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Borualogo, I.; van de Vijver, Fons

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Values and Migration Motives in Three Ethnic Groups in Indonesia

Ihsana Sabriani Borualogo
Universitas Islam Bandung, Indonesia
(ihsana.sabriani@yahoo.com)

Fons J. R. van de Vijver
Tilburg University, the Netherlands
North-West University, South Africa
University of Queensland, Australia

Abstract

Indonesia has 1340 ethnic groups. This study focused on three large ethnic groups, which are Bataknese, Minangnese, and Sundanese. There were 712 participants in this study, aged 20-23 years. There is a different orientation on migration (within Indonesia) in those three ethnic groups. Bataknese mainly migrate for study, although members migrate for study or work. The aim of this study is to understand the value system of these three ethnic groups as measured by Schwartz’s PVQ-40 in correlation to migration attitudes. Migration attitudes were measured by items such as the importance of migration, the importance of having the tenacity and perseverance, the importance of making an effort, strive and work hard, the importance of having the ability to adjust with the new situation and dealing with problems in new place. There was no significant difference in value system of the three ethnic groups. Means on social life values were higher than means on fulfilling personal needs values in the three ethnic groups. Factors on migration motive have stronger and significant correlation with factors on value system in Bataknese than in Minangnese and Sundanese. We concluded that Bataknese’s motive to migrate was more associated with social life values and fulfilling personal needs values, Minangnese’s motive to migrate with fulfilling personal needs values, and Sundanese’s motive to migrate with social life values.

Introduction

Indonesia is a large country comprising 18,307 islands and 1340 ethnic groups. Therefore, the country is a rich resource for conducting cross-cultural psychological research to find both ethic and emic in Indonesian cultures. In this study we focus on migration, as there are indications that particular groups in Indonesia differ in motives and relevance given to migration. Indonesians usually migrate from one island to another one for study, for work or for trading.

There are three large ethnic groups in Indonesia, which are Bataknese, Minangnese, and Sundanese. Bataknese live in North Sumatra (Fig. 1), Minangnese live in West Sumatra (Fig. 2), and Sundanese live in West Java (Fig. 3). There are different culturally based values on migration used by the three ethnic groups. Bataknese migrate for study (Harahap, 1987, p. 170, 211). Minangnese migrate for work and trading (Latief, 2002, p. 53). In some Sundanese literature, we did not find a specific migration value explained (Rosidi, 2011; Suryani, 2010); yet, members of Sundanese ethnic group are said to migrate from their homeland for study or work. Usually, Bataknese and Minangnese migrate to Bandung which is on Java.

Bandung is unique not only because it has good universities, but also because it has the dominant culture. As Brunner (Cohen, 2004, p. 257) stated, the Sundanese are the dominant culture group in that they set the standards of appropriate behavior in public places, and most urban institutions are controlled by them and are operated according to their culture patterns. Bataknese and other migrants in Bandung realize that the Sundanese are the dominant culture and they adapt to the realities of the urban situation in which they find themselves. The differences between two places – their own homeland and Bandung – have implications for social life and for ethnic group relations (Cohen, 2004, p. 263). All migrants adapt to the locally dominant culture. They conceive adaptation as a process of individual adjustment but they are responding individually to the larger structure of ethnic group relations in the city. Migrants take a position in the urban system with reference to the dominant culture group and they occupy economic niches made available to them or left vacant by the dominant group. In Bandung, the Sundanese are a numerical majority, are the dominant culture, and have control of political power (Cohen, 2004, p. 258).

Values

An examination of the many definitions of values in the literature reveals five common features (Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987). Values (a) are concepts or beliefs, (b) are about desirable end states or behaviors, (c) transcend specific situations, (d) guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and (e) are ordered by relative importance (Allport, 1961; Levy & Guttman, 1974; Maslow, 1959; Morris, 1956; Pepper, 1958; Rokeach, 1973; Scott, 1965).

