



Perception of threat and national identity: Investigation of the mediating role of collective self esteem

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ABSTRACT

This article examines whether perceived threat can predict national identity mediated by collective self-esteem in the context of students in Indonesia. The notion of national identity can be described as an individual's attachment to a country. The strength of the bond between national identity and its individuals has an impact on raising collective self-esteem. This article shows that national identity is latent, as it can emerge and be self-reinforced when stimulated by a perceived threat. The connection between the perception of threat and national identity is indirect but mediated by collective self-esteem. This study involved 504 students from 49 universities in Indonesia. The samples of the research were obtained by using convenience sampling. The Lisrell 8.7 program was used to conduct this study's entire data analysis process. The analysis showed that the perception of threat affects the national identity, which was mediated by collective self-esteem. From the result above, collective self-esteem is influential as the mediator variable. Additionally, the impact of the perception of the threat on national identity can indicate collective self-esteem. People who perceive social phenomena in their environment will strengthen ties to the nation but this correlation is affected by the strength of collective self-esteem.

1. Introduction

Indonesia is a country with diverse ethnicities and religions. Indonesia has 1300 ethnic groups and six religions recognized by the government of the Republic of Indonesia [1]. The diversity of ethnic and religious identities can potentially cause conflicts for national harmony. If ethnic and religious identities are more substantial than national identities, it can result in tensions among social groups with different ethnicities and religious backgrounds. Preserving national identity is essential to maintaining existing and facilitating a country's development. A weak national identity will negatively influence a government, such as a breakup and a collapse nation. Strong national identity is often perceived as a unitive factor contributing to the unification between West and East Germany. In contrast, weak national identity triggered the collapse of Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union [2].

The growth and development of the national identity are influenced by the perceived threat to the national identity. The connection was confirmed by the research of Moskalenko et al. [2], who found a link between national identity and threat perception, in which the threat gave stimulus to a strong response in establishing national identity. In another study by Dimitrova [3], it was found that

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Bulgarian youth asserted their nationalism and national identity as Bulgarians while perceiving Romanians as a threat and formulating negative attitudes towards them. As we know national identity is a latent variable, it would emerge and be strengthened if stimulated by a real-life phenomenon. For example, various forms of threats that can potentially damage critical elements of a country, such as the nation's territory or culture, can be a stimulant for the reinforcement of national identity [4]. If the key elements in a country are perturbed, there will be turmoil in the country as a form of national defense.

National identity is often linked with collective self-esteem. Self-esteem plays an important role in the lives of individuals, both personally and in the context of their membership in social groups. Inferring from the human desire for self-expression and the need of being in the spotlight, which is one part of certain aspects of self, those needs arose from being in their group and having a collective or shared feeling together. These collective groups and shared feelings are inevitable considering the shared reality of the psycho-social concept of national identity and collective self-esteem [5].

People who have high collective self-esteem tend to protect their social group identities, including their national identity, from all threats [6]. Smurda [7] supported this statement by adding that collective self-esteem is also one of the determining factors of national identity, which often triggers intergroup prejudice among people who already identify themselves with certain ethnic groups or nations. The concept of collective self-esteem can explain these manifested forms of discrimination among various ethnically different groups [8]. Further, it should be noted that the generated prejudice was derived from the perception of threats to nationalism [9].

In his research in the city of Lima, Peru, Rottenbacher de Rojas [10] found that collective self-esteem had a positive correlation with national identity. The research utilized 99 teachers as its data samples. The result of the research showed that respect for past history is a form of national identity, which positively correlated with collective self-esteem.

Even the collective self-esteem can also lead to the emergence of prejudice among their social groups, in addition to the perception of threats to the nation as a derivative [7]. National identity, self-esteem, and the perception of threats to a nation are interlinked empirically. Previous studies have proven that the perception of threats is related to national identity [3,11], collective self-esteem [12], and collective self-esteem that is linked with national identity [7]. However, researchers have not found a model that connects the three variables (i.e., perception of threats, national identity, collective self-esteem). This encouraged the researchers to create a relationship model that can be tested statistically between these three variables. Thus, the researchers aimed to build a model that shows the mediation effect of the collective self-esteem regarding the relationship between perception of threats and national identity.

2. National identity

The theoretical explanation of national identity cannot be considered separately from the concept of social identity. National identity can be understood as part of an individual's social identity and a collective phenomenon for certain national groups [13]. The discussion regarding national identity often relates to individuals in the context of groups whose patterns vary, such as groups based on similarities in race, ethnicity, or religion. It can also connect to the ties of the same citizenship in a country [14]. The discourse of social identity is also often related to the context of an individual within his or her group. In the point of view of social psychology, there are two kinds of self in a human, namely 1.) self in a personal context and traits; 2.) self in the context of membership in a group [15]. Firstly, the self signifies personal identity. Secondly, the self indicates social identity. However, these two selves are interrelated with each other [16]. Therefore, while [17] study focused on the interpretation of social identity as a personal attachment to social groups, this research focuses on the interpretation of social identity that relates to a nation.

National identity can be identified into two types, that is citizenship as the national identity and ethnicity as the national identity [18]. Each of these national identities has special characteristics that can be distinguished from one another. The ethnic as the national identity can be interpreted as the similarities of historical region or homeland, land myths, and commonalities of their historical and cultural elements in their social environment. On the other hand, Tkachenko (2016) explains that citizenship as the national identity is not based on ethnic similarities but on a group membership that belongs to similar surrounding residents and tolerance for different ethnicities who also reside in the same country. The identity of the latter is a choice made by a person.

From the identification of these two types of national identity, the study emphasizes more on citizenship identity. This type of national identity can be identified by the members' attachment to their country. The notion of national identity can also be explained through the concept of social identity, which is a part of the self-concepts born from the concept of social membership in a group, including the state or nation [15]. Therefore, national identity can be interpreted as an individual's attachment to a country as the place to experience and display a sense of belongingness [19].

