

Exploring Javanese

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Exploring Javanese Interpersonal Communication using the *Catur-Atahiktri* Approach: the Four Basic Values of Javanese Interpersonal Relationships

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This paper examines and validates Javanese interpersonal communication's dimensionality. A survey of 120 Batik employees was conducted. The new construction of Javanese interpersonal communication is stated to be built and tested. At the first point, preliminary form development, in-depth interviews, reviewing prior theoretical and empirical research in the field of interpersonal communication is constructed. During the second stages, item generation, content validity testing and construct validity assessment is accompanied to examine the dimensionality of the proposed construct. At the final stage, we employed reliability and validity information. Our results validate Javanese interpersonal communication as a multidimensional construct comprising of (a) Narimo (giving in), (b) Ngalah (accepting all things in life with gratitude), (d) Empan papan (place consciousness) and (d) Andhap Asor (humbleness/modesty). The research results contribute to a better understanding of the dimensionality and drivers of interpersonal communication based on *catur-atahiktri* approach. This can help managers to enhance their corporate strategies to build harmony among employees in a Javanese community working environment.

Key words: *Javanese, Interpersonal Communication, Catur-atahiktri, Harmony, Mutual respect, Empan Papan.*



Introduction

Recent research on management reveals the role of interpersonal communication in the career development of an employee (Lolli, 2013). An employee who has excellent interpersonal communication skills will quickly adapt to the organisational environment. Interpersonal communication skills will help an employee to build relationships with co-workers, such as exchanging ideas, information, and skills. According to Marzano, Carss, & Bell (2006), employees who have interpersonal communication skills will have mutual respect and learn to consider the opinions and suggestions from colleagues. Communication that runs effectively allows each task that is charged can be completed better and faster. A good relationship with co-workers and company leaders will enable individuals to get opportunities that are more attractive in the company where they work. The excellent impression employees give to the company will make it easier for them to get higher positions and greater responsibilities.

Many western and eastern researchers with several different characteristics, as explained by Miike (2017), have carried out management research that discusses interpersonal communication. Some of the differences mentioned are that communication in the west tends to be individualistic while in the east, people tend to be more involved in developing stronger social ties. One form of culture that carries these eastern values is Javanese philosophy. Murtisari (2013) explained that Javanese culture is a reflection of the Javanese human mind, which summarises the will, ideals, ideas, and spirit in achieving prosperity, safety, and happiness both physically and mentally.

As a tradition and oral folklore, the Javanese culture has values from the viewpoint of the community. By taking the values of traditional expressions, the community can understand how the ancestors or the people who produce these expressions view and respond to life, to maintain balance and harmony. Therefore, in general, Javanese society is seen as a society that is always grounded in the creation of human harmony with God, society, and the environment (Sutarto, 2006).

The peculiarities of Javanese values as Indonesian culture has consequences of differences in values with other countries' cultures, including in the context of interpersonal communication (Fathoni, Muhibbin, & Hidayat, 2016). Most of the communication literature only adopts the scale of measurement that has been carried out by westerners so that it is possible to produce bias in attitudes and behaviour indicators. Takai and Ota (1994) show scepticism when they stated that a measurement scale can accurately provide an overview of the attitude of life of culture with another culture when the norms or values held are equivalent. However, like Japanese culture, they consider that the culture inherited by the Japanese people has much uniqueness compared to other countries. Thus, when a researcher measures the interpersonal communication competency using a scale used in western countries, it is possible to have a



bias even though back-translation techniques have been carried out. Additionally, they stated that "it is doubtful that the mere translation can attain conceptual equivalence in a highly culture-loaded matter as interpersonal competence".

Interpersonal communication skills can be interpreted as the ability to communicate appropriately and effectively for a given situation (Burleson, 2010; Munawaroh, 2015). Likewise, Solomon and Theiss (2012) defined interpersonal communication as a process of delivering ideas that are easily understood by the listeners. Wood (2015) conceptualised interpersonal communication as "the extent to which the utterance is perceived as suitable for a particular purpose and a particular audience in a particular social context". Cultural differences have vast implications on attitudes because they involve norms that live in a society (Croucher, Sommer, Rahmani, & Appenrodt, 2015). Something that is considered appropriate in the context of a particular cultural community may be an attitude that cannot be tolerated and is considered inappropriate in another culture. So it becomes possible if there are fundamental differences that exist in a cultural context based on a value system and norms that live inside the community (Tili & Barker, 2015).