Schwartz (1994) described a theoretical model of relations among motivational types of values, higher order value types, and bipolar value dimensions. The shared emphases are as follows: (a) power and achievement: both emphasize social superiority and esteem; (b) achievement and hedonism: both focus on self-centered satisfaction; (c) hedonism and stimulation: both entail a desire for affectively pleasant arousal; (d) stimulation and self-direction: both involve intrinsic interest in novelty and mastery; (e) self-direction and universalism: both express reliance upon one’s own judgment and comfort with the diversity of existence; (f) universalism and benevolence: both are concerned with enhancement of others and transcendence of selfish interests; (g) benevolence and conformity: both call for normative behavior that promotes close relationships; (h) benevolence and tradition: both promote devotion to one’s ingroup; (i) conformity and tradition: both entail subordination of self in favor of socially imposed expectations; (j) tradition and security: both stress preserving existing social arrangements that give certainty to life; (k) conformity and security: both emphasize protection of order and harmony in relations; (l) security and power: both stress avoiding or overcoming the threat of uncertainties by controlling relationships and resources (Schwartz, 1994, pp. 24-25).
Migration Motives

Bataknese in North Sumatra have certain values that teach youth to pursue success in life. This value, called “hamajuon”, refers to reaching for success in life and having a better life than before. Hamajuon is achieved by migrating for study to other islands, usually to Java (Harahap, 1987). This value of migration teaches Bataknese young people to be persistent and diligent in reaching their goals, to work hard, and to be able to adjust to new places (Harahap, 1987).

Unlike Bataknese, Minangnese young people are taught to migrate mostly for work. Naim (2013) defined migration for Minangnese as the activity to leave their hometowns by their own will, in some cases while having certain goals for work or looking for some life experiences (including studying) with the intention to come back to their homeland in West Sumatra. Minangnese do not have a specific name for this migration value, and usually refer to “manggaleh” which refers to a value about trading when migrating to new places (Latief, 2002).

We did not find a designated term for a migration value in Sundanese, but that does not mean that Sundanese do not migrate from their homelands. According to Naim (2013), migration is not an important cultural value among Sundanese, although they do migrate to pursue a better life.

We did preliminary research to be able to design the migration motive scale for these three ethnic groups. We gave questionnaires with open-ended questions to ask young people from these three ethnic groups about the perceived value of migration in their culture, how they defined the value of migration, and what psychological aspects they thought they need to have for migrating to new places. Based on those answers and the literature study, the migration value was defined as the value that teaches young people to think about their future life, to have goals, to be persistent and diligent in pursuing their goals, to be smart and intelligent on solving problems, and to be able to adjust themselves to new places (Borualogo, 2012).

Research Questions

We were interested in the question of how migration values were related to other personal values in these three groups. More specifically, the following questions were investigated:

1. What are the similarities and differences in value system of these three ethnic groups?
2. What are the correlations between values and migration attitudes in each group?

Method

Participants

Participants were 712 individuals from three ethnic groups (Bataknese, Minangnese, and Sundanese), aged 20-23 years and living in Bandung. The first sample consisted of 234 Bataknese (165 male, 69 female), 233 Minangnese (123 male, 110 female), and 245 Sundanese (71 male, 174 female). All participants were university students who were living in Bandung without their parents for 1-2 years. All participants had migrated to Bandung without their parents, and had to face problems and difficulties in Bandung by themselves.

Instruments

The questionnaires consisted of two scales, which were the PVQ-40 by Schwartz to measure personal values and an instrument which we designed to measure migration motives in Indonesian culture in addition to a background scale. The latter scale asked for participants’ gender, age, level of education, ethnicity, place of birth, ethnicity of parents, and with whom they live in Bandung.

The migration motive scale consisted of 44 items (see Table 1), formulated as statements and followed by a 6-point Likert scale ranging from (1) absolutely not important for me, to (6) very important for me. The migration motive scale involved 5 domains: i) the importance of going out of the hometown (13 items); ii) the importance of being persistent and diligent (10 items); iii) the importance of willing to try and work hard (9 items); iv) the importance of being smart and carefully handled situation (5 items); and v) the importance of being able to adjust (7 items).

Procedure

Samples were chosen using cluster random sampling. Twenty-five universities were chosen randomly as the cluster; students were randomly selected within the universities. Data were collected by research assistants who met the participants in person. The research assistants distributed the questionnaires to participants. There was an introduction to the questionnaires, which stated the nature and purpose of the study as well as the responsible university. The second page contained instructions about completing the questionnaires which were presented on the following pages.

