Buginese self-construal in review of siri'' and pesse''

(study at new student of hasanuddin university)

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Abstract— Siri' and *Pesse'* values that is rooted in Buginese culture. These values influence Buginese social life as well as the way they perceive the world. The purpose of this research is to investigate how these two values influence the formation of Bugis self-construal. This research was conducted by using qualitative-explorative approach. Participants of the study were 18 first year students of Hasanuddin University who were divided into two groups. The first group consisted of 11 students who came from rural areas, and the second group consisted of eight students who were born and raised in city of Makassar. Participants were selected using purposeful sampling. Data were collected by interview and analyzed by coding method. For reliability of data analysis, intercoder agreement was employed. The results of this study indicate that *siri'* 'and *pesse'* values influence formation of Buginese self-construal. The more Buginese living up with *siri'* and *pesse'* values, the greater its influence on self-construal. The formation of self-construal affect the way of Buginese interact and adapt with their social relations. It is found that Buginese have tendency to construct self as interdependent.

Keywords— Self-Construal; Siri' and Pesse'; Buginese; Buginese Student

I. INTRODUCTION

Buginese are one of the tribes inhabiting in South Sulawesi. They live and grow in a social environment and have values that are rooted in their culture. Through the value system, individuals learn about what behavior should be and should not be done [1]. *Siri'* 'and *pesse'* are the two great values that affect the Buginese and are often used as the key to understand Bugineses' social behavior [2]. A Buginese who live up to *Siri'* value will always protect themselves from behavior that can tarnish their honor and at the same are encouraged to achieve personal accomplishment [3]. Furthermore, appreciation of the *pesse'* value will make Buginese sensitive to their social environment. To put it into another words, to live up with *siri'* and *pesse'* will lead Buginese to become cultured person.

Culture influences how to behave, and also the formation of the self [4]. While individuals in individualistic cultures prioritize independence and personal rights, individuals in collective culture more value interdependence and harmony in relationships and groups [5]. Markus and Kitayama [6] then suggest that Westerners tend to view the self as independent, while non-Western individuals interpret the self as interdependent self-construal. Interestingly, this imply that the meaning of self will be interpreted differently depending on the cultural exposure and the social context in which the individual is located.

Unfortunately, self is often viewed as universal. In fact, the concept of self in most literatures represent self from individualistic culture because most of the sample taken were derived from this culture [7]. It becomes odd to use a concept built in individualistic culture to understand people from collective culture. Hence, it will be unsuitable to explain people from Indonesia by concept derived from individualistic culture where Indonesia is generally perceive to collective stereotypes [8].

This present study aims to examine how the value of *sire'* and *posse'* influence the Buginese formation in defining of self in relation to others (self-construal). This research provides strategic initial step to get a better understanding on current sociocultural changes and shift in cultural values which requires a contemporary assessment. In addition, this research is expected to encourage study on self in different subculture in Indonesia.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Self-Construal

The study by Markus and Kitayama [4] is based on a view which confronts assumption that self is universal, but is actually more likely to represent self in Western culture. Their analysis focuses on what people understand and believe about themselves and how they relate to each other. Their analysis shows that people in Western culture have a view of self that is fundamentally different from those in non-Western cultures. It is said that Westerners view the self as an independent entity from the social context and place emphasis more on the internal attributes of the self. Mark and Kitayama call it independent self-construal. As for non-Western cultures, people view the self as an entity that cannot be separated from the social context and emphasizes interdependence. Mark and Kitayama then refer to it as interdependent self-construal. These two distinctions are then used as typologies of self-construal.

Independent self-construal is defined as a stable self, bounded, unitary, and independent from the social context. In

this sense, self is defined as an entity that (a) consists of the unique configuration of the internal self-attributes, such as self-preference, trait, abilities, motivation, values, personal needs and rights, (b) behavior is determined by the presence of such internal attributes. Being the same or consistent person throughout the situation, being able to express oneself and communicate their rights assertively, emotions, needs and objectives without violating the rights of another individual is considered the basis of self-esteem. Mark and Kitayama propose that relatively, individuals from Western cultures hold more of this independent self-construal than individuals from non-Western cultures. But, of course, individual's self-construal will vary depending on the extent of which they live up the culture.

