The Effect of In-Group and Outgroup Labels on the Evaluation of People's Behavior: A Survey Experiment Using 12 Morally Ambiguous Situations

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Abstract - *This study attempted to determine if the labels associated to a person will have an influence on how his/her behaviours are evaluated by others. A survey experiment was administered to the subjects in several repetitions. Twelve morally ambiguous vignettes are presented to the subjects during each stage. Subjects are asked to rate in a 6-point scale whether the character in the vignette "did the right thing" or not - with 1 indicating that the character is wrong and 6 indicating that the character did the right thing. During each stage of administration, similar vignettes are presented but the sequence of presentation, name of character, and labels associated with the character are changed. The goal is to see whether or not the subjects shall evaluate the character in the vignette differently when the label associated with them is changed. The four labels used are "Filipino" and "Christian" for the in-group labels, and "American" and "Atheist" for the outgroup labels.*

Evidence from the study shows that characters associated with labels indicating in-group affiliation have been evaluated more positively by the subjects. However, the difference between the scores given by subjects to perceived in-group and outgroup characters are small. Findings reveal that religious labels has a greater effect on evaluation than nationality label. Results of correlational tests suggest that personal self-esteem has no significant influence in the evaluation of members of the in-group and outgroup. Instead, collective self-esteem, especially the private collective self-esteem, has a significant influence in how the subjects evaluated characters with in-group and outgroup labels.

Keywords: *Prejudice, Nationality, Religion, In-group Bias, Evaluation, Morality, Identity*

INTRODUCTION

Our actions will undoubtedly elicit a reaction from other members of society. They will judge it as right or wrong, good or bad, desirable or undesirable. However, the situations we find ourselves in will not always be easily fitted in a dichotomous 'black and white' paradigm – what is right and what is wrong or what is deviant is not always easy to define. In his discussion of deviance in society in his book, Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance, the Howard Becker [1] described the "deviant" as such:

> "*Social groups create deviance by making rules whose infraction constitutes deviance, and by applying those rules to particular people and labeling them as outsiders. From this point of view, deviance is not a quality of the act the person commits, but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to the 'offender'. The deviant is one to whom the label has successfully been applied; deviant behavior is behavior that people so label.*"

This appreciation of how deviance is created in society suggests that our conceptualization of what is undesirable is not dependent on the behavior itself. Instead, there is no behavior that is inherently deviant. An act only becomes deviant when others perceive and define it as such – the label of "deviant" is only a consequence of the responses of others to a person's act. The challenge, then, is not to identify what acts are deviant but rather to identify which groups of individuals have their behaviors labeled as deviant by society.

Following Becker's assumption that deviance is the product of an interaction that takes place between a social group and one who is viewed by that group as

a rule-breaker, this study argues that the perceived desirability or undesirability of an act is relative to the actor's degree of difference with the other members of society. In other words, the acceptability of an act is based on how much the actor is considered as a member of the in-group by the society who serves as the audience.

Preference for the in-group has been a trait of human societies since the dawn of time as a function of human survival. During the hunting-gathering societies, people tend to be cautious of outsiders out of suspicion that these are invaders, thieves, or rivals in their source of sustenance. With the rise of a global society with increasingly diverse melting pots of cultures, wariness towards outgroups is expected to diminish. This, however, does not seem to be the case. In the Philippine setting, the road to the recently-concluded national elections saw several accusations of foul play and transgressions exchanged between supporters of different presidential camps. The words "BAYARAN", "BIAS", and a combination of a president's name and –tard (from the word "retard") such as "DUTERTARDS" (for supporters of Rodrigo Duterte) and "NOYTARDS" (as an attack against the Liberal Party in general) have repeatedly been exchanged in various forms of social media. These ad hominems are not necessarily elicited from actual acts of foul play and transgressions of supporters of a rival candidate but are instead associated with any mundane act of the opposing camp. The mere expression of one's opinion is enough for supporters of the opposing camp to label one with any or a combination of these ad hominems. The opinions of members of one's camp, on the other hand, are often met with symbols of approval in social media such as Facebook "Likes" and Twitter "retweets" regardless of the opinion's actual merit. What becomes salient here is the repeated manifestation of in-group bias amongst the supporters of the various presidential camps.

