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## Mortality salience and prejudice towards ethno-religion minorities: Results and implications of a Nigerian study

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The present study examined mortality salience (MS) effect on prejudice towards an ethno-religion minority group of Northern Nigeria. Participants were 120 undergraduate students (females = 41.67%) with an age range between 17 and 38 years. The students completed a Distance-(relationship)-Situation (DS) measure under alternative conditions: with MS priming and a control condition. Following a three-way mixed model ANOVA, results showed MS to predict prejudice across relationship situations of secret disclosure, business partnership, and cooperating to get a task done. Consistent with terror management theory, MS effects on ethno-cultural prejudice expression apply across relationship situations.

**Keywords:** Hausas, Igbos, mortality salience, prejudice

### Introduction

Mortality salience (MS), or the view that people have increased awareness of own cultural views with annihilation threat (Solomon, Greenberg, & Pyszczynski, 2004), has been demonstrated in high prejudice settings (Cohen, Soenke, Solomon, & Greenberg, 2013). For instance, MS induction led to an increased support for martyrdom attacks against Americans among young Iranians, and increased support for extreme military actions by American forces in the Middle East among young Americans (Pyszczynski, Abdollahi, Solomon, Greenberg, Cohen, & Weise, 2006). Terror management theory (TMT: Greenberg, Pyszczynski, & Solomon, 1990) proposes that human group self-preservation instincts call for necessary adaptive abilities; and particularly so within helplessness or ultimate mortality situations. The awareness of likely mortality from group persecution exposes the individual to a paralysing terror or anxiety. MS risk for an outer group is higher with prejudice against them. Prejudice is a positive or negative (although, mostly negative) evaluation of another person based on their perceived group membership (Davidio & Gaertner, 2010). It is a learned attitude towards a target object that typically involves negative affect, dislike, or fear with a set of negative beliefs that support the attitude and a behavioural intention to avoid, to control, or dominate, those in the target group (Zimbardo & Leippe, 1991).

One of the ways that people facing genocide may adopt to enhance their chances of survival is by boosting their cultural self-esteem (Solomon et al., 2004) and managing their proximate distance from their would be exterminators. This study sought to examine whether MS predicts ethno-cultural prejudice in a Nigerian setting in various proximate distance relationship situations.

### The Nigerian-Ethno-religion Context

In the Nigerian setting, actual and perceived clashes of cultural and religious values between the Hausas and the Igbos are particularly important when existential threats become salient. The Igbos and Hausas are two of the three

largest ethnic groups in Nigeria. The Igbos inhabit Eastern Nigeria, and are well known for being assiduous, travellers, and are largely Christians. The Hausas are chiefly based in Northern Nigeria and South-Eastern Niger and their culture can be said to be Islamic. The Igbos and Hausas have had a handful of conflicts between them in the past; including a litany of religion and politically motivated assassinations (Nwankwo, 1980).

In recent years, a terrorist group known as Boko Haram sprouted in Northern Nigeria. The group seeks to establish a 'pure' Islamic state ruled by Sharia law (Walker, 2012) putting a stop to what it deems 'westernisation'. The group is known for attacking Christians, bombing churches, motor parks, recreational centres, schools, security agencies, and government targets. However, they have also assassinated members of Islamic establishment that are not in their support (Lobel, 2012). Violence linked to Boko Haram insurgency has resulted in an estimated 10 000 deaths between 2001 and 2013 (Allen, 2013) with more attacks and deaths over the years. From the Igbo perspective, the Boko Haram group is synonymous to Hausa ethnic group and they target the Igbo ethnic group. For example, a publication in Tribune.com (2013) indicated that in 2013 the World Igbo Congress (WIC) went to the United Nations to seek her to mitigate the killings and destruction of Igbo lives and property by Boko Haram. Nigeria Village Square (2013) also reported that the Northern Islamic sect, Boko Haram and its sponsors have stockpiled arms and lethal weapons in mosques and other Islamic centres in Igbo lands and Niger Delta with the aim of invading and killing Igbo Christians in their own fatherland. Earlier in 2012, the Igbo Elders Forum urged Igbo women and their children living in the North to return home because of the mass killings of Igbo people and bombings by the Boko Haram sect (Ubabukoh, 2012).

