



Accountability as a source of national identity development



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ABSTRACT

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Individuals ought to be guided by the principle of accountability when establishing their civil duties. It is vital and deeply rooted in the formation of a feeling of national identity. The recent episode, however, has questioned the ability of the civil service to uphold accountability. Consequently, fostering a feeling of national identity requires nothing more than doing the right thing. The methodology employed in this research blends a quantitative design with a survey-oriented approach. The fundamental random sample method had a total of 120 respondents. The analysis's findings illustrate the criticality of honesty in any effort to assist individuals in need. Accountability must be highly esteemed for every group to participate in the formation of a national identity that safeguards the interests of the people. To build a strong and cohesive national identity, accountability must be upheld at all levels of society. A technique akin to the national identity formation process could be employed to advocate for the notion of accountability. Accountability is a crucial source of national identity development to promote trust, transparency, equality and responsibility within a society, creating a strong foundation for a cohesive and proud national identity. To ensure national security and, more pragmatically, foster peace and harmony, the establishment of accountable values and the cultivation of a sense of national identity must take precedence.

Contribution/ Originality: Previous research on national identity in Malaysia focuses on the ethnicity and language of the people in Malaysia. Research that focuses on accountability as the factors influencing national identity is scarce and limited. Meanwhile, this article contributes to the knowledge by investigating accountability as a source of national identity development.

1. INTRODUCTION

Accountability encompasses the obligation for individuals or entities to justify their conduct, take ownership of the decisions and make the outcomes known to the public. The situation extends to the stewardship of financial assets, the provision of services and the wider ramifications of the strategies on society (Almquist, Grossi, van Helden, & Reichard, 2013). Accountability, on the other hand, is a broad concept that can mean different things in various contexts (Mulyadi, Anwar, & Economics, 2012).

Accountability is defined as a relationship built on specific people's obligations to demonstrate, review, and take responsibility for performance, with both outcomes achieved while taking agreed-upon expectations and techniques into account. Accountability is defined as being obedient and fulfilling personal tasks, feeling of obligation to another person, and defending one's conduct to others (Claire, 2021).

External restrictions, as well as the acceptance of self-regulatory concepts, can both encourage accountability. The Islamic state can play a critical role in controlling employees' disposition of authority in the use of power, discretion, and employee behaviour regulatory processes through Islamic teaching and administrative ethics training programmes (Chandio, 2021). The primary goal and responsibility of the Islamic state is to ensure proper accountability to offer efficient service delivery on the ground.

Transparency and accountability are linked and can help each other. Citizens can use this to highlight their problems, influence decision-making, and express their thoughts. Decentralization, delegation of authority, performance monitoring criteria, and the use of modifications that specify the process of accountability by public officials to satisfy the standards of being loyal citizens of the country are all key components of this new management paradigm (Mulyadi et al., 2012).

The quality of services provided and addressing the demands of the people are the key focuses of this new management style as a civil officer. Personal responsibility and how to serve the country are intimately linked to the concept of accountability. Every task completed can be evaluated to see if it fosters patriotism and promotes a strong sense of national identity (Mokhtar & Lokman, 2016). This might be viewed as a simple act of voting on a regular basis or as a set of formal and institutional control mechanisms capable of holding public officials accountable for their actions in a simplified form.

National identity serves as an illustration of a distinctive characteristic shared by all countries (Bruce & Tomas, 1998). As per this perspective, it has been observed that national identity can be interpreted as a theoretical construct that is created from scratch based on a few unique elements linked to a specific culture that is followed within a specific political state (Huntington, 1997). Stated differently, a society's culture can influence how its members form a social and personal identity that aligns with the prevailing values of that society. The concept of social and personal identity that aligns with the dominant values of a society is referred to as national identity, as discussed by Albury and Khin (2016).

The Social Identity Theory of Tajfel and Turner (2004) lends support to this understanding of people's national identities. A member of a society may have a self-image that combines their social and personal identities, according to Tajfel and Turner (2004). As a result, national identity research presents a difficult problem for social cultural studies when applied to a multicultural society like Malaysia.

Ethnic pluralism has been highlighted in Malaysian society as a suitable social and cultural practice (Changsong & Yiming, 2017). One key governmental policy in Malaysia has been to foster a sense of unity among the various ethnic groups that make up the country (Albury & Khin, 2016). National identity is the positive sentiments that individual members of a society may have and express toward their country. It is the sense of unity and loyalty that members of a society have toward their country. However, we were unsure if young Malaysians felt a comprehensively positive sense about their nation (Mokhtar & Lokman, 2016). According to the same line of reasoning, national identity activities may be difficult in Malaysia due to the strong sense of belonging that many communities have to their cultures and customs (Albury & Khin, 2016; Matondang, 2018).

