

Core Self-Evaluations and Black Consciousness in post-apartheid Zululand, South Africa.

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Abstract. This study aimed to explore the relationship between Core Self-Evaluations and Black Consciousness amongst adult Zulus in Zululand, South Africa. Core Self-Evaluations refer to individual perceptions of worth and ability (Judge et al, 2009), whereas Black Consciousness is the way individuals perceive their racial identity (Biko, 1978). Using a non-probability convenience sample of adult Zulus in Zululand, the relationship between Core Self-Evaluations and Black Consciousness was tested. A survey was used to administer the Core Self-Evaluations Scale and The Measure of Indigenous Racist Experience. Pearson product moment correlations revealed a small but statistically and practically significant relationship between Core Self-Evaluations and Black Consciousness for male but not female respondents ($p=0.005$, $n=60$, $r=0.36$). The overall correlation was $r=0.22$ ($p=0.003$, $n=198$), which indicates a small, positive correlation between the variables. It can be concluded that there may be a small, statistically significant relationship between Black Consciousness and Core Self-Evaluations amongst adult Zulus in Zululand.

Keywords: Core Self-Evaluations, Black Consciousness, Apartheid

1. Introduction

Apartheid pervaded every aspect of South African's lives (Leach, 1989), influencing where people could live, education received, job prospects and even who they could marry. Biko (1978) felt that the oppression associated with apartheid had led to apathy and self-denigration amongst Black South Africans. Notwithstanding this, the Zulu culture has a strong ethnic identity (Tebele, 2010). Black Consciousness (BC) was proposed by Biko (1978) as a means of instilling pride in Black South Africans in response to apartheid. Core Self-Evaluations (CSE) are a person's estimation of their own worth and ability (Judge & Locke, 2009). The relationship between these variables is explored in this paper using quantitative survey research.

2. Background and Literature

2.1. Background

The environment in South Africa was a hostile one for Black South Africans during apartheid (Biko, 1978). It is possible that the apartheid environment affected personality development amongst Black South Africans, affecting their BC and their CSE. The environment in Zululand, with its more traditional Zulu customs and lifestyle (Rosenthal, 1964), and the lack of glaring inequity between Blacks and Whites may have been less psychologically damaging for young Zulus (Addison, 2010).

2.2. Core Self-Evaluations

CSE is how an individual feels about him/herself. It is an estimation of worth, capability and stability and feelings of control people have over their lives. CSE is made up of Self-Esteem, Self-efficacy, Locus of Control and also Neuroticism/Emotional Stability (Judge & Scott, 2009). In international studies, CSE has been linked to both academic and work performance (Judge et al, 2003). Experiences of racial oppression and the communication of damaging racial stereotypes could reduce an individual's feelings of self-worth (Self-Esteem). Rosenberg (1962) explained that self-esteem is the degree to which an individual "holds attitudes of acceptance or rejection toward himself" (p135). In addition, the restriction of opportunities for achievement and the scarcity of resources and opportunity experienced by Blacks during apartheid may have made Black South Africans feel less capable of achievement (Self-efficacy). Self-efficacy pertains to believing in one's capability- the belief that one can succeed (Bandura, 1994). The complete regulation of every aspect of day-to-day life by apartheid legislation may have caused Black South Africans to feel like

they were not agents in the determination of their success or failure in life (external Locus of Control). Locus of control refers to the belief that one is in control of the outcomes in one's life (Rotter, 1954, in Cadinu, Maass, Lombardo & Frigerio, 2006). Finally, apartheid experiences of Black South Africans (Leach, 1989) may have resulted in Neuroticism (Judge & Scott, 2002). Neuroticism is the level of emotional instability a person has (Cervera *et al.*, 2002). Thus, the study sought to assess whether these influences, as evidenced by BC, or a lack thereof, were manifested in levels of CSE.

