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Perceived Collective Continuity between Minority and Majority Groups

By Hovig Samuel Demirjian

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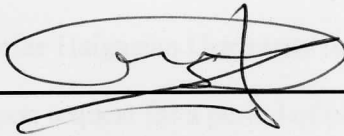
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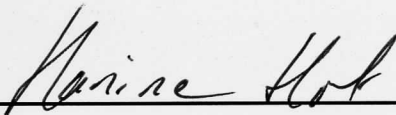
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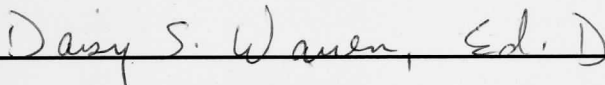
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Dedication

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To my Beloved Lebanon

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Abstract

Previous studies have found that perceived collective continuity predicts important group-related variables. In the following research paper we hypothesized that perceived collective continuity positively correlates with collective self-esteem, perceived group entitativity and individual self-esteem while it is negatively associated with group anomie for both Lebanese and Armenian nationals. The paper also examined group differences between the Lebanese and Armenian samples on perceiving their nation as more continuous. For this study, Lebanese ($N=114$) and Armenians ($N=101$) totaling $N=215$ completed self-administered questionnaires on group related constructs. As was hypothesized, the results showed significant and positive correlation between perceived collective continuity and collective self-esteem, perceived group entitativity and individual self-esteem for the Lebanese group, Armenian group and total Lebanese-Armenian groups. As for the relation of collective continuity with group anomie, the results failed to support the stated hypothesis. Moreover, members of Armenian ethnic group showed significantly stronger collective continuity compared to their Lebanese counterparts. The obtained results are explained in terms of group related characteristics and intergroup relations between minority and majority groups.

Chapter I

Introduction

Empirical and theoretical studies on the nature of social and national identity, ethnicity and culture are constantly investigated in the fields of social psychology, sociology and anthropology. Social scientists have developed interesting and often controversial ideas and theories on the nature of these social constructs especially in Europe after the pioneering work of Tajfel and Turner (1986) on Social Identity Theory. In SIT, Tajfel et al. asserted that individuals who tend to categorize themselves as members of a social group are more likely to show in-group favoritism. As a result, they develop higher self-esteem by differentiating their membership as individuals of in-group against individuals of the out-group.

Social identity theory paved the way for a major conclusion that identity is a socially constructed phenomenon whether it is developed in ethnic, nationalistic, religious, ideological or political groups. Social identity, henceforth, was defined as the portion of an individual's self-concept derived from perceived membership in a relevant social group (Hogg & Vaughan, 2002).

By assuming that Lebanese and Armenians too derive their identity from membership in their Lebanese and Armenian national groups, the following paper aims at examining the perception of members of Lebanese and Armenian groups on perceived collective continuity and various group related characteristics. The first chapter of the study presents a general theoretical and empirical background of the concept of social identity and its relevance in the field of social psychology. The chapter also briefly explains the methodology, delimitations and ends up by providing a thorough operational definition of the major terms that were used in the current study.

The Background of the Study

Nowadays, the total number of Lebanese population who reside on its territories is estimated around 3.7 million people (Lebanese Republic: Presidency of the Council of Ministries, 2008, p. 13) with ethnic composition of Arabs 95%, Armenians 4% and others 1%. In addition, the Lebanese population, due to different reasons, has spread throughout different continents and established a Lebanese Diaspora that dates back to nearly 120 years (Humphrey, 2004). Moreover, the country shelters 18 recognized religious sects with chief religions Islam that constitute around 60% of the population and the Christianity making up the remaining 39% of the total population (World Almanac and Book of Facts, 2009). This unique religious and cultural diversity of the Lebanese society has often been accentuated by scholars (Haddad, 2002). Similarly, political, sociological and anthropological studies are voluminous as they relate to national, confessional and ethnic identity (for example see Peleikis, 2001).

Armenians of Lebanon, categorized as ethnic minority group numbering around 105,000 (Tololyan, 2000), have been a topic of discussion both in academic and public circles. The concept of ethnicity, which characterizes the Armenians of Lebanon, has originated in the field of anthropology with a plethora of definitions. Bourdieu's conceptualization of the term ethnicity on the individual level remains the most attractive. He defines the concept of ethnicity as a "set of integrated dispositions that structure peoples' social, spatial and temporal orientations to the world" (Bourdieu, 1977, as cited in Møllersen & Holte, 2008). The ethnic identity of members of Armenian descent in Lebanon has been explored with special reference to their national identity (Panossian, 2002). Likewise, scholars have paid special attention to their cultural values and ethnic characters.

For example, while attempting to validate ethnic identity measure within the context of the Lebanese pluralistic society amongst the adolescent population, researchers reported an association between subjective self-esteem and ethnic identity measure (Kazarian and Boyadjian, 2008). This ethnic identity scale was composed of two subscales that examined the adolescent's commitment to the Armenian ethnic identity and their attempts to explore about Armenian ethnic group. Hence, according to this study, membership for the Armenian ethnic group was positively associated with individual self-esteem. Similar conclusions had been drawn earlier from studies worldwide where identification with one's heritage and culture strongly predicted wellbeing (Phinney, 1990). Hence, one can contend that culture is not only perceived as an identity apparatus that groups construct and enrich through time but it also provides feelings of worth, self-esteem and wellbeing.

Statement of the Problem

By keeping in mind the ethnic composition of the Lebanese society and the minority-majority relation between Lebanese and Armenian group, the present research seeks to underscore the following facts. First, for the Lebanese sample, recent political upheavals, disagreements over power sharing, civil violence, wars, and internal disputes have certainly affected the way Lebanese perceive the Lebanese identity.

On the other hand, being a minority group with distinct culture and history, members of Armenian ethnic group have a unique mental representation of their Armenian identity. Based on these facts, the following paper attempted to investigate group related properties of the two groups, which was perceptual in nature rather than an objective measurement of group properties per se.

In other words, the following study aimed at examining the subjective perception of individual members on constructs that pertain to their group membership.

Research Question: Do members of the Armenian ethnic minority group perceive their culture and history as more continuous compared to members of the Lebanese majority national group?

In addition to the posed research question which was comparative in essence, this research study tested the following sets of hypotheses: First a general hypotheses that investigate the whole sample followed by a specific comparative hypothesis that investigates the group differences between Lebanese and Armenian nationals on perceived collective continuity scale.

a. General Hypotheses

1. There is positive association between perceived collective continuity and collective self-esteem for the total Lebanese and Armenian samples.
2. Perceived collective continuity positively predicts perceived group entitativity for the total Lebanese and Armenians samples.
3. Perceived collective continuity and group anomie are negatively related.
4. There is positive correlation between perceived collective continuity and individual self-esteem for the two groups.

b. Specific Hypothesis on Group Differences

Having in mind the minority-majority relation between the two groups, the fifth hypothesis states that:

5. Members of the Armenian ethnic group perceive stronger collective continuity compared to members of the Lebanese national group.