In Javanese culture, one of the differences in communication is shown from the aspect of self-restraint. The characteristic shown by western traditions is that when communicating they are accustomed to being confrontational when they feel there is something that is not following their opinion. At the same time, Javanese people tend to avoid and act restrained from expressing it as a way to harmonise with other group members (Suratno, 2016).

According to Nadar (2007), another characteristic that is quite prominent for Javanese people is the habit of hiding feelings. This attitude arises because they assume that something is very inappropriate if other people know what they are thinking. For some cultures hiding feelings is something normal to do but for Javanese people, this becomes a living value that they hold tight.

This research was conducted to explore Javanese values in communication that are often used by employees in companies that are dominated by Javanese people. The inquiry then continues with an exploratory factor analysis to investigate the variables that appeared as a reflection of interpersonal communication between employees in the company.

Ethical Foundation for Javanese Interpersonal Communication

Previous research on Javanese culture has revealed two fundamental values which are the main point of view of Javanese people in establishing a social relationship. The two fundamental values are how to maintain: i) *guyub rukun* (harmony) and ii) *ngurmati/hormat* (mutual respect) among members of the community (Gunarwan, 1996).



Javanese Principal of Guyub Rukun

Baidhawy (2007) and Hawkins (1996) stated that guyub rukun (harmony) is a way to behave and is based on an effort to maintain peaceful interactions with each other that aim to avoid conflict. Geertz (1976) explained that guyub rukun (harmony) is a Javanese culture inner value which aims to maintain social conditions that are harmonious, serene and peaceful without a quarrel.

Javanese social-self is connected in a relational context with the cultural environment that has a strong influence on individuals. Matsumoto (2004) distinguished between social self in collectivist and individualist contexts. Individualistic culture forms an independent construal of self, which is self that focuses on internal attributes personal or individual ability. Whereas in collectivist values such as Javanese culture, the interdependent construal of self will exist as a part of their interaction with the environment. The main characteristic of a collectivistic culture is how to adjust to maintain interdependence. Consciousness is intersubjective, which is interpersonally connected.

Guyub rukun in substance means promoting social harmony and ignoring personal interests. The principle of a harmonious life lived by the Javanese people aims to eliminate the seeds of conflict that arise from selfishness. The value of harmony in Javanese society teaches people to be: low profile, not try to stifle and compete with other people, not be self-assertive, be obedient, and do not prioritise individual interests because of individual ambition (Kurwidaria, Rahadini, & Wijayanti, 2018).

The principle of harmonious values in Javanese culture is seen in several expressions such as the following proverb "crah agawe bubrah rukun agawe santosa" which means, a fight causes detriment, and getting along well makes the union tighter. As a conclusion, the central purpose from the cultural heritage of Javanese values is to maintain the condition of a harmonious, peaceful and calm society without any disputes as well giving priority to good relationships with others under the values of Javanese etiquette even though they must refrain from conflict (Sulistiyono, & Panuwun, 2018). Two maxims that often appear as representations of the attitude of maintaining harmony (rukun) shown by the Javanese people, namely the attitude ngalah (to give in) and narimo (accepting all things in life with gratitude) (Gunarwan, 1996).

The problem that often occurs in individualistic cultures is the occurrence of conflict and intense competition as a form of egocentrism. Whereas on the contrary collectivistic culture, individuals are not accustomed to saying "no" in order to avoid confrontation. One of the ways that are often taken by Javanese people to minimise and ease emotion is by applying the value of narimo (accepting all things in life with gratitude). In the context of interpersonal relationships, the principle of narimo for Javanese people is interpreted as to live a life that



does not force will or does not behave ambitiously. The implication that arises from narimo's attitude is that one's mind is not focused on the problems that occur but on the solutions that can be produced. Javanese cultural values, especially narimo, teach the people to be in good society, virtuous, maintain harmony in living life, respect differences and be a society that leaves all problems to God (Vivi, 2019).

Ngalah (to give in/concede) as one of the lexicon that emerged from Javanese vocabulary emerged as a mandate to avoid conflict and maintain social harmony. Javanese people believe that karma still holds in cosmic circles. Being defeated is sometimes considered defeat by the enemy. Other communities regard such people's attitudes as fatalistic. A defeatist attitude indeed has done by people in the culture who adhere to a spiritual culture system.