Tracing from the process of the formation of the national identity, it starts growing when an individual is in childhood. Several studies found that children were able to talk about their membership in a national group starting at five years old, and their awareness of the attributes of their national identity increases significantly between the ages of 5 and 11 years as well [20]. At this stage of development, children can conceptualize national identity based on geographical, familial, and linguistic elements [21].

Continuing to the phase of adolescence, in which individuals are undergoing both physical and psychological development, the phase features people who are searching for their identity about who and how they interact with the social agents in their social environments. In this context, interpersonal communication plays an instrumental role in the dynamics of their social identity formation [22]. In the stage of early adolescence, positive attitudes towards national in-groups tend to decline; however, in-group favoritism is always maintained [23]. Additionally, adolescents can perceive more hidden signs of national identities, such as the sense of belonging and loyalty to the nation [24].

After individuals enter the phase of college education, the inner formation of their national identity tends to be stable (e.g., as teachers, and parents as social agents). This means that the tendency of individuals to identify themselves as part of a particular nation has been solidified. In a study from Northern Ireland, an individual transition from school to university had no impact on their national

identity [25]. In contrast, a study hailed from Los Angeles found that the transition from the phase of school to the university stimulated the growth of patriotic values [26].

Besides individual and group issues, national identity is also concerned with behaviors within groups and among groups. There are at least three theories of cognitive processes interrelated with group behavior, i.e., social categorization, social identification, and social comparison [14]. Social categorization relates to the tendency of individuals to categorize others based on their similarities and differences. Thus, based on these similarities and differences, individuals can categorize others into in-groups and out-groups [15]. As a consequence, these individuals tend to act towards the in-groups favorably and discriminate against the out-groups. [27] found that Americans tend to categorize themselves as Americans and believe that other Americans should do the same.

Social identification refers to individuals who create their category for their group identification so that people will no longer consider them as unique individuals but as group members [14]. The position of an individual indicates as part of a group, which in this context is the state, that will override personal identity. Kelman (1997) argues that this happens because people adopt key elements of the state as part of themselves, which ultimately form personal meanings that shape their worldview.

Meanwhile, theoretically, social comparison is an individual's evaluation regarding one's personal opinion and one's abilities in comparison with other people who also have opinions or perform tasks with similar abilities in their surroundings [28]. Social comparison in the context of a group is different from a social comparison in the context of an individual. In the context of a group, social comparison is a comparison between individuals and the group they belong to, as well as the assessment of others to the individuals within the group. Furthermore, Darley (2001) explains that if the membership of the group is deemed crucial for an individual psychologically, then it will have an enormous influence on the behavior, thoughts, and emotions of the members of the group. Under this condition, the individuals will encourage others in their group to think and act in order to achieve something that is considered valuable or maintain common values for the group [14]. The cognitive process is influenced by the internalization of national identity elements that their perspective on the world is affected by values and other elements inherent in a particular nation [29]. The national identity also includes the beliefs and values associated with their meaning of humane existence, the nature of social institutions, human relationships, and the interpretation of an ideal personification [29]. These values stem from the long historical experience of a nation and are reflected in and elaborated in documents, traditions, and various forms of institutions. For example, beliefs and values influence how an individual view the world and position themselves in the world, as well as how they cultivate their relationship with their surroundings.

3. Perception of threat

A threat is a perception or feeling that something imminent will impede or hinder someone [30]. Threats can impede the fulfillment of basic personal needs and be related to social groups, including the identity of a nation. Threats related to the group will bring forth the assertiveness of group membership sentiments and deliver ethnocentric attitudes and behavior [30]. Threats often lead people to support and maintain the in-groups and, at the same time, harass the out-groups [31].

According to [32], people feel threatened when they are unable to handle and accommodate a direct demand effectively. In contrast, when the demand is believed to be anticipated and handled well, the demand will not be considered a threat but becomes a challenge [31]. Blascovich and Tomaka (1996) state that the threat increases when people think that the perceived efficacy of dealing with existing social demands is low. Thus, a threat level depends on people's perceptions. A threat occurs when it is posed by actual conditions that must be anticipated from a person's social or physical environment, which are considered as a hindrance to the satisfaction derived from achieving the goals, individual intentions, or, broadly, basic human needs.

The interaction between the in-group and out-group also plays a key role in creating the perception of threats that give rise to prejudice and conflict, such as the presence of immigrants who are considered as out-groups who are also perceived as a threat to a nation [33]. The emergence of threats is not always born from the out-group, as the threats to the social identity sometimes can be attributed to the conflict from within the in-group. The conflict often stems from group members who have some similar characteristics but also striking differences from the majority of other group members [34].

The researcher conducted a preliminary study to identify aspects that are perceived as threats to the Indonesian people, and the results are as follows.

As shown in Table 1, drugs and terrorism occupy the highest order of the national threat. The threat of substance or drug abuse has a direct impact on the physiology and psychology of human well-being. The effect of drugs on human physiology is profound, causing severe illness and death, while the psychological effects cause mental depression, serious mental disorder/psychosis, suicide, and a tendency to commit crimes seeking destruction [35]. Similarly, the threat posed by the acts of terrorism is not only concerned with individual safety but also includes an economic impact on a larger scale. For example, a survey conducted in a study of 177 countries regarding the impact of the act of terrorism on the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) found an average decline of 0.048% [36].

Table 1
The aspect of national threat perceptions.

No	Threat(s)	Frequency
1	Substance (Drugs)	124
2	Terrorism	124
3	Consumptive Behavior	78

(see appendix 1).

Additionally, terrorism is also considered a threat to national identity. There are two factors that can distinguish terrorism. The first is the rebellious activities carried out by the natives based on ethnic or religious backgrounds. The second is derived from the outside source or international parties connected with the geopolitical conditions of a country [37]. Crenshaw [38] asserted that terrorism is a symbolic act aimed at influencing political behavior in a way that is beyond normalcy, where violence or threat of violence is used to influence behavior. Consumptive behavior is associated with a lower level of empathy and tends to have a pattern of volatile relationships that is prone to conflict [39]. The main focus of people that engage in high consumptive behavior is themselves, thus ignoring their social groups [40]. Therefore, this may be considered a threat to the national identity that requires cohesiveness among its member, which is characterized by solidarity among its members, a sense of empathy, and social awareness to enjoy a nation's prosperity.