Moreover, for further investigation, possible differences can also be expected on the remaining group related constructs namely collective self-esteem, group anomie, perceived group entitativity and individual self-esteem.

To the best of the author's knowledge, no study has been undertaken to examine these questions either empirically or theoretically. More specifically, our research aimed at examining the construct of perceived collective continuity between members of a majority group (Lebanese national group) compared to members of minority group (Armenian ethnic group). This study constitutes a pioneering attempt of its kind in Lebanon.

The Professional Significance of the Study

The following research paper covered both group properties and an individual characteristic namely the self-esteem of the members of the two samples. Hence, the posed research question has intrinsic importance for both groups for two basic reasons.

First, the research examined the characteristics of each sample on group related measures, which as mentioned before was perceptual in nature rather than an objective measurement. Second, the minority-majority relation between the two groups will enhance our understanding of the perception of identity in a multiethnic society such as that of Lebanon.

Overview of the Methodology

For the purpose of this quantitative research, self-identified Lebanese and Armenian nationals ($N=215$) participated by filling multiple questionnaires for measures of perceived collective continuity, collective self-esteem, group anomie, perceived group entitativity and individual self-esteem. To answer questions on group differences, a total of 114 Lebanese and 101 Armenian participants of different ages

and backgrounds were randomly selected to take part in the research. Survey questionnaires structured in Likert form were distributed to voluntary participants. The gathered data were analysed using SPSS 13 computerized program.

Limitations

The following research had certain shortcomings. First both samples were extracted from Beirut district and did not include members of other areas mainly those of rural populations which might have different perception of their Lebanese and Armenian national identity. Consequently, any generalization based on the obtained results should be viewed with caution. Second, experiencing a noisy politics in the country might have accounted for the development of a disturbed perception of the Lebanese identity. In other words, the way individuals perceive identity is influenced not only by cultural and historical factors but also by the current political atmosphere of the country. With the same justification, one can argue that Armenians also are vulnerable to this factor since they reside on Lebanese territories; however, this noise may not be experienced with equal significance. Finally, this research examined the relation of perceived collective continuity with individual self-esteem without investigating its relation with individual wellbeing which in turn has more relevance in mental health sciences.

Definitions of Key Terms

The main aim of the following paper was to measure the perceived collective continuity of both Lebanese and Armenian samples. Due to the relative novelty of the concept of PCC, the term has not yet gained general currency in professional studies and hence deserves clear operational definition.

Perceived Collective Continuity (PCC): The perception held by members of a certain social group that the cultural values, traditions, customs, myths, philosophy, folklore, habits and the mentalities of the group is continuous throughout generations. Therefore the first dimension taps the cultural continuity of a group as perceived by its individual members. Second, PCC connotes the belief and certainty that the various stages, past episodes and periods of the group's existence throughout history is causally attached and interconnected to each other to form a "coherent narrative". This second dimension is tapped as historical continuity of the group as perceived by members of a national group (Sani, Bowe, Herrera, Manna, Cossa, Miao, & Zhou 2007). Hence, the measure of PCC comprises of two interrelated subscales that examine the perceived cultural and historical continuity of the group that individuals belong to or identify with.

Collective Self-Esteem (CSE): Human beings are members of different social group or categories that pertain to gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, religion and socioeconomic class. Collective self-esteem is operationally defined as the individual's self-evaluation, feelings, attitudes and acknowledgment of group membership (Luhtanen and Crocker, 1992). In the case of the present research, collective self-esteem is derived from being a member of Lebanese or Armenian national groups rather than being members of other relevant social groups.

Group Anomie: The usage of the term group anomie started in the field of sociology by Emile Durkheim (Ludz, 1973) that connotes the individual feeling of lack of social norms. Anomie indicates the level of individual's alienation from the society. The scale used in to measure in this research was developed by Srole (1956).

Perceived Group Entitativity (PGE): The term group entitativity is defined as the degree of perceiving an aggregate or a group of individuals as cohesive whole (Donald Campbell 1958) and the degree of the group's solidarity as it is perceived by the group members. While PCC refers to the continuous existence of the group and the continuity of its cultural values, PGE refers to the present level of group cohesion that is experienced by its individual members.

Individual Self-esteem (ISE): Contrary to previous terminologies, individual self-esteem is one of the mostly researched constructs in the field of social psychology and personality. The concept of self-esteem is defined as the individual's overall self-appraisal and self-evaluation. The present study used the well-known self-esteem scale of Rosenberg (1965).

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

The following chapter will investigate the literature of both individual and collective continuity. Although these two constructs are interrelated yet they constitute different elements in the process of identity formation. This chapter will look at the literature that includes both empirical and theoretical studies that cover first individual continuity and later collective continuity.

Many scholars have attempted to explain the process of identity formation in the lifetime of human beings. Since social identity is defined as the portion of an individual's self-concept derived from perceived membership in a relevant social group (Hogg & Vaughan, 2002), then identity has both individual and social dimension.

Individual Continuity

The very essence of a person's identity is a sense and belief in the individual's continuity. Erikson depicted ego identity as "the awareness of the fact that there is a self-sameness and continuity to the ego's synthesizing methods, the style of one's individuality, and that this style coincides with the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for significant others in the immediate community" (Erikson, 1968, p.50). Some identity theorists have considered continuity in human identity formation as essential for the survival of the human identity itself. Derek Parfit (1984) argues, "what matters in personal identity is survival, and that what constitutes survival is psychological continuity" (as cited in Elliot, 1991. p. 55). Locke in turn defines person as "thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself-as itself-, the same thinking thing, in different times and places" (Locke, 1959, p. 11 as cited in Steinhart, 2002).

Although a wave of criticism has been created against Locke's conception of human identity (Schechtman, 2005), yet Locke's analysis of the very nature of human beings remains the building block of the formation of human identity. By assuming that continuity is found at the core of individual's identity, perceiving one's identity as continuous is in turn positively associated with individual's psychological wellbeing.

In this direction, self-continuity received additional attention due to its influence on individual wellbeing. For example, the results of a study concluded that those participants who maintained a sense of self-sameness mirrored in behaving in similar manner across different interactions exhibited better mental health whereas participants who failed to perceive themselves as same experienced dismay (Block, 1961 as cited in Dunkel, 2005). Block stated that "it seems clear that the individuals seeing themselves as highly variable in their interactions experience strain and dismay in their social endeavors, view the world as essentially unfriendly, and are personally troubled" (p.395). Hence, lack of self-continuity and sameness results in identity confusion and psychological crises. Similarly, individuals who experience discontinuity, contrasting states of minds and divided consciousness, tend to experience altered and disturbing personalities (Brown, 2001). Furthermore, the failure to maintain a coherent sense of identity results in severe psychological pathologies, which in turn is a manifestation of fragmented character of the modern life (Fuchs, 2007). Fuchs infers that psychopathology, especially borderline personality disorder, results "in a temporal splitting of the self-that tends to exclude past and future as dimensions of object constancy, commitment, responsibility and identity. [These] individuals [with borderline personality disorders] exhibit what may be called a fragmentation of the narrative self-" (Fuchs, p. 381).