Nevertheless, in Javanese cosmic logic, the attitude of giving in becomes a hold on that God will elevate people who concede (wani ngalah luhur wekasane). According to Miartianing (2015), the attitude of ngalah (give in/concede) will emerge patience, self-control, calm, not grudge against others and surrender to the will of the creator. The Javanese believe that the corpus of ngalah is a way of truth that needs to be experienced as a spiritual practice. By reflecting on an attitude of defeatism, the Javanese person gains an authentic understanding of striving to be truly good as humans in general and as a Javanese society in particular.

Javanese Principal of Ngurmati (Respect)

The value of respect in the Javanese family is vital in the life of the community which is related to the procedure of grace and behaviour of the Javanese community, the value of respect is related to the politeness of the Javanese community. In Javanese society, the value of respecting or appreciating is a measurement of an individual or a person in society, whether this individual can be said to have an ethical manner by the values in Javanese society. The principle of respect explains that everyone, when speaking and carrying oneself, must show respect for other people, according to their degree and position (Suseno, 2003: 60). In Javanese society, the attitude that is considered excellent and civilised is gentle. This attitude includes softness, smoothness, elegance, and flexibility. Everything smooth is presented in good order, gracefully perfected and carried out charmingly. It was considered the culmination of Javanese culture. This mental attitude shows mastery of the levels of speech in Javanese, self-awareness, and the necessity to act refined and understated (Mulder, 2007: 251). The principle of respect determines hierarchical relationships and thus establishes a framework for all kinds of interactions. In the context of the vertical respect, Magnis-Suseno (1997) took the Javanese ethic postulate put forward by Geertz (1976), and argued that for Javanese people all social relations are hierarchical, and this tiered regularity contains a value for the Javanese entity.



Further analysis conducted by Magnis-Suseno (1997) found that respect is a valuable asset for the development of community motivation to encourage ethical attitudes such as honesty, loyalty, empathy, sympathy and tolerance that are opposed to the mental attitude of "bypass". Corpus of respect will act as a fundamental condition for humanity to understand and respect one another as peaks of Javanese culture nobility. One of the fundamental differences of Javanese culture with the Western Society is regarding the understanding of Javanese ethics as a wisdom that is different from the perspective of Western ethical philosophy carried by Immanuel Kant who has a categorical imperative formula about ethics as an obligation. Kahn's opinion suggests that doing good is an obligation while for Javanese culture, wisdom is the keyword in understanding the character of an existing culture.

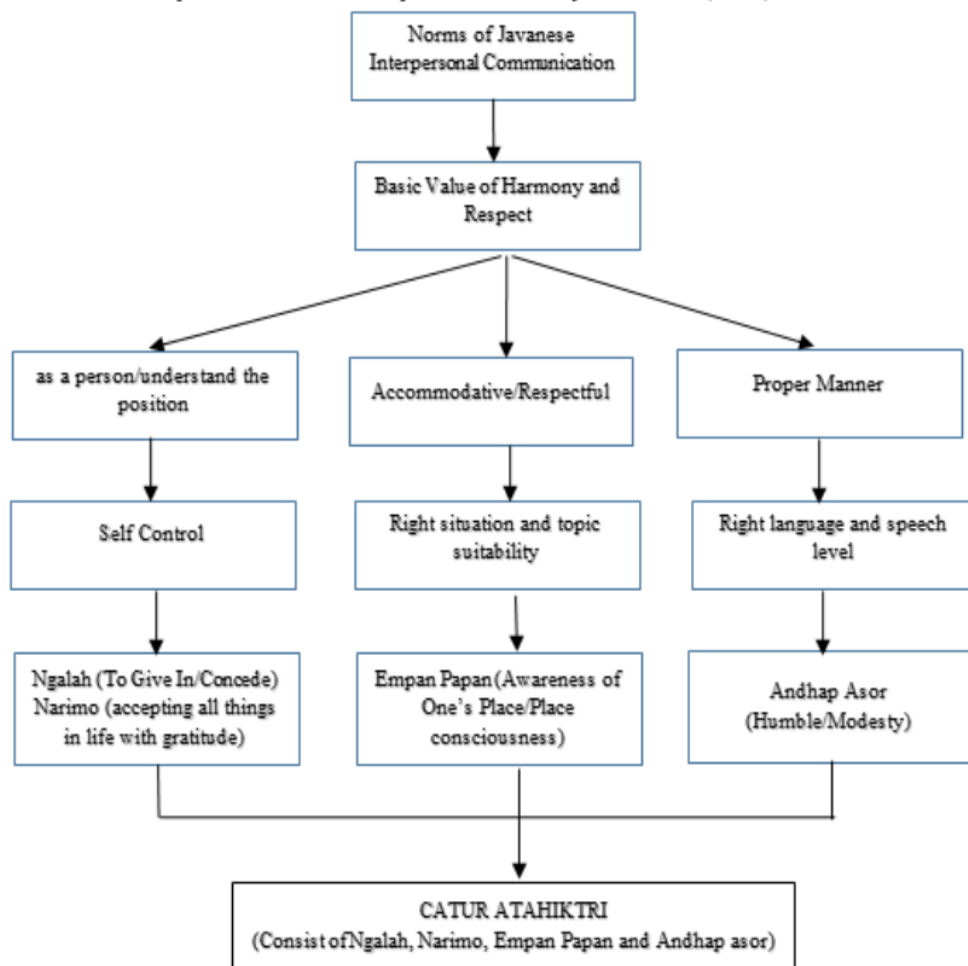
According to Gunarwan (1997), the phrase "empan papan" (place consciousness) is one of the cardinal principles in the context of Ngurmati (respect). This maxim has meant that when behaving and talking one must pay attention to the place, the situation (papan), the contents (empan) and who is faced (adepan). The phrase of empan papan represents the attitude of people who know where to put themselves in and understand what should be done according to their capacity. Hughes-Freeland (1991) argued that empan papan as personal awareness to behave according to the value of politeness as a form of respect by considering social and personal relationships in the basis of smoothness. According to the principle of empan papan when a speaker wants to initiate a conversation, he/she should choose the suitable topic and objective to discuss with the interlocutor. The speaker also has to ensure that the speech partner is in a good mood when invited to communicate. The basic formula for this corpus of empan papan is to not discuss any personal matters in public (Poedjosoedarmo, 2017).