Results

Results are divided into four sections which are (1) factor analysis of the migration motive scale in three ethnic groups, (2) factor analysis of the PVQ 40, (3) demographic background, and (4) comparison of ethnic group means on the value instruments.

Factor Analysis of the Migration Motive Scale

We executed an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to identify the factor loading on the three ethnic groups. Based on Eigen values greater than 1, there were 5 components extracted, which could be interpreted. The five factors explained 50.2% of the variance. Table 1 shows the 5 factors of migration motive scale. Based on those classifications, the construct of the migration motive on the three ethnic groups was defined as traits which are needed during migration (factor 1; the highest loading items were “To never give up
when having an ambition for a bright future” and “To work hard to be able to succeed in the future”), the importance of going out of the hometown (factor 2; the highest loading items were “To show my competencies through going out of my hometown for study” and “To have a bright future through going out of my hometown for study”), the importance of having a plan when migrating (factor 3; the highest loading items were “To make a strong effort for reaching the high achievement” and “To make a strong effort for reaching the goals”), the importance of being able to adjust (factor 4; the highest loading items were “To adjust myself to new friends on campus” and “To adjust myself to the campus life”), and the importance of being successful when migrating (factor 5; the loadings of the two items were “To adjust myself to live far away from my parents” and “To study hard in order to complete my education in an excellent manner”). The internal consistencies of the five scales were .96, .91, .78, .70, and .93, respectively. It can be concluded that the scale showed adequate internal consistencies.

**Factor Analysis of PVQ 40**

We executed an EFA to identify the factor loadings on the PVQ. We identified two factors. Table 3 shows there are two factors. The two factors explained 19.0% of the variance. Factor 1 social life values showed the factor loadings for universalism (items number 3, 8, 19, 23, 29, 40), conformity (items number 7, 16, 28, 36), tradition (items number 9, 20, 25, 38), benevolence (items number 12, 18, 27, 33), and security (items number 5, 14, 21, 31, 35). Factor 2 fulfilling personal needs values showed the factor loadings for power (items number 2, 17, 39), achievement (items number 4, 13, 24, 32), hedonism (items number 10, 26, 37), stimulation (items number 6, 15, 30), and self-direction (items number 1, 11, 22, 34). Based on those classifications, we called the first factor social life values (universalism, conformity, tradition, benevolence, security) and the second factor fulfilling personal needs values (power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction). The internal consistencies of the two scales (comprising the items as described) were .81 and .75, which were deemed adequate.

**Ethnic Differences**

Group differences in migration motives were tested in a MANOVA. The group differences in means were significant, Wilks’ Lambda = .89, F(10, 1410) = 8.81, (partial) $\eta^2 = .06$, $p < .001$. The mean scores are presented in Table 4. All univariate effects were significant, except for the last factor (the importance of being successful when migrating), all with small effect sizes ($\eta^2$) with values between .01 and .06. Even if the effects were not large, the pattern of differences was salient, Batakese showed the highest score on all migration values. These mean score were significantly larger than the means of the other groups for all groups except for the scale about importance of being successful when migrating. It can be concluded that migration values are more endorsed by Batakese than by Minangnese and Sundanese.

A second MANOVA tested group differences in the two values (social life and personal fulfillment values). The multivariate effect of group was not significant, Wilks’ Lambda = .99, F(4, 1416) = 1.37, (partial) $\eta^2 = .00$, n.s.. Univariate effects were not significant either although the differences in personal needs bordered on significance ($p < .07$). Post hoc tests showed that Sundanese endorsed personal needs less than the other groups. All in all, the differences in values were negligible.

We then addressed correlations between migration motives and personal values. Table 5 showed that migration motive had stronger correlations with PVQ values for Batakese than for Minangnese and Sundanese. In the case of Batakese, all correlations between personal values and migration motive are positive, significant and of moderate size. The link would be in line with the notion that the importance of migration has been taught to the participants. They migrate to Bandung to materialize important goals. To be able to have a good social life in Bandung, they know the importance of being persistent and diligent ($r = .50, p < .01$), being smart and carefully handling situation ($r = .44, p < .01$), and being able to adjust ($r = .44, p < .01$). For fulfilling their personal needs values, they know the importance of going out of their hometown ($r = .45, p < .01$).