The study connotes that narrative identity is a causal coherence of an individual's past, present and the future as an analogue of a meaningful story: "we live immersed in narrative, recounting and reassessing the meaning of our past actions, anticipating the outcome of our future projects, situating ourselves at the intersection of several stories not yet completed" (Brooks, 1984 p. 3, as cited in Fuchs, 2007).

Identity based on Eriksonian theory of individual continuity has not always been positively associated with psychological wellbeing in mental health sciences. For example, Côté (1996) argues that within specific socio-cultural environments, maintaining a defused identity which is mostly changeable can be more adaptive than maintaining an identity of sameness and continuity (as cited in Schachter, 2002). The mentioned conclusion might appeal true for constantly changing and unstable societies that endure continuous changes and upheavals.

Hence, empirical investigation has waxed and waned on the merits and demerits of developing an individual identity based on perceived self-continuity.

In conclusion, despite disagreement over the association of continuity with psychological wellbeing, yet the concept of continuity is found at the core of human identity.

Identity that characterizes individual's sense of uniqueness and self-knowledge (Marcia, 1966, as cited in Dunkel, 2005) also helps the individual to anticipate certain feeling of consistency in the future. Before reviewing the literature on collective continuity, this research looks at the continuity concept with future dimension.

Continuity with Future Dimension

Self-continuity is not only a concept of sameness throughout history but also it represents a thought of sameness in the future. In a longitudinal study, the future selves

and continuity was investigated in community resident elderly population's perceptions (Frazier, Hooker, Johnson & Kaus, 2000). When a sample of elderly participants were interviewed to describe their possible selves (images of their selves in the coming future), the results showed that continuity was significantly predicted more than change in the possible future selves. Fraizer et. al concluded that "preserving current sense of self into the future may be more adaptive than striving for something less attainable or developing a fear of what one might become" (p. 242). Moreover, the study investigated the developmental trends of the residents' anticipated selves that included health, physical functioning, independence/dependence, family and lifestyle. When the participants were interviewed in phase 2 of this longitudinal study, they underscored health related concerns and physical functioning as factors that change over time rather than remain the same. Finally, while the participants perceived continuity for the most of the developmental trends, health was perceived as less consistent factor in the future selves of the elderly.

Collective Self-and Continuity

The very nature of human self-that has been discussed above is the individual or personal self-. Brewer and Gardner (1996) developed a conceptual framework of the concept of self, which includes in addition to the personal self, relational self and social self. Relational self is constructed upon relational interactions and connections whereas the collective self is derived from being a member of a collective or social group. It is the collective self that urges human beings to belong to others and be identified with them, which in turn is a universal human need and the lack of it causes serious pathologies (Shifron, 2010). Hereafter, experiencing a sense of continuity is not considered merely a subjective and self--related attribute.

Sense of continuity transcends individual subjective perception to envisage the perceived continuity of the group or groups that the collective self identifies himself or herself with. In addition to experiencing individual continuity, people also perceive the group that they belong to as having a sense of continuity. In this regard, the construct perceived collective continuity was coined and validated across different studies.

Perceived Collective Continuity

Primarily, the construct of group continuity envisages the perception held by its members that the cultural values, traditions, customs, myths, philosophy, folklore, habits and the mentalities of the group is continuous through generations. As a result, the first dimension of the collective continuity examines the cultural sameness and interconnectedness of the group. Also, group continuity has a second dimension which connotes the belief and certainty that the various stages, past episodes and periods of the group's existence throughout history is causally attached and interconnected to each other to form a "coherent narrative" (Sani, Bowe, Herrera, Manna, Cossa, Miao, & Zhou 2007). This second dimension investigates the historical continuity of the group. Although the two dimensions differ from each other, yet they both construe an interconnected and unique construct in social psychology namely perceived collective continuity.

Similar to the pathologies derived from experiencing a sense of identity discontinuity, lack of cultural continuity also leads to serious personal and collective disturbances or pathologies. In an extensive study conducted with Canadian aboriginal people or what is commonly labeled first nations, it was reported that tribes marked with high rates of cultural continuity experienced fewer suicide rates whereas tribes

with weaker ties to their traditional past and a known cultural future experienced epidemic levels of suicide rates (Chandler and Proulx, 2008). In this research, the authors interviewed 300 young people who were admitted to psychiatric hospitals for more than 18 months and then divided the patients into two groups: those who were and those who were not put on active suicide precaution. Through direct and structured interviews, the researchers concluded that around 80% of the suicidal group was not successful to find a sense of continuity in the face of social changes. After facing socio-cultural adversaries, these indigenous people lacked connectedness to their social groups and their unique culture. Instead they opted for suicide as way to put an end to their lives. The authors explained this association between lack of cultural continuity and suicidality by claiming that “one’s culture can be counted on to provide young people a measure of sameness...if instead one’s culture is marginalized or vandalized...or otherwise assimilated beyond easy recognition...then predictable consequence of such personal and cultural losses is often disillusionment, lassitude, substance abuse, self-injury and self-appointed death at an early age” (Chandler and Proulx, 2008, p. 9; see also Chandler, Lalonde, Sokol, & Hallett, 2003). Hence, cultures that are perceived as continuous shelter their individuals in the face of changes and transformations.

Moreover, in an experimental study motivated to further the concept of collective continuity, researchers made the mortality of a human being salient and reminded the participants of their ultimate death. When the subjects were aware of their mortality, this awareness made them perceive their social group as more continuous (Sani, Herrera, & Bowe, 2009). Possibly being aware of the fact that one’s group will outlive and survive in the future gives group members a sense of relief. In turn, a strong

perception of collective continuity became to be associated with increased collective identification. The results of the mentioned research are in line with studies on terror management theory where those people who are reminded of their mortality show more attachment to their social groups (Pyszczynski 2004).

Investigating the process of maintaining group continuity has been extended to include the perceived continuity of individuals' group membership. In a study conducted on people who suffered from a stroke, it was reported that maintaining preexisting group membership after a stroke was positively associated with individual wellbeing and life satisfaction and negatively correlated with stress level (Haslam, Holme, Haslam, Iyer, Jetten & Williams 2008). This study suggests that finding continuity in group membership helps people experience wellbeing in post stroke period and find satisfaction after experiencing a medical crisis.

