Political Concern and Idealism as Mediators for Determining Political Leadership Styles

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The current study surveyed multi-ethnic youth aspirations on credibility of political leadership with regards to the integrity in leadership, political concern, political idealism and political leadership styles. This study utilised a survey research design involving 800 Indonesian youth aged between 19 and 25, using a questionnaire that has been developed based on several past studies on youth and political leadership. Results revealed that there is a significant relationship between the elements of integrity, political concern and political idealism towards the inspired leadership style. This means that these three factors are interrelated and they are important factors for youth in selecting political leaders. Inferential statistics using Structural Equation Models (SEM) AMOS 18 found that political concern and idealism are mediators for determining political leadership styles. Surprisingly, the element of political concern and idealism are stronger that the element of integrity for political leadership inspired by youth. This informs the priorities for multi-ethnic youth in selecting the future political leaders are how political leaders exhibit their political concern and their political idealism. However, please bear in mind that the element of integrity is also significant and important for political leadership. The implications of this study are that political leadership must be aware of these factors as young people have specific characteristics for their future leaders.

Key words: *aspiration, integrity, political leadership, political concern, youth.*

Introduction

Research in political leadership style has received its impetus with the existence of social media influences. A wider access to political ideas has increased individual agency to express concern and act upon public issues as never before (Gordon & Yukl, 2004). This is a particularly interesting area for exploration among youths in multi-ethnic society due to the complex interactions and ambiguous changes between individual aspects and contextual factors. For a well-functioning democratic society, political leadership plays an important role in making changes involving the quality of individual behaviour when leading a group to achieve the objectives of the organisation (Kahne, Middaugh, & Allen, 2014).

Political leadership may occur in groups that involve two or more people and often involve the influence of the group members in achieving a specific goal (Chhokar, Brodbeck, & House, 2013). In addition, leaders also influence the interpretation of events, organisations and activities to achieve targets and cooperation from people outside the cluster or organisation (Zainal, Hadad, & Ramly, 2014). There is no cluster that can live as a community without a leader. In fact, in today's development, it is quite impossible to live without a leader. Without leaders, an organisation chart will not be complete and the organisation will not last long (Jamil, 2015). Most research within the large political leadership literature focusses on developed countries. The limited number of studies conducted on multi-ethnic youths in developing countries means that the insight about their political leaders is underrepresented. Blunt and Jones (1997) have warned about the danger of applying western leadership theory in developing country contexts.

In this paper, the authors begin by exploring the concepts related to leadership, integrity and political concern. These concepts are necessary components to understand the connections and its implications. The section that follows reports the methodology of this study and then presents the results from the survey. The final section discusses the results and concludes with some recommendations.

Conceptualising Political Leadership, Integrity and Political Concern

Political leadership style refers to goals and needs in various situations. Fiedler (2006) stated that the different aims that leaders have determines individuals' behavior within an institution depending the context and situation. Groups perform a combination of factors between the leaders and the good relations of members. The role of political leaders can be divided into four areas, namely: executive, scrutiny, regulatory and advocacy (Morrell & Hartley, 2006). Leaders with integrity are leaders who are of consistently between speech and actions, actions and morality, ethics and the law as well as consistently between personal interests and the interests of the public. A leader with integrity possesses values and ethics, which are the

standards for their behavior. When the leader conducts accepted values and ethics, this leader is said to have integrity. Due to rapid changes and uncertainty, there is a need for administration of an organisation to be led by leaders who possess the characteristics of exceptional leadership (Rooke & Torbert, 2009). This is because leaders who make changes will be faced by many challenges due to competition and conflict, which then lead to discomfort. Thus, in making changes, the leader must be highly intellectual in order to outline the vision, mission and goals clearly. Leaders need to see leadership as a responsibility and trust. Not as a privilege which qualifies them to be in the highest position in the organisational hierarchy. In this atmosphere, leaders must be capable to lead and heading towards a common goal.

