



The Theoretical Overview of Extremism and Terrorism

Anup A. Kudtarkar

Research scholar, Department of Studies in Criminology and Forensic science, Karnatak University- Dharwad.

Dr. Dinesh J. Narayanar

Research Guide and Asst Professor Department of Studies in Criminology and Forensic science, Karnatak University

ABSTRACT

Extremism and terrorism is a main concern in today's world community. It may occur in different manner and different nature. Extremism and terrorism is a common term for mass violence and it's only related to destruction, terror and fear. To understand this both phenomena one has to overview the entire dimensions of extremism and terrorism. By the theoretical approaches we can examine the pattern of both things. The Purpose of this paper is to ascertain distinguish overall overview of theoretical approaches related to extremism and terrorism.

KEYWORDS : Extremism ,Terrorism,

Introduction

In the current national security environment, there is little question that extremism and terrorism is among the gravest of threats. Massive resources throughout the government and private sectors have been allocated and re-allocated to the task of preventing extremism and terrorism. These efforts, however, often lack a conceptual - let alone empirically-based - foundation for understanding extremists, terrorists and their acts of violence. This void creates a serious challenge at many levels, from policy-level decisions about how a state should respond to extremism and terrorism, to individual-level decisions about whether a given person of interest, who espouses extremist ideas and create terror, truly poses a serious threat to all nations, personnel, assets, and interests.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze various theoretical framework and professional literature related to extremism and terrorism. The overall view of all approaches to understanding or explaining the related violent to human behavior can be done easily through this framework. This will seem a reasonable, and potentially productive, line of inquiry.

Meaning of Extremism and Terrorism

Extremism: Academicians are yet to agree on the complete definition of the term 'extremism and terrorism'. Extremism and terrorism can be defined in various ways by various experts' opinion, therefore, in the present presentation the general view of extremism and terrorism could be defined in this way:- thus, extremism, it is an activities of a far removed from the ordinary. In conflict settings it manifests as a severe form of conflict management and Mostly related to political, social and religious matter.

Terrorism: According to the views in the article published by Schmid in 1983:111, terrorism is a method of combat in which random or symbolic victims become targets of violence. Through the previous use of violence or the credible threat of violence, other members of a group are put in a state of chronic fear (terror). The victimization of the target is considered extra normal by most observers which in turn create an audience beyond the target of terror. The purpose of terrorism is either to immobilize the target of terror in order to produce disorientation and/or compliance, or to mobilize secondary targets of demand or targets of attention.

Objectives

To overview the theoretical approaches related to extremism and terrorism.

Supporting literature: - these formulated theoretical views and ideas by eminent experts in their various disciplines, highlights the human views and behavior that are associated with extremism and terrorism. Here I would mention four theoretical approaches that discuss human behavior and their effects in any given society.

- Psychological theories.(Beck, 2002, Gurr, 1968, Freud, Konrad Lorenz)
- Sociological theories.(Bandura 2003, Oots & Wiegele, 1985, Crenshaw)
- Political theories. (Fanon 1965; Whitaker1972; Schmid, 1983, Weinberg and Eubank 1994)
- Economical theories. (Gurr's 1970,Hasisi and Pedahzur 2000; Krueger and Maleckova 2002)

I-Psychological theories.

Psychoanalytic: "The most widely recognized theory that addresses the roots of all forms of violence is the psychoanalytic model. Despite its influence on writers in the political science, sociology, history, and criminology literature, this model has weak logical, theoretical, and empirical foundations" (Beck, 2002). Freud viewed aggression more generally as an innate and instinctual human trait, which most should outgrow in the normal course of human development. A later development in Freud's theory was that humans had the energy of life force (eros) and death force (thanatos) that sought internal balance. Violence was seen as the "displacement" of thanatos from self and onto others. A number of more narrow violence-related theories have drawn on psychoanalytic concepts and ideas, but none are widely regarded as psychoanalytic theories of violence.

Ethology: Ethology has been alternately defined as the scientific study of animal behavior, especially as it occurs in a natural environment and as the study of human ethos, and its formation (American Heritage Dictionary, 2000). Ethnologist, Konrad Lorenz advanced the notion that aggression arises from a very basic biological need - a "fighting instinct" that has had adaptive value as humans have evolved. He argued the drive from aggression is innate and that, in humans, only its mode of expression is learned through exposure to, and interaction with the environment. The theory of an instinctual drive for aggression suggests that it builds up over time, is fueled by emotional or psycho physiologic arousal, and is subsequently discharged by a process of catharsis, which ostensibly decreases drive. Empirical researches, including physiologic studies, however, do not support this "hydraulic" (building until discharge, and then receding) theory of aggressive energy. Moreover, anthropologists and other social scientists have found significant differences both in the nature and level of aggression in different cultures, and experimental research has demonstrated that aggression can be environmentally manipulated; both findings that argue against a universal human instinct.

Drive Theory (Frustration-Aggression)

Frustration-Aggression: The link between frustration (being prevented from attaining a goal or engaging in behavior) and aggression has been discussed in psychology for more than half a century. Some even view it as a "master explanation" for understanding the cause of human violence. The basic premise of the frustration-aggression (FA)

hypothesis is twofold: (1) Aggression is always produced by frustration, and (2) Frustration always produces aggression. When subjected to empirical scrutiny, however, research has shown that frustration does not inevitably lead to aggression. Sometimes, for example, it results in problem solving or dependent behaviors. And aggression is known to occur even in the absence of frustration. Thus it is not reasonable to view frustration alone as a necessary and sufficient causal factor. In an important reformulation of the FA hypothesis, Berkowitz (1989) posited that it was only "aversive" frustration that would lead to aggression. The newly proposed progression was that frustration would lead to anger, and that anger – in the presence of aggressive cues – would lead to aggression. While subsequent research findings have, at times, been inconsistent or contradictory, "it is reasonable to conclude that aversive stimuli do facilitate, but probably not instigate, aggressive behavior" (Tedeschi & Felson, 1994, p. 68). In a now classic work, Ted Gurr was among the first to apply a systematic FA analysis to the problem of political violence, framing the frustration as one of "relative deprivation" (Gurr, 1968).

