

RESEARCH TITLE

**TRIBALISM AMONG AFRICAN NATIONS: DOES TRIBALISM
CAUSE OPPRESSION?**

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Abstract

This study aims to empirically examine the relationship between tribalism and oppression levels at the country level among twenty-seven African countries. The author utilized hypothetical evidence from the extant literature to materialize the discussion and back the study hypothesis. To examine the study hypothesis, the author used secondary data from Freedom Human Index (2020), co-published by the Cato and the Fraser Institute, and Tribalism Index (2012) generated by Jacobson and Deckard. The author used simple linear regression analysis, and the analysis results show a positive and significant relationship between tribalism and oppression ($\beta = 0.482$, t -value = 5.811, p -value < 0.00). The study findings contribute to the literature by empirically specifying a new factor that drives oppression and developing a conceptual framework for additional empirical research. The study conclusions results could also help policymakers comprehend the origins of oppression, violence, marginalization, powerlessness, and cultural imperialism, and reconsider new approaches that eliminate tribalism, and therefore, oppression from its starting grains. The authors also discussed future research, the study limitations, and the study implications.

Key Words: Tribalism; Tribal Violence; Tribal Exploitation; Tribal Oppression; Marginalization

Introduction

Africa is one of the world's most ignored regions. While the continent does face extraordinary challenges such as tribalism "(i.e., the attitude and practice of maintaining such a substantial feeling of loyalty or glue to one's tribe that one excludes or actually demonizes those 'others' who do not belong to that in-group)", oppression "(i.e., the fundamental injustice of social institutions)", corruption "(i.e., the abuse of entrusted authority for personal interest)", civil wars, refugees, and brain drain, the need for higher education in Africa is rapidly growing privately and publicly but without addressing these challenges from their roots in the education system. African policymakers, educators, and scholars have long paid little attention or no attention in most cases to eradicate the African chronic issues from the roots via policymaking, research, and educating Africans of all ages, specifically children, adolescents, teenagers, and youth. The relationship between tribalism and oppression has recently been confirmed by Yousuf Taresh Hilal Alamaya¹ (2022). In his study, Alamaya has confirmed that tribalism is the major cause of oppression since tribalism causes violence, exploitation, cultural imperialism, marginalization, and powerlessness. However, these prior studies theoretically linked tribalism to oppression and empirical studies have been found in the literature review to confirm that claimed relationship between tribalism and oppression. Hence, this study empirically endeavors to examine why tribalism is one of the deep roots of oppression in Africa directly and indirectly and how schools, colleges, and universities help eradicate tribalism in Africa, and therefore, oppression. This study aims to answer one research question to fill the gap in the literature: "Does tribalism cause oppression among the African nations?" This study's results contribute to the literature by developing a conceptual framework for the relationship between tribalism and oppression besides empirically confirming that theoretical link between tribalism and oppression. For practitioners, these study findings ring the alarm for the African regional institutions who must be aware of the cultural context of tribalism and acknowledge the urgent need to educate every African when collaborating with universities in Africa, as well as learning from the atrocities in the past decades in Rwanda, Sudan, Somalia, etc. In addition, the study results could benefit sociologists and social psychologists to understand the root cause of low self-esteem, rape, violence, and abuse in African nations.

Literature Review

Tribalism

The concept of tribalism has been defined by several researchers. For example, the Engaged theory illustrates tribalism as a method of being based on reciprocal exchange, oral communication, and kinship-based Baabbad & Abidin (2015). Glaze, Moynihan, and Schelling (Cherstich, 2014) represent tribalism as "a label for social classes who deem recognizably distinct by descent and the shared culture (Hofstede, 1980). Segmentary lineage theory (SLT), proposed by James (2006), defines the dynamics of tribal communities as well. SLT theory claims that tribal devotion arises from the necessity to secure the well-being and privileges of tribespeople in the scarcity of executive power or the central government. For instance, during troubles, such as an outer threat, the tribe normally subdivides its people into subgroups according to genealogical relations. It is important for every tribal segment to have plant members in every ecological zone to secure the oneness and togetherness of the tribe in case the tribe encounters aggression from the exterior.

Tribalism has societal and personal blessings as well as expenses. In terms of usefulness, tribalism offers tribe members a feeling of belonging and confidence. Group associations could bring cohesion to societies and motivate people to serve on behalf of others.

Psychologically, humans encounter consolation and protection regarding that they are part of something bigger than themselves. On the other hand, tribalism can have very damaging outcomes when it is utilized to exclude people or groups or to take away their privileges, independence, and status. The promising news is that the harmful characteristics of tribalism are not irreversible if we have the proper education in place. The key to tribalism is blindly defending one's own tribe, demeaning others' tribes, and feeling superior over out-groups (Abdelrahim, 2020; 2021).