Political concern is a level of perfection, excellence, kindness and beauty. It can also be described as something that is used to achieve a particular desire. Political concern of various parties is diverse and depends on the party itself. In this study, idealism is based on the national idea, a struggle which is based on the perspective of religion, contemporary developments and ethnicity. Nationalism is a determination within humanitarian to have its own government. Religion is the most important role in one's formation of identity (Jamil, 2015). The emergence of new parties in politics aimed at uniting citizens, rejects the various practices of racism and racism and anti-corruption and justice for all people (DeMatthews & Mawhinney, 2014). Research also found that political awareness is important among gifted and talented young leaders for individuals development and well-being (Bakar, Ishak, & Abidin, 2014).

There are few studies on the mediators of leadership style. Differences of opinion on what makes a 'good leader' further complicate the study since the approach to lead is still a long-standing debate (Rooke & Torbert, 2009). Research on the reason for a low political engagement rate amongst youth suggests that the new generations are more interested in politics that is more participative and politicians who keep their promises (Henn, Weinstein, & Forrest, 2005). An additional factor that is vitally important for understanding the relationship between youths' political concern and leadership style is the emergence of new norms of citizenship (Xenos, Vromen, & Loader, 2014). The following sections presents the methodology used for the present study.

Youths of the millennials are an incredibly diverse group and many studies have found that the measurement of their citizenship competencies has shifted to include the ability to respect others' voices, tolerate ethnic differences and to have problem solving skills (Ahmad & Awang, 2016; Awang, Alfitri, Ahmad, & Ulu, 2016). Engagement with local communities is suggested as a way forward in order to acculturate noble values within an organisation (Rahman, Ahmad, Awang, & Malek, 2016a). Leaders of youth in multi-ethnic society need to ensure the efforts, programs and activities they lead aim to improve noble values especially in

urban areas where the social participation of the residents is at a low level (Rahman, Ahmad, Awang, & Malek, 2016b). To ensure senior leaders stay committed to their roles and responsibilities, research has found it is important that organisations have better rewarding systems, institutional recognition and continuous professional development programs (Ahmad, Awang, & Yunus, 2015).

Objectives of the Study

The current study surveyed multi-ethnic youth aspirations on the credibility of political leaders, political concern and political leadership styles. Specifically, the study identified the levels of relationship between Credibility, Political Concern and Political Leadership Styles in Indonesia. It also examined the differences of youth aspirations of leadership quality with regards to their integrity, political leadership style and political concern. Indeed, the study also examined the influence of political concern as a mediator between integrity and political leadership style.

Methodology

This study employs a survey research design, to make comparisons and examine correlations involving a total of 800 youths in Indonesia. This study uses a survey to collect information from respondents in order to obtain data related to the integrity, political leadership style, and political concern. Youth aged between 19 and 25 years old in Indonesia were chosen as the respondents and this amount is above the recommended size and also sufficient to present the populace (Eng, 2003). Among the respondents, 446 are male (55.8%) and 354 are female (44.3%). Of this, 302 of them are graduates (37.8%), while, the rest are employed and unemployed with the total of 250 (31.3%) and 248 (31.0%) respectively. The instrument used in this study was adapted from Kouzes and Posner (2002) and Ahmad, Awang, and Ahmad (2017) to measure three constructs which are credibility, political concern and political leadership style. Likert scales (1–7) with anchors ranging from 'lowest priority' to 'highest priority' were used for each construct.

A pilot study was conducted to check the reliability of the items. A total of 100 youth with various ethnic groups have been involved in the study. The reliability of the instruments was 0.82. Data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics to determine the level of credibility, political concern and political leadership style. One-way MANOVA was used to identify whether there were significant differences for each construct based on gender. The effects of credibility and political concern towards political leadership style were tested using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with goodness of fit chi-square value ($\chi2$) (p>0.05), comparative fit index (CFI> 0.90) and a Tucker Lewis index (TLI> 0.90). Cronbach's Alpha, CR and AVE were calculated in order to measure internal consistency of the instrument. In

order to measure political concern, 19 items were adapted using a Likert scale of 7. A pilot study was conducted to check the reliability of the items. In order to measure political concern, 5 items were adapted and the reliability value of the instrument was 0.88.

