Terror Management Theory

Institutional Affiliation

Student’s name

Course

Date

**Psychology**

**Terror Management Theory**

Terrorist attacks have become very common in many countries, which end up taking the lives of innocent people. This has created fear among people since such events can hardly be predicted and even avoided at the same time. The victims of such events especially the survivors, find it hard to cop up with life depending on what they saw at the crime scene. For instance when one sees the other person being killed, whether he/she is a relative or not, then it becomes difficult for such people to lead their normal lives. The psychological stability becomes disrupts and death anxiety also increase.

One of the latest terror attacks took place in the UK on 23rd May 2017, where there was a suicide bombing in the Manchester Arena. There was a deadly explosion in the concert hall in Manchester Arena in England which killed twenty-nine people and left fifty-nine injured. The explosion happened immediately after the Ariana Grand, the American singer had just finished performing. After using the improvised explosive device, the attacker died on the spot. According to the BBC news, it is not clear if the attacker was expecting to get assistance from the outside or if the attack happened as planned.

In this case, the Terror Management Theory (TMT) is important when it comes to helping people overcome fear. Regardless of what happens, however bad it may seem to be, life needs to go on. It is expected that following the attack, most people would fear to go to public places, with the fear of being killed through such occurrences. For this reason, TMT should be applied in order to encourage people the death is inevitable, and for that reason, all that needs to be done is being cautious rather than avoiding getting involved in different activities. TMT can also play a role in enhancing good relationship between people and reduce much unnecessary suspicion as well.

Following the Attack in the Manchester Arena, there are various ways in which TMT may be applied in enabling the survivors and other people coping with the situation. One of them is simply talking to the survivors. Through the talk then discussion of making them think about how they may succumb their death should be brought up. This should not be meant to scare them, but simply make them understand that each one of us at some point will die, therefore there is a need of accepting what has happened. It is a fact that most of them would have lost their loved ones, but then TMT will enable them to accept the situation. This is also one of the ways the survivors will be able to carry on with their lives. It will also be important in stabilizing their mental conditions.

Apart from that, TMT can be used in reminding the victims of their values. Probably losing people who meant a lot on one’s life might seem the end of the world to the victim. This is the reason why you will find people getting involved in dangerous acts like excessive drug abuse, suicidal events or even plan to revenge as a way of seeking justice. If at all these people are reminded of their roles, and also how special they are in society than they will be able to lead decent lives so that they can also achieve their goals. Having a problem no matter how great it might seem to be should not prevent others from achieving their goals, but rather challenge them on focusing on making the world a better place to stay. This will probably improve even their social lives, after having the ability to accept.

When it comes to culture, TMT can also be applied to encouraging people to participate in their roles as expected. Through educating the victims on the fear of death, then people would definitely consider leading a better kind of lifestyles and avoiding various acts that might lead to their death. As much as people lead to accepting death, fearing it is also another way of encouraging people to use the time they have in shaping their lives, and probably create a little heaven on earth. Culture demand that people should work, be productive and also give back to society. The concept of fearing death will not only enable people to lead careful lives but also a meaningful kind of lifestyle. This involves all cultural aspects like supporting others among other things.

In helping the victims cope with the situation, all the above factors (cultural, social, cognitive and intellectual) need to be put under consideration. This is because the lives of each individual are affected by all these factors. If for instance, the focus of TMT is on social factors only, then the victim might find it hard to deal with personal issues like self-esteem. The idea is that all these factors are depended, and failure to address issues related to one of them the outcomes will definitely be poor. For this reason, when dealing with the victims of any terror event than it is important to focus on all these things so that they can easily carry on with their lives well, especially after having a good understanding on death and other related issues.

As compared to other psychological theories like Subjective Well Being (SWB), TMT is very much appropriate in dealing with terror events. This is because the theory focuses much on enabling the victims to understand the situation, and also advise them on alternative measures that can be used in ensuring they lead normal likes. On the other hand, SWB focuses only on the self-happiness, which is attained through having the feeling of satisfaction. In the case of terror events it is more important to first encourage people to accept the situation the way it is, and then thereafter factors like happiness would follow. This makes TMT the most appropriate theory that can be used in enabling the victims of any terror even cop with the situation and later on lead common and better lives.

SWB theory is there for appropriate in cases where people tend to be hopeless in life. This might be caused by issues such as poverty, disabilities among other issues. Such people actually are the ones who really need psychological support, which would enable them to gain happiness despite their condition. Accepting their situation and believing in themselves is actually the key to happiness for such people. Life is not about where we come from, but how we deal with our situations and as well as the attitude we have towards ourselves. According to SWB theory, it is only through self-acceptance that happiness can be gained. Otherwise, if the same theory is applied to survivors of the terror attack, it won’t be sufficient since they will need more than just the concept of self-appreciation. The past also matters.

In general, TMT is one of the most appropriate theories that can be used for the victims or rather the survivors of any terror event. This is because it can be used in reducing fear and also creating a sense of appreciating what has happened among the survivors, giving them a good reason to carry on with life. Other psychological theories are also important but it also depends on the audience and also the situation being faced by the victims.

References

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