The formation of national identity and accountability in a society is greatly influenced by civil servants. This is a succinct synopsis such as putting policies in practice for economic growth. The policies that promote economic growth, draw in investments and encourage development are drafted and implemented in large part by civil servants. Their contribution to economic governance has a direct impact on how accountable government policies are for promoting national prosperity. Maintaining effective governance by carrying out governmental directives and offering public services, civil servants support good governance. Building public trust and confidence in the

government's capacity to meet societal needs requires good governance. The choices and actions are crucial to preserve transparency and accountability in governance procedures.

Creation and execution of policies involve civil servants in charge of creating and carrying out policies that affect different facets of society. The dedication to morally and responsibly governing the country helps to forge a unified identity based on common principles and a feeling of duty. Cultural and Social Integration: Civil servants can help diverse communities within a country integrate socially and culturally through their work. They contribute to the formation of a cohesive national identity by promoting inclusivity and a sense of belonging through the equitable implementation of policies. In conclusion, civil servants are essential in fostering accountability through the application of policies and help to forge a unified national identity by guaranteeing just and open governance. Their activities have a big impact on a country's overall socioeconomic structure.

Accountability within government procurement is essential for effective governance, as its absence can erode public trust in government institutions and lead to significant financial losses for the national economy, ultimately affecting the populace.

Prior to investigating the presence of integrity in Malaysian government procurement, it is necessary to look into ways to curtail or get rid of non-integrity activities. A nation like Malaysia can benefit from the experience of other nations or the function of international organizations in forming an integrity-based culture.

Accountability is a crucial value that should be inherent in every public servant. By fulfilling their assigned duties with integrity, they ensure that funding for government entities, initiatives, events, or projects adheres to existing plans, budgets, protocols, and legal frameworks, thereby maximizing the return on every expenditure.

The concepts of accountability and integrity can be used to ensure value for money in government procurement in a variety of ways, including the ones listed below. Civil servants' appreciation of noble principles in the public sector. It can help government officials develop a noble character by ensuring that the responsibilities given to them are completed transparently, equitably, and diligently. Trust in carrying out tasks, responsible, sincere, honest, clean, fair and just, frugality, and others are among the noble characteristics that must be lived to enable the application of the principles of accountability and integrity in every public officer. Only civil workers who possess and practise good and quality qualities may conduct efficient financial management.

Accountability of civil servants is crucial to the formation of national identity. This is an explanation given from this angle. Accountable civil servants will guarantee honesty in government. People's confidence in public institutions and the government is based on and transparency in Management. In order to understand and implement the national policies, the foundation for the growth of a robust national identity is the efficient and honest execution of national policies, which will be ensured by responsible civil servants. By providing excellent public services, civil servants leadership that is both professional and of outstanding quality will enhance the sense of national identity.

Accountability for civil servants comprises not only efficient use of resources but also honesty, integrity, and duty to the nation and its citizens. Each of these makes a substantial contribution to the formation of a strong and competitive national identity.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Accountability

Accountability in the context of public service refers to the duty of workers to fulfil duties and adhere to laws to guarantee the effective and methodical use of public resources. Accountability is intimately associated with transparency, adherence to legal and regulatory requirements, and the economical and efficient utilization of resources (Ferreira, 2021). It is also a step in the right direction toward developing an efficient control mechanism to guarantee that public money is managed in compliance with legal requirements.

Three (3) different kinds of accountability exist. Program accountability is necessary to guarantee that each established program meets its predetermined goals and objectives. The effectiveness and efficiency with which energy, labour, money, and other resources are used to prevent waste can be assessed through management accountability. Financial accountability ensures that all transactions are carried out honestly, completely, methodically, and in accordance with financial laws and regulations. It also gives confidence that the accounts kept are trustworthy.

Given the volume and significant use of funds within this sector, the public sector is one with a bigger budget allocation. It is indisputable that this sector is frequently subject to practices of fraud, waste, and, more crucially, corruption. According to Lyrio, Lunkes, and Taliani (2018) there is a direct correlation between the amount of money spent on company and the likelihood of various sorts of misbehaviour, making this industry very susceptible to wrongdoing.

Government procurement accountability is essential to strong governance because, in the absence of accountability, the public's trust in the government would be eroded, resulting in large losses to the national economy that will eventually harm the people as well (Atan, Alam, & Said, 2017). Approaches to lessen or eradicate non-accountability activities must be considered before determining whether government procurement in Malaysia is accountable. Advice on how to establish an accountable culture in a nation like Malaysia be found in other nations' experiences or in the functions of international organizations (Aziz, Rahman, Alam, & Said, 2015).