This perception has led to a rise in negative press and public scrutiny of the Hausas by the Igbos and with the continued attacks by Boko Haram, the tendency for the Igbos to develop prejudicial attitudes against the Hausas is likely to be high. For example, when the Igbos encounter

the threat that Boko Haram poses to their cultural world view they may be inclined to cling tenaciously to their cultural meaningfulness, increase their investment in their religious and cultural beliefs, and derogate their perceived enemy in line with TMT (Greenberg, Pyszczynski, & Solomon, 1990). In this circumstance, for the Igbos to make meaning of their social world they may develop a stable stereotypic tendency towards the Hausas (who are perceived as synonymous to the Boko Haram sect) that may serve as a terror management function. Historically, the Hausas also harbour a deep-seated ethnic hatred against the Igbos. The Hausas tend to distrust the Igbos and to be suspicious of Igbo cultural ideology that accentuates change, individualism, and competitiveness (Achebe, 2012); and so tend to perceive the Igbos as a threat to their survival as a nation. This has led the Igbos to have a high perception of self-prosecution and with further perception of mortality threat because of Boko Haram activities, the Igbos may show prejudice towards the Hausas through larger proximate distance. For example, evidence has shown that when death thought accessibility is heightened there is an increase in preferences for similar others who behave in stereotypic ways (Schimmel, et al., 1999).

#### **Ethno-cultural proximate distancing**

One behavioural index of prejudice towards the out-group is the choice of larger proximate distance in a relationship with the out-group (Kilbury, Bordieri, & Wong, 1996). That is, if an in-group member has a more negative evaluation of and ascribes more negative stereotypic traits to an out-group member, the in-group member will likely choose a larger proximate distance when dealing with the out-group member, especially following MS induction. However, the interpersonal distances may not be the same for all relationship situations under MS effect because the meaning that defines the behavioural action may change with a relationship situation, context, or episode (Reis, Collins, & Berscheid, 2000) (i.e., each relationship situation affects subsequent behaviour differentially). In addition, each relationship context constitutes a discrete structure (Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, 1998) that is also seen to differ in function, operation, and sensitivity to social cues (Reis, Collins, & Berscheid, 2000) and so may differ in cognitive representation and emotion regulation.

From the proximate distance proposition, the Igbos may be predisposed to 'physically' avoid the Hausas following MS induction. In this instance, this study used the personal space given to an image of a man in Hausa attire (an inner wear (*danchiki*) and a large outer flowing gown (*baban riga*) with some elaborate embroidery designs and embroidered caps (*fullah*)) as against a neutral image (image of a man wearing an attire not specific to any ethnic group in Nigeria) to study prejudice against the Hausas by the Igbos. Some researchers have tested prejudice using personal space (see for example Norman, Sorrentino, Gawronski, Szeto, Ye, & Windell, 2010).

Therefore, stereotypic tendency towards the Hausas could be combined with affect (strong feeling of hostility), and translated into several forms of behaviours such as avoidance, discrimination, and intergroup conflict

(Vivian & Brown, 1995). In this study, we sought to investigate ethno-cultural prejudice across relationship situations following MS priming. Our study was guided by the question: What are MS effects on prejudice expression towards an out-group taking proximate distance relationship situations into account? To address the question, we examined self-report prejudice attitudes of the Igbos towards the Hausas. Specifically, we hypothesised significant prejudicial attitude towards the Hausas with MS priming compared to neutral or control condition (Hypothesis 1) and a significant differential MS effects across relationship situations (Hypothesis 2). Additionally, we hypothesised that prejudice responses to a Hausa target will receive significantly more negative self-report prejudice attitude compared to neutral target (Hypothesis 3).

There is the need to test MS effects in different cultural context such as Nigeria. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study that examined MS and prejudice in Nigeria and across relationship situations.