These manifestations of in-group bias are not limited to special events such as elections. In day-to-day life in the Philippines, the way by which ordinary Filipinos evaluate the actions of the people around them could, unbeknownst to them, be influenced by their perceptions on the object of their attention's perceived inclusion or exclusion from the groups they themselves are a part of. An act, done by a perceived in-group, may be evaluated more positively by the perceiver compared to when the same act is committed by a perceived out-group. These manifestations of in-group bias become more alarming when the stakes associated with a person's evaluation of another person's behavior is higher. There have been documented cases, for example, of jurors manifesting in-group bias in their judicial decisions in other countries [2]-[3]. The bias in favor of the perceived "similar" and the perceived "outsider" or "other" is also shown in other countries to be manifested in policing [4]-[5] and crime or violence attributions [6]-[9].

The aforementioned reports from other countries of manifestations of in-group bias in everyday life are the motivation for this scientific inquiry. This study is an attempt to determine whether two people who have done the same act would be evaluated by society differently if one person is labeled as a member of the in-group while the other is labeled as an outsider.

This research is guided by William Graham Sumner's [10] concept of in-group favoritism or in-group bias. According to Franzoi [11], this pertains to the tendency to evaluate members of one's in-group more positively than those who are perceived as out-group members. This in-group favoritism is further exacerbated by the concept of social identity. According to the Social identity theory [12], people who wish to increase their self-esteem may do so by associating themselves with specific social groups and evaluating these social groups as better than other groups.

This study is conducted with two particular research questions in mind:

1. How will a label associated with a person influence other's evaluation of that person's behavior during morally ambiguous situations?

Perdue, Dovidio, Gurtman, and Tyler [13] suggest that mere association with in-group-designating pronouns such as 'we', 'us', and 'ours' can have a positive influence on evaluation whereas the mere association with outgroup-designating pronouns can have the opposite effect. Tajfel and Turner [12] agrees with this. According to them, even in-group and outgroup distinctions based on trivial criteria are enough to influence people to treat members of the in-group more positively than members of the out-group. Therefore, this study hypothesizes that the actions of people in morally ambiguous situations will be evaluated more positively if the person is associated with an in-group label than when the person is associated with an out-group label.

2. What are the factors that influence how people will evaluate the actions of the members of in-groups and out-groups in morally ambiguous situations?

The Social Identity theory suggests that the degree to which individuals will manifest in-group favoritism is also influenced by how important the in-group affiliation is to their identity [11]. Therefore, this study also hypothesizes that those who consider their group affiliation as important to their self-esteem would exhibit greater in-group bias. Those with a greater in-group bias will consequently evaluations of perceived in-groups more positively.

METHODS

Research Design

Philosophy students from a small, private, sectarian college in Laguna, Philippines were engaged as subjects of the study. This group is comprised of a total of 37 college students, 24 of which are female and 13 are male. All of the participating subjects are Filipino in nationality and Christian in terms of religious affiliation. The consent of both the professor in charge of the class and the students were solicited. The professor was given complete disclosure of the nature of the study. The students were briefed that the study is about their perception on morally ambiguous situations which happened to be one of the topics they were discussing in their philosophy class. Due to the design of the survey experiment, the researcher cannot disclose the nature of the study to its fullest without potentially compromising the research design. All students were briefed that they have the option to decline from participating and that their anonymity, should they participate, will be assured. All students were also briefed that their participation, or lack thereof, and their answers will not influence their grades.

A survey experiment was administered to the subjects in several repetitions following a within-subject repeated measures design. Twelve morally ambiguous vignettes are presented to the subjects during each stage. There is an interval of one week per stage to avoid the possibility of students remembering the scores they gave to the vignettes and to blur their memory of the vignettes themselves. Subjects were asked to rate on a 6-point scale whether the character in the vignette "did the right thing" - with 1 indicating that the character is wrong and 6 indicating that the character did the right thing. During each stage of administration, similar vignettes are presented but the sequence of presentation, the name of the character, and labels associated with the character are changed. An example of the vignettes used for the study is provided.

