.

We utilised Google Form questionnaire, which needed 15-20 minutes to fill, as our measuring tool. The questionnaire consisted of several parts. The first part contained introduction, information on research objectives, and consent form. The next part consisted of items on national identity variables, and the last part is items on discrimination narrative.

Table 1. Participants data

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	25	15.6
Female	135	84.4
Age		
17 years old	1	0.6
18 years old	76	47.5
19 years old	83	51.9
Ethnicity		
Chinese Indonesian	94	58.8
Non-Chinese Indonesian	66	41.2

The items that used in the questionnaire have gone through validity and reliability test which try outed to 30 participants. Initially we had 23 items on national identity before validity test. The item will be called valid if it gets a

value of 0.2 while the reliability is used as a benchmark above 0.5 or if the item is considered valid. However, the test eliminated five items, there were only 18 items at the end as seen at table 2.

Table 2. Validity and Reliability National Identity Variable

Dimension	Before Validity Reliability Test		After Validity Reliability Test	
	Total Items	Alpha Cronbach	Total Items	Alpha Cronbach
Fundamental	8	0.558	6	0.675
Instrumental	6	0.343	4	0.520
Natural	5	0.655	4	0.798
Actualization	4	0.639	4	0.639

Meanwhile, the total of initial items on discrimination narrative was 20 items, 10 items each for master narrative and counter narrative. The number went down to 18 items following the test (see Table 3). Discrimination narrative is divided into master narrative and counter narrative. Master narrative contained pointer questions on discrimination that received by Chinese Indonesian, such as "Chinese Indonesians often became victims during riots". Counter narrative consisted of items that stated non-discrimination, such as "Chinese Indonesians receive the same treatment as other ethnicities when dealing with administrative matters".

Table 3. Validity and Reliability Discrimination Narrative

Dimension	Before Validity Reliability Test		After Validity Reliability Test	
	Total Items	Alpha Cronbach	Total Items	Alpha Cronbach
Master	10	0.832	10	0.832
Counter	10	0.750	8	0.781

Data analysis was carried out by testing the correlation using the SPSS program. Correlational testing and Independent sample T-test were carried out for both the Chinese and non-Chinese participants, that level significance used 0.05.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 4 showed mean value from each variable. Based on the mean value, there are values that more than 3 (which is mean for items scale 1-5). Therefore, we can say the value is high. National identity from Chinese Indonesia displayed a high score (4.3892) and from non-Chinese Indonesian 4.4643.

Table 4. Mean and Deviation Standard Values in National identity variable

	Chinese Indonesian		Non-Chinese Indonesian	
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation
Fundamental	4.4876	.48034	4.5657	.36501
Instrumental	4.2686	.53158	4.3220	.45944
Natural	4.4867	.56006	4.5152	.51865
Actualization	4.3138	.60900	4.4545	.44916
National identity	4.3892	.47025	4.4643	.38433

Table 5. Mean and Deviation Standard Values in Master and Counter Narratives

	Chinese Indonesian		Non-Chinese Indonesian	
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation
Master narrative	3.6819	.76044	2.9682	.59541
Counter narrative	3.4641	.67492	3.7235	.72937

The test against distribution normality was done through Kolmogorov Smirnov with the result test $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$) for identity national variable, and $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$) that indicated abnormal data distribution. We opted for Spearman correlation due to data distribution abnormality and independent sample T-test Mann-Withney.

Table 6. Correlation Test Result

	Chinese Indonesian		Non-Chinese Indonesian	
	p (sign)	Coef. corr	p (sign)	Coef. corr
Master narrative – National Identity	0.215	0.129	0.281	-0.135
Counter narrative – National Identity	0.069	0.188	0.010*)	0.313*)

The testing towards Chinese-Indonesian participants and non-Chinese Indonesian participants indicated discrimination master narrative did not have correlation with national identity. The significance value to Chinese Indonesian group is a 0,215 ($p > 0,005$), while for non-Chinese Indonesian group 0,281 ($p > 0,005$).

A different result emerged in the testing between discrimination counter narrative with national identity. The test result showcased a positive relation between

discrimination counter narrative with national identity amongst non-Chinese Indonesian participants with significance value 0,010 (p < 0,05) and correlation coefficient value 0,313. Meanwhile, there was no corelation between discrimination counter narrative with national identity in the Chinese Indonesian group. See Table 6 for detailed data.

Next, the researchers test the difference between the two groups on national identity, master narrative, and counter narrative. The result of the test showed no difference on national identity of Chinese Indonesians and non-Chinese Indonesians with significance value 0,449 (p > 0,05).