This study used descriptive and inferential statistics to achieve the objective of the study. SPSS 25 was used to determine the level of integrity, political leadership style, achievement-oriented political leadership style and political concern. MANOVA was used to identify differences in integrity, political leadership style, and political concern based on employment. Integrity as well as the role of influence and political concern was analysed using SEM. The value of goodness of fit was examined through the chi-square ($\chi2$) ($p > 0.05$), comparative fit index (CFI > 0.90) and the Tucker Lewis index (TLI > 0.90). In addition, coefficient alpha's values, CR and the AVE calculated. Alpha's value was calculated to determine the reliability of the instruments (total and sub-construction). CR take into account that indicator has a different load, while the AVE determines variation. Hair et al. (2006) reported that the alpha value of 0.60 to 0.70 is considered satisfactory. CR should be more than 0.60, and AVE should be higher than 0.50.

Findings of the Study
Level of Relationship between Integrity, Political concern and Political Leadership Styles

Table 1 shows that there is a significant relationship between integrity, political leadership style and political concern with the value of r = 0.177 and 0.452 ($p < 0.05$). The strength of the relationships shown are weak and moderate. In terms of the mean shows that integrity (M = 6.28, SD = 0.65), idealism struggle (M = 5.54, SD = 1.14), political concern (M = 4.16, SD = 0.63) and political leadership style (M = 5.37, SD = 1.22) among youths is moderate and high. This correlation suggests that the validity of the discrimination variables has been reached because the matrix correlation produced a correlation of less than 0.90 (Kline, 2005). In terms of normality, the results of the initial analysis of the univariate describe all items measure of Credibility, his idealism struggles and political leadership style to achieve normal univariate (values of skewness and kurtosis from 0.06 to 2.22).

The differences between integrity, political leadership style and political concern

A one-way Manova was used to identify differences in integrity, political leadership style, and political concern based on employment. Test Box'M (F = 7.318 >, p 0.05) indicating all independent variables have equality of variance for each group and allows the test to be used for analysis. Wilks test results Lambda (F = 6.699, sig = 0.001, $p < 0.05$) indicating that the effects of difference are integrity, political leadership style, and political concern based on employment. The difference for each variable is presented in table 2 below.

Table 2 shows that there are significant differences in political concern (F = 4.538, sig = 0.011, p < 0.05) and political leadership style (F = 16.513, sig = 0.001, p < 0.05) based on the youths' employment status with the effect of small differences (0.011 to 0.040). Youth who are students have a higher perception compared to employed youth. While there have been significant differences of integrity (F = 0.578 0.561, sig = p > 0.05). This means that youth as students, working and not working have a perspective similar to integrity. Post Hoc Scheffe test results show that there are significant differences between the status of a job struggle idealism of youth as a student with not working (the difference mean = 0.33) and work with not working (the difference mean = 0.51). For political concern indicates there is a significant difference between students with working youths (mean difference = 0.16). The next significant differences also occur for political leadership styles between students and working youths (mean difference = 0.54), the mean difference is 0.50.

The Influence of political concern and idealism as the mediators between integrity and political leadership style

The SEM analysis reported that structural model hypothesis on $\chi 2 / df = 3.38$, RMSEA = 0.06, TLI = 0.90, and CFI = 0.97. All evaluations yield appropriate model. The loading factor for integrity, political leadership style, idealism struggle and political concern variables is from 0.61 to 0.92. Loading factor value exceeded the standard acceptance of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2006).

Integrity positively influences the political leadership style based on idealism and political concern construct. There is a significant relationship existed between the two constructs ($\beta = 0.09$, t = 2.632, p<0.01). Indirectly, idealism struggles have a positive influence on political leadership style ($\beta = 0.38$, t = 2.175, p<0.01) and political concern ($\beta = 0.38$, t = 12.929, p<0.01).

Discussion

This study found that the youth's integrity, political leadership style and idealism scores are high while their political concern score is at a moderate level. Integrity has direct and significant influences on political leadership style. An organisation may not grow if the leaders do not change with transformation within the society. Leaders' integrity facilitates the development of vision, mission and objective as a means of promoting youths' participation and political engagement.

Programs and action plans have to be developed according to the aims of an organisation. Leaders should be able to reflect upon the aims to ensure successful implementation. It is

crucial for an organisation to be led by individuals who understand, commit and act proactively to achieve the agreed objectives (Lyon, Nadersahi, Nattestad, Kachalia, & Hammer, 2014). Integrity enables leaders to realise the strength of the individuals within their organisation. Leaders with high integrity are honest, responsible and wise in making decisions (Goolamally & Ahmad, 2014). Good governance ensures transparency and openness among the community to achieve a high standard of quality (Aryee, Budhwar, & Chen, 2002).