Similar to Chandler's et. al (2003) study on Aboriginal adolescents, the results of Haslam's et. al (2008) research underlines the importance of perceiving continuity in certain groups in predicting psychological wellbeing in mental health sciences. At last, the following research investigated the collective continuity of national groups and its relation with individual self-esteem which is another important factor on mental health sciences.

Empirical Research on Perceived Collective Continuity

A large body of research is dedicated to the concept of self-continuity and the pathologies derived from having a sense of discontinuity. On the other hand, due to the novelty of the concept of perceived collective continuity in the field of social psychology, the literature still lacks sufficient empirical studies that deal specifically

with the concept of perceived collective continuity. In this regard, two attempts stand out.

First, a pioneering study by a group of scholars who coined the concept of perceived collective continuity (Sani et al, 2007). In this article, the authors first validated the PCC scale with Italian participants and later correlated it with other identity related measures. The study showed that perception of continuity is based on two dimensions that include cultural continuity and historical continuity. Secondly, in an empirical study, Sani, Bowe and Herrera (2008), extended the investigation of PCC scale with Spanish nationals and reported that PCC positively predicts collective self-esteem and perceived group entitativity. On the hand, the results confirmed that PCC is negatively correlated with feeling of misfit into the larger society and sense of social malintegration or anomie.

The correlation of PCC with collective self-esteem is explained by the assumption that members who perceive their culture and history as more continuous will likely attribute more pride and confidence in their group when compared to members who perceive their group as less continuous and hence attaching less importance and regard to their group. Moreover, since PCC affords the group members a sense of timelessness, the knowledge that the group they belong to is continuous will encourage its members to increase their pride in the group membership. Second, the relation of PCC with PGE is explained by the fact that people are driven to be identified more with entitative group rather than with groups who lack entitativity (Castano, Yzbert & Bourguignon 2003). In addition, individuals tend to highly value membership for entitative groups rather than less entitative groups (Lickel, Hamilton, Wierzchowska, Lewis, Sherman and Uhles, 2000).

Thus, prior to be perceived as an integrated aggregate, a group has to experience a continuous existence. Donald Campbell (1958) who fathered the term entitativity operationally defines entitativity as the degree of perceiving an aggregate or a group of individuals as cohesive whole and united similar to a biological organism. He outlines the coefficients that covary with the perceived entitateness or the feeling of a group's solidarity as proximity of its members, similarity, where similar elements are more likely to coil into an entitative group, common fate and the pregnancy of the group as the members perceive the aggregate an organized whole with closed boundaries (p.170).

Thirdly the relation between PCC and Anomie is justified by the rationale where before perceiving a group as continuous, the individual has to be integrated and involved into the social or national group.

Stated Hypotheses

The following research proposes two major sets of hypotheses. The first part relates to the correlational hypotheses that apply for the total Lebanese and Armenian groups. The correlational part hypothesizes that PCC will be associated with CSE, PGE, Anomie and ISE for the total Lebanese and Armenian groups. Specifically it is hypothesized that:

1. Perceived collective continuity and collective self-esteem will be positively correlated for both Lebanese and Armenian national groups.
2. Perceived collective continuity will be positively associated with perceived group entitativity.
3. Group anomie will be negatively correlated with perceived collective continuity.

4. Perceived collective continuity will be positively associated with individual self-esteem.

The second part of the following research relates to differences between Lebanese and Armenian groups on perceived collective continuity. It is hypothesized that:

5. Members of Lebanese national group will report less cultural and historical continuity compared to Armenian national group.

Contrary to the first, second and the third speculations, this fourth hypothesis is new and original. Hence, no previous research has been dedicated to examine the association between perceived collective continuity and individual self-esteem. By attempting to construct an integrated theory of identity formation Vignoles, Regalia, Manzi, Golledge, & Scabini, (2006) concluded 6 distinctive motives in the process of identity construction. According to these findings, “people are generally motivated to maintain and/or enhance feelings of self-esteem, continuity, distinctiveness, belonging, efficacy, and meaning within their identities” (Vignoles, Regalia, Manzi, Golledge, & Scabini, 2006, p. 329).

The inferences drawn from the above-mentioned theory reasons that identities are developed and constructed to meet various psychological needs including the need for continuity and self-esteem. Hence, one can infer that similar to self-continuity, perceived collective continuity will be positively affiliated with individual self-esteem.

Finally, the possible group differences between Lebanese and Armenian nationals is explained on the grounds where the cultural, societal, historical, political and religious differences in the Lebanese society, in addition to constant upheavals and wars, might account for this discrepancy in perceiving the Lebanese national group as less continuance than the Armenian group.

Moreover, since Armenians as a minority group, populating around 105,000, have maintained a subculture underneath a broader cultural milieu, this cultural minority effect might have consolidated their cultural value system and stretched their perception of their group's continuity.

Chapter III

Methodology

The following chapter outlines the method used in carrying out the research and gives specific information regarding the participants, the materials and questionnaires, the reliabilities of the scales in addition to the nature of the used scales.

General Perspective

The following correlational research used self-evaluation questionnaire to measure the perception of each participant regarding questions on group related properties. The questionnaire started with demographics questions that included the age, gender and an optional question regarding the religious sect of the participant. In addition, 4 different indices illustrating people's perception towards their identity groups were asked by amending valid and standardized scales. Furthermore, one scale depicting individual characteristic of the participants was also used.

The Research Context

Having in mind the purpose of the investigation, only self-identified Lebanese and Armenian participants were eligible to take part in the research. The two samples included participants from both genders, different ages, occupations, religions, which mostly included high school and college students, university graduates, teachers, businessmen, public sector employees, retirees, health care and skilled workers.

The Research Procedure

The research was presented as a graduate degree requirement and the participation was on voluntary basis without any incentives. The participants in the study were assured that their names and opinions would be dealt confidentiality without displaying it to the public.

The Research Participants

The total number of the participants was 215. The Lebanese sample had 114 participants (53%) and the Armenian sample 101 participants (47%). Regarding the gender distribution, the sample consisted of 124 females (57.7%) and 91 males (42.3%). The age range of the participants was between 17 and 65. The mean age was 23.12 years old and $SD = 8.33$. As for the participants' religion, 18.1% of them were identified as either atheist or left blank space whereas 53.5% were identified as Christians and 28.4% as followers of the Muslim faith.

Instruments Used in Data Collection

Several instruments were used in the process of data collection. The two samples were contrasted on the basis of their identification with or belongingness to either Lebanese or Armenian nationals groups. For the participants of the first sample, the term "Lebanon" and "Lebanese" was mentioned throughout the questionnaire as the national group that the participants identified themselves with. For the second sample, Lebanese was substituted with "Armenia" and "Armenian".

