Psychological Models of a Terrorist’s Personality, as Imagined by the Urban Students: Causes and Prevention of a Terrorist Incident

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Abstract: The article represents the research results as for psychological models of a typical terrorist, as imagined by the urban students of schools, colleges and universities. The authors suggest empirical criteria for determining the psychological models of terrorists, while these very models are marked and specified. Moreover, the essence of each model is described. The causes and possible prevention of a terrorist incident are studied in accordance with each of these models, as it is supposed by the high school alumni, college and university students in the cities of Rostov-on-Don and Taganrog.

Key words: Psychological model of a classical terrorist • Models of a classical terrorist • Schoolchildren • College students • University students

INTRODUCTION

Plentiness of psychological models of a terrorist accumulated in the scientific literature has already allowed to classify terrorists according to various principles [1; 2]. These models perform cognitive, informative and propaedeutic functions and facilitate in maturing of anti-terrorism and anti-extremism persuasions. Thus, they are limited to some degree due to non-obviousness of the terrorist incident situation, behavioral and personal character features of a terrorist for a researcher, also due to transfer of contextual behavioral characteristics of a terrorist to his personality in general made by researchers. The common mass media representation of a classical terrorist's psychology illustrated with facts concerning the terrorist incidents and its consequences cause a vivid public response [3; 4]. That can yield a psychological phenomenon of “terrorism threaten affection” for some part of people [5]. The data of the kind can create a “copying-behavior” standard and also shape an image of “true” hero of these latter days [2] and finally, result in apprehension of causes and possible prevention of terrorist incidents [7; 8] as for a portion of young audience of global information space (in other words, the carrier of “mass media consciousness”). That is why, the research of terrorist psychological models, as they are shaped by the youth, is still acute.

The psychological models encompass the core, most important and interconnected characteristics of the real person, though diverge with the latter at the same time. They serve as a “pattern” for either diagnostic or forecasting evaluation and a direction for the exploration of the modeled phenomenon. These models differ as concerning their essence and methods of obtaining. Each one includes an object, way of obtaining and form of description of the data about the object. The terrorist's psychological model should be understood as the agents' verbal presentation of the imagined classical terrorist's psychological peculiarities, while he is the prototype shaped owing to the information obtained from both the mass media and eyewitnesses' accounts.

Study Purpose is to research the essence of the classical terrorist's psychological models; to explore both the causes and possible prevention of terrorist incidents, as this is imagined by the urban students. The present research has encompassed 88 high school graduation class' students, 15 university students from Rostov-on-Don and 88 college students from Rostov-on-Don and Taganrog.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Polling (S.T. Dzhaneryan, D.I. Gvozdeva's questionnaire); testing (E.B. Fantalova's technique “Correlation rate between “value” and “availability”
in various life aspects”, A. Maslow’s list of values-motivations, K.E. Izard’s scale of differential emotions, technique “Personal differential” (PD), personal traits rating by means of R. Kettell’s 16PF test); content analysis, statistical methods (principal components’ R-mode factor analysis, Shapiro-Wilk’s criteria, Freedman’s criterion, Spearman RHO, quartering, binominal distribution).

The concepts of permanent and variable aspects in a terrorist’s personality and integration of its general psychic shape were involved for the description of a terrorist’s individuality. The psychic shape of the terrorist’s personality was studied basing on the evaluation of his orientation (finite values, vital motives, principal feelings) and character (personal traits). The meaningful finite values, vital motives and principal feelings formed the permanent part of the personality, while emotional experience and available values - the variable one in it.

The adaptive values should be Endowed Life, Health, social values are Interesting Job, Happy Family, Friends, Love and finally, individuality’s values are Dynamic Stirring Life, Freedom, Confidence, Knowledge, Creativity [9].

The questionnaire aimed at research of classical terrorist’s personality consisted of the following sections: social-demographic data on a classical terrorist; his personal orientation; personal traits and feelings in the context of a terrorist incident; external and internal causes for committing a terrorist incident and possible prevention (an open-ended question). The content analysis of respondents feedback resulted in defining the following categories reflecting the methods of terrorism prevention: state policy democratization (social-economic and democratic reforms, human rights and freedoms observance, etc.), psychological aid to citizens for psychological issues solving; means directed to the terrorists: prohibitions (emigration control), punishment (death penalty), intelligence services’ professionalism and common citizens’ vigilance.