Interdependent self-construal is defined as a flexible, variable self, which is inseparable from social context and interconnected with one another. Moreover, self is defined as an entity that emphasizes on (a) external or public features such as status, role, and relationships, (b) individual behavior is largely determined by perceived thoughts, feelings, and possible actions of others appear in relationships. Being able to position yourself, adjust to various situation, perform appropriate actions, regulate emotions, and maintain harmony of relationships between individuals and within groups are considered as the basis of self-esteem.

B. *Siri''*

Siri' is a value which is inherent in the daily life of the people in South Sulawesi, especially for the Bugis and Makassar tribes. The term can be explained literally and culturally [9]. The word *siri*' in Bugis and Makassar means shame or embarrassment. However, this literal interpretation is insufficient to explain what *siri*' is. Moreover, the meaning of the word "shame" has not been fully represent the meaning of shame embodied in *siri*'. Culturally, *siri*' ' is defined as honor, dignity, and honor [9]. It is said that this cultural sense is more represent the meaning of *siri*', because when a person says the word siri', then the meaning of the word actually refers to something most sensitive in a person - that is self-esteem, honor, and dignity.

Siri' can also be understood as an act and as an internal drive in Buginese. *Siri*' as a consequence will occur when the honor or dignity of a person or group of people are violated or get offended. Thus, *siri*' in this case arises because of external factors that come from outside of the person. In addition, *siri*' also means as an internal driving force that arises to reach a goal [10]. This type of siri' is used as a driver in facing various obstacles in achieving goal, because someone fails to achieve the goal, then it is *siri*'' for him. In other words, *siri*' serve as a source of motivation because it arises desire to succeed in order to obtain honorable values and dignity.

C. *Pesse'*

Siri' must be understood inseparable from other Bugis-Makassar cultural concept, which is commonly known as *pesse*'. The word *pesse*' means painful feeling, which indicates a deep feeling of empathy toward fellow members of a social group who are in a state of deprivation, grieving, experiencing calamity, or suffering from illness [2]. *Pesse*' is what makes

Buginese moved his heart to show solidarity. So, empathy is implemented in the form of solidarity or loyalty to fellow members of the community in the social environment. In addition, *pesse*' also applies not only to those who are afflicted with misfortune, but also to members of communities who are together striving to achieve their goals. This will be especially true for sailors and Buginese who are overseas. The sense of being a "Bugis Fellow" underlies the emergence of *pesse*' u and thus make them help each other even before there is no bond.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

A. Participants

There were 18 participants participated in this study. Participants were selected using purposeful sampling [11] criteria's for selecting participants are:

- Buginese descent which were born and raised in Makassar regencies

- Buginese descent who were born and raised in city of Makassar

- First year student of Hasanuddin University

Participants in this study are divided into two groups. The first group consists of eleven students who came from Makassar regencies and the second group consists of eight people who came from the city of Makassar.

The Bugis descent is set because it is related to the issue under investigation. The criteria of "birth and raised" means that the subject should be an individual who is born and permanently domiciled in certain environment. Then the distinction between the Bugis criteria that were born and raised in the regency and domiciled in Makassar City was established with the assumption that individuals living in different environments would be affected by the socialization of

B. Procedures

Data collection were conducted through two stages. First Focus Group discussion was administered in order to obtain initial description as well as trials of the interview guideline. After that researchers conducted interviews on the actual participants as the main method of data collection.

Data collection was performed by interviewing one group of participants and then proceed by interviewing another group of participants. Data collection was stopped until the data obtained is perceived saturated, of which adding data will no longer provide more understanding regarding research question.

C. Data Analysis

Data analysis was done by using coding technique. The first stage was to transcribe each interview session to the subject. Second, the researcher read all the transcripts several times to get a general impression of the data. Third, from each of these transcript, researcher identified several statements or phrases

related to research problem. Forth, researcher summarized the data by formulating the important meaning contained in statements. Finally, the researcher wrote a code label which represents the essence of the statement.