Perceived Collective Continuity: PCC (Appendix 1). For the two sample groups, the perceived collective continuity scale was measured using the modified 12-item Perceived Collective Continuity Scale (Sani, et al., 2007). It is a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 7 (*totally agree*). The original scale, drafted for the Spanish nationals, was modified by inscribing the name Lebanon and Lebanese for the Lebanese sample and Armenia and Armenians for the Armenian sample. In this research the reported internal consistency of PCC scale (coefficient alpha) was 0.745 which is considered rather satisfactory whereas during the validation of the scale Sani et al reported an internal consistency of 0.80.

The measure included questions such as Lebanese people have passed on their traditions across different generations and Lebanese history is a sequence of interconnected events.

Collective Self-Esteem: CSE (Appendix 2). The collective self-esteem was measured by using the 16-item Collective Self-Esteem Scale (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). CSE is a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 7 (*totally agree*). It is made up of 4 subscales each tapping specific dimension of one's evaluation to his/her membership of the group. The subscales were membership esteem (the extent of being a good member), private self-esteem (the extent of having a certain degree of belongingness to a good group), public esteem (the extent to which others evaluate one's group) and identity esteem (the extent to which one's group is important to the individual). The internal consistency (coefficient alpha) reported for the entire scale was 0.92. The scale included questions such as: in general, I'm glad to be a member of the Lebanese group and most people consider the Lebanese group, on the average, to be more ineffective than other groups.

Collective self-esteem scale has been used across different studies. For example, in a study researchers found that as perceived discrimination of the in-group increased, perceived in-group status and the collective self-esteem of the members of the group decreased (Leonardelli & Tormala, 2003). In this research, the internal consistency of collective self-esteem was 0.85.

Anomie: (Appendix 3). By using the same anomie scale that was used in Sani's et al research with Spanish nationals, group anomie was measured by extracting the 5 items of Srole's (1956) major work on individual's feeling of a group as disintegrated or anomic on 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 7 (*totally*

agree). The internal consistency (coefficient alpha) of the scale was 0.67. Different studies have used Srole's anomie scale and have obtained rather satisfactory internal consistency scores. Samples from the scale includes questions such as: Nowadays a person has to live pretty much for today and let tomorrow take care of itself and in spite of what some people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse not better.

For example, in a research aimed to develop different dimensions for social wellbeing scale, researchers found an alpha of 0.57 for the Anomie scale (Keyes, 1998), which similar to the internal consistency if this research is considered rather satisfactory.

Perceived Group Entitativity: PGE (Appendix 4). PGE was measured by using Campbell's (1958) original 6-item entitativity scale. Again, it is 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 7 (*totally agree*). For this scale, the reported internal consistency (coefficient alpha) was 0.82. Samples from the scale includes Lebanese share a common past experience and Lebanese have a sense of common fate.

Individual Self-Esteem ISE: (Appendix 5). The final measure which tapped individual self-esteem was borrowed from Rosenberg's famous self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965) which is composed of 10 Likert-type statements that includes *strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree*. The internal consistency (coefficient alpha) of ISE scale was 0.75.

Data Analysis

The obtained data were analyzed using computerized SPSS software program to calculate correlations among the indexes in addition to independent sample t test to calculate the mean differences between Lebanese and Armenian national groups.

Chapter IV

Results

First, the internal consistency of the five scales or Cronbach alphas used in the research are presented in table 1.

Table 1. Internal consistency of perceived collective continuity, collective self-esteem, anomie, perceived group entitativity and individual self-esteem scales.

Scale	PCC	CSE	Anomie	PGE	ISE
Alpha	0.745	0.92	0.67	0.82	0.75

Regarding the internal consistency of the scales, data analysis showed that the used measures had good internal consistency except for anomie scale which is considered rather satisfactory specially by having in mind the reported internal consistency scores across other studies.

The results of the correlation between PCC and the other group measures for both Lebanese and Armenian samples are presented below in table 2. For the first hypothesis, perceived collective continuity was positively and significantly associated with collective self-esteem for the total sample. This finding supports the first stated hypothesis: PCC and CSE are positively correlated.

Secondly, PCC was positively and significantly correlated with perceived group entitativity for the total sample which in turn supports the second stated hypothesis.

Contrary to the third stated hypothesis, PCC and anomie did not show any significant relation. Although the correlation between PCC and anomie was slightly positive nevertheless it was insignificant and nearly negligible. This result doesn't support the third formulated hypothesis.

Fourthly, PCC significantly predicted individual self-esteem for the total Lebanese and Armenian sample. This result supports the fourth hypothesis of the research. In short as it was hypothesized, perceived collective continuity was positively correlated with collective self-esteem, perceived group entitativity and individual self-esteem for the total Lebanese and Armenian samples. However, contrary to the third hypothesis, PCC was not correlated with group anomie for the two Lebanese and Armenian groups.

Table 2. Intercorrelations between Perceived Collective Continuity, Collective Self-Esteem, Anomie, Perceived Group Entitativity and Individual Self-esteem for the total Lebanese and Armenian groups sample.

	Perceived Collective Continuity	Collective Self Esteem	Anomia	Perceived Group Entitativity	Individual Self Esteem
Perceived Collectiv Continuity	1	.541**	.012	.424**	.327*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.861	.000	.000
	N	215	215	215	215
Collective Self Este		1	-.097	.497**	.324*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.157	.000	.000
	N		215	215	215
Anomia			1	-.027	.103
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.691	.133
	N			215	215
Perceived Group Entitativity				1	.274*
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.000
	N				215
Individual Self Este					1

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

Although the research did not stipulate any specific and separate hypothesis for each group, yet the data collected from each sample were analyzed and the results are provided below.

For the Lebanese sample, the results show that PCC was positively and significantly correlated with collective self-esteem, perceived group entitativity and individual self-esteem. However, there was no significant correlation between PCC and group anomie. The results from the Lebanese sample are reported in table 3. Similarly, the results for the Armenian sample showed that PCC was positively and significantly associated with CSE, PGE and ISE; however once again there was no significant correlation between PCC and group anomie.

Table 3. Intercorrelations between PCC, CSE, Anomie, PGE and ISE for the Lebanese sample.

		Perceived Collective Continuity	Collective Self Esteem	Anomia	Perceived Group Entitativity	Individual Self Esteem
Perceived Collective Continuity	Pearson Correlation	1	.190*	.123	.256**	.273**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.043	.191	.006	.003
	N		114	114	114	114
Collective Self Esteem	Pearson Correlation		1	.050	.242**	.216*
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.601	.009	.021
	N			114	114	114
Anomia	Pearson Correlation			1	.072	.177
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.447	.060
	N				114	114
Perceived Group Entitativity	Pearson Correlation				1	.159
	Sig. (2-tailed)					.092
	N					114
Individual Self Esteem	Pearson Correlation					1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

Similar to the Lebanese sample, the study did not stipulate specific hypothesis for the Armenian sample. Nevertheless the results of the correlations, which are displayed below in table 4, show that PCC was positively and significantly correlated with CSE, PGE and ISE whereas there was no significant correlation between PCC and group anomie.