4. Collective self esteem

Social group membership is crucial in promoting a positive identity. When the social identity of an individual has been established, the individual often makes an effort to maintain his identity or to boost their self-esteem; they strive for a positive self-concept due to intergroup comparisons [41]. People usually have two identities: 1) Personal identity, which relates to the characteristics of the individuals, and 2) social or collective identity which is associated with the characteristics of the individuals' group, which may or may not characterize oneself as an individual [6]. Collective identity consists of self-identification as a member of an ethnic group, a sense of belonging to the group, positive attitudes towards the group, and involvement in ethnic practices [42].

On the other hand, everyone has a self-evaluation mechanism or self-assessment of values, which is known as self-esteem [42]. Self-esteem is an evaluative assessment dimension aspect of self-esteem, which combines cognitive and affective aspects [43]. Through cognitive aspects, an individual acquires knowledge about himself or herself, which is organized in a thinking scheme that comes from real experience or imagery from the judgments of others. In contrast, the affective aspect gives birth to feelings that arise from themselves. Thus, self-evaluation gives rise to strong feelings, such as fear, anger, hatred, love, pride, satisfaction, anxiety, shame, guilt, shame, and emotions.

Self-esteem is a central aspect of well-being and psychological adjustment. In its development, self-esteem can be divided into two, namely personal self-esteem and collective self-esteem. Personal self-esteem is defined as a feeling of self-worth derived from an individual's characteristics [44]. Collective self-esteem is an individual's feeling and evaluation of the worthiness of a social group - such as the race, ethnicity, or workgroup - of which the related person is deemed one of its members [45].

One who becomes a social group member is usually motivated to maintain a positive image of the group and will react to any disturbance from both in-group and out-group so that the image of the group is preserved and even promoted. The portrayal of a group's image provides evidence for a working mechanism of collective self-esteem in people who identify with a social group. Further, how individuals respond when the image of their social group is questioned is also influenced by collective self-esteem [44]. Collective self-esteem also influences individuals who experience threats because they feel a greater threat to self-esteem when they perform adequately well in a higher-performing group that performs more than well but has a different impact on people who are in lower-performing groups [44].

Multiple scientific research evidence indicates that collective self-esteem has a positive impact, including positive mental health such as life satisfaction and individual well-being that can be predicted by collective self-esteem [46]. [6] found that collective self-esteem was positively associated with well-being among white, black, and Asian college students in the United States. Likewise, in research conducted by Ref. [47], collective self-esteem mediates the relationship between allocentrism, defined as individual differences in collectivism, and subjective well-being among U.S. students. A study of 798 Chinese migrant adolescents also found that there is a relationship between perceived discrimination and three indices of psychological well-being, which consist of self-esteem, life satisfaction, and collective self-esteem [48].

[49] explained that collective self-esteem contains four aspects. The first aspect explains private collective self-esteem, which is related to evaluating individual social groups [6]. For the private collective self-esteem aspect, individuals evaluate how well the relationship between an individual and her social group is. The second aspect is concerned with collective public self-esteem, which relates to an individual's assessment regarding how other people evaluate the social group of the individual [49]. The third aspect talks about the importance of being a good member of a social group and how other people feel about their social group [49]. Lastly, the fourth aspect of collective self-esteem is associated with membership, which relates to the feelings of an individual regarding how well the individual can function as one of the members of their social group [6].

5. Methods

5.1. Sample

The study employed 504 students from 49 universities as samples. The gender distribution was 176 male and 328 female students, with an average age of 22. The study used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to analyze the samples, which should be sufficient for further analysis. The rule of thumb on the SEM test sample is 30–460 if the case is continuum data [50], while for ordinal data, it is recommended to reach the range of 200–500 [51]. The recommended sample size is to consider the accuracy of estimates, models, data and empirical context [52]. In testing the strength of inferential statistics, the probability related to the rejection of the hypothesis being tested if it is false is often seen. And SEM requires four things to determine the strength of a test, including 1) model, 2) alternative model, 3) targeted significance level, and 4) sample size [53]. Thus, the number of samples employed in this study should

be sufficiently adequate.

5.2. Analysis

SEM aims to verify the structural relationship between one latent variable and other latent variables and to analyze the relationship of each indicator of the latent variables. SEM also analyzes the covariance structure of latent variables, which leans more likely toward a confirmatory analysis than an exploratory approach [54]. The SEM approach can be divided into two, i.e., the covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) and the partial least squares SEM (PLS-SEM) [55]; in other words, if you want to test a theory and confirm it, then covariance-based (CB) SEM is the most appropriate choice [56]. This research aims to test and verify the formulated theory, which qualified the use of CB-SEM [57] as the most appropriate approach.

The study tested the model of the relationship between the perceptions of the national threat and national identity mediated by collective self-esteem. Baron and Kenny (1986) showed that such a model is called the mediational relation. The mediational relation explains how a variable affects other variables by including a third variable (B), which is located between the independent variable (A) and the outcome variable or dependent variable (C) [58], which also has a predictive relationship. The third variable is the mediator variable (M), which explains the relationship between the independent and dependent variables (outcome variable).

A mediator is an intervening variable that explains the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The function of the mediator variable has three requirements.

- (a) The variation of IV causes significant differences in the variable perceived as the mediator, namely the pathway a;
- (b) The variation of mediator significantly causes differences in DV, namely the pathway b;
- (c) When pathways a and b are controlled, the previously significant relationship between IV and DV becomes insignificant 0, as now the mediation that occurs happening when pathway c is zero [58].

The researcher chose structural equation modeling (SEM) as a method to analyze the mediational relation model in this study and all analysis using Mplus 8.4.