#### **Method**

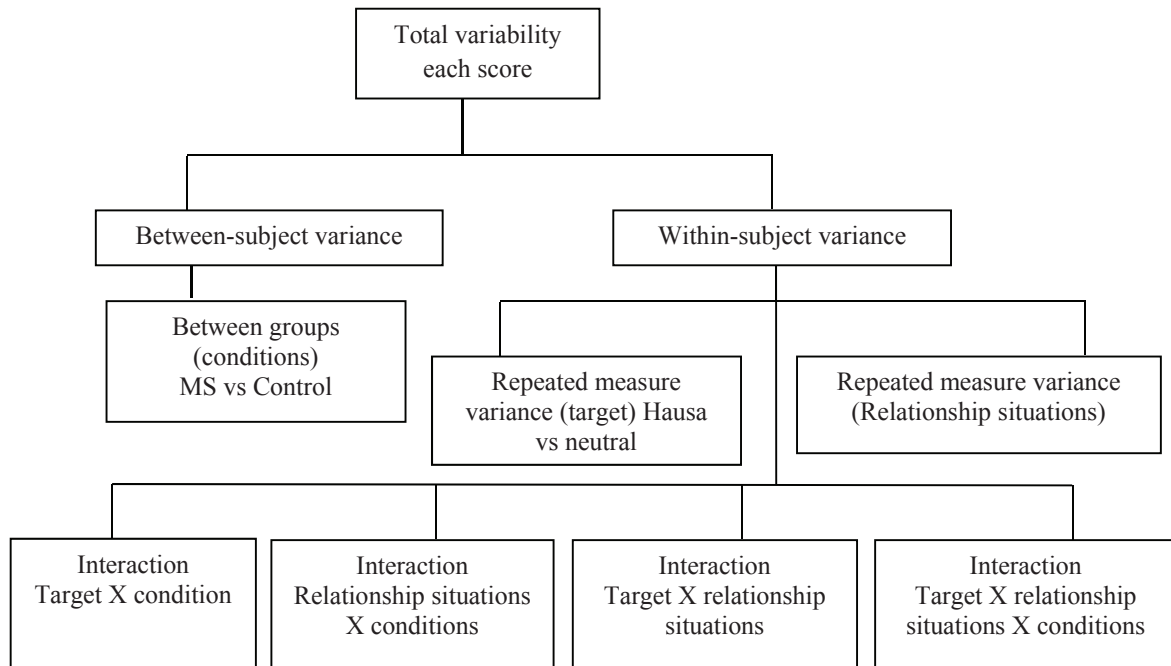
##### **Participants**

One hundred and twenty undergraduate students (50 females) from an Eastern-Nigerian campus took part in the study. They were all of the Igbo ethnic group with age range between 17 and 38 (Mean = 20.57, SD = 2.30).

##### **Study design**

Figure 1 presents the design of the study with MS manipulation. In this study MS condition was presented with a three-minute video clip of a funeral ceremony in which a dead man was laid in the mortuary, was lowered into a coffin, was put into an ambulance and driven to his house, and lowered into a grave with people around wailing. The control group was presented with a three-minute video clip of a marriage ceremony in which the bride and groom fed themselves and danced with people spraying money at them. Previous research has used video images for MS manipulation (see Liu & Smeesters, 2010). To establish whether MS affected mood, participants completed the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) and the ratings of positive and negative affect were compared between MS and control conditions. ANOVA result showed a non-significant difference between MS and control conditions for positive  $F(1,118) = 0.539, p = 0.464$  and negative  $F(1,118) = 1.516, p = 0.220$  affects.

After MS induction and presentation of images, participants were asked to indicate the thought that came to their minds. About 92% of those in the MS condition indicated "thought of their own death" while 87% of those in the control condition indicated "fashion parade". As a preliminary analysis, we tested the simple effect of MS (MS condition vs control) on composite scores of prejudice using independent group t-test. Significant MS effect was obtained  $t(118) = 3.974, p < 0.001$ . MS effect was significantly higher for those in MS condition (= 24.383) compared to the control (= 20.983).