Table 4. Intercorrelations between PCC, CSE, Anomie, PGE and ISE for Armenian sample.

		Perceived Collective Continuity	Collective Self Esteem	Anomia	Perceived Group Entitativity	Individual Self Esteem
Perceived Collective Continuity	Pearson Correlation	1	.490**	.161	.243*	.260**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.109	.014	.009
	N		101	101	101	101
Collective Self Esteem	Pearson Correlation		1	.016	.431**	.322**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.875	.000	.001
	N			101	101	101
Anomia	Pearson Correlation			1	.056	.112
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.575	.264
	N				101	101
Perceived Group Entitativity	Pearson Correlation				1	.289**
	Sig. (2-tailed)					.003
	N					101
Individual Self Esteem	Pearson Correlation					1

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

* .Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Finally for the fifth hypothesis, the means and standard deviations of each scale were calculated and the outcome is reported in table 5.

Table 5. Means & Standard Deviations for Lebanese and Armenian samples

	Nationality	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Perceived Collective Continuity	Lebanese	114	39.01	7.436
	Armenian	101	30.24	6.442
Collective Self Esteem	Lebanese	114	60.21	14.338
	Armenian	101	38.04	12.451
Anomia	Lebanese	114	14.96	5.330
	Armenian	101	17.03	5.127
Perceived Group Entitativity	Lebanese	114	19.91	6.126
	Armenian	101	14.47	4.961
Individual Self Esteem	Lebanese	114	9.32	3.773
	Armenian	101	7.80	3.731

The PCC, CSE, PGE and ISE scales are reversely scored. Higher values for these scales mean lower perception of continuity, lower collective esteem, low entitativity, and low self-esteem respectively.

For anomie, low scores implied stronger anomic perception by the group members.

To test the fifth hypothesis, a *t* test was performed on perceived collective continuity, which showed significant mean differences between Lebanese and Armenian samples (table 6). The obtained result confirms our last hypothesis: Armenians had a higher mean score on perceived collective continuity compared to their Lebanese counterparts. A closer look at table 6 also reveals that the Armenian sample showed higher mean scores on collective self-esteem, perceived group entitativity, group anomie and individual self-esteem compared to the Lebanese sample.

Table 6. Independent sample test for mean differences between Lebanese and Armenian groups on PCC, CSE, Anomie, PGE and ISE.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Perceived Collective Continuity	Equal variances assumed	2.494	.116	9.186	213	.000	8.771
	Equal variances not assumed			9.266	212.899	.000	8.771
Collective Self Esteer	Equal variances assumed	.571	.451	12.031	213	.000	22.171
	Equal variances not assumed			12.134	212.920	.000	22.171
Anomia	Equal variances assumed	1.162	.282	-2.886	213	.004	-2.065
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.893	211.543	.004	-2.065
Perceived Group Entitativity	Equal variances assumed	8.221	.005	7.106	213	.000	5.447
	Equal variances not assumed			7.196	211.346	.000	5.447
Individual Self Esteen	Equal variances assumed	.051	.821	2.968	213	.003	1.523
	Equal variances not assumed			2.970	210.434	.003	1.523

Finally, table 7 displays the results of the correlations from this research in addition to the results obtained from the studies conducted with the Spanish nationals (Sani et al, 2007 & Sani et al 2008). As the results in the last table indicate, PCC was significantly correlated with CSE, and PGE across the 5 samples which in turn validate the consistency of PCC scale across different cultures and societies.

Table 7: Intercorrelations between PCC, CSE, Anomie & PGE among 2 Spanish Samples, total Lebanese and Armenian samples, Lebanese and Armenian samples.

		CSE	Anomie	PGE
Spanish 1	PCC	.39**	----	.50**
Spanish 2	PCC	.42**	-.25**	.50**
Leb. & Arm	PCC	.54**	.01	.42**
Leb.	PCC	.19*	.12	.26**
Arm.	PCC	.49**	.16	.24**

Note: ** $p < .01$.

* $p < .05$.

Finally, the results of this research showed positive and significant correlation between PCC, CSE and PGE for the Lebanese, Armenian and total Lebanese and Armenian samples. These results are in line with the results obtained from the both Spanish samples. As for the PCC's relation with anomie, our results didn't show a significant correlation. This outcome contradicts the findings from the Spanish samples.

Chapter V

Discussion and Summary

The last chapter of the following research restates the research problem and briefly reviews the methodology followed by summarizing the obtained results and discussing their implications.

As stated earlier, the following study investigated the perceived collective continuity of both Lebanese and Armenians samples and its relation to collective self-esteem, perceived group entitativity, group anomie and individual self-esteem. It was hypothesized that members of Armenian ethnic group perceive stronger collective continuity compared to members of Lebanese national group. The research primarily was quantitative in nature based on responses to questionnaires of 215 participants.

Contrary to individual continuity, collective continuity is an uncharted territory in the field of social psychology; nevertheless, as the obtained results indicate, it has important implications on studying group-related characteristics. As predicted in the first hypothesis, perceived collective continuity is strongly associated with sense of pride and regard that individuals attach to their group membership. Members who perceive their group as a unit, which possesses cultural and historical durability over time, are more likely to possess a higher sense of collective self-esteem.

The obtained results are in line with De Cremer and Oosterwegel's (1999) study where subjects with high collective self-esteem evaluated in-group members more favorably. In other words, the participants had higher in-group favoritism compared to members with low collective self-esteem.

Moreover, the role of collective self-esteem besides individual self-esteem in providing life satisfaction and general happiness is emphasized in the literature.

For example, researchers found that collective self-esteem was strongly associated with life satisfaction followed by identification with in-group membership (Mokgathe & Schoeman, 1998). On the other hand, members who perceive their group as lacking narrativity or are disconnected from the past and future attribute less regard and pride for their group membership. Similarly, members who have disjointed feeling between the historical episodes of the group and its anticipated future events attach less regard to their national group.

The present results are in full agreement with those obtained by Sani et al (2007, 2008) using Spanish nationals where the researchers reported positive relation between PCC and CSE scale. In short, members who perceive their national or ethnic group as continuous tend to increase their regard to their group.

Secondly, as the results show, perceived collective continuity is positively associated with perceived group entitativity. The outcome implies that collective continuity can bring forth considerable information about the perceived entitativity of a group. Although the results yielded a positive correlation between PCC and PGE; nevertheless, it will be unwise at this stage to infer that perceiving a group as a continuous organism provides a ground for making this group more entitative. By having in mind the fact that individual's perception of group entitativity is influenced by different factors including the type of the group (Svirydzenka, Sani, Bennett, 2010); therefore, to infer a causal relationship between PCC and PGE needs further investigation and research.