The initial codes made then classified into several categories based on their similarity. After initial categories were made, researcher reviewed the categories then proceed to higher level of abstraction, which is formation of theme. If in the previous stage the classification was done on the basis of similarity of meaning, at this stage classification was made based on conditions and interactions which connect codes and categories. Finally, at a broader level of analysis, researcher created a hypothetical chart or model that could help researcher to visualize the results of the analysis which further became the description basis of the research problem to be answered.

IV.   RESULTS

A.   Results

There are several findings of this study, which are.

- Self-Description

The theme of self-description is related to how participants describe themselves. It focuses to uncover the content of the statements that participants used to describe themselves. The results of this study indicate that the self-portrayal statements used by subjects are generally specific and social. Specific means that the statement used by the subject contains a particular social situation. As for the social means that the statement are related with others.

- Role of Significant Others

The theme of role of significant others explains about certain people who are considered meaningful to participants and how these significant others play the role in the participants' life. It is found that in both group parents, family, and friends are the people who greatly influence participants. This is because they have a very functional role, both personally for participants also within the wider social context.

For the first group, parents and families play a role in nurturing, educating, and meeting basic and financial needs, as well as a source of motivation for participants. As for the second group, the role of significant other is emphasized in educating role, which how parents rear participants through the cultivation of moral values. Regarding the figure of a friend, both groups perceived friends as people who are be there for the participants

- The Structure of Goals

A goal is one of the internal attributes of self that makes individual actions become directed. In the first group it was found that these goals are in the form of self-achievement such as academic success, attainment of status and honor, which is generally based on the form of responsibilities fulfillment to the parents and to themselves. As for the second group, they call pride or honor, solidarity, and honesty as things to be achieved in life.

- Interaction with Others

Interaction with others is a theme that describes how participants build their relationship with others. Both the first and second groups, rely on adjustment (adjust & fit in) in their interaction with others. Firstly, they identify the trait, feelings, intention, and what others like and dislike. Only then they try to adjust their actions in their interactions.

In addition on adjustment, participants also are found to make certain efforts in order to establish closeness (closeness) with others. If the interactions involves friend, participants of the first group establish closeness by make fun and gather together. In contrast, participants in second group tend to open up and try to find the common ground. However, if the interactions involves older person, the first group establishes closeness by gathering together while the second group relies more on how to discuss some issues.

This theme also provides understanding that there are thoughts that arise when participants interacts with others. In the first group it is found that the thoughts that are raised refer to how the others responds to the actions that participants taken, whilst in the second group, the thoughts are more focused on how perceptions of others toward them

The last finding on this theme is related to how the emotional experience of the subject. In other words, participants not only involve actions and thoughts in their interaction, but also their feelings. Both first and second group more focused on others responds, such as fear of what others may think about them

- Norms

Norms refer to rules or guidelines on behaviors which are acquired by participants from family and their social life. From this theme, it is found there are norms that guide participant's behavior. These norms are family norms and social norms. Family norms referee specific norms that participants get from their family and social norms refer to norms that participants get from their broader social life.

The norms specifically emphasized in family for the first group subject are courtesy, taboo, independence, and tenacity. As for the second group norms that are emphasized are how to maintain self-respect, family respect and others respect. For social norms, the first group learns about the importance of helping, maintaining closeness and maintaining relationship harmony whilst in the second group, the important of respecting others is more emphasized.

- Values System

This theme describes the value system held by participants which is acquired by appreciation of their life in their environment. This theme explains how participants understanding of the *siri*' and *pesse*', and implementation of these values

There is a difference between the first group and the second on their understanding of *siri*' and *pesse*'. For participants from regency, they understand that *siri*' as the utter humiliation that occurs after committing a violation of social norms which impact on self-respect and family respect. While other group understand that *siri*' as a form of consistency between what is

said and done, and the recognition of the existence of self and others.

As a result of the difference in understanding, the implementation of *siri'* also different between the two groups of participants. In the first group *siri'* is implemented by maintaining self and family respect by not violating the social norms. In the second group, *siri'* is implemented by being responsible for what they say and do, and also how to respect others.