"[NAME], a [GROUP], lives with his family in a squatter's area. Where he lives, there is a great scarcity of jobs and his family is starving to death. One day, when he was trying to find food for his family among the trash, a truck delivering sacks of rice passed by. As it sped on the road, it hit a bump and a sack of rice fell to the ground. Still, the driver of the truck didn't notice and sped on. [NAME] is now left with a sack of rice. He knows that the sack of rice is not rightfully his, and that the driver would be penalized by his employer once they found out that a sack of rice is missing. Furthermore, [NAME] knows that taking the sack of rice would qualify as stealing. Still, he took the sack of rice home and fed his family with it for several weeks, saving them from weeks of starvation.

Did [NAME] do the right thing?"

The goal is to see whether or not the subjects shall evaluate the character in the vignette differently when the label associated with them is changed. The four labels used are "Filipino" and "Christian" for the in-group labels, and "American" and "Atheist" for the outgroup labels. It should be mentioned at this point that Philosophy students were specifically chosen as the subjects because they have been familiarized with the term "Atheist" during their lessons in class only a week prior to the conduct of the survey experiment. The choice of these two opposing labels (Filipino vs. American; Christian vs. Atheist) is grounded both in literature and the Philippine context. The assumption is that the subjects of this study, being Filipinos themselves, would be biased in favor of fellow Filipinos due to their similarity in nationality especially if they identify strongly with this aspect of their identity. This is in line with studies of ethnicity- or nationality-based in-group bias [14]-[15]. The decision to make use of "American" as the opposing label, on the other hand, is rooted on the xenocentrism in the Philippine society that often works in favor of people from Western nations, especially Americans from the United States. It is, therefore, interesting to test which will be salient in the study: the bias for the in-group, or the xenocentrism that is often critiqued of Filipinos.

The choice of religious labels, "Christian" and "Atheist", are rooted on the high degree of religiosity in the Philippines. According to the survey reports of the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) and the Social Weather Station (SWS), the Philippines remains as one of the most religious countries in the

world [16]. The choice of "atheist" as the religion-related label for the "other", on the other hand, is rooted in the atheist label's nature as the complete opposite of religiosity. While religions may have their differences, they are essentially different shades of theism. Atheism is the complete opposite of this existence of belief in a deity and the supernatural in general. In a study involving nationally representative data from the United States, Edgell, Gerteis, and Hartmann [17] found that in cultural melting pots such as the USA, those who are labeled as atheists are the least likely to be trusted among a long list of ethnic, political, and religious backgrounds. This is partly based on the belief that while people from different religions may differ in specific beliefs, there is a "common creed" or a set of moral prescriptions inherent in religious belief that the atheists do not share. In the Philippine setting, the preference for a theist is often made salient when people are asked about the qualities of their ideal partner or even political candidate: "Maka-Diyos" or God-fearing.

The subjects were also administered with a survey questionnaire that includes the Rosenberg Self-esteem scale [17], the Collective Self-esteem scale [19], the Direct Bias scale [20], and the Indirect Bias scale [21].

The Rosenberg Self-esteem scale is a 10-item Likert scale with items answered on a four point scale - from strongly agree to strongly disagree. It is used to measure an individual's evaluation of his or her own self-concept. People with low self-esteem could be more prone to bias possibly because the act of denigrating or seeing others in a negative light makes us feel better about ourselves [22]. However, Aberson, Healy, and Romero [23] stated that high self-esteem has a positive relationship with intergroup bias.