Meanwhile, as mentioned before, Castano et al (2003) in 4 experimental studies concluded that individuals are motivated to increase their identification with entitative groups. In other words, individuals tend to be identified with groups that possess

certain degree of entitativity compared to groups who lack entitativity. Similarly, due to the positive correlation between PCC and PGE, individuals might also increase their identification with groups that have some degree of historical and cultural continuity. In short, collective continuity and perceived entitativity characterize individual's mental representation of group membership.

For the third proposition, the yielded results failed to support the stated hypothesis where it was expected that PCC would be negatively correlated with group anomie. Accordingly, a possible explanation can be found in the theoretical nature of the concept of anomie. Probably, the participants had obscured feelings of alienation from their group especially by remembering the fact that anomie also varies with personal characteristics of the individual (McClosky & Schaar, 1965 as cited in Blank, 2003). Hence, most likely, the complex relationship between personal characteristics and the feelings of group alienation accounts for the lack of correlation not only between anomie and PCC, but also between anomie and all other indices including that of individual self-esteem. Such an explanation suggests that "causes of anomie do not necessarily lie in the state of the nation, but can vary depending on the individual significance of different social identities" (Blank, 2003, p. 280). In other words, group members might possess individual reasons and characteristics that might cause them to alienate from their national and ethnic groups.

In sum, one can deduce that by perceiving a group as more continuous, the individual becomes more inclined to accentuate the integrity of group membership. Similarly, the belief that an individual is the progeny of a body of traditions and values helps the individual to anchor more regard to the group.

For our fourth and new hypothesis, the results supported the association between perceived collective continuity and individual self-esteem. By restating the definition of PCC on individual level, collective continuity entails the feeling of certainty in the present moment that the group people belong to or identify with is continuous throughout history and will certainly exist in the future. This process of living a present with a certain future will lessen the feelings of uncertainty. In turn experiencing less uncertainty helps the individual to increase his or her level of self-confidence.

On the other hand, our results become interesting when remembering Chandler's et al (2008) study on Canadian aboriginals where lack of cultural continuity partially explained the epidemic rate of suicidality. For example, a cross-national study across 55 nations indicated that suicide is more common in nations with relatively low self-esteem (Chatard, Selimbegovic & Konan, 2009). Also, suicidal children (Marciano & Kazdin, 1994) and adolescents (Overholser & Adams, 1995) exhibited lower self-esteem than non-suicidal children and adolescents. Hence, by relying on one's group to enhance one's self-esteem may probably decrease suicidal thoughts and behaviors. In other words, individuals who cling to a continuous group or perceive the group as continuous reap its benefit that includes an increased self-esteem. In short, individuals who perceive their national group as continuous are more likely to develop a positive self-appraisal.

At last, the two constructs, collective self-esteem and individual self-esteem have positive implications in mental health sciences. And as the obtained results indicate the positive relation of PCC with collective and individual self-esteem appeals important

not only in the field of social psychology but in the field of clinical psychology as well.

For the last hypothesized difference between Lebanese and Armenian national groups, the results confirmed that members of Armenian ethnic group perceive their group as more continuous compared to the Lebanese group. Explaining this contrast cannot be achieved by decontextualizing the Armenian ethnic group from its wider Lebanese society. As Eriksen (2010) in his highly regarded socio-anthropological work states “groups and categories are in a sense *created* (italics in the original work) through ...contact. Group identities must always be defined in relation to what they are not – in other words, in relation to non-members of the group” (p. 14). Primarily, the native language of the Armenian ethnic group is an element that draws well-defined ethnic boundaries vis-à-vis the Lebanese host society. Although language as an ethnic boundary marker is “used for inter-ethnic categorization and is an important tool for establishing a sense of group cohesiveness” (Giles & Johnson, 1981, as cited in Heaven, Stones, Simbayi & Le Roux, 2000), yet merely utilizing a unique language cannot explain the difference in perceiving stronger collective continuity.

On the other hand, the second factor that most probably accounts for this difference between the two samples is the group size between Armenians as a minority group within a majority Lebanese group. In this sense, one can argue that members of Armenian ethnic group have succeeded to safely harbor their culture and collective history underneath a broader cultural milieu, namely that of Lebanese culture and history. And upon being conscious of the fact that they are a minority group in a host society, this awareness has consolidated their values and beliefs and stretched their perception of their group’s continuity.

By reaching likewise conclusion, Ellemers, Kortekaas and Ouwerkerk (1999) by basing their study on Brewer's (1991) optimal distinctiveness theory, found that people's self-categorization as members of a certain group solely depends on the relative size of the group. In other words, members of a minority group upon being aware of their relative size increase their self-categorization. Similarly, Armenians have attended to their minority status, often implicitly, and as a result perceived the life of their group as experiencing interconnected past, present and future in addition to continuous cultural values. This implies that at some core level, the perceived collective existence of the Armenian group has remained intact. With the same logic of minority effect one can contend that when contrasted with the larger Arab culture and history or by surviving in a wider Arab milieu, members of Lebanese group can similarly perceive their nation as more continuous both historically and culturally. However, given the current social, geopolitical and cultural circumstances of their existence, they are inattentive to this factor.

Moreover, further analysis shows significant differences between the two groups on measures of collective self-esteem, anomie, perceived group entitativity and individual self-esteem. To start with collective self-esteem, according to the literature, when national identity of one's group membership is threatened by an out-group usually defensive processes are activated (Branscombe & Wann, 1994). These defenses are manifested by developing enhanced collective self-esteem, and as Tajfel (1982) proposed the individual becomes motivated for in-group favoritism and out-group derogation. Similarly, members of the Armenian ethnic minority group might be perceiving the threat of losing the Armenian identity, though this fear can be imagined or real, (Milburn & Watman, 1981 as cited in Korf & Malan, 2002), and as a result

increase their collective self-esteem to immunize against this alarm. As for the Lebanese sample, the Lebanese identity is not threatened to be lost or assimilated due to the status of the Lebanese group as a majority group existing in their native environment. However, when compared to the larger Arab World, one can expect that the Lebanese group will increase their attachment to their national group due to their status as a minority group existing in an Arab world dominated by non Lebanese population.

Secondly, for the difference in perceived entitativity of the two groups, previous studies have concluded that feelings of entitativity lead to enhanced sense of security and safety in the face of threats (Sacchi, Castano & Brauer, 2009). In this research, the fact that Armenians exist in clearly territorized and well-defined boundaries, and boundary being a factor in perceiving an aggregate as entitative, this territorization has probably increased the level of perceiving their group as more entitative than the Lebanese national group. Moreover, since most of the members of Armenian ethnic group live in blocked areas, this way of existence has increased their perception of their group as an entitative body. Thirdly, PCC in the Lebanese, Armenian and Lebanese Armenian samples did not correlate with group anomie. Nevertheless, members of the Armenian group showed lesser anomic feeling compared to their Lebanese counterparts. When compared to the Lebanese majority group, members of Armenian ethnic group are possibly more integrated into the wider Armenian society due to their relative group size. Apparently, preserving social norms and values is more attainable and easier in smaller groups. In larger, groups norms and values become easily melted or at least they seem hard to be maintained.