Table 7. Independent sample T-test Mann-Withney result

Variable	Mean rank		Significance
	Chinese Indonesian	Non-Chinese Indonesian	
National Identity	78.18	83.81	0.449
Master narrative	98.90	54.30	0.000 *)
Counter narrative	73.55	90.40	0.023 *)

On master narrative variable, there is a difference between Chinese-Indonesian group and non-Chinese Indonesian group, with significance value 0.000 (p < 0.05). It means that there is a significant different between the two groups on the master narrative valuation, with the Chinese Indonesian group has higher value (98.90) compared to the non-Chinese Indonesian (54.30). On counter narrative variable, there is also a difference between the two camps, with significance value 0.023 (p < 0.05). In contrast with master narrative, the value of non-Chinese Indonesian's counter narrative is higher (90.40) compared to the Chinese Indonesian group (73.55). See Table 7 for details.

An individual's surrounding environment contributed in forming his or her identity. The same case applied to Chinese Indonesians. Although Chinese Indonesians are often perceived as not part of the society, but they live and became Indonesian citizen. Our study displayed that national identity of Chinese Indonesians and non-Chinese Indonesians is the same. In addition, both groups showed relatively high value of national identity. The result is in line with [11] Schmid & Hewstone's study, an individual usually became part of social group and even identified him or herself as part of the social sphere.

National identity plays an important part for an individual to live in her or his society. The same also applied to Chinese Indonesians. Our study displayed that narrative discrimination did not correlate with their national identity. As argued by Inac and Unal [12], gain identity is an identity that strived by a particular individual to gain identity recognition from a particular entity. Here we argue that Chinese Indonesians also require recognition in forming their national identity. In line with Ting-Toomey's [13] argument, ethnic identity is an individual's emotional significance to participate in sense of belonging or to be affiliated with a particular culture.
Tajfel [14] showed three definitions of social identity characteristics. First, it is part of the self-conceptualisation. Second, self-conceptualisation requires membership awareness. Third, it has sense of evaluation and emotional. Those three processes can happen amongst Chinese Indonesians. According to Dharmowijono [15],

social categorisation refers to assignment of impression in a general class in which its definition has been known, such as Chinese Indonesians' face. Social comparison can be done through prejudice and stereotype. Social identification happened through social categorisation and social comparison phases, such as an individual that defends his or her pride through identifying her or himself with a group and believe the group is better than the others.

General Indonesian society largely perceives Chinese Indonesians as outsiders. Chinese Indonesians are perceived differently compared to other ethnicities. While others are perceived as part of Indonesia, Chinese Indonesians do not own such status [16]. The view produced discrimination which occurred due to the doubt over Chinese Indonesians' nationalism [15]. Discrimination will increase stress level, create conflict of identity, and even trigger depression [14]. Based on the above discussion, we can see that discrimination narratives still terrorising Chinese Indonesians. Meanwhile, amongst non-Chinese Indonesians, the counter narrative occurred as the primary narrative. We hope that discrimination narrative against Chinese Indonesians does not occur in the future. The early good sign can be seen from our young respondents. The stable post-1998 politics also supported such positive development.

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

4.1. Conclusion

Both Chinese Indonesian group and non-Chinese Indonesians did not show any differences in national identity tag. This happened because the age of those participants (17-19 years old) and their same university origin. However, there is a possibility that the division between Chinese Indonesian and non-Chinese Indonesian did not affect their social life, including national identity formation.
Based on our study, discrimination counter narrative strengthened national identity of Chinese Indonesian. The narration on discrimination which is represented by discrimination master narrative seems no longer relevant for Chinese-Indonesian and non-Chinese Indonesian

participants. Our research showcased discrimination master narrative is not correlated with national identity. Meanwhile, counter narrative indeed has a correlation with national identity amongst non-Chinese Indonesians. Thus, for Chinese Indonesian group, both master and counter narrative do not determine their national identity. However, in non-Chinese Indonesian group, counter narrative is related with national identity.

Chinese Indonesian group and non-Chinese Indonesian groups have a difference in facing master and counter narrative. The Chinese Indonesian group has higher value in master narrative, while the non-Chinese Indonesian group has higher score in counter narrative. As a result, we can argue that in Chinese Indonesian group discrimination narratives are still felt. Meanwhile, non-Chinese Indonesian group perceives discrimination narrative is irrelevant.

4.2. SUGGESTIONS

There is a necessity to increase discrimination counter narrative, such as through mass media, social media, education institutions and advocacy agency. Meanwhile, discrimination master narrative statements must be stopped. Meanwhile, national identity is a shared identity, regardless of the ethnicities, which must be educated since early age through family.
The other suggestion is to employ qualitative method through interview or focus group discussion (FGD) by selecting Chinese-Indonesian and non-Chinese Indonesian participants, and those who are in interracial marriage. Narrative discrimination must be outlined by using discriminative texts that formulated by communication experts and trusted resources.

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