The Collective Self-esteem scale is a 16-item measure on a 7-point Likert-type scale used to measure an individual's self-esteem relative to his social group affiliations. It can be used to measure a person's self-esteem as related to specific social groups (i.e. religion, ethnicity, race, etc.). Because it is the collective self-esteem that is related to group membership, it is the collective self-esteem that is related to intergroup bias rather than the personal self-esteem [19]. This instrument has four dimensions:

a. *Membership esteem*. Individual's judgments of how worthy they are as members of their social groups. Aberson and Howanski [21] has found that people with low membership esteem tend to be more prone to in-group bias. This is because individuals low in membership self-esteem have a tendency to reinforce their sense of association with positively-valued groups as a means of basking in the reflected glory of the in-group.

b. *Public collective esteem*. Assesses one's perceptions of how positively other people evaluate one's social groups. This is correlated positively with in-group bias [24].

c. *Private collective esteem*. Measures personal judgments of how good one's social groups are. Because this is directly related to social identity, it is positively correlated with in-group bias [20]. In their study, Luhtanen and Crocker found that those with a high private collective esteem manifests higher in-group bias.

d. *Importance to identity*. Assesses the importance of one's social group memberships to one's self-concept. People who see their social group affiliations as a central component of their self-concept are more likely to engage in in-group favoritism than those who do not [25].

The Direct Bias Scale is a 16-item adjective rating scale including eight positive items and eight negative items. Participants rated how descriptive each item was for each target group. Responses can range from (1) "does not describe" to (7) "describes completely". It is expected that subjects will attribute positive adjectives to in-groups to a higher degree while generally attributing negative attitudes to out-groups to a higher degree.

The Indirect Bias Scale, on the other hand, focuses on perceived similarity between the participant and members of the in-group and out-group. Participants are asked to indicate the extent that they share common interests, common experiences, and overall similarity with the group.

For each of the scales, except for the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale, subjects were asked to answer with reference to their nationality (Filipino) and their religious affiliation (Christian). Mean scores obtained by the character with respective labels on each vignette were obtained and compared. Correlational analyses were conducted to determine the relationship between self-esteem, collective self-esteem, direct bias and indirect bias with the way subjects evaluate the characters in the vignette.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Different combinations of labels were compared for each vignette in the study. For example, Vignette 1 was used three times: one with no label which serves as the control group, one with the label "Filipino" and

one with the label "American". In this circumstance, there is a comparison between a control group, an in-group label, and an out-group label. There are also attempts to compare the two in-group labels (i.e. Vignette 3) and the two out-group labels (i.e. Vignette 6). In the latter vignettes, the labels were combined. For example, Vignette 11 combines the two in-group labels, "Filipino" and "Christian", and compared them with the double out-group label, "American Christian" to see how being different in two levels would influence the audience's evaluation of the character's actions. Vignettes 8, 9, and 10 attempted to test the combination of out-group and in-group labels in a character and see which between the nationality-based and religion-based labels are more influential. Finally, Vignettes 7 and 12 attempted to compare all four labels as stand-alone and in combination. Table 1 summarizes the results of each vignette comparison.

The results of Vignette 1 shows that the character, when given the label of "Filipino", was evaluated more positively (3.52) than when it is labeled with an out-group label (3) and when there is no label at all (3.12). Vignette 2 followed this trend, with the Christian being evaluated more positively (4.22) than the Atheist counterpart (3.81). Vignette 3 attempted to compare the two in-group labels and the results showed that the religion-based in-group label (3.74) has a greater positive influence than the nationality-based label (3.63), though both are evaluated more positively than the control group (3.59). The same trend was observed in the comparison of out-groups done in Vignette 6. Vignettes 4 and 5 attempted to compare a religion-based label with a nationality-based label, and results for both vignettes showed that

the in-group label had more positive scores (2.81 vs. 2.78 and 2.93 vs. 2.26 respectively). The pattern found in Vignettes 4 and 5 are corroborated by the results of Vignette 7 where the Christian label garnered the highest evaluation (3.22) while the Atheist label got the lowest evaluation (2.67).

Results of Vignettes 8 and 9 showed that when the religion-based label is held constant, the in-group, nationality-based, label is still influential. Vignette 10 further corroborates the results of Vignettes 4, 5, and 7. And finally, Vignettes 11 and 12 showed that those who are similar to the audience in two levels (nationality and religion) are evaluated more positively than those who are different on two levels. Those who are different on one level, on the other hand, were evaluated somewhere within the range of the two extremes, with the one who is similar in religious affiliation being rated more positively than the one who is similar in nationality. A summary of the average evaluation scores of the various labels is provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Mean evaluation scores of the different labels used in the 12 vignettes.

