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Born-To-Rule Mentality and Authoritarianism as Correlates of Inclination to Terrorism among Northern Nigeria Youths

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated born-to-rule mentality and authoritarianism as correlates of inclination to terrorism among northern Nigeria youths. A total of 151 (one hundred and fifty-one) participants of 66 (six-six) male and 85 (eighty-five) female undergraduates randomly drawn from University of Maiduguri, Bornu State of Nigeria, using available random sampling technique, were used for the study. They were randomly drawn from 200,300, and 400 levels students of the University, and between the age range of 17 and 29 years. Three instruments were used in generating data for the study: Leadership Orientation Scale developed and validated for use in Nigeria by the researcher, Authoritarianism Scale developed and validated for use in Nigeria and Inclination to Terrorism Scale developed and validated for use in Nigeria. Cross-sectional survey design was the design for the study, while Multiple Regression Analysis was applied for statistical analysis of data. The result showed that born-to-rule mentality significantly correlated with inclination to terrorism ($\beta = .36$, $p < .001$), while authoritarianism did not ($\beta = .04$, ns). This shows that increase in born-to-rule mentality significantly increased with increase in inclination to terrorism, while increase in authoritarianism did not. Governmental and non-governmental organizations should come up with strong legislation to shun group inequality and encourage group equality among Nigerians.

Keywords: Born-to-rule mentality, authoritarianism, inclination to terrorism, and northern Nigeria youths.

INTRODUCTION

Terrorism has become a recurring incident in every part of Nigeria today, especially in the northern area. Everybody, both male and female in the northern part of Nigeria today is more security conscious now than ever as a result of this ugly situation called terrorism. The people of the north in Nigeria have been experiencing these unfortunate dramatic changes in every facet of life of all northerners, which have also brought some stressful situations to which well-meaning people in northern Nigeria are finding it difficult to cope with. According to [1], in their own perspective, terrorism is a premeditated deliberate systematic murder, mayhem, and threatening of the innocent people to create fear and intimidation to gain a political or tactical advantages, usually to influence an audience. [2] in their own view pointed out that terrorism is the deliberate negligent or reckless use of force against noncombatants, by State or non-state actors for ideological ends and in the absence of a substantively just form of legal action. Furthermore, [3] noted that terrorism is an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by semi-clandestine individual, group, or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby in contrast to assassination, the direct victims of violence are not the main target. According to [4], two common elements were usually found in definitions of terrorism: that terrorism involves aggression against non-combatants, and that terrorist's action in itself is not expected by its perpetrator to accomplish a political goal but to influence a target audience and change that audience's behaviour in a way that will serve the interest of the terrorist. Terrorism is human's willingness to use violence to effect change in the society. The immediate human victims of terrorism are generally chosen randomly or selectively from a target population, and serve as message generators, threat and violence-based communication processes between terrorist victims.

According to [2], environmental degradation, poor governance, tribalism, proliferation of light and heavy weapons, ethnicity, religious fanaticism, marginalization in the highest order, etc are the causes of terrorism in Northern Nigeria. The same source noted the derogatory impacts of terrorism in a society to include loss of lives and properties, sense of insecurity, fear of

migration, fear of investment, lawlessness, lack of development, etc. People who engage in the act of terrorism are violent, rigid, fanatical, harsh, aggressive, dogmatic, intolerance, and suicidal in nature. They hold strong believe in their leaders, and whatever belief or ideology their group holds is the best.

More so, those people who are high on born-to-rule mentality who believe that their group is superior to other groups(ethnocentrism), and that group based hierarchy should be maintained between their group and other groups through all possible means even if it includes the use of violence in an intergroup context [5]. Born-to-rule mentality shows itself in different aspects of lives in our society today, such as in employment opportunity, remuneration, appointment into managerial positions, giving health care services, academic admission/scholarship, allocation of infrastructural development, etc. People that possess the traits of ethnic orientation, have those traits of absolute obedience or submission to their leaders and to the principles guiding the group.

According to [6], authoritarianism is a predisposition to be submissive to political and societal authorities, endorse traditional norms of society, and react aggressively against minorities by authorities. In the psychological perspective, people who exhibit authoritarianism are said to possess a personality type known as authoritarian personality. Authoritarian personality is a state of mind or attitude characterized by one's belief in absolute obedience and submission to one's superior [7]. The same source reported that parents who had the inclination for domination, and who dominated and threatened the child harshly, and demanded obedience to conventional behaviours with threats, exhibit the characteristics of this personality in that child. In regards to child development, the formation of the authoritarian personality type occurs within the first few years of the person's life, strongly shaped by parents and family structure.