Value of *pesse'* also understood differently by the two groups. For the first group, they understand that the *pesse'* is an excruciating pain which arises as a result of because of something that happened to a close relative. The second group, road works, *pesse'* understood unfortunate events happened to their relatives in the second group, *pesse'* is understood as solidarity and sensitivity to social environment. Although there are differences, understanding of *siri'* in both groups share the common ground, which is concern for others and willingness to help each other.

- Cultural Identities

This theme discuss appreciation and understanding of participant's cultural identity which indicate their typical characteristics as Buginese. For participants from the regency area, they appreciate that courtesy, accent, taboos, shame and brotherhood as the most prominent identity as Buginese for the second group, they appreciate that their identity as Buginese is reflected on their philosophy of life. Although different, both groups are equally agreed that shame, brotherhood, and manners is representing Buginese identity.

B. Data Analysis

This research aims to understand how *siri'* and *pesse'* influence the formation of self-construal. Self-construal refers to how individuals understand and explain themselves in relation to others. It is assumed that understanding of self is influenced by the cultural in which the individual resides. Therefore, there are two mains issues to be discussed here, which are how participants cultural socialization and patterns of interaction

- Cultural Socialization

In this study it was found that there are the two source of cultural exposure received by participants, which are *siri'* and *pesse'* value system, and normative value which are required from environment. Understanding of these value serve as the basis to understand self. Participants understand *siri'* as something precious that should be preserved its honor. *Pesse'* is understood as interconnection with others through emotional ties. The results of the self-understanding manifests in the form normative behavior such respect to others, respect for older people, maintain closeness and nurture the relationship between them.

- Interaction Pattern

The ability to adjust is a key element in understanding how subjects interact with others. To act in accordance with the normative rules, participants have to understand that their

behavior must be managed in accordance social context. Therefore, before performing a behavior, participants should be able to understand the social context, such as what is the situation, to whom they interact, and what is their characteristics. Then, participants try to adjust their action, language expression and demeanor. When unable to do that, they must be prepared to accept the consequences of social punishment, such as a negative view from others. This is called the ability to adjust

The result of this study proposes that there are three stages of adjustment the first stage involves ability of the participants to identify situation and condition of the interaction, such as whether they interact with individuals or groups, what is their age, and whether they have certain social position or not. Furthermore, they are also try to identify the characteristics of whom they interact, such as their trait, feelings, desire, hope, and like or dislike.

The next stage, participants then try to adjust themselves according to their analysis on previous stage. Of course, their adjustment is varied according to whom they interact. However, generally, participants will regulate their actions, language expressions, and demeanor. When interacting with people who are considered older, participant will act more polite. It is based on normative matters. If the person to whom they interact dislike certain things, then participants try to avoid or not perform the action. If the person to whom participants interact has certain trait, from instance, quiet, and then participants will try to adjust their behavior according to this trait. In conclusion, how participants identify situations and conditions will largely determine how they regulate their actions

The last stage after organizing the action, they will bring up thoughts like how others respond to the actions they have taken against them. Subjects wonder whether what has been done or not by them? Is what I do has made others offended or not? So, at this stage there is an evaluation of the actions that have been done. The results of these evaluations further become the basis of consideration for the subject if you want to re-interact with the person. Basically the three stages above take place continuously in the process of interaction and not rigid. That is, when the subject has a basic introduction, then it is enough used as a basis for organizing actions in the interaction. The in-depth introduction process is usually done on the people with whom the subject is close.

The last stage is to evaluate their adjustment. To what extent they have succeed to adjust their action to the person to whom they interact to. In this stage, thoughts of what others may respond to participants' behavior, are they happy enough? Or are they offended by what participants has done? This evaluation then serve as consideration for future interaction. Basically, in interaction with others, these stages go on and on and are flexible. It means, the first round of adjustment usually enough to interact with others. However, when interaction with someone who are close to participants more rounds usually.

V. Discussion

The result of this study shows that the *siri'* 'and *pesse'* value system has a major role in shaping one's formation of

self-construal. Self-construal then influence on how participants adjust with their social interaction. Some scholars argue that culture has a major role in the formation of self and self-concept. It is due to socialization through various cultural practices that seem to run naturally, but actually have a significant impact on how people perceive the selves [1]. It also shows that people who in the same area hold a set of values which rooted in their culture and are practically used to understand others within the same area.

