Self-Integration in Culture: A Case Study of Indonesian Individuals' Self-Processes

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Abstract
The self is built of internal and external processes. Humans are cultural beings with independent and interdependent values that are differentiated or integrated into the self. A healthy self depends on the success of integrating experiences in life. Studies of the self are important for insight to the various processes resulting in different degrees of mental health issues. However, much of the studies in psychology is obtained from the Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) population. While individuals from independent cultures equate consistency with well-being, individuals from interdependent cultures display situational behavior. This paper attempts to study self-integration as a goal in self-congruence and as a higher process through a qualitative case study of three individuals from the Indonesian culture. The three individuals in this paper have varying degrees of foreign culture exposures. We found that self-integration is an idiosyncratic process, which differs from one individual to another. We found that more dynamic experiences and older age does not ensure high level of self-integration. Openness to experience and adaptive flexibility is important for higher level of self-integration. Self-integration is not a plateau state, but the overall frequency in displaying a self-congruent or a process type of integration. Other individual factors such as personality and possible psychological dysfunction influence self-integration. Different degrees of self-determination are displayed in self-integration as goal or process. In line with interdependent characteristics, the three Indonesian cases presented here consider their own values along with close others' values as they face challenges in integration.

Keywords: Self-integration, self-construal, case study, mixed cultures

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Introduction

Large societies in the world are home to individuals from different cultures with different heritage, traditions, religions, languages, and ultimately values (Heine, 2016). The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs lists an increasing number of international migrants from 220 million in 2010 to 258 million in 2017. Eighty million migrants choose to live in Asia, and 78 million choose to live in Europe. Both continents take in the largest number of migrants (60%), followed by Northern America which takes in 58 million migrants. The remaining numbers are spread in other regions of the world. Modern transportation provides opportunity for wider search of jobs, education and better life (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2017).

Indonesia is a developing Asian country with high possibility for foreign investments (Fauzia, 2018). As of 2018, Indonesia lists 85,000 registered foreign workers out of 121 million total work force (Hakim, 2018). Migration brings globalization in information, economic, education, and transportation as well as an increasing number of mixed marriages (Putra, 2018). Cultural values contained in ethnic, national, religious and linguistic groups are transferred, affecting people's life experiences (Yampolsky, Amiot, & Sablonnière, 2016).

Multicultural individuals need to integrate different norms, values, expectations, behaviors, and identities to balance their internal values with external reality of multicultural life. Psychologically, it creates a certain dynamic in which people from the early stage of life try to find harmony and integration of their *self* with the environment. Only through successful organizing of the individual's own perception and others' values, the individual reaches a secure self without denying or distorting experiences (Rogers, 1951). This paper elaborates the dynamic of the person in integrating his or her self in a multicultural environment, emphasizing self-integration as a goal in self-congruence and as a higher process in the development of personality.

Multicultural Individual and the Development of Self-Identity

Culture is information passed by others in social learning which affects an individual's total being (Heine, 2016). Norms in any cultures have the ability to influence an individual's cognitive, affective, and behavioral capacity. Multicultural individuals are sometimes in situations where they must negotiate conflicting values. Conflicts are usually dealt with through switching between different cultural identities which is driven by environmental cues (Giguère, Lalonde, & Lou, 2010). The different level of conflicts that multicultural individuals experience includes: a) intergroup conflict, b) interpersonal conflict, and c) intrapersonal conflict.

Intergroup conflicts usually occur due to discrimination based on certain cultural characteristics. Interpersonal conflicts occur due to the presence of two different normative commitment along with the pressure to follow norms from each culture. Intrapersonal conflicts occur due to 'feeling torn' between cultures. In efforts of developing a personal and cultural identity, individuals define themselves through integrating their experiences with others and the self (Deci & Ryan, 1990). When

individuals are unable to integrate their experiences, it affects their feelings, emotions, and mental health.