Available evidence has shown that in the past, people lived together peacefully, loved one another, became their brother's keeper, shared things in common, etc but recently, the love and peace seem to be fading away, thereby giving way to terrorism and other horrible social vices. This terrorism has brought about a high level of uncertainty in our country, especially in the northern part of Nigeria and in the world at large. There is confusion as well as tension

everywhere, lives and properties are being destroyed and people live in fear not knowing what will become of them the next seconds. The act of terrorism is very much on the increase in the northern part of Nigeria and takes more sophisticated dimensions like suicide bombing, car bombing, church bombings, regular attacks on villagers, attacks on security agents, kidnapping, etc on daily basis. Following this development, the researcher tends to find answers to the following questions: (1) will born-to-rule mentality significantly correlate with the inclination to terrorism among northern Nigeria youths? (2) Will authoritarianism significantly correlate with the inclination to terrorism among northern Nigeria youths?

Therefore, the main objective of this study is to find out (1) whether born-to-rule mentality will significantly correlate with the inclination to terrorism among northern Nigeria youths and, (2) whether authoritarianism will significantly correlate with the inclination to terrorism among northern Nigeria youths. Some theories have been used to explain the concept of born-to-rule mentality, terrorism, and authoritarianism. One of the theories is Social Learning Theory.

Social Learning Theory

According to [8], this theory suggests that violence follows observation and imitation of an aggressive model, and a variant of this theory has been invoked to explain terrorist behaviours. Bandura posits that behaviour is learned not only through one's direct experience, but also through observation of how such contingencies occur in one's environment. According to him, individuals that directly witness aggressive or violent behaviour or live in societies that glorify violence will imitate this behaviour. If aggression is a learned behaviour, then terrorism, a type of aggressive behaviour can also be learned [9]. However, this theory can be criticized on the fact that it is not everything that we learn, manifests in our behaviours.

Relative Deprivation Theory

Another theory is Relative Deprivation Theory propounded by [10]. This theory posits that economic disparities cause terrorism, which comes to be when people cannot bear the misery of their lot. [11], observed that Gurr's theory was born out of the frustration aggression hypothesis. According to [10], economic deprivation ignites terrorist sentiments especially among members

of an oppressed underclass. This theory specifically, holds that the greater the intensity and scope of relative deprivation, the greater the magnitude of collective attack or violence. This theory can be criticized on the fact that not all that are oppressed show the act of terrorism. Some oppressed people always look for meaningful alternative ways of expressing their grievances (such as non violent protest, strikes, etc), rather than engaging in terrorist attacks.

Intergroup Theory

Intergroup Theory propounded by [12] argues that intergroup oppression, discrimination, and prejudice are the means by which human societies organize themselves as group-based hierarchies in which members of dominant groups secure a disproportionate share of the good things in life, such as good housing, good health services, etc and members of subordinate groups receive a disproportionate share of the bad things in life, such as relatively poor housing and poor health care. In general, an individual's likelihood of performing hierarchy acts depends on his general desire to support/maintain or reduce group-based inequality, a characteristic we call born-to-rule mentality orientation or socialization.

Authoritarian Personality Theory

Finally, the Authoritarian Personality Theory propounded by [13] focused on individual differences in prejudices. According to this theory, people with an authoritarian personality are more likely to be prejudiced and are characterized by rigid belief in conventional values, general hostility towards other groups, and submissive attitude towards authority figures. [13] argued that childhood experiences play a key role in the development of the authoritarian personality. Harsh treatment causes the child to have much hostility towards his/her parents. This theory also pointed out that authoritarian personality dislikes change and wants those in authority to punish anyone seen as a threat to the existing beliefs and order in that society. Thus, the beliefs of authoritarian individuals are orchestrated by their dominant cultural values.

In addition, inclination to terrorism, born-to-rule mentality and authoritarianism were empirically reviewed. [14], study that lasted for six years, examined the effects of

underemployment and marginalization on levels of terrorism across 37 countries, to see if the two variables can positively correlate with an increase in the number of terrorist attacks in those countries. The study revealed that unemployment and population size positively correlated with increased cases of terrorism, while that of marginalization has no significant relationship with a nation's level of terrorism. [15], study in five years, examined whether poverty, ethno-religious diversity, population, inequality and poor economic development have link with terrorism using 55 countries. The study revealed no significant relationship between poor economic development and terrorism, rather other variables like inequality, population, ethno-religious diversity, etc were found to have significantly correlated with terrorism.

Furthermore, [16], study examined the relationship between ethnic dominance orientation and authoritarianism using university students of Bolonga University with mean age of 21.8years. The result of regression analysis showed a significant relationship between authoritarianism and ethnic dominance orientation ($\beta = .14$).

[17], study examined the extent ethnic dominance education and authoritarianism can predict support for terrorism, using 425 US middle adults as participants, who were subjected to experimental study. The result showed that those who were high on authoritarianism generally indicated less likelihood of engaging in protest or terror attack, while those high on ethnic dominance education were more likely to choose terror attack and indicated that it was more justified.

