

Authoritarian behavior indicators

Category	Definition	Subcategory	Indicators	Rubric
C1. Rejection of Democratic Rules	Explicit or implicit questioning of the basic norms of democracy (elections, separation of powers, constitution).	C1.S1. Attacks on the Established Order or the Electoral Process	Do they reject the constitution or express willingness to disregard it? Do they suggest anti-democratic measures (e.g., cancel elections, suspend the constitution, ban organizations, restrict basic political/civil rights)? Do they attempt to undermine the legitimacy of elections (e.g., refusing to accept credible results)?	1 Absent: no reference to the constitutional order/process. 2–3 Mild: vague complaints about a biased or imperfect system, without alleging fraud or advocating rule-breaking. 4–5 Moderate: insinuations of manipulation (e.g., 'they don't play fair', 'institutions are captured'); preemptive doubts while still accepting legality. 6–7 Strong: direct claims of illegitimacy (e.g., 'rigged elections', 'I won't recognize the result if...'); explicit challenges to electoral arbiters. 8–9 Very strong: explicit calls to annul/postpone elections, disobey courts, ignore results; promote 'purging' rivals from the ballot. 10 Explicit/operative: concrete proposal to cancel elections, suspend the constitution, or ban parties/candidates.
		C1.S2. Use of Extra-Legal Solutions	Do they intend to use (or endorse) extra-constitutional means to change government (e.g., coups, violent insurrections, mass mobilization to force a government change)?	1 Absent: no appeals to extra-legal avenues. 2–3 Mild: grandiose warlike metaphors ('battle', 'fight') without real calls to action. 4–5 Moderate: legitimizing 'the streets' as a corrective ('pressure is the only way'), without calling for overthrow.

				6–7 Strong: winks to insurrections or 'uprisings' as valid options if 'the system fails'; praise for past 'patriotic' coups. 8–9 Very strong: support for insurrectionary strikes, blockades, or 'occupations' to force government change; calls for military 'intervention'. 10 Explicit/operative: direct call for a coup, insurrection, or use of force to remove authorities.
C2. Denial of Opponents' Legitimacy	Portraying rivals not as legitimate opponents but as enemies of the people, corrupt traitors, or existential threats.	C2.S1. Opponent as Corrupt/Traitor	Do they describe rivals as subversive or opposed to the established constitutional order?	1 Absent: standard programmatic criticism. 2–3 Mild: generic ethical critiques ('not up to the task'). 4–5 Moderate: accusations of corruption without concrete evidence; insinuations of subverting the constitutional order. 6–7 Strong: labeling as 'traitors' or 'coup plotters'; systematic disqualification as democratic actors. 8–9 Very strong: demands to exclude rivals from political life ('they shouldn't be allowed to participate', 'ban them'). 10 Explicit/operative: concrete proposal to disqualify, dissolve, or prosecute rivals for their political identity alone.
		C2.S2. Opponent as Existential Threat	Do they claim rivals pose an existential threat to national security or the prevailing way of life?	1 Absent: no portrayal of rivals as threats; normal democratic disagreement. 2–3 Mild: 'their policies are dangerous' without apocalyptic tone. 4–5 Moderate: rhetoric that rivals 'endanger our way of life', still within democratic competition.

				6–7 Strong: opponent framed as a threat to the nation or 'the people'; salvation rhetoric against annihilation. 8–9 Very strong: presenting an opponent's mere victory as national collapse or 'civil war'; calls for exceptional 'defense'. 10 Explicit/operative: legitimizing emergency measures against opponents as immediate existential threats.
		C2.S3. 'Enemies of the People' Language	Do they, without evidence, depict rivals as criminals whose alleged lawbreaking (or potential for it) disqualifies them from full political participation? Do they baselessly suggest rivals are foreign spies working secretly with, or paid by, an enemy government?	1 Absent: no criminalizing or delegitimizing language; normal policy disagreements. 2–3 Mild: generic criticism of 'the elite'. 4–5 Moderate: references to conspiracies without evidence ('they work against the country'). 6–7 Strong: routinely labeling opponents/media as criminals or unpatriotic; alleging foreign collusion without evidence. 8–9 Very strong: repeated accusations of espionage or terrorism against rivals or journalists; calls for exemplary punishment. 10 Explicit/operative: demands for arrests, banning, or criminal prosecution of opponents/media as 'enemies'.
C3. Tolerance or Promotion of Violence	Normalization of political violence as a legitimate tool.	C3.S1. Organizational Links with Violence	Do they have ties to armed gangs, paramilitary forces, militias, guerrillas, or other illegal violent organizations?	1 Absent: no known or implied association with violent groups. 2–3 Mild: attending events where 'hardline' groups are present without comment.