5.3. Instrument

The study employed three instruments to measure the variables. For measuring the variable of national identity, the Indonesian national identity scale was used [59]. This scale consists of three aspects. The national pride aspect has four items (e.g., when I am listening to the national anthem of Indonesia, i.e., *Indonesia Raya*, a sense of pride would well up; Pancasila is a unique and amazing national guideline, I feel unique and proud of Indonesia), the aspect of exclusive national belongingness consisting of seven items (e.g., I will accept any conditions happening in Indonesia and still be proud of it; I feel belongingness that stems from profound love to Indonesia makes one not want to change one’s nationality), and the aspect of national devotion consisting of six items (e.g., I am participating in daily communal activities and at the same time preserving the spirit of *gotong royong*; I am ready to become the volunteer in defending my country). The measuring instruments employed the Likert scale that consisted of five responses (highly suitable = 5, suitable = 4, somewhat suitable = 3, less suitable = 2, and not suitable = 1).

The Indonesian national identity scale has been tested by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The information regarding the model

Table 2
Scores for reliability, validity, and CFA Standardized Loading Factor (SLF of Indonesian national identity scale).

Item	Mean	SD	CFA			Cronbach’s alpha	Construct reliability	AVE
			SLF	se	t-value			
1	4.61	0.58	0.63	0.04	18.33	0.895	0.95	0.51
2	4.28	0.76	0.84	0.02	40.30			
3	4.18	0.76	0.78	0.02	32.06			
4	4.39	0.71	0.74	0.03	27.00			
5	4.39	0.63	0.71	0.03	26.55			
6	4.31	0.46	0.76	0.03	26.33			
7	4.22	0.41	0.70	0.04	18.52			
8	3.66	0.94	0.79	0.02	41.10			
9	4.39	0.73	0.64	0.03	19.92			
10	4.20	0.80	0.81	0.02	38.39			
11	3.84	0.98	0.82	0.02	42.25			
12	4.15	0.64	0.53	0.04	15.11			
13	3.78	0.90	0.66	0.03	22.97			
14	3.33	0.93	0.65	0.03	21.17			
15	3.95	0.75	0.71	0.03	26.29			
16	3.85	0.83	0.74	0.03	29.95			
17	3.38	0.95	0.56	0.03	16.45			
NP	21.84	2.50	0.97	0.02	64.51			
ENB	24.62	3.18	0.96	0.02	63.41			
ND	22.45	3.35	0.87	0.02	43.41			

fitness can be evaluated using The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), which had a cut-off value of 0.8 [60], the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), whose cut off value is 0.95 [61]. The result of the analysis showed that RMSEA = 0.06 (<0.08), CFI = 0.98 (>0.95), and TLI = 0.97 (>0.95) which indicates the measurement model fits the data. After testing the fit model, it can be interpreted as the contribution of factor loading from all items to each of the factors, and three factors are referred to as the standardized loading value.

As shown in Table 2, the 18 items dan the three factors had a significant standardized loading factor because the t-value is above 1.96. It can be concluded that all items and the three factors (National pride, Exclusive national belonging, and National devotion) have a significant contribution to measuring national identity. In addition, based on the value of the standardized loading factor, construct reliability (CR) and variance extracted (VE) were also analyzed by the Fornel and Lacker formula [62]:

$$Construct\ reliability = \frac{(\sum Standardized\ loading\ factor)^2}{(\sum Standardized\ loading\ factor)^2 + \sum e_j} \tag{1}$$

$$Variance\ extracted = \frac{\sum Standardized\ loading\ factor^2}{\sum Standardized\ loading\ factor^2 + \sum e_j} \tag{2}$$

Where e_j is the measurement error for each item or indicator [63]. From the results of the analysis it was found that CR = 0.96 and variance extracted (VE) = 0.59 which proves that The Indonesian national identity scale is adequate because it has CR > 0.7 and VE > 0.5 [63].

The study employed the perception of threat scales as the measurement instrument to measure the national threat perceptions, which the researcher designed. This instrument is named the Indonesian perception of threat scale. The instrument consisted of 10 items that can be divided into three aspects, i.e., the perception of drugs aspect, which consisted of three items, the perception of consumerism, and the perception of terrorism that each comprised four items, respectively. The perception of drugs aspect has three items (e.g., narcotics cases that are rife with worry for the nation’s young generation; Drug trafficking poses a big threat to youth in Indonesia), and the aspect of the perception of consumerism consisting of four items (e.g., a life orientation that is only to obtain luxury destroys the noble values of the Indonesian nation; admiration for people who have houses, cars, and expensive clothes is not a reflection of the noble values of the nation), and the aspect of the perception of terrorism consists of three items (e.g., in my opinion, the Indonesian nation needs to continue to be vigilant against terrorists because this is a form of other countries’ efforts to destroy Indonesia; acts of terrorism threaten the security and integrity of the Indonesian nation). Similar to the previous measurement tool, the perception of threat scale also used a Likert scale. It consisted of five responses (highly appropriate, appropriate, somewhat appropriate, less appropriate, and not appropriate).

Indonesian perception of threat scale has also been analyzed with CFA and found that the model fits the data because RMSEA = 0.045 (<0.08), CFI = 0.99 (>0.95), and TLI = 0.98 (>0.95). Information regarding the contribution of each item to the Indonesian perception of threat scale can be found in Table 3 below.

Based on the information summarized in Table 3, 10 items and three factors (perception of drugs, perception of consumerism, and perception of terrorism) have a significant standardized loading factor, because the t-value is above 1.96. It can be concluded that, all items and the three factors have a significant contribution in measuring Indonesian perception of threat. In addition, it was found that construct reliability = 0.96 (>0.7) and variance extracted = 0.59 (>0.5) which indicates that the Indonesian perception of threat is adequate.

