Summary

The Determinative Role of Ethnic Identification in Determining Value Orientations: A Comparison of Kurds from Turkey at Individual and Group Levels

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Social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982) and Self-categorisation theory (Turner, 1985) emphasize that social identity is determined by the group to which the individual belongs. In the relevant literature, the number of empirical (e.g., Diehl, 1990; Turner, 1985; Tyler, 1999) and descriptive studies (e.g., Deaux, Reid, Mizrahi & Ethier, 1995; Schwartz, Montgomery & Briones, 2006) on the structure of social identities that are relatively stable in terms of temporal continuity, but also different in relation to contextual changes, are too many to be underestimated.

The aim of the present research is to examine how political orientation and ethnic identity processes of the Kurdish people affect their value orientations by focusing on the identity-value relationship. In the present study, we used the concept of Kurdish identity -differently from the Kurdish people- as a social category specifically for Turkey.

Identity and Value Relationship

As one of the key elements in shaping our beliefs, attitudes and behaviours, value systems (Rokeach, 1970, 1973; Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz & Bardi, 2001) enable social interaction by determining the way we present ourselves to others. At the same time, values as cognitive and emotional frameworks established in the socialisation process (Hitlin, 2003), fulfil important functions in the formation of the shared identity of the community in question by providing agency and continuity to the individual. As to the relationship between value and identity, Stelzl and Seligman's (2009) study of cultural belonging, which focuses on value priorities, shows that the sample of Asian origin Canadians prefer different values for different belonging conditions. From this point of view, identification with Kurdish identity is expected to activate group norms, and therefore, it is expected that value orientations will be affected at both the individual and group level.

Value Transformation and Value Transmission

According to modernization theory, values spreading from western societies to other countries undergo a change from materialist forms to post-materialist forms (Baştürk, 2013; Inglehart & Abramson, 1994). In spite of this general change and transformation climate, Boehnke (2001) refers to a typical value climate that determines the values orientation of both parents and children in a given time period. Therefore, it can be said that the traditional structures, such as the cultural and political factors that transfer the values at the individual level, and modernization, which causes the transformation at the social level, are both effective on the values at the same time (Vedder, Berry, Sabatier & Sam, 2009).

A finding in Turkey creates some conflict about the above-mentioned value transformation and transfer phenomenon. The Southeast Anatolia region would be expected to be a region where materialistic values are high and post-materialistic values are low, due to physical security and economic concerns, as it is the least economically developed region of Turkey (see. Filiztekin, 2009). However, it has been reported by Esmer (2012) as the first-ranked region of Turkey in terms of post-materialistic values. It can be thought that the political orientation in the region can be considered to account for the original situation. Indeed, there are enough findings in the literature that the left and right political orientation is polarized between the Openness to change and Conservation value dimensions, and there is a predictive relationship between political orientation and values (Caprara, Schwartz, Capanna, Vecchione & Barbaranelli, 2006; Caprara & Zimbardo, 2004; Hasta & Dönmez, 2009; Schwartz et al., 2001; Schwartz, Caprara & Vecchione, 2010). Likewise, we expect that leftist Kurds will prefer the high level of Openness to Change values. Further within the historical development of Turkey, Kurdish identity is already a reactive ethnicity because of its position against the dominant Turkish identity (see. Çoymak, 2009; Rumbaut,

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2008; Yeğen, 2009). From this point of view, it is thought in this study that the various identity statuses of the Kurds will point to different forms of political positioning by acting as zeitgeist (see. Boehnke, 2001) and the identification level will have a mediator effect on the general relationship between political orientation and value orientation. For this purpose, four ethnic identity statuses were established according to the ethnic identification of Kurds within the scope of the Ethnic Socialization Model developed by Umaña-Taylor, Yazedjian and Bacama-Gomez (2004) and the value orientations were determined according to the Basic Human Values Approach developed by Schwartz (1992). However, while the value orientations of the Kurdish participants were determined at the individual level, it was also included to the investigation, which values the 'Kurds' were being associated with as a general social category at the group level.

Method

Participants

The sample consisted of 232 participants, aged between 18 and 57 (M = 29.9, SD = 7.2), 67 women (28.6%) and 165 men (71.4%), living in Turkey and defining themselves as Kurds.

Materials and Procedure

Participants were asked to report some demographic information including gender (0 = female, 1 = male), age (in years), political orientation (1 = left to 7 = right), education (in years), Moreno question (1 = only Kurdish, 5 = only Turkish).

In order to measure the level of ethnic identification; Ethnic Identity Scale (EIS) consisting of 3 subscales and 17 questions, including exploration (7 items), resolution (4 items) and affirmation (6 items) developed by Umaña-Taylor et al. (2004) has been translated into Turkish by the researchers. The increase in the total score on this scale does not mean an increase the level of identification. However, based on the cut-off point determined by the K mean of the clustering analysis applied to the scores of the samples on the sub-scales, the low (-) or high (+) score of each participant determines the participant's ethnic identity status.

In order to measure participants' value orientations, we used The Portrait Values Questionnaire, developed by Schwartz et al. (2001) and adapted into Turkish by Demirutku and Sumer (2010). The Portrait Values Questionnaire evaluates values on two dimensions. The first one is Openness to change (self-direction and stimulation), and Conservation, while the other one is Self-transcendence (Benevolence and Universalism) and Self-enhancement (Hedonism, Achievement, and Power).