In short, though PCC failed to correlate with anomie for both group members, still obtaining significant mean differences between these groups seems interesting and has to be investigated more closely.

Finally, for the reported difference on individual self-esteem scale, previous research studies have failed to reach convincing and undisputed results regarding the development of self-esteem in minority groups that exist in societies dominated by a majority group (Verkuyten, 2005). In this study, the results showed significant differences in personal self-esteem between Armenian ethnic group and Lebanese nationals where Armenians showed higher self-esteem compared to the Lebanese sample. The observed difference in self-esteem is probably derived from group membership and belongingness rather than by maintaining an individuality that is characterized by high self-esteem.

For example, in a study on ethnic minority group, (Hovey, Kin & Seligman, 2006), researchers found that maintenance of cultural values was correlated with decreased self-esteem due to what the authors called “ethnic bind” (p. 508) where the individuals were caught between traditionalism of their culture and modernism of the general society. Hence according to the results of this study, self-esteem was negatively correlated with the minority status of the sample.

However, contradictory results are also obtained in different studies where self-esteem was found to be positively correlated with minority status groups in multicultural societies (Verkuyten, 2009). For the reported difference on self-esteem scale, probably membership in Armenian group as a minority group implies an overlap between the collective self and the individual self (Simon & Hamilton, 1994 as cited in

Ellemers et al, 1999). The obtained result of positive correlation between the individual and collective self-esteem scales verifies the stated explanation.

As a summary, the outcome of the study indicated that for the Lebanese and Armenian samples perceived collective continuity was significantly and positively associated with collective self-esteem, perceived group entitativity and individual self-esteem. However, contrary to expectations, PCC failed to correlate with group anomie scale. As for the differences in perceived collective continuity, Armenians perceived stronger continuity compared to their Lebanese counterparts.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the following study had certain limitations. First, as we mentioned before, the two samples were extracted from Beirut district and failed to include members of other areas and countries specially Lebanese who reside abroad. Members of these groups might have developed different perception towards their national identity. Secondly, due to the fact that PCC tapped two different dimensions, cultural and historical continuity, one of these dimensions could have been more strongly correlated with certain group properties. However, in order to preserve the integrated nature of the authors' original scale, the study avoided disentangling each dimensions. Future attempts should be made to investigate each element of the scale separately. Similarly, the collective self-esteem tapped 4 different dimensions and hence each dimension could have unique association with PCC and other scales. These limitations should be revisited for any future implications. Second, investigating the direct causal effect of perceived collective continuity will better enhance our understanding of the en-route influence of continuity on wellbeing.

For this reason, furthering the dynamic relationship of perceived continuity with other group related variables would help us understand the nature of PCC effect on other measures.

In the end, previous results have accentuated the positive effects of adhering to one's ethnic identity on the positive feelings of a person (Carlson et al 2000, Uman~ a- Taylor et al, 2009). Likewise, as the findings of this study show perceiving one's culture and history as continuous and durable has interesting consequences on group-related properties and characteristics, in addition to having direct association with personal self-esteem too. In other words, PCC has major implications both in the field of social and clinical psychology due to its positive association with individual self-esteem. Attempting to explore possible continuity effect of the individual's other distinct social groups including one's family, social class or religion deserves further exploration especially in collectivistic cultures where family values occupy important place in the individual's life. In this regard, perceived sense of family continuity, for example, may positively influence the family members' sense of pride and confidence.

Moreover, the direct effect of continuity information on the well functioning of the family also deserves further investigation. Finally, a comparative study on the perceived continuity between the Lebanese as a minority group and the Arabs as a majority group will enhance our understanding of the interesting relation between minority and majority groups.

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Appendix 1Perceived Collective Continuity Scale

Instructions: Kindly read the following statements and then circle one number from 1 to 7 on the scale. There is no right or wrong answer to these questions. We are only interested in your honest opinion. Please don't mention your name.

Age: _____

Gender: Female _____ Male _____

Religious Sect _____ (Only if you don't mind)

1. Lebanese people have passed on their traditions across different generations
2. Lebanese history is a sequence of interconnected events
3. Shared values, beliefs and attitudes of Lebanese people have endurance across times
4. Major phases in Lebanese history are linked to one another
5. Throughout history the members of the Lebanese group have maintained their inclinations and mentality
6. There is no connection between past, present, and future events in Lebanon
7. Lebanese people will always be characterized by specific traditions and beliefs
8. There is a causal link between different events in Lebanese history
9. Lebanon has preserved its traditions and customs throughout history
10. The main events in Lebanese history are part of an "unbroken stream"
11. Lebanese people have maintained their values across time
12. There is no continuity between different ages in Lebanese history

Appendix 2Collective Self-esteem Scale

We are all members of different social groups or social categories. Some of such social groups or categories pertain to gender, race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, and socioeconomic class. We would like you to consider your memberships for the Lebanese group.

1. I am a worthy member of the Lebanese group that I belong to.
2. I often regret that I belong to the Lebanese group.
3. Overall, Lebanese group is considered good by others.
4. Overall, Lebanese group membership has very little to do with how I feel about myself.
5. I feel I don't have much to offer to the Lebanese group I belong to.
6. In general, I'm glad to be a member of the Lebanese group.
7. Most people consider the Lebanese group, on the average, to be more ineffective than other groups.
8. The Lebanese group I belong to is an important reflection of who I am.
9. I am a cooperative participant in the Lebanese group I belong to.
10. Overall, I often feel that the Lebanese group of which I am a member is not worthwhile.
11. In general others respect the Lebanese group that I am a member of.
12. The Lebanese group I belong to is unimportant to my sense of what kind of a person I am.
13. I often feel I'm a useless member of the Lebanese group.
14. I feel good about the Lebanese group I belong to.

15. In general, others think that the Lebanese group I am a member of is unworthy.
16. In general, belonging to Lebanese group is an important part of my self-image.

Appendix 3: Anomie Scale

1. There is little use writing to public officials because often they aren't really interested in the problems of an average man.
2. Nowadays a person has to live pretty much for today and let tomorrow take care of itself.
3. In spite of what some people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse not better.
4. It's hardly fair to bring children into the world with the way things look for the future.
5. These days a person doesn't really know whom he can count on.

Appendix 4

Perceived Group Entitativity

1. Lebanese have many characteristics in common
2. There are strong ties among Lebanese
3. Lebanese cooperate with each other
4. There are strong similarities between Lebanese
5. Lebanese share a common past experience
6. Lebanese have a sense of common fate

Appendix 5

Individual self-esteem scale

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself-
2. At times, I think I am no good at all
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
6. I certainly feel useless at times.
7. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself-.
9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself-.