**Figure 1.** A mixed between-within participants ANOVA design for condition (MS vs control) X target (within-participant: Hausa vs neutral) X relationship situations (within-participant)

### Measures

The students completed a Distance-Situation (DS) Measure (Ugwu, 2003) on the distance (personal space) individuals maintain in relation to others in interpersonal relationships. Distance refers to the number of feet an individual would want to maintain in relation to another person in a given situation with a scale of 0 to 1.5 feet (1-point), 1.5 to 4 feet (2-points), 4 to 12 feet (3-points), and 12 feet and above (4-points). This scale corresponds to Hall's (1966) personal distance zones. Situation refers to particular forms of relationship settings. We operationalised eight proximate distance situations: develop friendship, enter into a conversation, enter into partnership in business, disclose a secret, accept a piece of advice, cooperate to get a task done, help out in time of trouble, and care if upset. Participants are to indicate the distance they will give a target when they are expected to be a participant in each relationship situation with the target. Prejudice scores were obtained in two ways for each individual: first as a composite score for all the DS and used to test MS effects on general prejudice towards the Hausas; and second as separate scores for each DS and used to test MS effects on prejudice towards the Hausas across relationship situations. The DS measure is unique in that it does not only measure prejudice using personal space but also across relationship situations. The DS showed a high degree of internal consistency with a Cronbach alpha of 0.89 for scores from the DS.

In addition, the students completed The Situational Attitude Scale (SAS; Sedlacek & Brooks, 1970) measure of prejudice attitudes. The SAS consists of ten social situations that are each accompanied by ten semantic differential scales, thus bringing the total items to 100. An example of a social situation is: "A new (Hausa) person joins your social group." Participants are expected to select

the rating which best describes their feelings towards this situation along a 5-point bipolar semantic differential scale such as "threatened-neutral," "understanding-indifferent," and "suspicious-trusting." Two forms of the SAS version were created as follows: Form (A), which is neutral and did not reflect any particular group in the situation; and Form (B) with Hausa as a group presented in the social situations. For example "A new family moves in next door to you" and "A new Hausa family moves in next door to you." The SAS thus provides fitting social contexts within which attitudes can be measured. The SAS has shown evidence of reliability and validity in assessing attitudes toward racial and ethnic groups (Liang & Sedlacek, 2003). Higher means indicated a more negative attitude and any mean difference observed between the two forms randomly assigned to a group is attributed to the insertion of "Hausa" in the second form.

### Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned into MS condition and control and were then given MS induction. As a cover story for watching the video the participants were told that they will be shown video clips that depict how Nigerians engage in flamboyant burial (MS condition) and marriage (control condition) ceremonies. This was followed by a word search task. After the distraction task, order of target presentations (i.e., whether the Hausa target or Neutral target was presented first) were counterbalanced to control for sequence effect. For each condition, half of the participants were presented with Neutral target, followed by the Hausa target; while the other half were presented with Hausa target, followed by the Neutral target. Each target presentation was followed by the DS Measure. Participants were given the following instruction: "You are welcome to this experiment. As you get settled you will be

shown images of men you probably have never met before. You will also be given a scale that you will respond to in relation to each image by indicating the distance you may wish to give to the man in the image if you are to interact with him in some relationship situations.” Prejudice scores were separately computed for the Neutral target and the Hausa target. Higher scores indicate higher prejudice. All presentations were made using a projector. Finally, the SAS was administered to the participants.

## Results

A mixed between-within participants ANOVA to test the Condition (MS vs. control) X Target (within-participant: Hausa vs. neutral target) X Relationship Situations (within-participant) interaction was conducted to test for MS effect on general prejudice and across relationship situations. Mauchly’s test indicated that the assumption of sphericity had been violated  $W = 0.310$ ,  $X^2(27) = 73.08$ ,  $p < 0.001$  for relationship situations and  $W = 0.513$ ,  $X^2(27) = 26.57$ ,  $p < 0.01$  for target X relationship situations interaction. Therefore degrees of freedom were corrected using Greenhouse-Geisser estimates of sphericity ( $\epsilon = 0.704$  and  $0.786$ ) respectively. Table 1 shows the test of within-subject effects.

### Manipulation check effects.

There was a significant main effect of condition  $F(1,118) = 410.17$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.777$ . Prejudice was significantly higher for those in MS condition (= 2.34, 95%CI = 2.31 to 2.37) than control condition (= 1.89, 95%CI = 1.86 to 1.92). There was a significant main effect of target  $F(1,118) = 1517.52$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.93$ . Prejudice was significantly higher for Hausa target (= 2.63, 95%CI = 2.59 to 2.67) than Neutral target (= 1.60, 95%CI = 1.57 to 1.63). A significant main effect of relationship situations was also found  $F(5.63,663.87) = 220.11$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.65$ . Pairwise comparisons for the main effect of relationship situations corrected using a Bonferroni adjustments revealed significant difference in prejudice across relationship situations.