2.3. Black Consciousness

Biko stated, "Black Consciousness is a political cultural philosophy employed by Blacks in South Africa in an effort to shake off shackles of mental oppression and to reinstate the essential humanity and pride of Blacks" (Biko, 1977). Biko's conceptualisation of BC provided many Black South Africans with pride. It would seem possible that young Black Zulus would, in post-apartheid Zululand, hold a positive perception of BC and also CSE. This pride could arise from the democratisation of South Africa and also the pride associated with being Zulu (Tebele, 2010). Biko described the psychological effect of oppression in terms that indicated the potential negative impact of apartheid on CSE. He promoted Black Consciousness as means of mitigating the damaging effect of apartheid on Black South Africans (1978). Biko championed self-sufficiency and independence through a number of upliftment projects and the dissemination of BC literature. 33 years after Biko's death, the status of BC amongst Black South Africans warrants exploration, given the transitions within the country.

3. Research Method

3.1. Research objectives

The aim of this study was to explore the extent to which BC and CSE interrelate within individuals who share an ethnic identity. A further aim was to describe current levels of CSE and BC amongst adult Zulus in Zululand.

3.2. Research design and approach

This study made use of a quantitative survey research approach where self-administered questionnaires were distributed to residents of Zululand, KwaZulu-Natal. The research instruments used, the Core Self-Evaluation Scale and Measure of Indigenous Racism Experiences, have already been utilised internationally yielding reliable and valid results (Paradies & Cunningham, 1998; Tsaousis, Nikolaou, Serdaris & Judge, 2007, p1444).

3.3. Sampling Method

The sample comprised n=198 respondents drawn using non-probability convenience sampling, as the study was exploratory, not causal. The population, from which the non-probability sample was drawn, comprised Black, adult Zulu (18 years or older) South Africans resident on the KwaZulu-Natal North Coast. These respondents were assumed to have experienced at least the latter years of apartheid and to have a Zulu cultural and ethnic component to their identity.

3.4. Measuring instruments:

Two measuring instruments were used in the study, namely a) the Core Self-evaluation scale [CSES] used to measure CSE and b) The Measure of Indigenous Racist Experience [MIRE] used to measure BC. These two instruments were transformed into a composite measure developed to look at CSE and BC. This measure comprised 17 items (four of which were excluded later following factor analysis and calculation of reliability) on a five point likert scale (Ekin, 2002, p3). The researcher assessed all the measures for content validity, which assesses whether the measures adequately assess the scope of behaviour associated with the traits. In order to achieve this, one consults subject experts during the measures' construction, in addition, focus groups were utilised to validate the findings.

The Measure of Indigenous Racism Experiences was found to have face validity and to be of an acceptable level of reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.79. The Instrument had already been validated in previous studies (Paradies & Cunningham, 2008). Preliminary Validity and Reliability of the measures

involved a pilot study that was conducted on a sample of staff and students of the University of Zululand (n=151). The Core Self-Evaluation Scale had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.61 which is acceptable for studies of this type (Baars et al, 2005), although 0.7 to 0.8 would have been preferred. Because of the exploratory nature of the study, a Cronbach's alpha of 0.61 was accepted. For future studies this reliability will need to be rigorously scrutinised in our specific African context.

3.5. Research procedure

The data was collected in Empangeni, Mtunzini and Dlangezwa by trained fieldworkers. The items in the questionnaire were explained where necessary, but respondents completed the questionnaire themselves. Ethical considerations were taken into account and the respondents gave informed consent and assured of their anonymity. Data was then cleaned and captured in MS Excel for statistical analysis.

3.6. Statistical analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistics were calculated using MS Excel, Statistica and SPSS. Scores were calculated for Core Self-Evaluation and Black Consciousness respectively. Demographic variables were also analysed and described. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the relationship between Core Self-Evaluation and Black Consciousness. The results are presented in the next section.

4. Findings

4.1. Demographic profile

The majority (85%) of the population in KwaZulu-Natal is Black followed by an Indian/Asian representation of 9%, then Whites (5%) and coloureds (1.5%). The main language spoken is IsiZulu (81%) (Statistics South Africa, 2010). Just over half the population lives in non-urban areas (54%). The sex ratio (males to every 100 females) is 88:100.