Leaders' honesty and sincerity are the basis of integrity. They sacrifice for others to so organisations can achieve a high performance (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). In addition, these leaders stress the importance of principles including providing an exemplar, having good relationships with the people they lead, respecting others despite differences of opinions, creating a safe working environment for being honest, and guiding others to improve.

Conclusions

Overall, it is clear that is a significant relationship between the element of integrity, political concern and political idealism towards leadership style is inspired by a multi-ethnic youth. As these three elements are inter-related for selecting future political leaders by multi-ethnic youth, the prospect leaders must be aware to exhibit these elements in their political life. Indeed, in democratic countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia, political leaders must exhibit good behaviour by projecting their integrity, their concern to peoples' problems and clearly understand the political ideal. Although the element of integrity in this study is less powerful compared to the elements of political concern and idealism, it must be realised that these three factors are inter-related. This means that all these elements are important considerations for multi-ethnic youth when selecting their future leaders.

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Table 1: Correlation matrix, mean and standard deviation

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Integrity	1			
2. Idealism	0.287**	1		
3. Political concern	0.282**	0.295**	1	
4. Political leadership style	0.309**	0.551**	0.552**	1
Skewness	-1.81	-0.82	-1.61	-1.51
Kurtosis	2.22	0.06	1.61	1.32
Mean	6.28	5.54	4.16	5.37
SD	0.65	1.14	0.63	1.22

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 2: One way MANOVA - differences of integrity, political concern and political leadership style

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Integrity	.483	2	.241	.578	.561	.001
Political concern	3.515	2	1.757	4.538	.011	.011
Political leadership style	47.325	2	23.662	16.513	.001	.040

Table 3: Output of Mediating Effect

Path	Direct effect		Indirect effect		Result
	B	P value	B	Nilai P	
INT -> IS -> LS	0.09	0.000	0.38	0.000	Partial mediation
INT -> PC -> LS	0.09	0.000	0.38	0.000	Partial mediation

Note: Integrity (INT); Idealism Struggle (IS); Political leadership Style (LS); Political concern (PC)

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Figure 1. Model of integrity and political leadership style
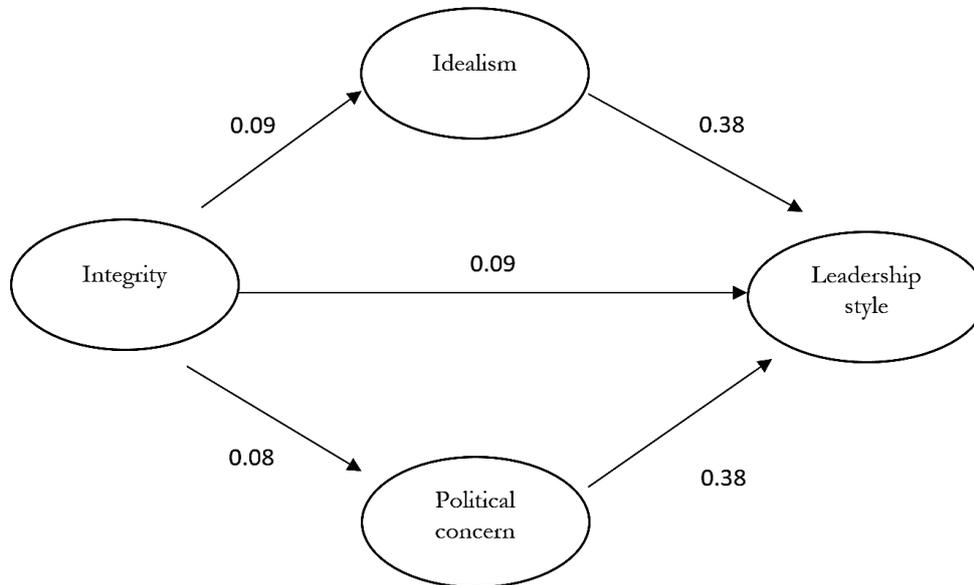
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