Self-Integration

Self-integration is having awareness, ability, and integrity of defining the authentic *self* (Akrivou, 2008). It is seen in two different stages: as a goal and as a process. As a goal, integration is observed in self-ideal congruence. As a process, integration is observed in continuous individual growth throughout development. In essence, integration is an adaptation process.

Piaget explained integration as a cyclical process of assimilation and accommodation through the strive for equilibrium in adapting new information (Papalia & Martorell, 2014). Through maturation and encounters to foreign values or concept to what was previously learned, a state of disequilibrium in the cognitive structures occurs. The individual will be set for restoring a state of equilibrium, achieved through assimilation and accommodation. The search for equilibrium is the underlying force for cognitive growth.

In the study of the self-concept, individuals obtain information of who they are through gaining knowledge of values, beliefs, roles, goals, and other attributes from others. Individuals receive values from parents and others in the social environment, which become a part of how they see themselves (Rogers, 1951). This knowledge of *the self* is a content component which requires organization. Through effective structural organization of the contents which make up the self-concept, individuals achieve self-concept clarity. Self-concept clarity is observed through clarity, definition, stability, and consistency in an individual's cognition, affect, and behavior (Campbell et al., 1996).

Western and Eastern Culture perspective on *Self*

Different cultures affect individual experiences of inconsistencies in relation to well-being. Western individuals' well-being is affected by internal inconsistencies, whereas individuals of Asian cultures view and interpret inconsistencies differently. Individuals from interdependent Asian cultures include in-groups in defining themselves to maintain respect and harmony (Suh, 2002). There is less focus on consistency and higher situational variability (Oishi, Diener, Scollon, & Biswas-Diener, 2004). They have a more holistic view of the world which evaluates themselves not limited as isolated beings but flexible according to the constant change in relations with others (Ma-Kellams & Blascovich, 2012). Therefore, they are more flexible in adaptations to societal cues due to the principles of change and contradiction. These inconsistencies should not be taken as incongruence in *the self*. In contrast, individuals from independent cultures place greater importance in maintaining stability of defining self-attributes (Suh, 2002).

In addition to universal situational variability, there are individual differences in culture which can add up to situational variability, causing greater within-person variability of affective experiences across situations (Oishi, Diener, Scollon, & Biswas-Diener, 2004). Because of the higher situational variability in interdependent cultures and known effects of multicultural exposure on the self, which consists of the

internal and external dynamics of self-integration, it would be fruitful to describe this process comprehensively. This research seeks to understand the participants' external dynamics and internal process, e.g. the structural component of *the self*, the organization of the structural contents, the self-integration process as reported in conflicting situations and the current state of integration at the time of this research, within the specific boundaries of the Indonesian culture. The aim is to obtain a deeper understanding of the self-integration process of Indonesian individuals with different degrees of foreign culture exposure, particularly in dealing with the situational variability of western and eastern culture in their life.

Methodology

This research employed a qualitative case study (Willig, 2013) approach to gain an in-depth description and exploratory understanding of the psychological process of self-integration in three different individuals with varying degrees of multicultural exposure in Indonesia. The focus is on explaining the experience of self-integration; such as the process, development, meaning, and type of integration based on the participant's retrospective accounts. The participants consist of three different Indonesian women with different degrees of exposure to Western cultures. X is a 51-year old single woman, with a European paternal grandmother. Y is a 34-year old woman, married to a European man, with a European paternal grandmother. Z is 57-year old divorced woman, with no European genealogy, but was raised alongside European individuals in parts of her childhood. Participants were recruited through purposive and convenient sampling for meeting certain criteria, e.g. young or middle adult Indonesian individuals who are 30 to 50 years old, exposure to different cultures, and having gone through adversity in life. Participants were briefed and provided with informed consent. Information was collected through semi-structured interview, audio-recorded, and transcribed for analysis.