Oppression

According to Cudd (2006), the Notion of Oppression is "the fundamental injustice of social institutions." Researcher Cudd (2006) likewise considers oppression as "institutional structures directed on groups by other groups using immediate and indirect substance and emotional forces that violate justice." Furthermore, Cudd (2006) argues that material influences, such as violence and financial deprivation, cause social oppression. Such characteristics impact a person's moral qualities in ways that are warped and deteriorated. Hence, being subject to such manners and procedures can harm the personality of the oppressed individuals (Card, 1986; Hault, 2015). It is critical to say that oppression can be generated and made easier to exist by societies. Based on Rousseau, Cress, and Gay's (1987) opinions, oppression could only have an objective reality if oppressed individuals are willing to surrender their freedom for some compensation or reward apparent to solely so-called civilized people (Abdelrahim, Eltoum, and Hassan (2022).

Oppression has many effects on both society and people. For example, perpetuating oppression, and social structures influence personal behavior (Ratner, 1994). Therefore, Ratner (2011) claims that social oppression impacts people emotionally, morally, and cognitively. As a consequence of oppression, people's behavior and senses are impacted in many ways, including through social understanding, labeling, internalization, and protection mechanisms (Driskell & Salas, 2013). Likewise, oppression drives people to ignore their abilities and restricts their power and prospect (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1972). Thus, encountering oppression diminishes one's self-esteem, decreases chances, and might even place people at risk of rape, violence, and abuse.

Tribalism and Oppression

The literature review shows that the relationship between tribalism and oppression has recently been confirmed by Yousuf Taresh Hilal Alamaya1 (2022). In his study, Alamaya has claimed that tribalism is the major cause of oppression since tribalism causes violence, exploitation (i.e., treating someone illegally or unreasonably to benefit from their job, profession, position, etc.), cultural imperialism (i.e., imposing your culture on someone else's culture), marginalization (i.e., positioning someone in a class of more inferior importance, power, or domination), and powerlessness (i.e., lacking the power or capability to function) among Iraqi communities. NDIFE (2021) argues that marginalization caused by tribalism in South Sudan via favoring the Dinka and Nuer (the two dominant tribes in the South Sudan who dominate all the top military ranking corps), which is exactly mirrors the National Congress Party (NCP)_ the former government of Sudan ruled by Omar Al Bashier. During Al Bashier ruling period the centre government power was controlled by the Jaalyin and the Shaygiya (LAKU, 2017). According to LAKU (2017), the rest of the 571 Sudanese ethnic groups were ruled out from the government of their country matters_ that elimination resulted in the formation of the Sudan People's Liberation Army Movement (SPLM/A) and the first civil war in Sudan. In addition, in the neighboring country Kenya, tribalism and ethnicity are believed to be the major cause of the widespread violence in the last decades (Mac Williams, 2012). Furthermore, violence against minority people and tribal exploitation of tribe leaders

throughout the former president of Iraq Saddam Hussien is a prominent cause of civil war post Saddam Hussein (Myers, 2013). Tribalism and sectarianism which legitimized by the colonial administration for the tribal leaders who went to London in 1919 to show their loyalty to the King of Britain have practice marginalization and powerlessness over minority tribes capitalizing on the loyalty to the King of England support for loyalty (Zain, 1996). Moreover, the isolation of minority tribes from power in Sudan by tribal leaders who were supported by the King of England in 1919 accelerated exploitation in the country (Zain, 1996). Accordingly, the author of this study argues that tribalism causes oppression in tribal countries in Africa and posts hypothesis 1 (H1):

H1: There is a positive relationship between tribalism and oppression among African nations.

Methodology

Data Collection

In this study the author utilized the following general research model to gather secondary data from different resources. The author examined the hypothesis below:

$$LOC = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * OP + \epsilon \quad (1)$$

Where LOC, OP, and ϵ refer to tribalism, oppression, and the error, respectively. Coming after examining the above study hypothesis, the study-specific model that mirrors the simple regression analysis is shown below since the association between tribalism and oppression is positive and significant:

$$LOC = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * OP + \epsilon \quad (2)$$



Figure 1: The conceptual framework for the relationship between tribalism and oppression

The Dependent Variable: Oppression

Oppression is the dependent variable gauged at the national level among 153 countries globally by the Human Freedom Index (HFI) reveals the essence of human freedom in the world founded on an overall estimate that combines freedom, civil, economic, and individual. Human freedom is a cultural notion that recognizes the value of people and is described as adverse freedom or the nonexistence of coercive constraint. The HFI is a comprehensive freedom index created for a globally significant grouping of nations and countries. The HFI consists of 162 countries and regions in 2020, the most recent year for which sufficient data are feasible. The HFI scale goes from zero to ten, where ten illustrates more additional freedom in a country, while zero denotes more negligible freedom in a country. The HFI report information is co-published by the Fraser Institute and Cato Institute. The HFI constructed their data unrestricted at <https://www.cato.org/human-freedom-index/2020>.