In contrast, the collective self-esteem variable is measured by the collective self-esteem scale compiled by [49] and its scale has been adapted to the Indonesian context. The scale consists of four aspects, namely the membership self-esteem, the private collective self-esteem, the public collective self-esteem, and their importance to an identity. The membership self-esteem aspect has four items (e.g., I am an important part of the Indonesian nation; I feel I have no contribution to the Indonesian nation), and the aspect of private collective self-esteem consists of four items (e.g., I feel proud of Indonesia as my homeland; I feel that Indonesia as my country is not

Table 3
Standardized Loading Factor (SLF), Standard Error (SE), and t-value of Indonesians’ perception of threat scale.

Item/factor	Mean	SD	CFA			Cronbach’s alpha	Construct reliability	AVE
			SLF	se	t-value			
1	4.62	0.64	0.59	0.05	12.42	0.56	0.94	0.54
2	4.60	0.60	0.75	0.05	16.05			
3	3.78	1.06	0.64	0.04	15.88			
4	3.69	1.03	0.79	0.02	33.25			
5	4.02	0.88	0.86	0.02	35.22			
6	4.42	0.73	0.64	0.03	22.39			
7	3.75	0.97	0.86	0.05	16.88			
8	3.42	1.09	0.59	0.04	16.99			
9	4.28	0.91	0.50	0.04	12.11			
10	3.64	1.01	0.93	0.05	20.47			
Narcotic	13.01	1.75	0.86	0.05	15.80			
Terrorism	12.13	2.16	0.84	0.05	16.47			
Consume	15.09	2.87	0.53	0.04	12.06			

useful for me personally), the public collective self-esteem aspect has four items (in general, people rate my country positively; many people think that my country is not functioning well compared to other countries), the aspect of importance to identity consisting of four items (eg. In general, identity as an Indonesian is an important part of my self-image; my identity as an Indonesian citizen has little effect on my assessment of my personality).

Similar to the two previous measurement instruments, the collective self-esteem scale has also been analyzed by CFA and it was found that the model fits the data RMSEA = 0.065 (<0.08), CFI = 0.98 (>0.95), and TLI = 0.97 (>0.95). Furthermore, it can be tested the contribution of each item to its factors and the contribution of the four factors (membership self-esteem, private collective self-esteem, public collective self-esteem, and importance to identity) on collective self-esteem. Interpretation is based on those in the following table.

Based on the information summarized in Table 4, 16 items and four factors of the collective self-esteem scale have a significant standardized loading factor, because the t-value is above 1.96. It can be concluded that all items and the four factors (perception of narcotics, perception of consumerism, and perception of terrorism) had a significant contribution to measuring Indonesian perception of threat. In addition, it was found that construct reliability (CR) = 0.97 (>0.7) and variance extracted (VE) = 0.67 (>0.5) which indicates that the collective self-esteem scale is adequate.

Based on the loading factor information, testing of discriminant validity can also be performed. The results of the test can be presented in Table 5 as follows.

Looking at the discriminant validity matrix in Table 5, the square root of AVE on Natid is 0.71, perception of threat is 0.73, and collective self-esteem is 0.82. They all had greater value than the value of the correlation between latent variables, which indicates that all research variables had met the discriminant validity measure.

5.4. Procedure

The participants were given information regarding the purpose, description, and procedure of this study. The participants were given an explanation that all of their responses were confidential. Participants were university undergraduates that were recruited voluntarily from several universities in Indonesia. During the study, if participants were not willing to continue, they could stop at any stage at any time without any consequences. When the participants were willing to participate they would sign a consent form as a sign that they agreed to be respondents in this study. Then participants were asked to fill in a sheet of paper that contained their identities clearly and completely. In this study, participants were informed that they were going to fill in three questionnaires with an estimated time of 40 min. Thus, all participants agreed to participate in this study by signing the consent form. The study has been approved by the ethics committee of Padjadjaran University no.1228/UN6. KEP/EC/2019.

6. Results

In the case of SEM analysis with a maximum likelihood, it is required that the data must be normally distributed. Therefore, the data normality testing was administered while considering the kurtosis from both the univariate and multivariate distribution. The results are listed in the following table.

Referring to Table 6 above, the data indicated a normal distribution, with a p-value of 0.05 for all variables, both in the univariate and multivariate normality test. Thus, the data could be processed using the structural equation modeling analysis.

Table 4
Standardized Loading Factor (SLF), Standard Error (SE), and t-value of collective self-esteem scale.

Item/factor	Mean	SD	CFA			Cronbach's alpha	Construct reliability	AVE
			SLF	se	t-value			
1	3.85	0.93	0.79	0.03	26.84	0.867	0.97315	0.67
2	4.11	0.32	0.90	0.03	30.80			
3	4.26	0.64	0.77	0.03	24.62			
4	4.20	0.40	0.86	0.03	29.82			
5	4.48	0.50	0.81	0.03	29.81			
6	4.19	0.73	0.93	0.01	72.05			
7	4.28	0.45	0.92	0.02	44.12			
8	4.31	0.77	0.91	0.01	66.91			
9	3.59	0.84	0.71	0.03	22.38			
10	4.09	0.29	0.78	0.04	21.70			
11	3.88	0.75	0.78	0.03	29.61			
12	4.13	0.34	0.78	0.04	22.32			
13	4.07	0.26	0.84	0.04	21.39			
14	3.76	0.97	0.60	0.03	18.49			
15	4.10	0.30	0.88	0.04	23.18			
16	3.70	0.83	0.80	0.02	35.60			
MEM	16.41	1.77	0.77	0.03	25.46			
PRI	17.25	2.02	0.92	0.02	50.87			
PUB	15.69	1.69	0.81	0.03	28.42			
IMP	15.64	1.77	0.93	0.02	37.97			

Table 5
Discriminant validity.

	Natid	PT	CSE
Natid	<i>0.71</i>		
PT	0.11	<i>0.73</i>	
CSE	0.59	0.39	<i>0.82</i>

Notes: The square root of the AVE is shown in italics on the diagonal of the matrix. The value below the diagonal is the correlation coefficient between variables.