In the duration of three months, the researcher met the participants based on agreed schedules. They were interviewed 4 to 5 times in separate informal meetings for a total duration of 1,410 minutes for all three participants. Domains explored include family history, specific internal or external conflicts throughout participant's developmental stages, specific situations that precede or proceed the conflict, as well as exploring internal processes such as feelings and thoughts as conflicts are experienced or after (as presented in Table 1). A sample indicator for the External Dynamics domain is *"the description of self in the phenomenal field or cultural reality"*. A sample indicator for the Internal Process domain is *"the ability to describe different aspects of self and how the aspects are organized or integrated"*. Sample indicators for the Self Integration domain are *"congruent selves in awareness, feeling, and expression"* and *"ability to take ownership in assimilating or accommodating values"*.

The researcher also applied probing techniques to inquire further participant's thoughts, such as their deep feelings, and resulting actions or attitudes to gain understanding of what specific situations mean to them and how those situations affect their internal processing. All information gained from each individual's in-depth interview was coded multi-axially into themes for each of the individuals. Themes include participant background, cultural influence, relational issues, areas of self-concept in structure and in contents, such as knowledge of self and evaluative

components of self, personality preference, behavioral, affective, and cognitive responses to conflict along with the results, motivation, and notable characteristics. Other additional data, such as information from significant others and supporting personal data such as social media posts, photographs, or official documents were also collected to support triangulation analysis.

Variable	Domains	Theory
Background	1. Family background 2. Family relationship 3. Close friends 4. Education 5. Work experience 6. Interests	Erikson's Psychosocial Development Stages (Papalia, Olds, & Feldman, 2009)
External Dynamics (culture, normative development)	1. Cultural context 2. Significant developmental issues or phases influenced by culture	1. Piaget's Cognitive and Moral Development (Papalia et al., 2009) 2. Erikson's Psychosocial Development Stages (Papalia et al., 2009) 3. Phenomenal field (Rogers, 1961) 4. Ego Development Theories (Cook-Greuter, 2000) 5. Self-construal (Markus & Kitayama, 1991)
Internal Process	**Knowledge of Self (Information):** 1. Understanding of perceived self 2. Understanding of real self 3. Perception of ideal self **(Evaluative):** 1. Attitude towards personal beliefs, ideals, and meaning in life 2. Cognitive and affective responses towards external dynamics **Structure of Self:** 1. Organization of self-knowledge	1. Self-ideal congruence (Rogers, 1951) 2. Process of fully functioning person (Rogers, 1961) 3. Self-concept clarity (Campbell et al., 1996) 4. Self-awareness (Myers, 2008; Cook-Greuter, 2000) 5. Self-complexity (Akrivou, 2008) 6. Self-consistency (Suh, 2002) 7. Well-being (Suh, 2002)
Self-Integration	**Conflict Response:** 1. Conflict responses towards internal and external dynamics 2. Ability to adapt 3. Motivation **State of Self:** Emotional state	1. Process of fully functioning person (Rogers, 1961) 2. Self-integration (Akrivou, 2008) 3. Integrative learning /Adaptive flexibility (Akrivou, 2008) 4. Developmental theories (Papalia et al., 2009) 5. Intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1990) 6. Self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1990; Rogers, 1951) 7. Self-ideal congruence (Rogers,

		1951)
		8. Self-construal (Markus & Kitayama, 1991)
Other Factors	Other factors promoting or preventing integration	1. Self-construal (Markus & Kitayama, 1991)
		2. Religion/ Spirituality

Table 1. Construct and Interview Guidelines

Results

Participant X

X has a European grandparent from each side of the family and worked with individuals from other nationalities throughout her career in the film and the health care industry. Her family consists of interfaith relationships. She was raised to value diversity. She views culture as the base of a person, influencing the way individuals dress, think, and carry the self. In her context, she sees others conforming to avoid confrontations. In her interaction with other nationalities, she seeks understanding of others' characters. X believes that diverse life experiences through exposure to different cultures, religion, and customs allow for better survival and integrity to the choices made in life. X believes that with more complexity, an individual has firmer grounds on why he or she has chosen specific values as part of his or her personality. X is an independent person, expressive and direct in voicing her views, yet displays flexibility in interacting with others. She feels that this is due to her exposure of Western cultures in her family and at work. As an individual from a relational-interdependent culture, X frequently considers the needs and wishes, through seeking advice, of those close to her. Despite her interdependent cultural context, X's upbringing and experiences with individuals of independent self-construal influences her character in the way she defines herself and manages conflicts. Individuals from Western cultures have an independent self-construal and are motivated to express self-defining internal attributes (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Whereas, individuals for Eastern cultures seeks to maintain respect and harmony with close others (Suh, 2002).