The Maxim of Andhap Asor interpreted by Gunarwan (1995) lexically consists of two words, i.e. the word of andhap (low) and asor (lowly). This maxim as Gunarwan said, can be paraphrased to behave "as humbly or as modestly as possible". Andhap asor attitude means being humble, which means the desire not to show off amid a community. Javanese people prioritise the attitude of andhap asor in establishing relationships with others and considers every reproach from others as a means of introspection so that they can make improvements (Sukarno, 2010). This statement of andhap asor is following Santoso's (2016) proposition which states that Javanese people highly prioritise the attitude of andhap asor in establishing relationships with others and consider every reproach from others as a means of introspection to be able to make improvements. The concept of andhap asor in terminology substantially means being humble by exalting the position of the respected person (Wijayanto, 2013). The principle of andhap asor dictates a speaker to treat an interlocutor with an appropriate manner and high respect (Saputra, 2019). One form of politeness that is shown by the attitude of andhap asor is to use krama (polite speech level) language in personal interactions.

Further, according to Sukarno (2018), interpersonal relationships within the frame of andhap asor does not allow a speaker to make the speech partner feel embarrassed. Speech partners should be made as comfortable as possible with the polite attitude shown by the speaker. One of the politeness attitudes as a representation of the attitude of andhap asor is when someone can be unobtrusive to make others have self-esteem or dignity (Muhibbin,& Mantja,2015).

The following is the conceptual framework that represents the above principles of Javanese interpersonal Communication.

Picture 1. Conceptual framework Adapted From: Poedjosoedarmo (2017)





Research Method

The research procedure was carried out with reference to the stages of the new construct for testing Interpersonal Communication Satisfaction Inventory conducted by Hecht (2003) and several other expert opinions about the development of measuring instruments. The stage making Interpersonal Communication Satisfaction Inventory conducted by Hecht (2003) involves preliminary form development, item generation, content validity testing, reliability test, discriminant validity test, and make a "short form".

In this research, the procedure that will be carried out in this research will be explained as follows:

1. Preliminary Form Development

Hecht (2003) conducted a preliminary stage by interviewing subjects and trying to burrow down information about interpersonal communication that is undertaken during work. The participants in this study were interviewed to explore experiences about their interpersonal communication processes by giving their opinions, evaluating components of Javanese interpersonal communication and confirming the variables which theoretically constitute the construct of Javanese interpersonal communication. The population consisted of approximately 120 employees in batik manufacturing in Solo, Indonesia.

2. Item Generation

The results of the interviews with 120 people employees with Javanese background were then used to make items. Initial indicator items were 21 items.

