

Collective narcissism and a concept of a “just war”: Cross-cultural perspective

Main research aims:

We have three main research goals: to examine the (1) role of individual-level factors in adopting beliefs in just war (reasons and aims for it); (2) universality (vs. cultural specificity) of beliefs related to just war (reasons and means); and (3) macro-level factors moderating the concept of just war across national and religious backgrounds.

To examine the concept of just war we use three-dimensional model of beliefs in just war, validated in Poland: (1) just war – restricted view on reasons and means of war, as self-defensive and targeted only toward military goals; (2) utilitarian war – unrestricted view on war reasons, accepting war as a way of intergroup conflicts resolutions; (3) dirty war – unrestricted view on war means, accepting any means useful in defeating the enemy.

Justification of the project:

The current project focuses on the concept of just war from political and cross-cultural psychology perspectives, addressing the roles of personality, beliefs, and cultural factors (Lopez & Johnson, 2020). The concept of just war refers both to reasons for war and the way the war is conducted (Coates, 2018; McMahan, 2005; Watkins, 2020). Therefore, we will examine the extent to which people of different nationalities and religious background perceive the war as justified, while testing the role of individual-level and macro-level factors in shaping these perceptions. To explain the possible psychological underpinnings of just war, we focus on collective narcissism (CN); right-wing authoritarianism [RWA], religiosity and spirituality. We will examine agentic/communal CN in conjunction with national and religious identifications, as particularly relevant for intergroup conflict (Böhm et al., 2020). Warfare studies typically address three levels of analysis (Lopez & Johnson, 2020). The international level refers to the policy-related factors or distribution of power, the domestic level refers to state-related factors, like kind of regime, while the individual level focuses on such factors as beliefs, personality, or culture (Lopez & Johnson, 2020). The concept of just war refers both to reasons for the war and the way it is conducted (Walzer, 1977). In the current project we plan to validate three-dimensional model of just war beliefs described above. We supplement self-report part by an index of extremal war means, rejected by most participants, like using tortures, nuclear weapon or targeting civilians in aim to intimidate the opponent.

Variables & measures:

Just war beliefs (Żemojtel-Piotrowska et al., 2022) – 17-item scale with three factors supplemented by 4-item “outliers” including extremal war means (like using nuclear weapon or targeting civilians).

Collective narcissism (religious and national): the CNS (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009), the CCNI (Żemojtel-Piotrowska et al., 2021).

Collective identification: brief Social Identification Scale (Cameron, 2004); identity scale of CSES (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992) –national and religious

Personality: normal: BFI-S (Lang et al., 2015); dark: Dirty Dozen Dark Triad (Jonason & Webster, 2010); NARQ-S (Leckelt et al., 2018); Narcissistic Sanctity and Heroism Questionnaire (Żemojtel-Piotrowska et al., 2022)

Political personality: 12-item RWA (Funke, 2005), 10-item SDO (Duckitt, 2006)

Religiosity: 9-item religiosity scale (Lavric & Flere, 2008).

Spirituality: 13-item universality and connectedness part of STS (Piedmont, 1999; 2010).

Terms of collaboration:

This project will be conducted with the same rules as typical ones in our past projects (<https://www.researchgate.net/project/Narcissisms-and-self-esteem-in-cross-cultural-context>; <https://www.researchgate.net/project/COVID-19-personality-and-quality-of-life-Self-enhancement-in-the-time-of-pandemic>). We plan several high IF publications, and I could guarantee at least one IF publication per each collaborator (having typical a series of 3-4 papers from project). As a rule in one paper could participate one collaborator from each country. This rule does not adopt to the experts (few people whose expertise is crucial in getting to the top-level journals).

We plan start data collection in Autumn 2022 and we will continue data collection within 2023. Sample: 250 university students, minimal age 18 (adults), at least 50 participants of less represented sex. We plan to use Limesurvey software available at our CSWU lab to keep one standardized procedure of data collection – the surveys will be created by our lab members after Summer 2022. Most scales are already translated into many national versions (see <https://www.crossculturalpsychlab.com/>). In June I plan to obtain general ethical approval for the survey from the Institute of Psychology CSWU ethical board (in English), but I encourage our national collaborators to obtain local university permission as well.

The project will be preregistered at osf.

Currently in the project participate collaborators from these countries:

Algeria, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bosna & Hercegovina; Brasil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Ghana, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Iran, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, North Macedonia, Nepal, Nigeria, New Zealand, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Thailand, Trinidad & Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, United Kingdom, Vietnam.

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