Category	Mean Evaluation Score
Control	3.24
Filipino	3.27
American	3.01
Christian	3.5
Atheist	2.91
Filipino Christian	**3.57**
Filipino Atheist	2.9
American Christian	3.6
American Atheist	**2.72**

Table 1. Summary of results of the survey experiment.

CATEGORY	Vignette 1 Mean Score	Vignette 2 Mean Score	Vignette 3 Mean Score	Vignette 4 Mean Score	Vignette 5 Mean Score	Vignette 6 Mean Score	Vignette 7 Mean Score	Vignette 8 Mean Score	Vignette 9 Mean Score	Vignette 10 Mean Score	Vignette 11 Mean Score	Vignette 12 Mean Score
Control Group	3.12	4.15	3.59	2.56	2.56	**3.67**	2.88	3.67	**3.19**	3.26	2.81	3.41
Filipino	**3.52**		3.63		**2.93**		3.00					
American	3.00			2.78		3.26	3.00					
Christian		**4.22**	3.74	2.81			3.22					
Atheist		3.81			2.26	2.89	2.67					
Filipino Christian								3.85			**3.00**	**3.85**
Filipino Atheist									2.93	2.81		2.96
American Christian								3.69		**3.38**		3.72
American Atheist									2.89		2.33	2.93

Table 3. Correlation Coefficients between measures of self-esteem and evaluation scores by label used.

	Filipino Score	American Score	Christian Score	Atheist Score	Filipino Christian Score	Filipino Atheist Score	American Christian Score	American Atheist Score
Direct Bias Filipino	**.248***	-.165	**.128***	-.159	**.188***	-.108	-.102	-.139
Direct Bias American	-.160	.097	.140	-.040	-.024	-.020	.094	-.269
Direct Bias Christian	**.081***	-.054	**.223***	**-.113***	**.195***	**-.107***	.154	-.215
Direct Bias Atheist	.038	.154	-.339	**.134***	-.219	.225	.068	-.014
Indirect Bias Filipino	-.050	**-.429***	.104	.471	**.177***	**-.241***	-.260	.026
Indirect Bias American	-.104	.296	.245	.252	.123	.118	.255	.120
Indirect Bias Christian	-.075	.254	**.153***	**-.254***	**.247***	.138	.239	.039
Indirect Bias Atheist	.109	.137	.015	**.296***	.062	-.181	.153	-.218
Personal Self-Esteem	-.067	-.076	.160	.049	.165	.093	.152	-.108
Nationality Membership Collective Self-Esteem	.297	-.060	.077	.399	.062	-.181	-.153	-.249
Nationality Private Collective Esteem	**.211***	-.125	**.462***	-.271	**.517****	-.080	0.047	-.299
Nationality Public Collective Self-Esteem	**.503***	-.300	0.18	-.140	.276	.047	-.072	-.227
Nationality importance to Identity	**.371***	.092	.127	-.200	**.342***	-.191	.021	-.228
Religion Membership Collective Self-Esteem	.261	.113	-.200	-.140	-.105	.149	-.117	.266
Religion Private Collective Esteem	.308	-.164	**.386***	**-.107***	**.300***	**-.312***	.209	**-.119***
Religion Public Collective Self-Esteem	.244	.103	**.128***	-.294	.165	-.205	.004	-.205
Religion importance to Identity	.045	.207	.069	.164	**.309***	-.168	.037	-.067

** **0.01**
* **0.05**

The results of the 12 vignettes as shown in Table 1, and the mean scores of the different labels as shown in Table 2, support the first hypothesis of this study. The subjects evaluate a behavior more positively when the behavior is exhibited by a perceived in-group compared to when the behavior is committed by a perceived out-group. However, it is important to note that the difference in the scores obtained by the characters with the in-group and out-group labels are small. In no instance among the 12 vignettes used in the study is the difference in the scores of the in-group and the out-group labeled characters amounting to a value of 1 or more. This suggests that while the labels suggesting in-group and out-group have an influence, the impact of these labels on the evaluation of an actor's behavior is limited.