3. Content Validity Testing

According to Heale and Twycross (2015), content validity testing can be done by asking an expert in a particular field who will provide an assessment of the item that has been made. Content validity/logical validity assessment in this study was performed by asking five people who are experts in the field of psychology and communication to provide evaluation on other than 21 items which have been made. Measurements used to evaluate items that are generated, used a 5 point Likert scale (score 1 = cannot be accepted; score 2 = bad; score 3 = average; score 4 = good; score 5 = very good). Items whose average score is below four will be eliminated.

4. Construct Validity Assessment

Heale and Twycross (2015) stated that evidence of construct validity can be obtained from homogeneity, convergent validity, discriminant validity and factor analysis. In this research, the evidence used to analyse the construct validity is as follows:

a) Homogeneity test



Homogeneity is one method that can be taken by researchers to examine the construct validity (Clark and Watson, 1995). Homogeneity shows how uniformity of a measuring instrument can be used to measure a single concept. According to Henson (2001), internal consistency reliability can be employed to show that the measuring instrument can measure a single concept. Therefore, this research study is testing the construct validity with alpha Cronbach's to check the internal consistency.

b. Factor Analysis

The factor analysis method used is the exploratory factor analysis. Haig (2005) advised of using principal axis factors as a method of extraction. Additionally, Haig (2005) set an eigenvalue greater than 1.0 to determine the number of factors, use orthogonal rotation (varimax) or oblique, and determine the sample amount using the 10:1 ratio because at this level of comparison Heywood cases will not occur (loading factor greater than 1.0). After carrying out a factor analysis, the final stage in this research is to do a reliability test with alpha Cronbach.

Results

The first step the researchers did was to test the content validity involving two psychologists and two Javanese language communication experts. After testing the validity contents, items that have a value of four and above for the assessment of "Catur-atahiktri Javanese Interpersonal Communication" were as many as 21 items. The results of the content validity test show 21 items consist of three items for Ngalah (to give in/concede) dimensions, six items for the narimo (accepting all things in life with gratitude) dimension, five items for dimensions of empan papan (place consciousness), eight items for the andhap asor (Humble/Modesty) dimensions. Subsequent test results which show the construct validity, show the reliability test results with alpha Cronbach against 21 items with 120 subjects produce reliability coefficients amounted to 0.920.

The reliability coefficient value it shows is that the "Catur-atahiktri Javanese Interpersonal Communication" construct has an acceptable homogeneity. Factor analysis with an exploratory factor analysis shows the value of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) of 0.935 (<0.7) with a significance value of 0.000 (<0.05). According to Leech et al. (2005), if the value of KMO is more significant than 0.7 with a value significance <0.05 it indicates items that are highly correlated so that a factor analysis can be done. The results of rounds with orthogonal rotation (varimax) show the formation of 2 factors. The results of a factor extraction can be seen in table 1.



Table 1: Exploratory Factor Analysis Results with Rotated Varimax

Factor	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
I avoid conflicts with colleagues when communicating	.674			
I take the manner of giving in with my co-workers when there are problems in conversation	.645			
I am able to control myself when a dispute occurs	.646			
Forgiveness is the manner I take when someone hurts me.		.632		
I have a tolerant attitude when I see co-workers need help.		.521		
I respect other people even though I have a different opinion		.571		
I choose to remain silent when a discord happen.		.526		
I do not complain when unpleasant events occur.		.467		
When angry emotions arise. I will try to be calm.		.455		
I always pay attention to the situation when going to convey a topic of conversation to a friend.			.727	
I will evade personal discussing matters with friends.			.576	
I am aware of my position when talking to an older person.			.571	
I always respect my interlocutors.			.530	
When talking with co-workers. I will choose a polite expression.			.474	
I am humble when communicating with others.				.632
I do not impose opinions even though I feel right.				.582
I will listen to a friend's subject matter even though I am not interested.				.525
Selfishness is an attitude that I avoid when interacting with others.				.666
Even though I have the skills and intelligence. I still ask my colleagues for opinions.				.621
Every conversation I have with colleagues is considered as something precious.				.470
I make others respectable when engaging in conversations with me.				.438

Costello and Osborne (2005) argued that the factor structure has been fit if the loading factor is greater than 0.4. The cross-loading factor was not found (one item have a high loading factor

on two or more factors formed), and in one factor there are at least three items (factors less than three items are considered unstable). The results of the factor analysis show that each component has a loading factor greater than 0.4 and not any factor component has an indicator of fewer than three factors. The conclusion from the results of the data analysis show that all factors produced correspond to the criteria set by Costello and Osborne (2005). The next process of factor analysis is about the total variance explained, which means the total variance given by each factor to the formation of variables. The total variance explained will be explained in table 2.