Due to factor analysis of the indicators determining the terrorist's psychological features, in the opinion of respondents, the 7-factor solution explaining 63.82 per cent dispersion has been made. The following analysis of terrorist's primary personal traits that have got relatively high share (>0.5) in each of the factors, in accordance with the respondents' evaluation and also the interconnection of these very evaluations with the terrorist's other personal traits assessments have allowed to point out the types of psychological models of axiologically socialized personality (type 1); extremely altruistic personality (type 2); personality's deficiency motives (type 3); contextual emotional repeance (type 4); intellectual terrorist (type 5); contextual emotional hostility, restrained by fear (type 6); and strong-willed personality (type 7). In accordance with the respondents' evaluation, the essence of the leading psychological peculiarity (either permanent or variable) of the classical terrorist's personality connected to the respondents' assessments of his other personal traits were the empirical criteria for the types determination. The permanent manifestations are predominant in models of types 1, 3 and 5; while the variable ones are primary for types 2, 4 and 6; finally, in model 7 both permanent and variable manifestations are equal [1].

Main Points: The classical terrorist, as imagined by the respondents of this research, is a male of 20 to 44 years old, single, born in the Caucasus, Muslim, with incomplete university or vocational education, off the job-in the majority of cases, bodily healthy, though with mental problems. As compared to the terrorist’s prototype represented by M. Reshetnikov [10], i.e., a young male of 15-25 years old, our classical terrorist has “become older”.

Let us describe the psychological models of a terrorist’s personality. In type 1 the college students describe his personality via predominance of the essential value of socialization “Interesting Job” inherent in high evaluation of available value “Confidence”, vital motives of security and acknowledgement, personal factors E, C, feelings of joy and guiltiness and also with low assessment of personal factor I. The college students “see” a terrorist (31-40 years old) as greatly aimed at achieving some social status, dominating, emotionally stable, less perceptive, confidently acting, experiencing self-condemnation and anxiety compensated with complacency in the context of terrorism. The terroristic incident was stipulated with his personal traits expressed in his education or professional activity, nature of his relationships within work or studying groups, changes in social-economic conditions of job.

The high school students suppose the predominant socialization value “Friends” is inherent in high evaluation of available values “Friends” and “Confidence”, personal factor G and feeling of grieve. The schoolchildren imagine that a terrorist (21-40 years old) highly appraises friendship, behave confidently with his friends and feels oppression in the situation of a terrorist incident. The latter has been stipulated with both his personal peculiarities and relationship as concerning variable interests.
As for prevention, the opinions of college students diverged: some of them were undecided, while the others chose state policy democratization. At the same time, the high school students preferred intelligence services' professional rate.

As for the model of type 2, the college students are sure that a terrorist makes friends easily (available value “Friends”), while the schoolchildren found him to be easy-going (available value “Love”). The primary available value of the prototype positively correlates with the personal trait M, feelings of disgust and contempt (as for college students’ assessments), also personal trait A (as for schoolchildren's position).

The college students “see” a terrorist (16-40 years old) as easily making friends, preoccupied with his own ideas, experiencing out-of-body feeling and superiority over other people in the context of a terrorist incident. As for the opinions of the high school students, a classical terrorist (21-30 years old) is easy-going and shows carelessness and good fellowship. The college students suppose that the terrorist incident was stipulated both with personal traits and nature of relationships of the prototype with his friends in the sphere of interests. At the same time, the schoolchildren find causes both in personal traits and changes of social-economic conditions of job together with important events in family life. As for the college students, they accentuate the intelligence services' professional rate and common citizens' vigilance. The high school students were undecided as concerning the possible terrorism prevention.

In the model of type 3, the college students find the motive of belonging as mostly connected to the various peculiarities of a terrorist (the straight correlation with essential values Knowledge and Happy Family, personal traits I, Q1, feelings of shame and guiltiness; the inverse correlation with features A and Activity). According to schoolchildren's assessments, the motive of safety is most of all connected to the peculiarities of the evaluated personality (straight correlation with feature M and feeling of surprise, inverse correlation with personal trait O).

As the college students suppose, a classical terrorist (21-40 years old) strives for friendly relationship, admittance by his family, appraising awareness and family happiness. He is an asocial, self-standing introvert. In case of a terrorist incident he imagines social evaluation of his act together with self-condemnation and repentance. The causes of the incident are his personal peculiarities, the nature of his relationship within the work group and changes of social-economic conditions of job. The high school students evaluate a terrorist (31-40 years old) as striving for safety and preoccupied with his own ideas, self-confident, mentally prepared for any rapid changes in course of the terrorist incident caused by any of the reasons. The respondents unanimously suppose the common citizens' vigilance as the decisive prevention of the terrorism. However, the schoolchildren have also pointed to punishment.

The assessments of the prototype's personality made by the college students are studied in the model of type 4. The respondents pointed out the feeling of grief as a primary one for the terrorist in the situation of the terrorist incident. Their assessments positively correlate with the evaluations of such prototype's personal traits, as Strength and Q2, efficient value Confidence, available value Knowledge; while negatively with factors Evaluation and Q1. A classical terrorist (16-50 and more years old) prepares himself for change of situation, while idealizing his Confidence. He is described as informed, forceful, self critical and conservative. The reasons for terrorist incident involve the nature of his family relationships and individual peculiarities. Some respondents were undecided as for terrorism prevention, while the others chose prohibitions.