The dynamics of self-integration in X's life is displayed in cycles of feeling empty, needing fulfillment through her life. This occurred around the age of 20 and then again around the age of 40, parallel to the developmental task shift. Unpleasant or excited emotions are present when a person is in seeking phase toward a goal to initiate seeking and integrating toward that goal (Rogers (1951). In facing internal conflicts, X turns inward and sets on analyzing herself with evaluative questions. By doing this, she is showing increased trust to self. She does what feels rights based on competence, showing increased self-government, self-regulation, autonomy, and uncontrolled by external forces (Rogers, 1951). This action is based on awareness of external demands, self needs, memories, and perception to produce a calculated course of action (Rogers, 1961). In conflicts, she is non-defensive to experiencing sadness, anger, irritation, and aggravation. She shows courage in facing her own emotions and includes both internal and external considerations in her decision-making. There is higher awareness of other cultures outside her own. This non-defensiveness adds insight and knowledge out of experiences in understanding and finding meaning (Vaillant in Cook-Greuter, 2000). X appears to be at the post-

conventional level of self-integration where there is increased integration between the self and others. An example of this is when she shows flexibility to changing situations. X understands that there are multiple factors which influences a situation when working with others at work. She plans, attempts to reach the goal, yet when the plan does not work, she does not force others. She accepted change and attempted to find other solutions. This is an example of her interacting and relating within the process, adapting to different situations.

In the construct-aware stage of the post-conventional level, an individual understands that meaning is gained from experiences in life instead of being an inherent matter. There is a distinguished increased awareness in the process of meaning making. This process affects the personal, rational, and symbolic awareness within the individual. In the ego-aware stage, the individual shows understanding of human nature and complexities in human interaction. The understanding is indicated in awareness of their own emotional, rational processing patterns, and how their own processes affect their relationship with others (Cook-Greuter, 2013). Despite being in the process level, in situations where she wishes to sustain her core values, X can also consciously choose to maintain her values instead of assimilating new values. Occasionally, X retains her own values against what is considered irrational.

X shows intrinsically motivated action in her behavior. X displays openness to experiences and takes risks to seek growth and knowledge in facing conflicts. A self-determined and a self-integrated person is driven by motivation to actively take action, seeking optimal challenges which promote growth. Integration happens at two different levels: internally within the self and externally with others (Deci & Ryan, 1990). Integration with others is observable in adaptive flexibility. When a goal is unattainable, she seeks to understand other's challenges and tries to communicate for solution. This indicates awareness of multiple factors influencing a situation. In not forcing others and attempting to find mutual solution, she displays a process of interacting and relating in adaptation to different situation. In line with literature, the shift to the post-conventional level of self-integration involves a shift from a local to a more global perspective, which includes integrating external aspects into the processes of the self.

Participant Y

Y has a European grandmother, European husband, North American step grandfather, and has lived in a Western country for some part of her adolescent and adult years. She comes from a family of doctors and was exposed to multiple languages since early on. Her family consists of interfaith relationships. She sees her cultural context as conservative, which she thought may be due to fear of the unknown of getting out of what is familiar. Living with others from different cultures influences her to adopt differing values from the Indonesian culture, such as being more liberal, relying on personal principles and scientific knowledge, believing in freedom of expression, stressing importance of personal consent, and appreciating differences. Individuals of Western cultures have an independent self-construal which cause them to value being distinctly different from others, reference their own internal thoughts and feelings in determining their actions (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Y displays congruence in her real self, ideal self, emotions, and actions consistently throughout most of the interview process. Due to her exposure to Western values from her upbringing and

family members, some discrepancy is present as she struggles to communicate her values to others in the interdependent Asian culture. Close others influence the decisions she makes in life. Through exposure to Western cultures and the independent self-construal Y becomes outspoken in sharing knowledge with others, albeit she wishes harmony with others. Y dislikes arguments and tends to avoid conflict. Her desires that contradict her intention to seek harmony poses challenge in successfully integrating differing values to function within her contextual environment.