Conclusively, out of the theories reviewed in this study, Social Learning Theory by [8] seems most appropriate because it connects all the variables studied in this research. Following this development, this study is anchored on the said theory. In carrying out this study, two hypotheses were formulated and tested.

Hypotheses

(1) Born-to-rule mentality will not significantly correlate with the inclination to terrorism among northern Nigeria youths; (2) authoritarianism will not significantly correlate with the inclination to terrorism among northern Nigeria youths.

Methods

Participants

A total of 151 (one hundred and fifty-one) university undergraduates comprising of 66 (sixty-six) males and 85 (eighty-five) females, were randomly drawn from the University of Maiduguri, Bornu State of Nigeria and used for this study. Available random sampling technique was used in drawing the participants. They were drawn from the faculties of Arts (51 participants), Social Sciences (52 participants), and Education (48 participants), of the university. They were 200, 300, and 400 levels university undergraduates from different states in northern Nigeria but were students of the University of Maiduguri, Bornu State. Their ages ranged between 17 and 29 years with mean age of 18.35 and standard deviation of 1.49.

Instruments

Three instruments were used for this study, the Leadership Orientation Scale developed and validated for use in Nigeria by the researcher, which is a Sixteen-item instrument designed to measure individual's desire to rule others based on classification among various groups created within the society. In this instrument, items from 1 to 8 have direct scoring format, while items from 9 to 16 have a revised scoring format. In interpreting the instrument, higher scores indicated higher born-to-rule mentality, while lower scores indicated less born-to-rule mentality. Another instrument used was Authoritarianism Scale developed by [6] to measure people's attitude characterized by their belief in absolute obedience to their superior or authority. [18] carried out pilot study and obtained a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of .55 to confirm the reliability of the instrument for use in Nigeria. In interpreting this instrument, higher scores indicate that the participant is high in authoritarianism and vice versa.

Finally, Terrorism Inclination Scale (TIS) was developed by [18] to measure the inclination to engage in the act of terrorism. The items were in five point scale format, and were ten item questions in the instrument. The developer obtained a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of .68 to prove the reliability of the instrument for use in Nigeria. Higher scores represent higher inclination to terrorism and vice versa.

Procedure

A total of 160 copies of the questionnaire(s) containing the three scales namely: Leadership Orientation Scale, Authoritarianism Scale, and Inclination to Terrorism Scale, were administered to the undergraduate students of the University of Maiduguri in their departments in their various faculties of the university, who were present in their departments and faculties, and agreed to participate in the study. The researcher made use of two lecturers from the northern part of Nigeria as his research assistants that assisted him in the administration and collection of the instruments. The researcher adopted the method of on-the-spot questionnaire. The students were asked to respond appropriately to the item questions in the questionnaires freely and return to the researcher and his assistants on the spot. Finally, out of 160 copies of the questionnaires administered, only 156 copies were filled and returned, while only 151 copies were correctly filled and used for this study. The remaining 5 copies were discarded because they were wrongly filled.

Design/Statistics

The design for this study was a cross-sectional survey design, while a Multiple Regression Analysis was applied for statistical analysis of data generated.

RESULTS

Table 1: Summary table of descriptive statistics on the control variable (gender, age, and level), independent variables (born-to rule mentality and authoritarianism) and the dependent variable (inclination to terrorism)

Variables	Mean	SD	N
Gender	1.41	.44	151
Age	18.35	1.49	151
Level	2.52	1.01	151
Born-to-rule mentality	68.78	14.82	151
Authoritarianism	138.23	18.48	151
Terrorism	22.56	10.42	151

summary of the Mean, Standard deviation and the number of participants used in the study for the variables of study (control, independent and dependent).

Table II: Inter-correlation between the control variables, Independent variable, and the dependent variables of study.

	Inclin. to terrorism	Gender	Age	Level	Born-to-rule ment	Authoritarianism
Inclination to terrorism	1					
Gender	.02	1				
Age	.01	-.04	1			
Level	.06	.01	.42*	1		
Born-to-R Ment.	.36 **	.07	.02	.01	1	
Authoritarianism	.04	.34**	.01	.15*	.04	1

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

*- Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed)

The correlation table reveals that born-to-rule mentality has significant correlation with inclination to terrorism ($r=.36$, $p<.01$). There is also significant correlations between gender and Authoritarianism ($r=.34$, $p<.01$), age and level ($r=.42$, $p<.01$) and level and Authoritarianism ($r=.15$, $p<.05$).

Table III: Model Summary table of the control variables (gender, age, level), the independent variables (Born-to-rule mentality and Authoritarianism) and the dependent variable (Inclination to terrorism).