However, the role of *siri*' 'and *pesse*' in influencing self-construal was found to be greater for participants originating from regency area. In addition, the interpretation of local values is also found deeper than the subject domiciled in the city of Makassar. This happens because the results of socialization or cultural exposure received by the two subject groups are different. Since childhood, subjects from local districts were raised in homogeneous cultural environments, such as the use of local languages, and the strong influence of normative matters. In contrast, in the second group, they are exposed to a multicultural environment with more relaxed normative matters since childhood. In other words, since sociocultural environment in the first group are more facilitating the internalization of cultural values and normative matters, then its influence also more prominent. Thus, the extent to which individuals are exposed to their culture and internalize their cultural values will reflects its influence of the formation of self-construal. The result of this study also shows that changes in the sociocultural context in which individuals reside can lead to changes in individual self-construal [12].

In interaction with others, both groups of participants start their interaction by getting to understand the social context and then adjusting their actions accordingly. In self-construal perspective, this is the characteristics of interdependent self. Markus and Kitayama [6] propose that individuals in non-Western cultures emphasize the ability to adapt in response to changing situations. On contrary, people in Western culture emphasize the consistency of behavior in various situations and conditions. This is the reason why people with interdependent self-construal's are called possessing a flexible, variable self.

Study by Markus and Kitayama [6] explains self-characteristics of people from non-westerner cultures. It is proposed that people from non-westerner culture are tend to have interdependent self-construal. However this study provide no further explanation of how people develop interdependent self-construal. This present study provide further information, especially from participants who were born and raised in rural area, of how participants adjust in their interaction with others. Adjustment done is not limited to behavior modification in response to changing social context. Moreover, adjustment involves certain stages that take place continuously and involves many cognitive functions. Context sensitivity is prominently evident in the first stage of interaction. This result support the prior study that propose individuals with interdependent self-construal have high context sensitivity [13].

Effort to build closeness is also included in interpretation of interdependent self. People with interdependent self always maintain connectedness and harmony in their relation with others. In a broader perspective, emphasizes on connectedness

and harmony are characteristics of collectivism culture [5]. In addition, we propose that tendency to build closeness with others is manifestation of *pesse*'. Because *pesse*' value system has long been rooted in culture shared among the people in the community, manifestation of this value in various behaviors and normative matter appears as natural and generally accepted.

Generally, norms serve as a guidance of how people should interact in their social life. If someone's behavior is violating the norms, it shall be regarded sanctioned. If the offense is severe, it will lead to *siri*' (deep shame). In fact, in any culture, people have ideas about what should be don and should not. They agreed to impose sanctions on those who did not want to follow the consensus [5]. It is not only emphasis on the norms that guide behavior, but also on what thoughts, feelings, and actions of others as a result of interaction. In this case, characteristics, preference of actions, desires, and moods of the person of whom they interact to also guide how participants act.

This study finds that culture plays a significant role in construction of self. The result of this study provide information for further study on self, especially the influence on culture to construction of self. However, cautious interpretation should be take cautiously since the sample of this study may not represent the entire population. Therefore, further study that involves this result as a basis should be done by relating self-construal to other variable. In addition, the study also found a distinctive pattern of interaction especially for subjects originating from district area. Therefore, a further investigation to examine this issue may also be done

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study set out to investigate how *siri*' and *pesse*' influence the formation of self-construal in Buginese. The result of this study shows Buginese tend to have interdependent self-construal. This result is consistent with study by Markus and Kitayama that propose people from nonwestern culture tend to have interdependent self-construal. In addition, this present study also finds that Buginese tend to make adjustment according to perceive social context when interacting with others. Furthermore, the stage of this adjustment consist of three stages, which are identifying situation, adjusting behavior, and evaluating actions. This study provide deeper insight regarding the process interdependent self-construal. In addition, this research also point out that even with the same value system, in this case *siri*' and *pesse*', different environment will result in different appreciation of value system.

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