### Secret disclosure and business partnership

Disclosing a secret received higher prejudice scores than all other relationship situations ( $p < 0.001$ ). Prejudice was also significantly higher for entering into partnership in business than all other relationship situations, except

disclosing a secret ( $p < 0.001$ ). Cooperating to get a task done also received significantly higher prejudice scores than other relationship situations, except disclosing a secret and entering into partnership in business ( $p < 0.001$ ). Prejudice was significantly higher for developing friendship than entering into conversation, accepting a piece of advice, helping out in time of trouble, and caring if upset ( $p < 0.001$ ). Helping out in time of trouble received significantly higher prejudice scores than entering into a conversation, accepting a piece of advice, and caring if upset ( $p < 0.001$ ); while accepting a piece of advice received significantly higher prejudice scores than entering into a conversation ( $p < 0.05$ ). There was no significant difference between entering into conversation and caring if upset ( $p = 0.084$ ) and between accepting a piece of advice and caring if upset ( $p = 0.413$ ).

The interaction between target (Hausa vs Neutral) X condition (MS vs Control) was significant  $F(1,118) = 8.87$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.070$ . In both conditions, prejudice was higher for Hausa target than neutral target but those in MS condition experienced more prejudice for the Hausa target than the control. A significant interaction between relationship situations and condition was also obtained  $F(5.63,663.87) = 18.97$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.140$ . In both conditions, prejudice was high for all relationship situations but was higher in MS condition especially for relationship situations involving developing friendship, entering into partnership in business, disclosing a secret, cooperating to get a task done, and helping out in time of trouble. There was also a significant interaction between target and relationship situations  $F(6.20,732.08) = 41.66$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.261$ . In all relationship situations prejudice was higher for Hausa target than Neutral target. for Neutral target, disclosing a secret had higher prejudice score than other relationship situations. There was also a significant interaction between target, relationship situations, and condition  $F(6.20,732.08) = 23.85$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.168$ . The nature of this interaction is shown in Figures 2a (MS condition) and 2b (control condition).

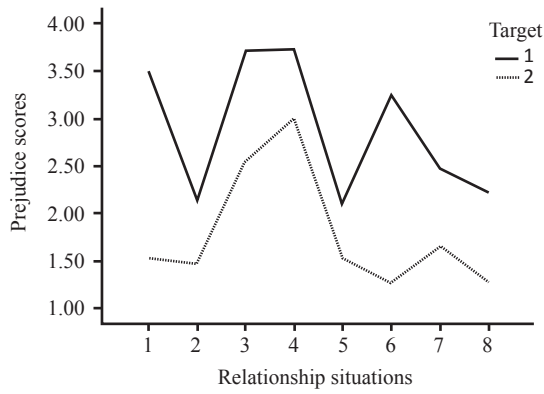
### Friendship and interpersonal relationships

As can be observed from Figures 2a and 2b, compared to those in control condition, those in MS condition had higher prejudice scores in all relationship situations for Hausa target; especially in relationships involving developing friendship, entering into partnership in

**Table 1.** Test of within-subject effects for mixed model ANOVA

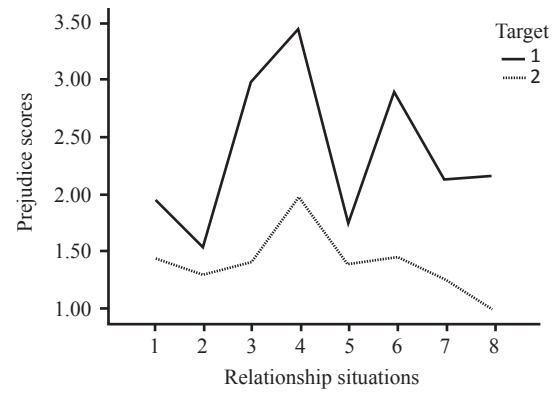
SOV	SS	df	MS	F	$\eta^2$
C (MS vs Control)	98.10	1	98.10	410.17**	0.777
T (1 = Hausa; 2 = Neutral)	514.60	1	514.60	1517.52**	0.928
T*C	3.01	1	3.01	8.87*	0.070
Error	40.012	118	0.34		
R	453.92	5.63	80.68	220.11**	0.651
R*C	39.12	5.63	6.95	18.97**	0.138
Error	243.34	663.87	0.37		
T*R	82.50	6.20	13.30	41.66**	0.261
T*R*C	47.23	6.20	7.61	23.85**	0.168
Error	233.65	732.08	0.32		