II-Sociological theories

Social Learning Theory

Fundamental learning theory suggests that behavioral patterns are acquired by links (contingencies) established between the behavior and its consequences. When behavior is followed by desired results (reward), that behavior is "reinforced" (made more likely). Conversely, when behavior is followed by undesirable or aversive consequence, that behavior is "punished" (made less likely). Bandura, 2003, Social learning theory is a simple extension of this basic idea, suggesting that behavior (e.g., aggression) is learned not only through one's direct experience, but also through observation of how such contingencies occur in one's environment. Some have referred to this as vicarious learning. In this model, aggression is viewed as learned behavior. Accordingly, it is argued that through observation we learn consequences for the behavior, how to do it, to whom it should be directed, what provocation justifies it, and when it is appropriate. If aggression is a learned behavior, then extremism and terrorism, a specific type of aggressive behavior, can also be learned. (Oots & Wiegele, 1985, p.11).

Cognitive Theory

The core elements in a "cognitive theory" of aggression derive from an area of study called "social cognition." The basic notion is that people interact with their environment based on how they perceive and interpret it. That is, people form an internal (cognitive) map of their external (social) environment, and these perceptions – rather than an objective external reality – determine their behavior. The experimental literature clearly suggests that perceptions of intent affect aggression. Moreover, there are internal and external factors that can affect one's perceptions of provocation or intent. Two common cognitive/processing deficits found among people who are highly aggressive are: (1) an inability to generate non-aggressive solutions to conflicts (and lack of confidence in their ability to use them successfully) and (2) a perceptual hypersensitivity to hostile/aggressive cues in the environment, particularly interpersonal cues.

Crenshaw suggests that the principles of social cognition apply both to terrorists and to their organizations.

III-POLITICAL THEORIES

OPPRESSION THEORY Multiple authors, from sociologists to revolutionaries, contend that oppression provokes political violence (Fanon 1965; Whitaker 1972; Schmid 1983). Particularly in the case of nationalist-separatist or ethnic-sectarian terrorism (e.g., ETA, PIRA, Hamas), actors often cite the injustice of their treatment by government as one of their motives for joining

a terrorist group (Crenshaw 1986; Taylor and Quayle 1994; Post, Sprinzak, and Denny 2003). Since it is difficult to measure oppression itself—a sociopolitical relationship subject to point of view—and since the impact of oppression may be felt subjectively to greater or lesser degrees by individuals within a community at risk, perceived oppression may be the proper cognitive-emotional variable to examine as a potential risk factor for extremism and terrorism. There are innumerable scales and instruments for assessing perceived prejudice and discrimination (e.g., McNeilly et al. 1996; Utsey and Ponterotto 1996; Neto 2001; Loo et al. 2001; Murry et al. 2001; Duckitt et al. 2002). However, virtually all of these are specifically designed to address the experience of a single group—in most cases, African Americans. None of them measures the life-and-liberty-threatening dominion of one group over another implied by the psycho-political concept of oppression.

NATIONAL CULTURAL THEORY

While many differences are observed between cultures, a specific variable was claimed to be key by Weinberg and Eubank (1994), who proposed that terrorism expresses itself differently in "collectivist" versus "individualist" cultures. According to this theory, in collectivist cultures, a person's identity is primarily derived from the social system, dividing the world strictly according to in-groups and out-groups and linking their personal well-being to the well-being of their group, while in individualist cultures, identity is derived from personal goals. Weinberg and Eubank propose that collectivists would be more likely than individualists to carry out terrorist attacks on out-groups, including foreigners. Individualists would be less inhibited in attacking one of their own.

Economical theories

RELATIVE DEPRIVATION THEORY- It has also been proposed that economic disparities cause terrorism. This claim underlies Gurr's (1970) theory of relative deprivation—which rebellions come to be when people cannot bear the misery of their lot. As Schmid (1983) observed, Gurr's theory derives more from psychoanalysis than from empirical sociology and is conceptually born of the FA hypothesis. Irrespective of these psychiatric roots, multiple writers have claimed a sociological link between poverty and terrorism (Schmid 1983; Harmon 2000; Hasisi and Pedahzur 2000; Krueger and Maleckova 2002). More recently, increasing differences between the material welfare of the haves and have-nots have been postulated to provoke a new era of political violence that will accelerate as globalization not only creates new foci of poverty but facilitates communication between those who perceive themselves to be globalization's victims (Maya, Lander, and Ungar 2002). One possibility is that either absolute deprivation or relative economic disparity ignites terrorist sentiments, especially among members of an oppressed underclass.

Discussion and Conclusion:

The paper has broadly discussed the issue of extremism and terrorism by theoretical perspective. And various dimensions or approaches like psychological, sociological, political and economical related to extremism and terrorism. In psychology we viewed psychoanalytic, ethology and driving theories which related to aggression, human behavior, ethos and frustration. In sociology how social learning has been acquired and social cognitive links with human behavior. Political approach we examine the operational theory how one reacts in an operation provokes in matters of political violence and how collectivist versus individualist cultures set a political goal for an individual. In economics how economic disparities cause for extremism and terrorism we come to know by relative deprivation theory. From all this various approaches we can say it will help full for making laws, policy and countering plans for any nation and the whole world related to this problem.

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