The Independent Variable: Tribalism

Tribalism is the independent variable gauged at the country level. The author utilized secondary tribalism data from the tribalism index (TI) generated by Jacobson and Deckard (2012). These scholars gathered the different dimensions of tribalism to construct an index that is made public from their journal publication. The TI ranks 160 countries comprises five powerful factors attributed to tribal cultures. The foremost factor is population demographics "i.e., the degree to which the population is indigenous; highly tribal societies tend to have more native or indigenous communities". The second factor is ethnic and linguistic

fractionalization "i.e., the extent to which society is heterogeneous". The third factor is gender equality "i.e., the degree to which men and women share equal roles in society". The fourth is perceptions of corruption "i.e., the extent to which societal member engages in corruption activities". The last factor is group grievance "i.e., the degree to which a particular group feels aggrieved and left out of political processes". The index scores ranges from one to denote an elevated level of tribalism to zero denoting no tribalism. For instance, Pakistan (0.995) rates first while Iceland (0.06) rates the lowest. Jacobson and Deckard (2012) employed a weighted entirety of the five tribalism dimensions to Construct the TI. Downward is the equation for the TI: $TI = 2(\text{Gender Equality}) + \text{Corruption Measure} + \text{Group Grievance} + 0.5 \text{ Indigenous Population} + 0.5 \text{ Ethnic Factionalism}$.

Statistical Tests and Results

The author analyzed the impact of tribalism on the nationwide levels of oppression in 27 countries using linear regression analysis in SPSS 27. The simple regression analysis is employed because the oppression variable dataset is normally dispersed with adequate variance (appendix 1 and Table 2). In addition, the author used secondary data sets from two different sources for the independent and dependent variables. The datasets cover 27 African nations and territories, and countries. The study findings reveal that there is a positive and influential relationship between tribalism and oppression among the 27 African nations (Table 1).

Table 1: The Simple Regression Analysis Results

Parameter	Value	Significance
Mean (tribalism)	0.67111	---
Mean (oppression)	6.3048	---
Standard Deviation (tribalism)	0.123760	---
Standard Deviation (oppression)	0.79954	---
R	0.750	Yes
R ²	0.575	Yes
F Change (model fit)	0.000	Yes
ANOVA	0.000	Yes
F Change (ANOVA)	33.769	Yes
β	0.482	Yes
St Error	0.829	Yes
t-Value	5.811	Yes

Table 2: The Normality Test Results

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Human Oppression	.102	27	.200*	.954	27	.274
Tribalism	.075	27	.200*	.973	27	.684

Conclusions

The simple regression analysis backed this study hypothesis (H1). Tribalism has a significant influence on the country's level of oppression. The study results affirm a significant association between the level of tribalism and oppression among African countries. These findings empirically contributed knowledge to the literature. The study hypothesis is consistent with the findings of Yousuf Tareh Hilal Alamaya (2022), who theoretically linked tribalism with oppression in Iraq. In his study, Alamaya claimed that tribalism is the major cause of oppression since tribalism causes violence, exploitation, cultural imperialism, marginalization, and powerlessness among Iraqi communities. This study's results contribute to the literature by developing a conceptual framework for the relationship between tribalism and oppression besides empirically confirming the theoretical link between tribalism and oppression. For practitioners, these study findings ring the alarm for the African regional institutions who must be aware of the cultural context of tribalism and acknowledge the urgent to educate every African when collaborating with universities in Africa, as well as learning from the atrocities in the past decades in Rwanda, Sudan, Somalia, etc. In addition, the study results could benefit sociologists and social psychologists to understand the root cause of low self-esteem, rape, violence, and abuse in African nations.

Research Implications

This study has significant contributions to the literature by empirically developing a conceptual framework for the relationship between tribalism, oppression, and corruption. Researchers by now should have a clear understanding of why tribalism and oppression are the ignored variables in the African context. In addition, the authors show that tribalism not only directly causes corruption but also indirectly through mediation. For policymakers, this study's results shed a light on the urgency of collaboration between universities, schools, and colleges to eradicate tribalism, oppression, and corruption. Policymakers should collaborate with educators and come up with a curriculum that educates all Africans on diversity, equality, accepting each other, ethnicity, and cultural differences. We all know that Mathematics and science are critical for our intelligence quotient (IQ). However, underestimating the importance of emotional intelligence (EQ) in social sciences and for all majors is a disaster. For international corporations, this study results make them aware of the hidden hand of corruption and who to hire from the locals when their business operates in Africa.

Future Research & Research Limitation

This research study specified mainly the impact of the widespread tribalism on a country's levels of oppression Among African nations. Future research is encouraged to investigate the influence of tribalism on oppression in other tribal countries.

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Appendix1: Test of Normality for Human Oppression Dataset.