Note: T = Target; C = Condition; R = Relationship situations; \*\* $p < 0.001$ ; \* $p < 0.01$



Note. Target 1 = Hausa target; Target 2 = Neutral target

**Figure 2a.** Graph showing the target X relationship situations X condition interaction for MS condition



Note. Target 1 = Hausa target; Target 2 = Neutral target

**Figure 2b.** Graph showing the target X relationship situations X condition interaction for control condition

**Table 2:** Mean, standard deviations and t-test for Forms A (Neutral) and B (Hausa)

Social situations	Form A		Form B		t-value
	M	SD	M	SD	
A new (Hausa) family moves in next door to you	29.70	5.51	37.40	6.64	6.92***
You read in the paper that a Hausa man has raped a woman	30.83	4.95	4.18	6.06	3.32**
It is evening and a (Hausa) man appears at your door saying he is selling magazines	24.37	6.73	28.88	6.63	3.70***
You are walking down the street alone and must pass a corner where a group of five young (Hausa) men are loitering	32.10	5.19	39.12	5.08	7.48***
Your best friend has just become engaged (to a Hausa person)	21.38	4.82	30.87	5.75	9.79***
You are stopped for speeding by a (Hausa) policeman	19.52	3.35	25.65	4.62	8.33***
A new (Hausa) person joins your social group	22.48	5.68	37.98	4.34	16.80***
You see a (Hausa) youngster steal something in a dime store	27.47	4.91	30.25	7.80	2.34*
Some (Hausa) students on campus stage a demonstration	30.37	4.93	41.07	4.81	12.02***
You get on a bus (with all Hausa people on board) and you are the only person who has to stand	27.05	5.68	41.85	4.18	16.27***

Note. \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \* $p < 0.05$

business, disclosing a secret, and cooperating to get a task done. However, prejudice scores for both MS and control conditions were similar for relationship situations involving entering into a conversation and accepting a piece of advice for both Hausa and Neutral targets. This indicates that the effect that relationship situations have on prejudice towards the Hausas by the Igbos are similar for both MS and control conditions in those RS. The results support hypothesis 2 that MS effect will differ across relationship conditions. To determine whether there will be self-report prejudice attitude towards the Hausas, we assessed the difference in attitude scores between Forms A (neutral) and B (Hausa) using t-test for independent group. The mean scores and t-values are shown in Table 2. Higher mean scores indicate more negative attitude toward the social situation.

There was significant difference in all social situations. Specifically, attitudes of participants who responded to the Hausa questionnaire form were significantly more negative for all social situations than those who responded to the neutral questionnaire form. Thus, the insertion of "Hausa" in Form B significantly influenced negative responses in situations requiring close social contact.

## Discussion

In this study, we examined whether MS predicts ethnocentric prejudice with historical intergroup

antagonism towards the Hausas, by the Igbos. We also examined differences in prejudice towards the Hausas across different relationship situations and self-report prejudice attitudes of Igbos. Most studies on MS effects have been conducted in the Western culture. From our findings, prejudice was higher for those in the MS condition than control and for Hausa target than neutral target. Additionally, prejudice was higher under MS effect for Hausa target and across all relationship situations. Attitudes of participants who responded to the Hausa questionnaire form were also significantly more negative for all social situations than those who responded to the neutral questionnaire form.

According to TMT evoking fear of death through the induction of mortality salience contributes to higher levels of prejudice against potentially worldview threatening out-groups. Although the Boko Haram terrorist group is diffuse and does not have a clear structure, the Igbos perceive them as Northern and Muslim terrorist group that targets the Igbos and their interests. Therefore, Boko Haram is threatening and incompatible to Igbo worldview. This perception is generalised to all Hausas whom some Igbos collectively perceive as fanatical and having very little regard for human life. The Igbos may develop a feeling of uneasiness and consequently increase proximate distance to Hausa target from anticipation of attack by Boko Haram. The finding is consistent with previous related studies

on implicit anti-Arab prejudice (Echebarria-Echabe & Fernandez-Guede, 2006; Cohen et al, 2013). Thus, implicit attitude towards the Hausas by the Igbos may be driven in part by existential concerns.