For Sundanese, the same pattern emerged although the correlations had a small effect size ranging from .10 to .25. Fulfilling personal needs values did not correlate with the importance of going out of the hometown ($r = .11, n.s.$) and being able to adjust ($r = .11, n.s.$). It can be concluded that there was a link between migrating and personal values among the Sundanese, but the link was much weaker than among the Batakese. The importance of migration is not emphasized in socialization of Sundanese.

For Minangnese, personal values are essentially uncorrelated with migration motives. Fulfilling personal needs values showed a significant, yet negative correlation with the importance of being able to adjust ($r = -.19, p < .01$), being persistent and diligent ($r = -.17, p < .01$), willing to try and work hard ($r = -.16, p < .01$). Minangnese are known to put more emphasis on work and trading (“manggaleh” value). The migration motive is regarded by this group rather as an activity that is oriented on wealth and financial success, so that their ethnic group members will respect them for their successful life in the new place. Interestingly, fulfilling personal needs values correlated negatively with three migration motives. Migration may not be perceived as pursuing personal goals. This can be a source of conflict when they migrate to Bandung.

**Discussion**

Samples of this study are migrant young people from three ethnic groups (Batakese, Minangnese, and Sundanese), age 20-23 years old, who migrated to Bandung to take up their studies. We were interested in their migration motives as well as in the link with personal values, as assessed by the Portraits Value Questionnaire. Batakese are known to value migration and parents support their children to migrate for study. A questionnaire of migration motives revealed five factors: Traits needed when migrating,
importance of going out of the hometown, importance of having a plan when migrating, importance of being able to adjust, and importance of being successful when migrating. The Portraits Values Questionnaire yielded two factors: social life values (universalism, conformity, tradition, benevolence, security) and fulfilling personal needs values (power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction). All scales had adequate internal consistencies. As anticipated we found that migration motives were more endorsed by Batakinese than by the other groups. Furthermore, correlations between personal values and migration motives were much stronger in Batakinese than in other groups. These findings provide support for the importance of migration in the life and socialization of Batakinese.

We found some indication that Minangkese migrated to Bandung to fulfill their personal needs values. They have certain value of migration named “manggaleh”, which is related to migrating, but primarily for work or trading. The core meaning of this “manggaleh” is about having a wealthy life. However, the correlation between fulfilling personal needs value with migration motive is negative. So, migration is not important as a motive in pursuing more affluence.

This research only discussed three ethnic groups which migrated to Bandung. To be able to conclude whether the value system of Indonesians are oriented on social life values rather than on fulfilling personal needs values, then research on another ethnic groups in Indonesia is needed.

It would also be interesting to conduct research on young migrants who migrate to other cities in Indonesia, to understand if the receiving societies have an effect on their value system. In addition, it would be interesting to conduct research on Indonesians who migrate to individualistic cultures such as Western countries. We started this study because of a special interest in Batakinese as one of the few groups that are very explicit related to migrating, but primarily for work or trading. The core meaning of this “manggaleh” is about having a wealthy life. However, the correlation between fulfilling personal needs value with migration motive is negative. So, migration is not important as a motive in pursuing more affluence.

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References


To work hard to overcome new difficult things in my study.