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std error of the estimate	Change statistics				
					R square change	F change	df 1	df 2	Sig
1	.078a	.006	-.010	10.43	.006	.318	3	155	.642
2	.381b	.148	.116	9.68	.138	12.16	2	144	.000

- Correlates (constant), level, gender, age.
- Correlates, level, gender, age, Born-to-rule ment., Authoritarianism

The result of the regression analysis as presented in table III above, showed that the control variables account for .8% (R^2 change) variance in inclination to terrorism which is not significant (F change (3,155) = .41, ns). In the second regression model, over and above the control variables, the correlates born-to-rule mentality and authoritarianism accounted for 14.5% (R^2 change) variance increase in inclination to terrorism which is significant (F change (2,144) = 13.26, $p < .001$)

Table IV: regression coefficient table of the control variables, independent, and dependent variables

Model	Unstandardized coefficient	Std error	Standard coefficient	t	Sig
	B		Beta		
1) Constant	22.641	6.722		1.881	.005
Gender	.482	1.745	.023	.219	ns
Age	-.086	4.06	-.019	-.135	ns
Level	1.012	1.003	.087	1.019	ns
2) Constant	35.613	7.848		2.897	.000
Gender	.885	1.650	.038	.426	ns
Age	.005	.2712	.001	.016	ns
Level	.615	.837	.068	.660	ns
Born-to-rule ment.	.159	.048	.282	4.137	.000
Authoritarianism	.023	.038	.045	.518	ns

- (a) Dependent variable: inclination to terrorism
- (b) ns = not significant

Table IV above reveals that among the control tables, no variable is a significant correlate to inclination to terrorism. After the demographic variables were controlled, born-to-rule mentality showed significant correlation with the inclination to terrorism ($\beta = .36$, $p < .001$). Authoritarianism showed no significant correlation with the inclination to terrorism ($\beta = .04$, ns). In summary, born-to rule mentality was found to be a significant correlate of inclination to terrorism among northern Nigeria youths ($\beta = .36$, $p < .001$). This suggests that as born-to-rule mentality increases among northern Nigeria youths, inclination to terrorism also increases and vice versa. Authoritarianism was found not to be a significant correlate of inclination to terrorism among northern Nigeria youths ($\beta = .04$, ns). This suggests that increase or decrease in authoritarianism does not in any way bring about increase or decrease in inclination to terrorism among the northern Nigeria youths.

DISCUSSION

The result of this study showed that the born-to-rule mentality significantly correlated with the inclination to terrorism among northern Nigeria youths, and as a result, the hypothesis which stated that ethnic orientation will not significantly correlate with the inclination to terrorism among northern Nigeria youths was rejected. The result agrees with [17], which reported a significant positive relationship between social dominance orientation and inclination to terrorism. This can be attributed to legitimizing myths of an individual's social dominance orientation. These myths are the justifications that such groups use to support their education.

The results of the study further showed that authoritarianism did not significantly correlate with the inclination to terrorism among northern Nigeria youths, and as a result, the hypothesis which stated that authoritarianism will not significantly correlate with the inclination to terrorism was accepted. The result is in agreement with earlier finding of [18] which reported a non significant relationship between authoritarianism and inclination to terrorism.

Implications of the Findings

- 1) It has been scientifically proved that born-to-rule mentality is one of the correlates of the inclination to terrorism among northern Nigeria youths.
- 2) More so, it has also been scientifically ascertained that authoritarianism is not a correlate of the inclination to terrorism among northern Nigeria youths.

As a result of this, there is every need to re-socialize or re-educate our people on the dangers of inclination to terrorism and on the individual concerned particularly and the society in general. The stakeholders in the various governmental positions should endeavour to shun group inequality in all facets of life and to preach the practice of group equality everywhere anywhere any time, in order to promote tolerance and harmonious co-existence in our country, Nigeria. Future researchers should try to look at other variables in relation to inclination to terrorism, such as level of education, wealth, religion, locality, etc and also have a wider coverage of the study.

In summary, this study investigated born-to-rule mentality and authoritarianism as correlates of inclination to terrorism among northern Nigeria youths. Undergraduate students of University of Maiduguri, Borno State drawn from 200, 300, and 400 levels students of different departments and faculties of the university, were the participants for this study. It was found that born-to-rule mentality correlated significantly with the inclination to terrorism among northern Nigeria youths, while authoritarianism did not.

Conclusively, by this study, it has been scientifically proved that born-to-rule mentality has link with inclination to terrorism, while authoritarianism has not. Therefore, people in various leadership positions should come up with strong legislation against born-to-rule mentality, and encourage authoritarianism, for this will reduce the northern Nigeria youths' inclination to terrorism and make our country, Nigeria free from terror attacks, and promote people's obedience to the constituted authority and rule of law.

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