Following the thoughts of Baron and Kenney [58], there are two stages of analysis carried out to examine the role of the mediating variable in explaining the relationship between the independent variable and the outcome variable. Therefore, in the first stage, it is tested whether the perception of threat had an effect on national identity which is carried out by structural equation modeling (SEM). The results of the analysis show that the data and model fit due to RMSEA = 0.037 (<0.08), CFI 1.00 (>0.95), and TLI = 1.00 (>0.95). Thus, it can be continued with the interpretation of the relationship between perception of threat and national identity. The structural relationship model between these two variables can be visualized in Fig. 1 below.

After it is found that the model and data fit, then it can then be interpreted the contribution of each indicator to each construct and the direct effect of perception of threat on national identity information about the value for carrying out this interpretation is provided in Table 7 below.

Based on the information listed in Tables 7 and it is known that all indicators are significant in measuring each construct. Likewise, the perception of threat has a positive and significant effect on national identity. The relationship means that the higher the perception of threat score, the higher the national identity score.

After finding the results of the analysis of the structural relationship between perception of threat and national identity in the first stage, in the second stage, the structural relationship between perception of threat and national identity was tested by including collective self-esteem as a mediator variable. Using the SEM approach to analyze the data, the first priority was to check the fitness of the model. Then, if the proposed model fits the available data, further interpretation can be made. The information regarding the model fitness can be evaluated using the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), whose cut off value is 0.95 [61], and The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), which had a cut-off value of 0.8 [60]. The result of the analysis showed that CFI = 1.00 (>0.95) and TLI = 1.00 (>0.95), and RMSEA = 0.023 (<0.8), which indicates fit data.

Based on the results above, further interpretation can be offered, which is the hypothesis testing to evince the direct effect of *Ksi* on *Eta* (perception of threat → national identity and collective self-esteem) and the direct effect of *Eta* on *Eta* (collective self-esteem → national identity) as well as the indirect effect of *the perceptions of threat* on *collective self-esteem* that is mediated by the national identity. The visualization of the SEM model can be portrayed in Fig. 2 below.

SEM combines the analysis of the measurement model and the relationships between variables. Thus, the interpretation included two components, namely the measurement model and the structural relationship. The results of the analysis of measurement modeling are in Table 8 below.

As shown in Table 8 above, all indicators of the three latent variables (*national identity, collective self-esteem, and perception of threat*) were significant because they have a *t-value* above 1.96.

As shown in Table 8 above, all indicators of the three latent variables (national identity, collective self-esteem, and perception of threat) were significant because they have a *t-value* above 1.96. The result of the analysis also showed that the coefficients revealed the influence of *ksi* on *eta* (perception of threat on collective self-esteem and national identity), the direct effect of *eta* on *eta* (collective self-esteem on national identity), the perception of threat on national identity through collective self-esteem, and the total effect of all relationships. These relationships can be summarized in Table 8 above. As shown in that table, it can be inferred that the perception of threat directly influenced collective self-esteem, and the collective self-esteem also directly affected national identity because the *t-value* of the indirect effect was above 1.96. On the other hand, the direct influence of the perception of threat on national identity was not significant, but the indirect effect of the perception of threat on national identity was significant.

It must be noted that the awareness of women in politics in Indonesia is still lacking. For example, according to a report from the Central Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Indonesia the representation of women to date has not reached one third of the number of men in parliament [52]. This shows that women’s political participation is still low. Therefore, the researchers also conducted a robustness test to prove whether the model was robust and applicable under different conditions. The robustness test used the model administered for female participants. The following results of were found in Table 9 as follow.

Thus, it can be concluded that.

Table 6
Normality test.

Normality test	Z-Score	P-Value
<i>Univariate Normality</i>		
National identity	-0.266	0.79
Collective self-esteem	-0.079	0.937
Perception of threat	-0.591	0.554
<i>Multivariate Normality</i>	-0.888	0.375

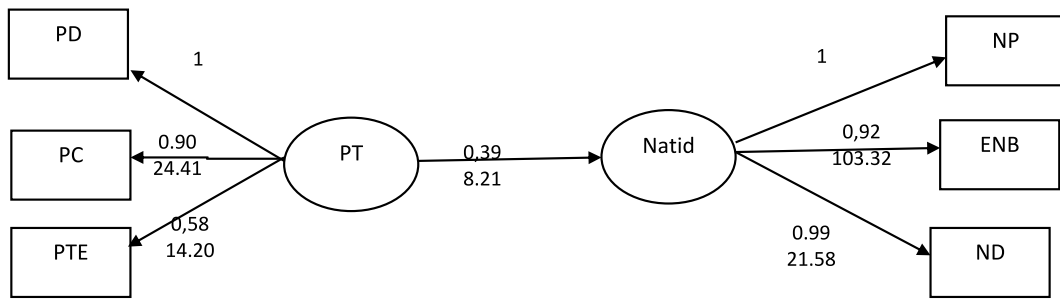


Fig. 1. Path diagram model of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Notes: PT is the perception of threat, and Natid is the national identity.

Table 7

Index of measurement models for each variable.

Indicator/relation	Construct	SLF	SE	t-value
NP	Natid	1 ^a	–	–
ENB	Natid	0.92	0.01	103.50
ND	Natid	0.99	0.05	21.08
PN	PT	1 ^a	–	–
PC	PT	0.90	0.02	14.20
PTE	PT	0.58	0.03	24.41
PT → Natid	–	0.39	0.05	8.21

^a Is an anchor, fixed so that the loading factor is one, t and the standard error is not estimated [64].

