

Japan-Indonesia Solidarity and Group Identity in the Midst of Natural Disaster: An Experimental Study

It has been long argued that adaptation to the environment might favor the persistence of certain traits of behavior that help the survival of the group. Cameron and Shah (2013) found that in Indonesia, individuals living in area recently suffer natural disaster exhibit different behavior than people living in area without significant natural disaster. We could not find any similar studies for the Japanese, but the Japanese have been well-known as a very resilient and strong society through many natural disasters. As these two countries can be categorized as the same “collective society”, we are interested to see if there are any differences in terms of solidarity across populations as a result of being exposed by natural disasters. Previous studies found that giving in Dictator Game was influenced by identity and in-group favoritism (e.g. Ben-Nar et.al, 2009; Chen & Li, 2009; and Costard & Bolle, 2011). We modified procedure from Costard and Bolle (2011) by combining Dictator Game and Public Good Game to test whether solidarity transfers are affected by in-group favoritism and whether solidarity also occurs among survivor. We run a series of experiments involving six sequential games varied by four factors ; severity of catastrophe (high, medium and low), role of player (donor and victim), ingroup-outgroup pairing (group of Indonesian with Indonesian, Indonesian with Japan, Japan with Japan), and location of disaster (Indonesia, Japan). Randomly, each group of participants were paired differently for each games, where they play the role as donor and victim three times for each role, in each severity level of catastrophe. The donor were asked if and how much they would share their endowment to the victim. The victim were asked how much donation they expect to get from donor, then if and how much they would transfer that donation to the victim’s social fund. The solidarity behavior measured by the amount of transfer made to victim, whilst solidarity among survivor was measured from the amount of transfer made to social fund. The participants were 151 students in Indonesia and Japan; 64 Indonesian and 23 Japanese students from Universitas Indonesia, Indonesia, and 50 Japanese and 14 Indonesian students from Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto and Nara Institute of Science and Technology in Nara, Japan. Interestingly, we found that the amount of transfer were not subject to the severity of catastrophes, and only amount transferred to victim at the second game which was significantly differed among participants in Indonesia and in Japan; participants in Indonesia transferred bigger amount. Yet, there were no differences in terms of transfer made to victim both in the first and the third game, neither when they paired with the same nationality nor with different one. When we specifically comparing between Japanese and Indonesian, we found that the Japanese transferred smaller than Indonesian, but it was only at the first game. We also did not find any differences in terms of amount transferred to social fund, both by Indonesians or Japanese, in Indonesia or in Japan. However, as victim, Indonesians in Indonesia and in Japan expected significantly bigger transfer from donor in all games. In addition to the experimental study, we also measured psychological factors of participants which were satisfaction with life, identity fusion to nation, proud to nation, perceived religiosity, perceived wealthiness between Japan and Indonesia, exposure to disaster, and donating frequency. As to conclude, we found that identity and in-group favoritism did not affect solidarity behavior among the Indonesian and the Japanese, neither in Indonesia, nor in Japan.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation

Date: Paris, 8 – 13 July, 2014

Name of Conference: 28th International Congress of Applied Psychology (ICAP); www.icap2014.com

Title of presentation: Japan-Indonesia Solidarity and Group Identity in the Midst of Natural Disaster: an Experimental Study

Presenter: Erita Narhetali

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)