Stereotypes are the cognitive components of prejudice and it is argued to be schemas about what particular groups are like since it entails applying to an individual one's cognitive expectancies and associations about the group (Fiske, 2004). However, stereotyping is not an exceptionless generalisation as it comprises both positive and negative attributes about a particular group and its strength is seen to be largely dependent on the social contexts in which they arise (Operario & Fiske, 2004). The affective component of prejudice is the strong feeling of hostility and it is believed to be more critical because differences in emotional prejudice correlates with discrimination more than do stereotype (Dovidio, Brigham, Johnson, & Gaertner, 1996). Emotions tend to energise, direct, and sustain behaviour (Rubin & McNeill, 1983); however, we don't react the same way in all situations. Consistent with this position, it is also very likely that the strength of stereotyping and the emotional prejudice towards the Hausas that may be aroused under MS effect may be weaker or stronger depending on the relationship situation at hand.

MS effects might lead the Igbos to distance themselves from the Hausas especially in relationships that demand disclosing a secret, entering into partnership in business, cooperating to get a task done, and developing friendship. This is likely explained by the fact that people are more likely to progressively develop more negative attitude as social situations become more intimate and personally relevant (Bogardus, 1925). If this was the case, then under existential fear, relationship situations that promote higher intimacy and relevance between the Hausas and the Igbos will more likely lead to higher prejudice as found in this study. Existential concerns may drive the Igbos to engage in several bias tendencies towards the Hausas, such as belief bias, confirmation bias, and out-group homogeneity bias that are manifested in larger hatred and dislike for the Hausas in certain relationship situations. Therefore, MS effect on out-group derogation and prejudice can be largely understood when relationship contexts are studied.

#### **Implications for diversity support interventions**

Prejudice undermines individual and group qualities favourable to governance and sustainable development. Strategies aimed at restructuring MS effects and reducing ethno-cultural prejudice should seek to include equal status between culturally diverse groups, authority support, shared goals, and cooperation (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). In the Nigerian setting, various agents of socialisation (schools, media, churches, mosques etc.) should systematically provide incentives, and teach and feature persuasive messages. Psychodrama aimed at reducing inter-group prejudice, conflict, and distrust and encouraging people to engage in attribute-driven processing (thinking about unique characteristics of the other group) rather than category-driven processing (thinking about other group in terms of their group membership) should be highly prioritised. Moreover, the

Igbos and Hausas should be positively and constrictively engaged to promote inter-group solidarity above ethnic-sectoral affiliation interests. Such solidarity-oriented interventions could help to draw attention away from group differences and positively influence behaviour that contributes to tolerance, reconciliation, and reduced negative competition.

#### **Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research**

This study has some limitations. For example, the use of self-report measures may lead participants to overstate their prejudice attitude reports. Other variables not considered in the present study might account for some of variance unaccounted for. For instance, collective narcissism and conspiracy stereotype (de Zavala & Cichocka, 2012) may explain prejudice and conflict among ethnic groups; especially in countries where ethnic identification is highly regarded and endorsed. Previous studies suggest that collective narcissism is related to high regard for the in-group with the belief that the in-group is superior and not adequately recognised by out-group members. This belief can precipitate intergroup hostility by heightening the perception of behaviours of out-group as threatening, offensive, and undermining to the positive image of the in-group (de Zavala, Cichocka, Eidelson, & Jayawickreme, 2009). Collective narcissism may also be reinforced by conspiracy stereotype. For example, in-group members may actively use conspiracy stereotype as an explanatory proposition for social, political and religious exclusion by out-groups.

#### **Conclusion**

The data in this study support the hypotheses that when mortality is made salient, larger proximate distance between ethno-cultural groupings with a history of mutual hostility or suspicion would increase. This effect is likely in relationship situations that demand high intimacy and relevance, such as secret disclosure and business partnership. Since these relationship situations are exemplars of interpersonal relationships that are required for optimal psycho-socio-economic development, the need for intervention is underscored.

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