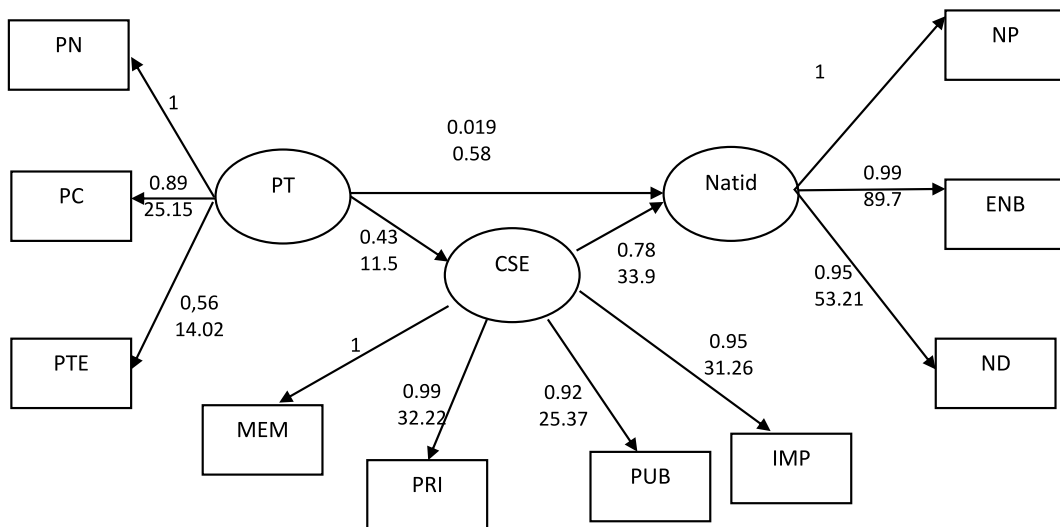


Fig. 2. Path diagram model of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Notes: PT is the perception of threat, Natid is the national identity, and CSE is the collective self-esteem.

1. Similar to the general model, CSE had a significant influence on national identity.
2. Similar to the general model, CSE had the role of mediating the relationship between the perception of threat and national identity.
3. Compared to the general model, only minimal change was found in the role of collective self-esteem in mediating the structural relationship between the perception of threat and national identity.

7. Discussion

The methodological bias in this research needs to be discussed, before addressing other elements of the obtained results. The methodological bias is often a problem caused by the measurement method utilized in SEM studies. The bias is often not shown because of the predictive model (e.g. the varied scores of national identity is caused by the variation of the threat perception scores) and the magnitude of the effect of the latent variables in this study [53], or in other words, bias occurs when the varied responses of the

Table 8
Index of measurement models for each variable.

Relation	R ²	SLF	SE	T-Value
NP ← Natid ^a	--	1	--	--
END ← Natid	--	1.00	0.01	89.97
ND ← Natid	--	0.94	0.02	53.21
PN ← PT ^a	--	1	--	--
PC ← PT	--	0.89	0.016	25.15
PTE ← PT	--	0.56	0.032	14.02
MEM ← CSE ^a	--	1	--	--
PRI ← CSE	--	0.99	0.04	32.22
PUB ← CSE	--	0.92	0.04	25.37
IMP ← CSE	--	0.95	0.04	31.26
PT → CSE	0.2	0.45	0.04	9.93
PT → Natid	0.0	0.01	0.03	0.29
CSE → Natid	0.61	0.78	0.05	19.66
PT → CSE → Natid		0.35	0.04	9.37
Total effect		0.36	0.05	19.66

^a is an anchor.

Table 9
Direct, indirect and total effect index of the robustness test.

Model	R ²	SLF
<i>Direct effect</i>		
PT- > CSE	0.2500	0.5000
PT- > Natid	0.0071	0.0840
CSE- > Natid	0.5285	0.7270
<i>Indirect effect</i>		
PT- > CSE- > Natid		0.3180
Total effect		0.4020

participants are caused by the research instrument, rather than the actual aim of the participants [54]. One simple method to test for any bias in general methodology is by using the single factor score of Harman, where all of the items measuring the latent variables are made into common factors [55]. If the variance is more than 50% in one of the common factors, then there is an indication of a bias in the general methodology [56]. This research showed that the variance of the perception of national threats was 23.38%, the variance of the national identity was 34.80%, and the variance of the collective self-esteem was 33.05%. Therefore, all instruments were proven to be free from general methodological bias.

In a mediational relation, the function of the perceptions of threat is to represent the independent variable. At the same time, national identity acts as the outcome variable or dependent variable, and collective self-esteem serves as a mediator variable to explain the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The relation of perception of threat and collective self-esteem was termed *a*, while the influence of collective self-esteem on national identity was called *b*, while the effect of perception of threat on the national identity is labeled *c*. Conceptually, when a mediator variable controls pathways *a* and *b*, the relation between the independent and the dependent variables becomes insignificant. This caused the effect of perception of threat on national identity to be insignificant and proves that collective self-esteem is a mediator that explains the effect of perception of threat on national identity.

The findings of the research were supported by [57] study, which shows the correlational relationship between collective self-esteem and national identity. Self-esteem could also explain the manifestations of prejudice, such as discrimination among groups [8], while *prejudice* is derived from the perception of national threats [9].

The result also showed that the relationship between national identity and self-esteem was significantly positive, as revealed in Table 3, which was in contrast to [65] study that found the relational effect between *collective self-esteem* and *national identity*. However, it must be noted that [65] study measured *personal self-esteem* and not *collective self-esteem*, although theoretically, the two *self-esteem* should be related. Additionally, the finding of this research was also in accordance with the finding of several other studies, which showed that the relationship between *national identity* and *self-esteem* was significantly positive [10, 46, 66].

The perception of national threat also had a direct, significant influence on national identity, and several studies supported these results. For example, Moskalenko et al. (2012) found that in the event of a terrorist attack, the threat becomes a stimulus that triggers the strengthening of national identity. Another example [3], proved that Romanian people who were perceived as a threat by Bulgarians strengthened their identity as Bulgarians.