The study also tried to determine the factors associated with a more positive evaluation of perceived in-groups. Correlation coefficients were used to check for significant associations. Table 3 summarizes the results for this part of the study.
The following results were obtained from the correlational analyses of the study: Using Luhtanen and Crocker's [20] Direct Bias scale, it was found that direct bias in favor of Filipinos is positively correlated with evaluating the behavior of characters with 'Filipino' (.248), 'Christian' (.128), and 'Filipino Christian' (.188) labels more positively. However, all three correlations are weak. Direct bias in favor of Christians is positively correlated with evaluating the behavior of characters with 'Filipino' (.081), 'Christian' (.223), and 'Filipino Christian' (.195) labels more positively. Conversely, it is negatively correlated with the evaluation of characters with 'Atheist' (-.113) and 'Filipino Atheist' (-.107) labels. However, all correlations are weak. Direct bias in favor of Atheists is positively but weakly correlated with evaluating the behavior of characters with 'Atheist' label positively (.134).

Using Aberson and Howanski's [21] Indirect Bias scale, it was found that indirect bias favoring Filipinos is negatively correlated with the evaluation of the behavior of characters with 'American' (-.429; Moderate) and 'Filipino Atheist' (-.241; Weak) labels. However, it is positively but weakly correlated with the evaluation of the behavior of characters with 'Filipino Christian' labels (177). An indirect bias favoring Christians is positively but weakly correlated with a more positive evaluation of characters with 'Christian' (.153) and 'Filipino Christian' (.247) labels. However, it is negatively but weakly correlated

with the evaluation of the behavior of characters with 'Atheist' label (-.254). An indirect bias favoring Atheists has a weak but positive relationship with evaluating the behavior of characters with 'Atheist' label more positively (.296).

Using Luhtanen and Crocker's [19] Collective Self-esteem scale, it was found that nationality-specific private collective self-esteem has a weak positive correlation with the evaluation of the behavior of characters with 'Filipino' label (.211) and it also has a moderate positive correlation with the evaluation of the behavior of characters with 'Christian' (.462) and 'Filipino Christian' (.517) labels. Nationality–specific public collective self-esteem has a moderate positive relationship with the evaluation of the behavior of characters with 'Filipino' label (.503). The importance of Nationality to self-identity has a moderate positive relationship with the evaluation of the behavior of characters with 'Filipino' (.371) and 'Filipino Christian' (.342) labels. Religion-specific private collective self-esteem has a moderate positive correlation with the evaluation of behaviors of characters with 'Christian' (.386) and 'Filipino Christian' (.300) labels but has a weak negative correlation with 'Atheist' (-.107) and 'American Atheist' (-.119) labels and a moderate negative correlation with 'Filipino Atheist' label (-.312).

On the other hand, it was also found in the correlational analyses of the Collective self-esteem scale that religion-specific public collective self-esteem has a weak positive correlation with evaluation of characters with 'Christian' label (128). The importance of Religion to identity is moderately and positively correlated with evaluation of characters with 'Filipino Christian' label (309).

What insights can be derived from these findings? The salience of the subjects' perception that they are similar to members of their in-group and the associated positive regard they have for these in-groups as well as the embeddedness of their membership in these in-groups in their evaluation of their self-worth might be a result of the continuous efforts of Philippine society, just like other countries, to define itself as distinct and special compared to other nations. Advertisements and statements pervade various forms of media about how one should be "proud to be Pinoy" and extoll the virtues of people who identify themselves as Filipinos here and abroad, regardless of whether they were born and reared in the Philippines. The success of a person, be one who was

borne of two Filipino parents, one Filipino parent, or who just happen to be associated, albeit indirectly, with a Filipino will be extolled by the media [26]. On the other hand, the success of a person who is perceived to be part of an out-group is accepted negatively [27]. An interesting example of this is the slogan utilized by the state, "It's More Fun in the Philippines". While the sentiment may be advantageous for the pursuit of higher tourism revenue, the message may inadvertently socialize people into accepting the premise that it is indeed more fun in the country without any objective evaluation. How many of those who subscribe to the premise of "It's More Fun in the Philippines", for example, have actually gone out of the country and experienced other nations' cultures in order to make a sound comparison?