Responsibility extends beyond mere accountability, which is tied to strict liability and requires individuals to answer the superiors for their actions (Almquist et al., 2013). It is a fundamental aspect of societal contracts and essential for trust in public institutions. The concept of responsibility contains not only the obligation to account for public resource use and to provide explanations, but also the precautionary and security measures that are vital in more complex societies. This concept of responsibility is deeply intertwined with both governmental and societal realms. It can manifest in straightforward forms, such as regular voting, or through more structured mechanisms that ensure public officials are held accountable for their conduct.

2.2. National Identity

Smith (1992) explores the notion that national identity is a modern and ever-changing concept, which gives rise to the personal conviction that individuals within a community who possess certain shared attributes are connected through lineage. Elements such as a shared history, cultural practices, traditions, emblematic representations, familial ties, language, religious beliefs, geographical boundaries, and a sense of a unifying origin and future have been variously emphasized by different groups throughout history and across different locations in their efforts to define and promote a distinct national identity.

In general, a nation-state's citizens are referred to as having a national identity. According to Ibnu Khaldun's Assabiyah Theory, humans are social creatures who interact and communicate with one another to meet their basic needs. Without the cooperation and support of other individuals or groups, an individual or group will not be able to meet all their basic needs (Mohd Tohar, Ab. Halim, Ku Samsu, & Musa, 2014). The same holds true for other fields that demand close collaboration between their members and the government, such as the political, economic, social, educational, and artistic domains.

An individual's national identity shapes their character. As an example of developed nations, consider Japan, Korea, and China. These three, while at the forefront of business, advancement, and planning, nevertheless manage to capture the essence of each nation, allowing other nations to recognize that can portray their own states (Jiao, 2018). Nonetheless, there are other situations in which people who belong to a country without a state of their own share a national identity. A shared sense of identity among the people who belong to the nation is reinforced by memories of a period when it was independent, faced collective oppression, or achieved international leadership (Van Ginderachter, 2004). The nation as an imagined community has become ingrained, as Anderson (2006)

suggests. Because of this, the country is the same as any other collective that is larger than the smallest of groups. Civil servants are expected to be central to the description and symbolism of national identity (Zhong, 2016).

The government and Malaysians believe that promoting integrity and accountability in national identity demonstrates moral and ethical excellence in all contributions to the country's development, reflecting the love and independence of its people (Mohd Yusoff, Ahmad, Meri, Modili, & Joko, 2020). Thus, to achieve excellence, several factors need to be considered. Accountability must receive particular attention at the most fundamental level to fulfil the national development agenda.

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methods and procedures used including population and sample design and analysis methods.

3.1. Research Design

This quantitative research was conducted utilising a survey approach with a questionnaire. A descriptive study is used in this investigation (Sekaran & Roger, 2017). Because the data is only collected once, the time horizon is the cross-sectional study (used). This study's unit of analysis is 120 civil servants from Kementerian Komunikasi dan Digital (KKD). Simple Random Sampling was used in this investigation. The questionnaire was distributed among civil servants in KKD from 1 August 2023 until 31 August 2023 and 120 civil servants completed the questionnaire.

3.2. Instrumentation

A questionnaire is selected as the medium for measuring respondents' responses. In this study, a survey questionnaire was employed since it provides a clear scale rating that may indicate opinion, clear perception, and accurate response from respondents. The questionnaire that the researcher will create is broken into three components. The first section will provide the demographics of the respondents, while the second section will have two subsections.

The questionnaire employs a Likert-type scale. The seven-point scale is referred to as a Likert-type scale. For this study, rating scales ranging from one (1) to five (7) have been used: - (1) Disagree; (2) Strongly disagree; (3) Somewhat disagree; (4) Neither agree nor disagree; (5) Somewhat agree; (6) Agree; and (7) Strongly agree.

The research will use SPSS to determine the descriptive, relationship and factor analysis. The study will be conducted on a set of respondents. The data will be analysed using the "SPSS IBM version 29.0" for Windows (Statistical Package for Social Science).

The quality of information gained through questionnaires is dependable on the respondent's understanding and interpretation of what is required by the item. Hence, clarity is an important aspect in preparing a good questionnaire.

3.3. Data Analysis

Table 1 shows the results for the Reliability test. The Cronbach's Alpha result is 0.971, which indicates a high level of consistency. From the result, accountability is valid as a source of national identity development.

Table 1. Reliability and validity.