				4–5 Moderate: tolerating their presence ('we can't control them'); friendly photos/gestures. 6–7 Strong: coordination or channels with militias/paramilitaries; public nods. 8–9 Very strong: public defense of their role ('they protect the people'); normalization of their actions. 10 Explicit/operative: mobilizing or financing violent groups; calls to 'form guards' or patrols.
		C3.S2. Support/Justification of Present Violence	Have they or their allies sponsored lynchings of opponents? Have they tacitly supported followers' violence by refusing to condemn and sanction it unambiguously?	1 Absent: clear condemnation of all political violence; no tolerance or justification. 2-3 Mild: belligerent euphemisms but calls for calm. 4-5 Moderate: 'I understand the outrage'—ambiguous condemnations with caveats. 6-7 Strong: minimizing supporters' assaults; blaming victims/opposition. 8-9 Very strong: applauding or celebrating assaults ('well done', 'they deserved it'). 10 Explicit/operative: incitement to 'hit', 'forcibly expel', 'arm yourselves'.
		C3.S3. Glorification/Normalization of Historical or Foreign Violence	Have they praised (or refused to condemn) major acts of political violence in the past or abroad?	1 Absent: no approval or reference suggesting legitimacy of past or foreign violence. 2-3 Mild: neutral historical references. 4-5 Moderate: relativizing foreign dictatorship/repression ('it wasn't that bad').

				6-7 Strong: praising repressive leaders/operations abroad or in the past 8-9 Very strong: suggesting emulation of foreign/historical repressive tactics. 10 Explicit/operative: announcing plans to import or replicate historical/foreign violent methods now.
C4. Willingness to Restrict Civil Liberties (including the media)	Proposals or threats to limit rights, censor, or silence dissent.	C4.S1. Restriction of Civil Liberties	Have they supported laws or policies that restrict civil liberties (e.g., expanding libel/defamation laws, limiting the right to protest, curbing criticism of government or certain civic/political organizations)?	1 Absent: no evidence of support for restricting civil liberties; consistent defense of fundamental rights. 2-3 Mild: complaints about 'boycotts/protests' while acknowledging rights. 4-5 Moderate: proposing stricter requirements (permits, zones) without severe penalties. 6-7 Strong: encouraging fines, disqualifications, or dissolution of 'troublesome' NGOs. 8-9 Very strong: defending gag laws, 'thought crimes', or broader defamation laws to silence criticism. 10 Explicit/operative: submitting orders/bills to limit/penalize protests, criminalize criticism, or restrict opposition associations.
		C4.S2. Censorship Proposals	Have they threatened legal or other punitive actions against critics in opposition parties, civil society, or the media?	"1": "Absent: no praise or endorsement of repressive measures domestically or abroad.", "2-3": "Mild: generic 'law and order' references.", "4-5": "Moderate: citing foreign 'iron-fist' policies approvingly without calling to copy them.",

				"6-7": "Strong: suggesting adoption of foreign repressive practices ('the X model')." , "8-9": "Very strong: urging the transposition of repressive legislation/operations from other countries." , "10": "Explicit/operative: announcing immediate implementation of repressive measures inspired by other governments (e.g., sweeping curfews, prior restraint censorship, administrative detentions)."
		C4.S3. Repressive Measures	Have they praised repressive measures adopted by other governments, either in the past or elsewhere in the world?	1 Absent: no praise or endorsement of repressive measures domestically or abroad. 2-3 Mild: generic 'law and order' references. 4-5 Moderate: citing foreign 'iron-fist' policies approvingly without calling to copy them. 6-7 Strong: suggesting adoption of foreign repressive practices ('the X model'). 8-9 Very strong: urging the transposition of repressive legislation/operations from other countries. 10 Explicit/operative: announcing immediate implementation of repressive measures inspired by other governments (e.g., sweeping curfews, prior restraint censorship, administrative detentions).

***Table S1. Authoritarian behavior indicators and scoring rubric derived from the Levitsky–Ziblatt framework.** The table presents the full taxonomy and rubric used for large-language-model (LLM) scoring. Four diagnostic dimensions—(C1) Rejection of Democratic Rules, (C2) Denial of Opponents’ Legitimacy, (C3) Tolerance or Promotion of Violence, and (C4) Willingness to Restrict Civil Liberties—were expanded into eleven operational indicators. Each indicator includes a guiding question and a ten-point rubric ranging*

from 1 (fully democratic) to 10 (explicitly authoritarian). This rubric provided the evaluative anchor for all LLM assessments, allowing consistent and comparable scoring of rhetorical behavior across leaders and historical contexts.