Y displays signs of possible depression throughout her life in her frequent depressed mood, insomnia, perceived negative others and self-attributes, withdrawal, lacking ability to finish projects, and thoughts of death. This is outside the context of this study. However, it is worth noting that the rumination may interfere with her reaching clarity. Self-concept clarity correlates negatively with neuroticism. Individuals with disorganized self-concept tend to have chronic self-analysis (Campbell et al., 1996). This may affect her process toward integrating her complexity and having self-concept clarity.

The dynamics of self-integration in Y is displayed in experiences of unpleasant feelings such as anger, guilt, upset, and confusion as precursor of seeking, integrating, and concentrating behavior toward goals during conflicts (Rogers, 1951). These unpleasant feelings promote reevaluation of goals and lead her to select the behavior which sustains her current self with her values. Thus, self-congruence is maintained. Her avoidance to arguments may be an effective way of maintaining self-consistency. When an ideal is reached or sustained, the resulting calm or satisfied emotions are indicators of the consummatory state of fulfilled needs in aligning the real self with the ideal self (Rogers, 1951). Y appears to be at the conventional level of self-integration where the self transitions to a conscious, separate, individual. Individuals at the conventional level are rational with tendencies to retain values against what is considered irrational (Loevinger & Cook-Greuter in Cook-Greuter, 2000).

Y shows internalized extrinsic motivation which indicates some degree of self-determination toward a set goal. This is evident in her pushing herself into making a decision, in needing spontaneity, having others' involvement, and relying on gut feeling in her decision-making. Y shows movement toward adaptive flexibility. Although she prefers sustaining her values, as she became a mother, she further considers external values and assimilate what she considers good. Changes in the responses to experiences and in meaning making indicate her adaptive flexibility. Y displays more internal integration in comparison to external integration with others.

Participant Z

Z is a woman with intertribal and interfaith relationships in her family. She was an only child raised by a single mother who lived with European families throughout most of her childhood. She views the Indonesian culture as diverse; consisting of many tribes with set traditions for people to work together interdependently. This diversity allows her to be more attentive to others with different beliefs. Being considerate in attentiveness is a form of maintaining social harmony and connectedness (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Z considers her cultural context as demanding adherence to traditions. Z has her own rules and dislikes being ruled by

traditions. In this she displays characteristics of an independent, autonomous, and egocentric individuals (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), which may originate from her upbringing.

Z's upbringing was marked with adverse experiences. She did not know her father, was considered an illegitimate child, and ostracized. Due to living with European families, her first language was not Indonesian. She only had a few close others whom she considers in decision-making and was bullied throughout childhood. As an adult, Z went through difficult marriage which end at divorce. Z continues to have intertribal and interfaith relationships through her daughters' marriage. Adverse childhood and adulthood experiences cause Z to become an independent, private, self-sufficient, determined, and persevering individual. Despite markedly determined with her own values, Z shows interdependent characteristics in avoidance and withdrawal as a peace measure.