Table 1: Demographic features of the sample (n=198)

Variable	Count	Percent	Cumulative %
Age			
<20	56	28.28%	28.28%
21-30	127	64.14%	92.42%
31-40	11	5.56%	5.56%
41-52	3	1.52%	7.07%
53-60	1	0.51%	0.51%
Gender			
Male	60	30.30%	30.30%
Female	138	69.70%	100.00%

The sample mainly comprised respondents younger than 30 (92.42%) and nearly 70 percent of respondents were female, as opposed to the provincial average of 43% (Brooks, 2004). The sample is not representative, as the aim at this point was not to make inferences about the population, but instead to ascertain whether the relationship between Core Self-Evaluation and Black Consciousness merited further in-depth investigation.

4.2. Findings for Core Self-Evaluations and Black Consciousness

Table two displays the summary statistics for CSE and BC. The mean score of CSE of the sample was 3.32 (n=198) on a five point likert scale. Reflecting on the questions asked, this is not a particularly high score, but it is comparable with the score of 3.33 found by Broucek in a similar study in the United States of America in 2005. The level of CSE was accompanied by a small standard deviation of only 0.57. In the sample, the lowest level of CSE was only 1.44 and the highest was 4.78, but the majority were clustered around 3.32.

The mean score for BC was 4.21 (n=198, see table 2). This indicates that the respondents felt positive about their race and were more positive about their race in general than about themselves as individuals. Although this score seems extremely high, it must be borne in mind that the statements that comprised the measure of racial consciousness were all positive statements about one's race. It can be inferred that there is evidence of BC in the sample. BC scores were high (see table three above). This indicates high levels of

overt or espoused BC. The lowest recorded score was 1.00 and the highest recorded score was 5.00. For the most part though, the sample had high levels of BC.

Table 2: Black Consciousness and Core Self-Evaluations scores (n=198)

	Minimum	Q1	Mean	Q3	Maximum	SD
CSE	1.44	3.00	3.32	3.67	4.78	0.57
BC	1.00	4.00	4.21	4.75	5.00	0.76

This may be a positive sign that apartheid has not left any lasting damage to Black South African's racial identities and BC for the sample. The statements in the measure were very positive statements of racial identity. As a result, high scores would be expected.

In Table three, the Pearson Product Moment Correlations between CSE and BC are indicated. The sample size was n=198. The correlations are presented for the sample as an entire unit and also for males and females separately. In the table, marked differences are visible between the correlations for males and females separately.

Table 3: Correlations between Black Consciousness and Core Self-Evaluations (n=198)

	Black Consciousness		
	All (n=198)	Male (n=60)	Female (n=138)
Core Self-Evaluation	0.22**	0.36**	0.14

**p<0.01

A statistically significant positive correlation was found between CSE and BC amongst males (p=0.005, n=60, r=0.358). There was no significant correlation between CSE and BC amongst the female respondents (n=138, r=.142). The overall correlation was r=0.22 (p=0.003, n=198) which indicates a small, positive correlation between CSE and BC (Table three). For males, those with higher levels of BC were more likely to have higher levels of CSE.

4.3. Discussion

It is possible that those with high CSE feel more positively towards their race, thereby exhibiting higher levels of BC. On the other hand, those who have high levels of BC may draw on this as a source of boosting their own self-worth and CSE. Another possible explanation is that some individuals have positive evaluations of the world in general, which affects both their CSE and BC levels. In the female sample, the average score for BC (4.17, SD.78, n=138) was higher than the average score for CSE (3.26, SD.53, n=138), implying that they perceive their racial identity more positively than they perceive themselves. On average, female CSE was less positive than their BC. This may be due to patriarchal aspects of the Zulu culture, or even internalised sexism (Rudwick, 2008). In a patriarchy, internalised sexism may be prevalent (Bearman, Korobov & Thorne, 2009, p10).

5. Conclusion

This research provides evidence that there is a relationship between CSE and BC amongst Zulus. The relationship is by no means consistent for men and women. Evidence of this relationship makes a case for further investigation of the relationship. In addition, the relationship of these variables to work-related behaviour, in particular performance and skills development, may aid South Africa in Human Resources Management and Human Resources Development.

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