Table 2: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigen Value			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative
1	1.656	22.939	22.939	1.656	22.939	22.939	1.592	22.762	22.712
2	1.275	18.254	41.114	1.275	18.254	41.114	1.251	17.886	40.638
3	1.143	16.561	57.646	1.143	16.561	57.646	1.169	16.842	57.491
4	1.244	14.929	72.565	1.244	14.929	72.565	1.058	15.095	72.575
5	.760	11.992	83.558						
6	.697	9.937	93.545						
7	.452	6.425	100.000						

Table 2 shows the results of the factor extraction and is displayed with the Eigen-value. Moreover, it shows the percentage of the variance of each factor, the cumulative factor variation and the previous variables. The statistical output shows the variance produced by the first variable of 22.93%, the second-factor accounts for 18.25%, the third factor can explain variants of 16.56%, and the fourth factor produced 14.92% of the variance. Exploratory Factor Analysis outcomes have confirmed that there are four leading factors in generating “Javanese interpersonal communication”. The four constructs are narimo (accepting all things in life with gratitude), ngalah (give in/concede), empan Papan (place consciousness) and andhap asor (humbleness/modesty).



Discussion

The main objective to be achieved from the research carried out is to develop a psychometric measure of Javanese interpersonal communication. Our results suggest that the development and refinement of the new construct produces a reliable and valid measurement. The results of empirical testing through several stages have proven that the constructs produced can provide satisfactory results based on the statistical analysis conducted.

Indicators produced as a representation of Javanese interpersonal communication can provide new insight into the development of the body of knowledge, especially in the field of communication and management. Scientific research carried out in the context of interpersonal communication so far has mostly been carried out in western societies, so it is often not suitable when used in eastern societies. This research was carried out using a cultural approach based on Javanese values that has a characteristic in establishing relationships with others. Strong cultural characteristics are very influential in the process of conducting verbal and non-verbal communication. Several concepts that emerged as a form of appreciation of the Javanese community towards their existence during the community encouraged the creation of some etiquette rules such as narimo, ngalah, empan papan and andhap asor. Narimo is an attitude of full acceptance of events in the past, present and the possibilities that can happen in the future. This matter is an effort to reduce disappointment if what happens is not according to what was expected. In the context of interpersonal communication, Javanese people will try to accept whatever is given by others without complaining. They will try to be patient and grateful for the conditions and do not try to demand more than something given by others. The next value conception held by Javanese people is giving in behaviour. This philosophy explained that in life, there must be much defeatism to achieve a victory. They are saying "Wong ngalah luhur wekasane" (people who concede will eventually excel). At first glance, it seems that it is a speculative perspective, but it has quite broad meaning to teach us all not to think selfishly and want to win alone. Javanese people believe that the attitude of defeatism will maintain harmony in relationships. When they can suppress the ego, this is interpreted as a way to maintain a more harmonious relationship with others in a community.

In Javanese philosophy, the accuracy of placing oneself is commonly called the empan papan (place consciousness). Practically the concept of empan papan is concerned with space and time. Space and time have a social dimension because they are referred to as social harmony. Being in harmony for a person means understanding their position and at the same time, understanding how to place them. Empan papan is psychological because space and time affect the feelings of comfort or discomfort for a person. In the view of Javanese culture, individuals who cannot place themselves (empan papan) when interacting with others, are considered not to have 'manners and etiquette'. The definition of etiquette in this case relates to the awareness of each individual concerning their position to respect others. The last noble



value of Javanese culture in interpersonal relations is to maintain harmony in life as is the attitude of andhap asor. The meaning of andhap asor is that it does not show its superiority and does not want to stand out. People who behave andhap asor do not want to show themselves even though they have the ability. The Javanese place a high priority on the nature of andhap asor when dealing with others. People who behave asor will be elevated or respected by others. On the other hand, people who look down on others and show no respect for both in speaking and acting will be considered arrogant.

Finally, the measurement scale initiated by the researcher regarding interpersonal communication based on Javanese values is appropriate to be used as a way of establishing communication, especially in the context of Javanese culture which has characteristics that are different from other cultures. The next step is examining the nomological network of the construct which aims to expand and strengthen the validity of the Javanese interpersonal communication construct.



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