The dynamics of self-integration in Z is seen in her state of self-awareness and efforts to manage internal as well as external conflicts. Z displays awareness of her complex background which results in her current values and determination. In facing conflicts, Z goes through an evaluative process, referring to her own values. Z is determined to reach her ideals of autonomy and competence while attempting to dismiss negative emotions gained from her adverse past experiences. Her upbringing stresses importance of having harmony and suppressing her individuality for the sake of harmony. Z displays intrinsic motivation and intention in focusing on problem-solving towards her ideals. However, withdrawal from conflicts may indicate internal and external conflict avoidance, masking them as peacekeeping attempt, exacerbated by painful past experiences of rejection. Withdrawal is done through occupying her mind with distracting activities from experiencing negative emotions, such as reading, smoking, and gaming. Negative emotions such as sadness, disappointment, anger, and confusion are present in goal-seeking efforts (Rogers, 1951). With further acceptance of negative emotions Z can become more integrated in her attempts to reach her ideals.

The need for relatedness, autonomy, and competence motivates human behavior (Deci and Ryan, 1990). Z displays clear needs for autonomy and competence, with less prominent needs of relatedness. Though firmly showing that she cares less of other's opinion and is used to being on her own, Z wants others' acceptance. Z appears to be at the conventional level of integration. She is aware of being a separate individual and tends to retain values against irrational perspectives in the personal realm. When she reaches out to the transpersonal realm, it is done in ideology, not in spirit yet. Z's avoidance of facing her negative emotions may hinder movement towards higher level of integration.

Discussion

Life and work experiences shape character and personality (Roberts, Wood, & Caspi in Roberts & Mroczek, 2008). Each of the participants in this study were raised in different contextual settings in the Indonesian culture. Different life experiences allow for different ways in reaching self-integration. This study confirms the participant's relational-interdependent self-construal (Takwin, 2014) in spite of multicultural influence and age as a predictor to both levels of self-integration (Akrivou, 2008).

Self-Complexity

Cultural context, which includes family, significant others, and the individuals' living environment, add situational variability as each represents certain self-construal. In the progression of self-integration, individuals behave accordingly to their preferred self-construal as they synthesize contextual experiences with internal values to function within the society. For the research participants with relational-interdependent self-construal, they consider their own ideals, needs, along with their close others' values and desires as they face challenges in integration. Close others who originate from other cultures adds self-complexity which needs to be integrated. In a previous study, self-complexity promotes the congruence level of integration in females. Whereas in males, it promotes the process level of integration (Akrivou, 2008).

Complexity through more dynamic experiences, including exposure to multiple cultures in life, do not ensure higher level of self-integration. Older age does not ensure higher level of self-integration, unless the individual remains open and flexible to experience. Higher self-complexity allows higher level synthesis in recreating meaning through increase of self-awareness. It promotes integration of affect, intuition, and rational thought in the adult development process (Akrivou, 2008). There are other important variables needed for achieving self-integration outside of self-complexity (Kegan & Loevinger in Akrivou, 2008).

Adaptive flexibility

Higher level of self-integration requires people to have true adaptive flexibility to deal with the complexity. Adaptive flexibility or integrative learning has positive correlation with self-integration at the postconventional level (Akrivou, 2008), indicated with a focus on process as well as an increased awareness of reality and ways of making meaning (Cook-Greuter, 2000). Openness in fully experiencing the reality of person-environment is an indicator of adaptive flexibility. This study found openness to experience as notable characteristics for successful integration and further growth. Openness allows courageous exploration in the process of re-committing to self in adaptation to different situations. It involves active choice through assimilation or accommodation to adapt to specific situations.

Wisdom

Dynamic, adverse, distress-causing experiences is a natural part of life. Yet, subjective evaluation of each individual's perception, meaning-making systems, interpretation, and level of wisdom influence individual responses. Active coping is essential to achieve wisdom after adversity (Spano, 2015). As a cognitive experience, wisdom is present within the moral decision-making process and accessed through deep introspection for deeper and more meaningful experiences of life and relationship with others. It occurs at the conventional and post-conventional level of development. With wisdom, there is integration of the cognitive, reflective, and affective aspects of personality which is influenced by the individual's spiritual, emotional, and psychosocial development. Wisdom is a positive real-life process

consisting of cognitive integration, vision for good life, and putting into practice the integrated thought and positive effects for the self and others (Yang, 2011).