The online version of the questionnaire was distributed via social media via snowball sampling. In addition, in Van, the questionnaires were delivered to participants in trade unions and professional associations where the education level was sufficient for reading ability.

Results

We found significant correlation between political orientation with Self-Transcendence, Openness to Change and Conservation (respectively; r = -.15, p < .05; r = -.17, p < .01; r = .27, p < .001). And also between age and Conservation (r = .20, p < .01); Conservation and education level (r = -.17, p < .01); ethnic identification point and Self-Transcendence (r = -.19, p < .01).

We use Marcia's (1996) categorization model based on K-means cluster analysis and determined four ethnic identity statuses [Diffuse (n = 16), Foreclose (n = 8), Moratorium (n = 51), Achieved (n = 156)]. But a dichotomous dummy variable, [0-*Othe*r (n = 75), 1-*Achieved* (n = 156)] was created because the number of participants in the four categories of ethnic identity statuses was not evenly distributed.

Multilinear hierarchical regression analyses were conducted with variables showing a significant relationship with Self-Transcendence and Openness to Change. We included political orientation as the predictor in the first step, the dummy variable as moderator in the second step and as dependent variable Self-Transcendence in the third step. However, since the moderator variable in this model is categorical, based on Iacobucci's (2012) mix regression model, the scores of first stage logistic regression (LOR) and second stage linear regression (LIR) were converted to standard scores and measured.

In the LOR the predictability of political orientation placing participants in this categorical ethnic identity status has been tested. A negative Spearman correlation (r_s = -.29, p < .001) was observed. The right political orientation reduces participants' likelihood of setting in the achieved ethnic identity status by 37% (Wald = 15.75; β = -.46; OR = .63; p < .001).

In the first model, Self-Transcendence was the dependent variable and the independent contribution of the political orientation (β = -.15) wasn't significant (β = -.09) after moderator was included (β = .20). It is expected that $z_{mediation}$ should be larger than |1.96| in order for the mediation effect to be significant (Iacobucci, 2012). In this model we found (n = 231) $z_{mediation}$ = 2.325. In the second model Openness to Change was the dependent variable and the independent contribution of the political orientation (β = -.15) wasn't significant (β = -.11) after moderator included (β = .24) into the model. In this model we found (N = 231) $z_{mediation}$ = 2.325.

In order to compare individual-group level value orientations, we conducted t test and significant differences were observed in Self-Enhancement [t (231) = -3.95, p < .001; IND. (M = 3.93; sd = .91); GR. (M = 4.15; sd = .86)], Openness to Change [t (231) = 6.300, p < .001; IND. (M= 4.38; sd = .77), GR. (M = 4.07; sd = .93)] and Self-Transcendence [t (231) = 9.29, p < .001; IND. (M = 5.18; sd = .75), GR. (M = 4.77; sd = .91)] value dimensions.

Discussion

Having conservative values with increasing age is parallel with Basic Human Values literature (Gümüş, Sümer & Dönmez, 2007; İmamoğlu & Karakitapoğlu-Aygün, 1999, Karakitapoğlu-Aygün & İmamoğlu 2002; Mishra, 1994; Schwartz & et al. 2001). However, it is noteworthy that the influence of the political orientation on the value dimensions compared to the socio-structural variables such as age, education level and place of birth (place of settlement) is a kind of zeitgeist on the Kurdish value orientations. This result shows that the Kurds are a very politicised social group.

In this study, the right political orientation predicts Conservation and the left political orientation predicts both the Openness to Change and the Self-Transcendence values. These results are parallel with the literature (Caprara & Zimbardo, 2004; Caprara et al. 2006; Cesur, et al. 2014; Schwartz et al. 2001; Schwartz et al. 2010). However, the self-transcendence values of the Kurds are determined by left political orientation as well. In Kurds, left political orientation doesn't only determine Openness to Change as a social conception, but it also seems to determine to prioritize collective goals at the individual level.

However, achieved identity status mediates the relationship between Self-Transcendence and Openness to Change and the political orientation. As shown earlier, different identities affect value orientations (Austers, 2002; Stelzl & Seligman, 2009; Tulviste, Konstabel & Tulviste, 2014). However, in this study, an ethnic identity status' effect, which determines the value orientations at the individual level and mediates the relation of the main predictor namely political orientation, has been revealed. Second, this result is likely to explain the high post-materialistic values reported by Esmer (2012) for Turkey's Southeastern region. Regarding the ethnical structure of the region where is intensely Kurdish, it can be said that the related deviance is related to the ethnic identity of the region.

In the individual-group level comparisons, participants saw their ethnic group as less open to change and less in terms of benevolence and universalism values. On the contrary, they think that their groups place more emphasis on power and success than themselves. The difference between this negative collective representation (Çelik, 2013; İnceoğlu & Çoban, 2014) achieved a consensus through the group identity and the value orientations expressed by participants in the achieved identity status is thought to be a strategic use to define a new Kurdish identity (for strategic use of identity, see. Klein & Azzi, 2001; Klein, Spears & Reicher, 2007). Previously, it has been shown that the Kurds use different strategies to deal with negative identities (see Bayad & Kuşdil, 2014; Alparslan, 2017). However, this study is important in order to reveal the conscious effort by the majority of the group members to consolidate modern values on a particular social identity.