As concerning the model of type 5, the analysis of the terrorist's personality was developed basing upon the respondents' assessments disregard to the nature of their education. The respondents' high evaluation of N personal trait positively correlates with the assessments of the values available for a terrorist-Endowed Life, Creativity, feelings of interest, while negatively-with the assessments of the available values: Love, bodily comfort motive and feelings of fear. Almost all respondents evaluated the prototype extremely high as for factor B. A terrorist (31-40 years old) is described as keen, clever, wealthy and busy. He never strives for bodily comfort and dearness with beloved. He does not feel fear in course of a terrorist incident, while acting as an engaged spectator. The causes of terrorism are the peculiarities of his personality and also the nature of relationship in his own family, which social-economic status has already changed. The intelligence services' professional rate is the reasonable prevention.

For the model of type 6, the university students highly appreciated the feeling of contempt positively connected to the evaluation of personal trait Q1, a factor of Strength, available adaptive values (Endowed Life, Health), social values (Happy Family), individuality's values (Dynamic Stirring Life, Freedom,
Confidence, Knowledge, Creativity), a motive of individualization. The students imagine a terrorist (31-40 years old) as rebellious, cunning, ready for drastic actions towards a person disdained by him. He also shows freethinking, independence and individuality in everyday life. The terrorist incident has been stipulated with his personal traits expressed both in his professional activity and communicating, also in the nature of his relationship within a work group, changes in social-economic conditions of job, his current social network in general.

The college students highly evaluated feelings of disgust positively connected to the assessments of personal feature A, essential value Freedom, available values Freedom and Confidence, bodily comfort, security and individuality motives, also feelings of rage negatively connected to personal feature G. A classical terrorist (21-40 years old) is hostile in the context of the incident, strings along with values of individualization, behaves himself freely and confidently in particular situations, strives for self-fulfillment and satisfaction of deficiency needs (except for needs of belonging and acknowledgement). He is a forthcoming and polluted fellow. The immediate causes of a terrorist incident are his personal traits, his relationships within the work group and family, also changed social-economic status of his family, what had an effect on his social communication.

The high school students highly praised the feelings of fear positively connected to assessments of essential individuality's values (Dynamic Stirring Life, Freedom, Confidence, Knowledge, Creativity), social values (Friends, Love) and adaptive values (Endowed Life), personal traits E,M,O and feelings of contempt. As the schoolchildren suppose, a terrorist (31-40 years old) feels hostility and exposure, idealizing individuality's values. He is dominating, preoccupied with his own ideas and vulnerable. The incident has been stipulated with his personal peculiarities and relationships with friends and colleagues.

In the schoolchildren's opinion, both the intelligence services' professional rate and common citizens' vigilance are possible prevention, while the college and university students chose state policy democratization. Moreover, the college youth has also pointed to psychological aid to citizens.

The college students' evaluation for type 7 model of primary available value Freedom positively connected to the assessments of essential value Freedom, bodily comfort motives, personal traits A, M, Q1, Q2, while negatively-to evaluation of feature L. As these respondents suppose, a terrorist idealizing freedom (21-40 years old) strives for bodily comfort. He is also forthcoming, credulous and self-consistent and preoccupied with his own ideas.

In the opinion of the schoolchildren, the primary personal trait of a terrorist is STRENGTH, while the assessments of the latter have positively correlated with evaluations of essential individuality's values Dynamic Stirring Life, available value Confidence, motives of self-fulfillment, factor of Evaluation, feelings of guiltiness.

A confident and self-respecting terrorist (21-40 years old) strings along with the values of the dynamic life and feels guiltiness in the terrorist incident. All respondents are sure that both the peculiarities of his relationships with the colleagues and personal traits appearing in course of his professional activity are the causes of committing incident. Likewise, all respondents pointed out punishment and intelligence services' professional rate as terrorism prevention, while the college students also added psychological aid to citizens.

CONCLUSION

The young people mostly prefer the model of type 6 among all other denoted ones. It reflects the terrorist's variable personal traits. The nature of respondents' education has an impact on the essence of the terrorist incident's causes and possible preventions pointed by them. As opposed to high school students the college and university youth points up the social-economic and managerial environment of the professional activity as factors of terrorist incident precipitation and also state policy democratization as a terrorism prevention method. Despite the type of psychological model and nature of education, the principal sources of information about the terrorist's personality are TV and Internet, as it could be expected.

Findings: The psychological models of classical terrorist's personality have empirically been defined basing upon the youth's evaluation. The essence of both the terrorist incident causes and possible preventions are stipulated both with the type of model and nature of education of young respondents designing the aforecited models.

REFERENCES