Personality

The study of human personality is a broad area which includes considerations of traits, predisposition, genetics, environmental influence, motivation, drives, and how individuals synthesize these in behavioral, affective, and cognitive outputs. Individuals with psychological disorders may face challenge in integrating their complex aspects of self. Self-concept clarity is associated with lower neuroticism, lower chronic self-analysis, and rumination (Campbell et al., 1996). The absence of self-concept clarity absence may delay integration. Furthermore, maladjustments occur when optimum adaptation does not occur (McCrae and Costa, 2003). Further research in how personality and psychopathology affect self-integration is needed.

Adaptive responses evolve throughout time based on learning in response to age, environmental changes, and interventions. Personality, through characteristic adaptations to culture, create variations in different individuals' responses to environmentally prescribed values (McCrae and Costa, 2003). Within Indonesia's interdependent culture, participants show individual values in characteristic to the culture. In a relational-interdependent self-construal, close others are honored over the values of the greater society consisting of individuals from different cultures. These differences can include language, religion, personal space, relationship patterns, time orientation, food preferences, and taboos which influence characteristic adaptations (McCrae and Costa, 2003). In the process of self-integration, self-complexity comes from the dynamics of personality and exposure to different values through life experiences. In the end, the individual must consider all these aspects and show internal as well as external integration for optimum adaptation.

Lastly, as self-integration is correlated with age, it is a part of natural progression in adult development. Unless severe dysfunction of personality is present, individuals should be reaching self-integration at the conventional level. Ninety percent of the general adult population is within the preconventional (10%) and conventional level (80%). Only nine percent reaches the postconventional level and even rarer –less than one percent in the postpostconventional level (Miller and Cook-Greuter in Cook-Greuter, 2000).

Conclusions

From these 3 multicultural individuals, we learn that self-integration is not a stagnant, rigid progression in development. Successful achievement of multicultural integration as a goal and progressing into the process level, does not indicate an individual who will not sustain values. Core values are sustained in some situations. Thus, the level of self-integration can be observed through the regularity of self-integration indicators displayed. Individuals in different levels of self-integration differ in the regularity of sustaining values as a goal versus as process through display of openness to experience in adaptive flexibility.

Self-integration is a product of internal process within the individual, even in multicultural life. It occurs when an individual reaches security and understanding of

his or her own self, fully functions in awareness and accepts of the person-environment field. As a goal, it necessitates having clarity in the organization of the self-concept in a contextual cultural existence. As a process it necessitates active and continuous reorganization of self-complexity toward a working, functional self in society. The individual dynamics in reaching self-integration differs because each person has different ages, unique life, and work experiences shaping individual characteristics and personality. Some individuals may show delayed progression towards self-integration, in its achievement as a goal and in progression to a higher process level.

Successful multicultural integration occurs with balance and congruence in integrating the internal self and external others. In the higher level of self-integration, true adaptive flexibility indicates advanced ways of finding greater meaning in life. Individuals who display self-integration show internal motivation, indicating self-determined, motivated actions, and flexibility in adaptation. In contrast, non-integrated individuals are externally motivated, showing controlled, or amotivated actions. Hence, the varying degrees of self-determination display different levels of integration and predict possibility for future progression in development.

Limitations

This study was conducted on three different Indonesian female participants, aged 34, 51, and 57 years old. The small number of participants, gender limitation, and the developmental age category poses challenge to apply findings to other gender and developmental ages. Further research on younger and older age groups, on larger and more heterogeneous populations, on specific ethnic tribes, or comparison studies of urban vs. rural individuals can add to the generality for this study. More studies in Eastern culture can add literature on Asian models of personality. As a cross-sectional study, limited interaction time poses challenge. Longitudinal studies can better capture the dynamics of self-integration through better measure of the development and frequency measure of integrated responses throughout the course of life. Furthermore, due to the qualitative nature of this study, the data obtained is descriptive in nature. Not much is known of the psychometric factors of self-integration. Therefore, development of psychometric measures is urgently needed for further confirmation.

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