Reliability statistics		
Cronbach's alpha	Cronbach's alpha based on standardized items	N of items
0.971	0.968	97

Table 2. Correlations accountability and national identity.

Correlations			
		Accountability	National identity
Accountability	Pearson correlation	1	0.988**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<0.001
	N	120	120
National identity	Pearson correlation	0.988**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.001	
	N	120	120

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

Table 2 shows that based on Pearson Correlation 2-tailed, all factors have significant correlation with each others. the correlation between the accountability and national identity are positive, significant recorded at (r = .988, p < 0.001). This could mean that when civil servant’s accountability is becoming stronger, the civil servants tend to increase their national identity towards the country. There is a significant relationship between accountability and national identity.

Table 3. Regression.

Regression				
Model summary ^b				
Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
1	0.988 ^a	0.975	0.975	0.075

Note: a. Predictors: (Constant), accountability.
b. Dependent variable: Nationalidentity.

Table 3 shows the regression model summary indicates that there is a very strong relationship between accountability and national identity, with accountability explaining 97.5% of the variance in national identity. The model's predictions are also quite accurate, as indicated by the small standard error of the estimate.

Table 3a. ANOVA.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	25.984	1	25.984	4662.247	<0.001 ^b
	Residual	0.658	118	0.006		
	Total	26.642	119			

Note: a. Dependent variable: Nationalidentity.
b. Predictors: (Constant), accountability.

Table 3a of ANOVA table indicates that the regression model with accountability as the predictor is highly statistically significant in explaining the variance in national identity. The model accounts for almost all of the variance in the dependent variable, with only a very small portion left unexplained.

Table 3b. Coefficients.

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardize d coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-0.061	0.098		-0.625	0.533
	Accountability	1.010	0.015	0.988	68.281	<0.001

Note: a. Dependent variable: Nationalidentity.

Table 3b indicates that accountability has a strong positive effect on national identity. The model suggests that as accountability increases, national identity also increases, and this relationship is statistically significant. The constant is not significantly different from zero, which means that when accountability is zero, the model does not provide a reliable prediction of national identity.

Table 3c. Residual statistics.

Residuals statistics ^a					
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. deviation	N
Predicted value	5.923	7.011	6.58	0.467	120
Residual	-0.192	0.144	0.000	0.074	120
Std. predicted value	-1.416	0.912	0.000	1.000	120
Std. residual	-2.583	1.935	0.000	0.996	120

Note: a. Dependent variable: Nationalidentity

Table 3c presents a strong and dependable regression model. The predicted values exhibit a moderate spread around the mean, reflecting the natural variability inherent in the data. The residuals are minimal and tightly clustered around zero, suggesting that the model's predictions are highly accurate. The standardized predicted values and residuals fall within expected ranges, with no significant outliers or deviations, indicating that the model successfully captures the underlying trends in the data.

As a conclusion, the model shows "National identity" seems to be highly effective, as demonstrated by the small residuals and their distribution around zero. This degree of accuracy and consistency in the residual statistics highlights the reliability of the model, making it a valuable instrument for comprehending and predicting the "National identity" variable within the given dataset.

4. DISCUSSION

The result of the present study indicated that the sense of national identity among civil servants in Kementerian Komunikasi dan Digital (KKD) was considerable. The sense of solidarity and faithfulness of members of a society towards their country is referred to as national identity (Mokhtar & Lokman, 2016). Basically, the findings of this research had been proven to answer the research objectives as set beforehand.

Civil Servants are the country's leaders, and cultivating national ideas inside these organizations is essential to creating a society with a recognizable national identity. It is important to emphasize the relationships, indigenous practices, history, literature, relationships, and rights related to tribes, kings, and governments (Mohd Tohar & Razali, 2019). Being a citizen of Malaysia is difficult as a result.

As a civil servant, the quality of services delivered and meeting the needs of the people are the main priorities of this new management style (Leoussi, 2009). Accountability is closely related to the concept of personal responsibility and how to serve the country. Every job done can be seen whether it enhances the spirit of patriotism and the level of national identity is at a high level.

This is appropriate because accountability is closely linked to the government and society. This may be seen in a simplified form as a simple act of voting on a regular basis or as a set of formal and institutional control mechanisms capable of holding public officials accountable for their activities.

Decentralization, delegation of authority, performance monitoring criteria, and the use of modifications that specify the process of accountability by public officials to satisfy the standards of being loyal citizens of the country are all key components of this new management paradigm.