The fact that bias for Christians also became very salient in the study is also understandable in the Philippine context given the country's status as the top Christian country in Asia and part of the top ten Christian countries in the world and where people consider religion as important in their life [28]-[29]. In the country, religiosity is part of the set of values given emphasis. This religious adherence and an emphasis on collectivism has been observed before [30] as well as its potential for religious discrimination [31]. This espousal of religiosity is often used as a claim to a moral character in the Philippine public sphere where revered icons such as Manny Pacquiao attribute their successes to a religious deity and their losses to perceived imprudent decisions on matters of faith [32] and where political candidates use religiosity (eg. May takot sa Diyos, Maka-Diyos) as a claim to an upright moral character. These sentiments of religiosity as a desirable quality is often made widespread alongside the sentiments of the "religious other" as being dangerous or less moral. These are manifested in films where subscription to other religious beliefs such as paganism, Islam, or non-belief are regarded as frightening or suspicious.

CONCLUSION
Results of the correlational tests suggest that personal self-esteem has no significant influence in the evaluation of members of the in-group and out-group. Instead, it is the collective self-esteem, especially the private collective self-esteem, and an individual's direct and indirect biases which have a significant influence in how the subjects evaluated characters with in-group and out-group labels.

Evidence from the study shows that characters associated with labels indicating in-group affiliation have been evaluated more positively by the subjects. However, the gap between the scores given by subjects to perceived in-group and out-group characters are quite small. Future studies are advised to explore the influence of other in-group and out-group labels or other bases for in-group and out-group classifications. Judging from the data, it was also observed that the labels with relation to religious affiliation have a greater effect on evaluation than the nationality label. This may be an indicator of Filipinos' tendency to attribute great importance to religious beliefs and the continuous subscription to the myth that morality and religiosity are mutually inclusive and therefore, the lack of religious beliefs also equates to a lack of morals. The relative weakness of the nationality label as compared to the religious label may also be indicative of a Filipino regionalistic mentality, where we identify ourselves more with being Tagalogs or Manileños, Cebuanos, Davaoeños, etc. rather than being a collective Filipino nation. The fact that the religious label has more importance to our social cognition rather than a collective Filipino identity bodes negatively for our future prospects in areas such as Mindanao where attitudes towards the state's attempts towards reconciliation armed groups can be influenced by differences in religious ideologies.

Both the national and religious in-group biases made salient in the study should be given attention to in an age where the world serves as one global village. In an age where words such as "globalization", and "internationalization", these manifestations of in-group bias could be to our disadvantage. The Social Identity theory posits that these manifestations of in-group bias are a result of the high importance we give to our affiliations – a trait which may not be easily removed given the collectivist culture that is definitive of the Philippines. The question which must now be problematized should center on how to reduce this in-group favoritism. While the testing of a solution to in-group bias is beyond the scope of this study, future studies should look into the merits of Gaertner and Dovidio's Common Group Identity model. This model posits that since the basis of in-group bias is rooted on people's categorization or conceptions of boundaries between which groups the self is associated with and which are not, then the solution to the problem would be to socialize people into categorizing themselves and perceived out-groups as part of a similar in-group

[33]. In the context of this study, what is necessary is to find a way to socialize Filipino Christians into classifying perceived out-groups such as Americans and atheists as part of a wider in-group. In such a manner, it is expected that the individual's representations of what is part of his in-group will consequently include those which are formerly considered as out-groups. A possible way to facilitate this re-categorization of out-groups into in-groups is though the inclusion of Filipinos and their perceived out-groups in collective identities that transcend national boundaries and religious beliefs such as advocacies toward the protection of the environment, eradication of poverty, and promotion of equality and humanism. Aristotle once said that man is a social animal and perhaps, as a social animal, man cannot help but seek belongingness and be biased towards their in-groups. The challenge, then, is how to harness this fervor for belongingness into something productive for humanity.

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