

A Depreciated Tool for Combating Terrorism: Tactical Psychology

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Abstract:

Terrorism is evolving rapidly, and with the technological advancements new threats are emerging from the 'World of Terror'. Now, it has become crucial than ever to evaluate and channelise our capabilities to curb terrorism. This article evaluates the basics of human behaviour and how it can be tactically used against terrorism. The author has also addressed an important question often raised among the terrorism research community — 'Who becomes a terrorist

The act of terror was first marked, when a Jewish organisation, Sicarii, colluded to supplant Romans who invaded their lands. However, the word 'Terrorism' came into existence during the French Revolution in the late 1700s and gained popularity during the 1970s with the formation of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA). Terrorism is a relative terminology, for some, it is an act against humanity; and for others, the only possible explanation for justice. Since many years, the international community and social scientists have struggled dealing the complex and multifaced aspects of terrorism. Literature review suggests that there are broadly two lines of exploration in the field of terrorism, 'Psychology and genetics based' and 'Defence operation based'. It is important to note that, both lines of research will not complement each other to effectively combat terrorism on the ground level. Till date, psychologists and geneticists have provided us with floating observations that have no prognostic efficacy and currently there is no new direction for further research. However, the defence-based operations need definitive and scientifically

backed data to evaluate and tackle the threat posed by terrorist organisations. Adding conundrum, there is also a concern that many counter-terrorism agencies refrain from sharing ground level data with researchers citing security concerns. This gap has pushed the state of terrorism research into dormancy. Hence, this article is an attempt to find a new empirical approach for countering terrorism. The human power of any terrorist organisation is governed by personality traits, they are intelligentially capable, manipulative, tactically sophisticated and possess the ability to adapt and evolve when faced with a threat; for example, with the onset of technology and media, many terrorist organisations have moved towards advertising and recruiting through social media. It was found out through a dataset study of ISIS twitter accounts, that there were at least 170k twitter accounts labelled as potential ISIS community twitter accounts just in the year 2015 [4]. Hence, with all the abilities and expertise the terrorist groups have, it is essential to look at the organisation as a whole and not just the ground crew, as the ground crew are a mere reflection of mind-power the leadership possesses. The human brain is a prodigious creation in the history of this universe, what it can do or achieve has not been studied to its fullest capacity yet. Unlike any other technology, a human brain is not easy to hack and has near to none loopholes. Geneticists are aware of most of the protein-coding and regulatory genes specific to the human brain but still cannot explain the complex relationship between the 'Human Brain' and its unique set of cognitive processes which constitutes the 'Human Mind'. Quite many researches have been done, to find out genetic pre-disposition towards violence and criminal behaviour. Literature review points a positive correlation between a variant of

Mono-Amine Oxidase A gene and aggressive behaviour, however, there is no data suggesting a link gene variant and terrorism. The research to analyse and profile a terrorist has been a renowned phenomenon since the dawn of terrorism. Innumerable research articles have been published, and most of them state and discuss the fundamental issues that have been lurking since long.