.62  .24  .28  .44  .07

25 To have ideas for achieving goals.

.50  .20  .22  .51  .09

26 To live independently when living apart from my parents.

.23  .59  .15  .34  .15

27 To improve the quality of life through going out of my hometown for study.

.17  .73  .21  .28  .08

28 To realize my work plan which I have compiled for my study in order to improve my competence.

.50  .29  .51  .24  .08

29 To reach high achievement in my study.

.21  .09  .40  .03  .05

30 To set the goals about the accomplishments to be achieved in the future.

.61  .26  .52  .19  .05

31 To never give up when facing problems in my study.

.61  .22  .47  .26  .03

32 To plan about my life through going out of my hometown for study.

.25  .67  .39  .12  .04

33 To adjust myself to the different pace of life in the new place.

.25  .40  .378  .41  .06

34 To go out of my hometown pursuing success in life as my parents taught me.

.18  .67  .45  .15  .05

35 To persist in learning and completing my education.

.57  .26  .56  .16  .04

36 To keep the tradition in my family to go out of my hometown for study.

.16  .45  .42  .08  .12

37 To never give up pursuing high achievement in my study.

.57  .19  .54  .23  .06

38 To have aspirations which I will achieve when I go out of my hometown for study.

.16  .61  .51  .18  .04

39 To have the will power to overcome challenging problems in my study.

.56  .25  .54  .21  .05

40 To experience new things when I go out of my hometown for study.

.20  .56  .47  .27  .03

41 To make a strong effort for reaching the goals.

.55  .262  .55  .25  .02

42 To make new friends in campus.

.26  .08  .52  .50  .04

43 To have ideas to be able to solve problems.

.42  .17  .53  .42  .01

44 To make a strong effort for reaching the high achievement.

.56  .18  .58  .21  .04

Factor 1: Traits needed when migrating
Factor 2: Importance of going out of the hometown
Factor 3: Importance of having plan when migrating
Factor 4: Importance of being able to adjust
Factor 5: Importance of being successful when migrating

Table 1
Items of Migration Motive Scale and Factor Loadings
To set the goals about the accomplishments to be achieved in the future.¹
To never give up when facing problems in my study.²
To plan about my life through going out of my hometown for study.¹
To adjust myself to the different pace of life in the new place.⁵
To go out of my hometown pursuing success in life as my parents taught me.¹
To persist in learning and completing my education.²
To keep the tradition in my family to go out of my hometown for study.¹
To never give up pursuing high achievement in my study.²
To have aspirations which I will achieve when I go out of my hometown for study.¹
To have a strong effort for reaching the goals.³
To know what to do to reach certain goals.²
To improve the quality of life through going out of my hometown for study.¹
To adjust myself to the campus life.³
To have a strong will power to overcome challenging problems in my study.²
To experience new things when I go out of my hometown for study.¹
To complete the assignments to gain more credit.²
To work hard to overcome new difficult things in my study.³
To have ideas to be able to solve problems.⁴
To have ideas for achieving goals.⁴
To live independently when living apart from my parents.³
To improve the quality of life through going out of my hometown for study.¹
To adjust myself to different life style in the new environment.³
To have a strong effort for reaching the high achievement.³

¹Traits needed when migrating. ²Importance of going out of the hometown. ³Importance of having plan when migrating. ⁴Importance of being able to adjust. ⁵Importance of being successful when migrating.
### Table 4

**Group Means on Migration Motives and Values**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scales</th>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Batakinese</td>
<td>Minangnesе</td>
<td>Sundanesе</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Migration Motives</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Traits needed when migrating</td>
<td>5.08&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>4.80&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>4.61&lt;sub&gt;c&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
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<td>Importance of going out of the hometown</td>
<td>5.24&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>5.03&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>5.14&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Importance of having plan when migrating</td>
<td>5.27&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>5.09&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>5.15&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Importance of being able to adjust</td>
<td>5.18&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>5.00&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>5.12&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Importance of being successful when migrating</td>
<td>5.07&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>4.96&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>4.98&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Values</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social life</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>4.81</td>
<td>4.77</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal needs</td>
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<td>4.59&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>4.50&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Means with different subscripts are significantly different (p < .05) in a Least Significant Difference post hoc test.
<table>
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<th>Minanginese</th>
<th>Sundanese</th>
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<td>1 Traits needed when migrating</td>
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<td>-.27</td>
<td>.23**</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2 The importance of going out of the hometown</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>-.020</td>
<td>.24**</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Social life values</td>
<td>3 The importance of having plan when migrating</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>-.045</td>
<td>.23**</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Social life values</td>
<td>4 The importance of being able to adjust</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>-.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Social life values</td>
<td>5 The importance of being successful when migrating</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.17**</td>
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<td>1 Traits needed when migrating</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.11</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3 The importance of having plan when migrating</td>
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<td>4 The importance of being able to adjust</td>
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<td>5 The importance of being successful when migrating</td>
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<td>-.18**</td>
<td>.10</td>
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</tbody>
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*p < .05. **p < .01.

**Figure 1**
Places of residence of the three groups of participants