Blind Versus Constructive Patriotism: Values And Manifestations

Staub (2003) argues that blind patriotism is classified as loyalty that is not criticized. Actions and decisions made by a particular group are in supportive by its own members regardless to whether the actions lacks support towards values of morality and other people's rights in other groups. Blind patriotism is seen as having destructive attributes to both people within and outside the group. Criticizing the policies, interests and fundamentals of the group leads to one being accused of betrayal by not being loyal to the attributes of the group. The public has the power over government bodies and groups of powerful stature if in any case they involve themselves in destruction measures such as mass killing and war. The public has the right to ensure that these kind of acts are dealt with by preventing these occurrences to continue.

Studies mostly identify blind patriotism as associated with power among nations through nationalism and that strong and powerful nations tend to dominate nations which are weak. Criticizing the values of a particular group is seen as being non-patriotic in regards to blind patriotism. Kahne & Middaugh (2006), a blind patriot is one who accepts the values, actions and policies of their group without question. Loyalty is seen and emphasized as a key attribute and criticism is not regarded whatsoever in any way. Criticism is regarded as being against the values of the group and hinders people of that group towards interacting with others and sharing own ideas with others hence criticism is ignored in blind patriotism.

Constructive patriotism tends to defy blind patriotism because it is more interested in the safety of citizens in a country regardless of their race/ ethnicity or status in the society. I respects the rights of individuals in a country and promotes equality amongst its citizens in the country. Constructive patriotism tries to ensure that the nation portrays a good image and rivals people especially politicians who pursue to wear away fundamental rights of citizens in the country. This is due to the fact that many cultures and institutions within the country tend to be imperative and therefore citizens have the right to contribute towards measures that correct these actions especially in conditions that require change. However, this tends to be challenging because many groups that rely on blind patriotism tend to be loyal and do not question the values and policies put in place hence the difficulty in trying to correct the wrongs using patriotism (Staub, 2003).

In this case, the comparison between blind patriotism and constructive patriotism may be looked at how the groups are comprehended and understood. In blind patriotism, it is seen against the threats and sensitiveness brought by the people amongst the different groups while in constructive patriotism it is about the security of a nation and does not take into account the differences amongst countries (Staub, 2003). Blind patriotism does not tend to criticize the values or actions of a group in a country but constructive patriotism tends to question the policies of the group and its objectives. Blind patriotism is associated with discriminating values and actions of different groups while constructive patriotism tends to achieving better social objectives and increases participation especially in a political sense. Blind patriotism tends to threaten the security of a country and culture values while constructive patriotism on the other hand, does not associate itself with national supremacy and achieving country identity. Blind patriotism tends to rely more on national values, policies and actions of groups within the

country but constructive patriotism tends to share its values and policies with structures from other countries.

Constructive patriotism respects the human rights of individuals within a country and does not associate itself with loyalty towards a country by discriminating other citizens within the country. It takes in account to protect or promote security of individuals in a country (Staub, 1997, p. 214). Constructive patriots tend to help their own country together with people residing in other countries globally.

One of the major characteristics of constructive patriotism is that it thrives to bring change in a country by criticizing the policies, actions and values put in place in a country. Constructive patriots tend to be loyal regarding the values and policies put in place in their country but also understand that they are not perfect and are willing to change these values and policies if needed in order to bring change and most importantly to better their social values in order to bring certainty in their country (Schatz & Staub, 1997). Patriotism, when demonstrated in this form may be beneficial to a country because it improves the values of the country and also it promotes positive relations with other countries. Constructive patriotism improves the social values and policies of a country and also helps in fighting abuse of power in government institutions in a country. (Schatz, Staub, and Lavine (1999) identified that constructive patriotism was a major determinant factor in realizing effectiveness in the political sector and also collecting accurate data and information in the political environment. Hence, constructive patriots are those people who are more knowledgeable about their political environment and stature and who also have the capacity affect change in the country.

In contrast, blind patriotism individuals form an alliance with the values and policies of their own country or group by offering full support to the practices put in place without any form of criticism. People accept and agree with the terms put in place even if the terms put in place discriminate people within or outside their group or even if it lacks support on moral values (Staub, 1997, p. 213). Blind patriots are also loyal like constructive patriots towards the values put in place in their country or group because these are characteristics of patriotism. However, blind patriots are not aware or lack the knowledge to determine whether the values or practices put in place impact positively towards their country or group or whether they are misleading their country or group in that case. They do not care how a country deals with other people in other groups or members within their group or even how they deal with other countries. Schatz et al. (1999) established that blind patriotism associates itself with nationalism, fear of pollution of cultural values from other countries and groups and that they are at harm or in danger of threats from other countries and groups. Blind patriots wish to see that their country is dominating other countries because they see their country being vulnerable (Schatz & Staub, 1997).

Baker and Oneal (2001) have demonstrated that blind patriotism has been highly valued when a country is involved in a war or when the security of a country is at risk or being threatened. They argued that in this case, citizens of that particular country do not have powers to be able to question whether the country should engage or not engage and further established that these blind patriots do not have the capability and more so willingness to determine whether this action positively affects their social status and therefore agree and abide to whatever action the government takes regardless to the impact it will have towards their human rights. They concluded that blind patriotism has a negative effect towards the social status of a country due to lack of questioning and its intolerance towards improving the values, actions and practices of a country. On the other hand, they argued that constructive patriotism tends to represent the will

to question policies of a country and whether these policies that have been put into place serve the best interests of a country. They argue that constructive patriotism is also well demonstrated when a country or a nation is at war with other countries and that citizens are able and willing to question if the war serves the interests of the country in a good way. They concluded that constructive patriotism is able to measure the consistency of government policies put in place and to how it impacts positively towards the rights of its citizens in regards to freedom of speech and religion within the country and that constructive patriotism has a positive impact on the social status of a country through its engagement in influencing change and improving the values and practices of a country.

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