The Cross-Cultural Characteristics of Conflict among Indonesian, South Korean, and United States Adolescents

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THE CROSS-CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CONFLICT AMONG
INDONESIAN, SOUTH KOREAN, AND UNITED STATES ADOLESCENTS

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Conflict is a common characteristic of interpersonal relationships across all
developmental periods and many consider it an inevitable aspect of close relationships. It
is evident that there are significant differences across cultures in terms of implicit models
and understandings of conflict and how it should be resolved. The current study explores
reports of conflict in reciprocated friendships in Indonesian, South Korean, and United
States adolescents. Data from U.S. seventh grade students (N=123, Mean age of 12.45
years) was collected and compared to data previously obtained in Indonesia and South
Korea (French, Lee, & Pidada, in press). Using multiple measures, data was collected on
several dimensions of friendship including loneliness, intimacy, exclusivity, and conflict.
Male and female Korean children reported significantly more conflict with reciprocated
friends across both measures of conflict compared to U.S. and Indonesian youth. Reports
of conflict across close relationships revealed that Indonesian youth reported more
conflict with friends compared to Korean and U.S. youth who reported more conflict with
mothers. Relationships with siblings were also more conflictual across all three countries
with U.S. students reporting significantly higher amounts.