Discussions about accountability in organizations are important to ensure the effectiveness of management and leadership. Accountability includes an individual's responsibility for the tasks assigned by the employer or organization (Almquist et al., 2013; Tran & Nguyen, 2020). To ensure improved accountability, strategies such as

performance monitoring, continuous evaluation, and a fair incentive and discipline system should be implemented. In addition, integrity management is also an important factor in dealing with issues such as corruption and malpractice in the organization.

The quality of services provided and addressing the demands of the people are the key focuses of this new management style as a public officer. Personal responsibility and how to serve the country are intimately linked to the concept of accountability. Every task completed can be evaluated to see if it fosters patriotism and promotes a strong sense of national identity. The government and society are inextricably interlinked. This might be viewed as a simple act of voting on a regular basis or as a set of formal and institutional control mechanisms capable of holding public officials accountable for their actions in a simplified form.

Referring to national identity, the element of accountability plays an important role in shaping and strengthening unity and integrity in society. Accountability refers to individual responsibility for tasks and decisions taken in a work or organizational context. In the context of national identity development, accountability ensures that individuals and institutions are responsible for their actions that affect national harmony and unity.

By strengthening accountability at all levels, including in the education system, public administration, and community development, individuals and institutions will be more willing to take responsibility for the interests of the country and national unity (Mohd Balwi et al., 2021). This helps to reduce the risk of corruption and strengthen people's trust in the government and national institutions.

In the context of leadership, accountability is the capacity to accept responsibility for the choices and actions made (Navaratnam, 2018). Accountability in the context of leadership means that the leader is accountable for the decisions, actions, and results he takes that affect the group or people he leads. A leader who is accountable will accept accountability for the choices they make and how they affect the organization's success or failure.

As for the leader, the key component in forming leadership professionalism is accountability. When it comes to performing his job, a professional leader exhibits accountability by being openly accountable, reliable, and honest. Being a professional entail carrying out duties in a moral and responsibly manner and upholding strict performance standards.

Accountability gives an impact on organizational development by creating a strong organizational culture requires a blend of professionalism and effective leadership. This will facilitate with organizational development by promoting personal accountability, fostering a culture of trust among employees, and raising output and efficiency (Chandio, 2021).

Strong commitment to accountability is necessary for the implementation of national policies, meaning that everyone involved in the process of developing, implementing, and overseeing the policies must take responsibility for their choices and actions.

Monitoring and assessment are the part of accountability is keeping a close eye on how national policies are being implemented and assessing whether the established objectives have been met (Ferreira, 2021). This guarantees successful and efficient implementation. The public should be informed freely about the use of resources, decision-making processes, and the effects of national policies during the implementation phase. As a result, there is increased accountability and trust. Government must be transparent in all terms of national policy and documentation in order to gain trust from the public.

Efficient and effective complaint and report System as the alternative to allow the public and stakeholders to report any anomalies or non-compliance with national policies, an effective complaint and report system must be put in place. This guarantees the integrity and security of the way policies are implemented (Kaur & Lodhia, 2019). Each government and institutional responsibilities agency must take accountability for carrying out the directives it receives. This entails enforcing legal requirements and precise guidelines to guarantee adherence to accountability standards.

The effective use of resources, successful outcomes, and the nation's sustainable development are all dependent on the implementation of national policies based on the accountability principle.

5. CONCLUSION

As a conclusion professional leadership relies heavily on accountability. Accountable leaders will promote integrity and responsibility, which will lead to a more successful direction for the organization's development. The influence of the value of accountability is related to the idea of media control and how to effectively manage public relations, particularly because social media, websites, digital communications, and video sessions are now such commonplace forms of information dissemination (Seman, Mat, & Nirwandy, 2018). The media is a significant factor in influencing public opinion and self-esteem in the age of globalisation. By infusing state aspects into the content, social media can be used as a platform to influence these groups which are predisposed toward the science of statehood on the importance of accountability in developing national identity.

The integration of elements of accountability in the discussion about national identity is important to build a quality, integrity, and united nation. By strengthening accountability, Malaysia can continue to strengthen its national identity in a multicultural society.

In the setting of this study, the study faced data gathering constraint as the research was done based in Malaysia. Thus, the information provided on this literature may concentrated international rather than local. As the research is subjected to shorter period, it limits the gathering of useful data as the researcher is hindered to limit the number of past literatures to be analyzed. The study was conducted within a limited time and indirectly it limits the depth of the study. Researchers who wish to conduct similar studies are welcome to use the research as a guideline. As a suggestion, researchers may conduct studies about the level of integrity among civil servants. Future researchers could focus on the different levels of respondents.

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Transparency: The authors state that the manuscript is honest, truthful, and transparent, that no key aspects of the investigation have been omitted, and that any differences from the study as planned have been clarified. This study followed all writing ethics.

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