8. Conclusion

Based on the analysis results, the collective self-esteem that acts as a mediator showed the effect of threat perception on national identity. The mediational model also showed a linear relationship, in which if the perception of threat increases, the national identity would also follow suit. National identity is always known to illuminate all aspects of life, especially factors related to nationalism. The

relationship between the awareness of belonging to a particular social category and emotional interests would build a social identity within its environment [6]. People who perceived the symptoms in the social environment as a threat would strengthen their identification with their country. The implication is that people would find it easier to join the cause and take action to develop their land and protect their country from degradation. In addition, the implication also shows that it is necessary to examine the relationship between national identity and patriotism, both positively and negatively, considering that strengthening national identity can also cause both positive and negative implications. In using the SEM method, which has advantages over other methods in revealing structural relationships, this study contributes to social science, especially social psychology, regarding the structural relationship between national identity, collective self-esteem, and threat perceptions in the context of the Indonesian state. However, this research can be a starting point for uncovering other structural relationships related to national identity.

The limitation of this research was that the sample only involved undergraduate students, which in the next research should also involve samples taken from adolescents and adults (non-students). Besides sample limitations, other limitations also emerge from a methodological point of view. The researchers only tested the SEM on the same groups, which future researchers can analyze the data using the multigroup structural equation model to find invariant measurements. Multigroup SEM can provide information regarding group differences analyzed through SEM [67]. For example, researchers can evaluate whether there are differences in the mean, path predictions, and factor loadings of two different cultures. The results of multigroup SEM would give more insight to the understanding of the relationship between variables when they have different conditions, as multigroup SEM testing is different from SEM testing on one group. Multigroup SEM testing looks at the fit of the model as many groups as tested. Lastly, the results of the multigroup SEM testing could inspire future researchers in the field of social behavior.

Author contribution statement

Baydhowi: Conceived and designed the experiments; Performed the experiments; Analyzed and interpreted the data; Contributed reagents, materials, analysis tools or data; Wrote the paper.

Urip Purwono: Conceived and designed the experiments; Analyzed and interpreted the data.

Ahmad Gimmy Prathama: Conceived and designed the experiments.

Moondore Madalina Ali: Conceived and designed the experiments; Wrote the paper.

Wahyu Syahputra: Contributed reagents, materials, analysis tools or data; Wrote the paper.

TB Zulriska Iskandar: Conceived and designed the experiments; Performed the experiments.

Data availability statement

Data will be made available on request.

Additional information

No additional information is available for this paper.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Appendix 1

National threat survey questions and result of data survey.

Question: “What do you think is a threat to the Indonesian nation today?” Write your answer in the column provided below.

No	Answer	Reason
1		
2		
.		
Result of data survey.		
No	National threat	Frequency

(continued on next page)

(continued)

No	National threat	Frequency
1	Drugs	131
2	Terrorism	130
3	LGBT	114
4	Consumptive behavior	80
5	Corruption	12
6	Radicalism	10
7	Sexual harassment	9
8	Ethnic, religious and racial conflicts	9
9	Nepotism	4
10	Harmful television broadcast	4
11	Free sex	3
12	Hoax	3
13	Bullying	2
14	Match fixing	2
15	Murder	2
16	Football mafia	2
17	Power abuse	2
18	Agnostic belief	1
19	Pornography exploitation	1
20	Decline in the quality of education	1
21	Moral crisis	1
22	environmental pollution	1
23	<i>Orde Baru's</i> politics	1
24	Bad parenting	1
25	Human trafficking	1
26	National fragmentation	1
27	Food Regulation	1
28	Hate speech on social media	1

Appendix 2

Instruments

Indonesian national identity scale [59].

1. Indonesia's diversity culture makes me proud
2. I am proud to be an Indonesian citizen
3. I feel that it is not too important to be part of the Indonesian nation
4. Listening to *Indonesia Raya*, a sense of pride would well up
5. The social and cultural conditions in Indonesia make me not proud of this nation
6. I am willing to set aside money to fellow Indonesian
7. I will accept any conditions happening in Indonesia and still be proud of it
8. Indonesia has an amazing/great history
9. Indonesia is an extraordinary gift from God for me
10. I feel belongingness that stems from profound love to Indonesia makes one not want to change one's nationality
11. I am participating in daily communal activities and at the same time preserving the spirit of gotong royong
12. Pancasila is a unique and amazing national guideline
13. I prioritize the interests of the nation over personal interests
14. Children need to be educated to love the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI)
15. I am also responsible for the sustainability of the country and the unity of the nation
16. I am ready to volunteer to defend my country
17. When working, I prefer domestic companies to foreign companies as a form of love for the nation

Perception of threat scale.

1. Narcotics cases that are rife are worrying for the nation's young generation
2. Drug trafficking poses a big threat to youth in Indonesia
3. The rampant circulation of narcotics in Indonesia is an attempt by other nations to destroy Indonesia
4. I am worried that Indonesia will become a target for terrorist attacks
5. In my opinion, the Indonesian nation needs to continue to be vigilant against terrorists because this is a form of other countries' efforts to destroy Indonesia
6. Acts of terrorism threaten the security and integrity of the Indonesian nation

7. A life orientation that is only to obtain luxury destroys the noble values of the Indonesian nation
8. Admiration for people who have houses, cars, and expensive clothes is not a reflection of the noble values of the nation
9. The pleasure of wasting money is not a good example for Indonesia's young generation
10. The pleasure of luxury is not in line with the character of the Indonesian nation

Collective self-esteem scale.

1. I am an important part of the Indonesian nation
2. I feel I have no contribution to the Indonesian nation
3. I am willing to participate in advancing the Indonesian nation
4. I feel useless for my country
5. I regret being part of the Indonesian nation
6. In general, I am proud to be an Indonesian citizen
7. I feel that Indonesia as my country is not useful for me personally
8. I feel proud of Indonesia as my homeland
9. In general, people rate my country positively
10. Many people think that my country is not functioning well compared to other countries
11. In general, people respect Indonesia where I live
12. Many people think that Indonesian citizenship status is not important
13. My identity as an Indonesian citizen has little effect on my assessment of my own personality
14. This country where I live is an important reflection of who I am
15. I feel this country has no strong connection with my personal formation
16. In general, identity as an Indonesian is an important part of my self-image

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