

Can political public relations be used as a tool for social integration,
with particular reference to the Muslim community in the UK?

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by Sarah A. M. Okour

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Declaration

The material being presented for examination is my own work and has not been submitted for an award of this or another HEI except in minor particulars which are explicitly noted in the body of the thesis. Where research pertaining to the thesis was undertaken collaboratively, the nature and extent of my individual contribution has been made explicit.

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Abstract

Political, social and demographic change has resulted in a search for new techniques for building public trust and reconciling relationships between the Muslim community and others in society. In this study, extremism and social cohesion have been chosen as potential new aims for the PR industry. This study assesses whether political PR can be diverted from its role in spin doctoring towards new cultural and social functions. My argument is that political public relations can be used as a tool for social integration with particular reference to the Muslim community in the UK. This research distinguishes between two issues. The first connects with political PR within a political communication background, which relates to politicians, election campaigns, news management, and their relationship with the media. The second issue is that political PR can be reconsidered from a corporate perspective, one that endorses the use of PR in challenging political environments. My study places emphasis on the second issue. It applies a triangulating methodology based on using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to answer the research questions. A sample of seven UK public relations academics evaluated the current communication policies for their effectiveness, explained how political PR could help, and gave their recommendations. In addition, seven NGOs in Britain described their work, the problems they encountered, and their concerns. A lack of social integration and the continuing rise of extremism were repeatedly explained in terms of stereotyping, marginalisation, and counter-productive techniques. The results suggest that a change in political PR is possible and should be encouraged to intervene in fighting against radicalisation, extremism, and enhancing social cohesion. They also show a lack of PR support for NGOs. More broadly, my findings move the field of inclusivity forward by working on a bottom-up approach instead of a top-down model of communication. The best answer for sustaining long-term community relationships was improved communication and engagement, inclusive messages and campaigns, and the Muslim community remaining open to others in society.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Current ideologies of authoritarianism and nationalism are arguably separating people and creating a communication chasm. This predicament will shape the implementation of new communication. For this reason, reconsidering communication strategies becomes necessary as people are growing confused whilst engaging in the free marketplace of ideas, which will be the main focus of this thesis. In this sense, political public relations will be proposed as an alternative communication strategy to support social integration and fight against extremism. The main thrust of the argument is that the UK government and political players could do the heavy lifting when it comes to community-based political PR. The literature highlights that there is a proven danger of extremism and social segregation in Britain. Calls for change being made, concerns explained, and figures relating to these issues have confirmed that there is a communication crisis in existence at this time. This can only make us more vigilant about the negative consequences of this crisis on society. More importantly, it motivates action in terms of designing the best strategies to address this issue as early as possible. For example, Gordon Brown believes “[t]here needed to be a more effective counter-argument to the rise of nationalism, protectionism and populism” (as cited in Sherwood, 2019, para. 11). Accordingly, engineering strategic models of communication and engagement is being looked for here. It all revolves around the science of public relations. Therefore, the central question for this doctoral research project is: Can political PR be used as a tool for social integration, with particular reference to the Muslim community in the UK? This academic enquiry comes while “the broader roles and responsibilities of public relations in government are relatively under-examined....[and] it remains unclear what public relations can do to develop the community and how public relations can engage the public in this process” (Kim

& Cho, 2019, pp. 297 - 299). Furthermore, the thesis applies a methodology based on a triangulation research design employing a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews to formulate an answer. The original contribution to knowledge is to identify whether political PR techniques can be redirected to enhance social integration in the UK. An evaluation of the communicative efforts of some NGOs working in the fields of inclusivity and extremism should also add to the existing knowledge and our understanding of the problem under discussion.

Far-right populists' standpoints are dangerous because they encourage social division. They can put our belief in social co-existence and common sense at risk. Some far-right movements, namely, Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) in Germany, is a good example here.

According to Berg (2019), this group's ideas:

...centred around the heterosexual family to save the 'pure people.'....[therefore] a more direct scenario of violence and fear is named: [for instance] people who are being labelled as migrant or non-German as perpetrators, and 'German' women as victims. The constant repetition of these old narratives on the AfD's social media channels is followed by interviews and talk show appearances by individual politicians supposedly legitimizing the scare claim. (pp. 83 - 84)

On the basis of this "racism, in particular anti-Muslim racism[,]...[t]he aggressively conducted far-right culture war, with its new and old strategies and networks, presents democratic societies with a range of challenges" (Berg, 2019, p. 89). Such demagogues can influence the audience to adopt their agenda. It is significant to state that one of the challenges in this thesis is to maintain the clarity of structure given the themes of the work and their rapidly evolving nature. Summarising and relating to the work, therefore, are being attempted as best as possible. While the literature primarily discusses right-wing populism in a British context, it is useful to go beyond national concerns and reactionary racism. Regarding inclusivity and pluralism, there is an importance to give evidence of how these

populists preach a lack of tolerance as a response to the economic crisis. Kaya (2018), for example, believes this rise of right-wing populism:

...becomes victorious at the national level when its leaders can blend elements of...economic resentment and cultural resentment...to create the perception of crisis. It is only when socio-economic frustration (unemployment and poverty) is linked to cultural concerns, such as immigration and integration. (p. 3)

Reilly and Mathias (2018) write about the right-wing extremists who were found guilty for planning a terror plot against American Muslims. The article focuses on how these extremists were first radicalised by stating that they were “enthusiastic supporters of Donald Trump...[while one of them] referred to...Trump as ‘the Man’” (para. 17). As those people share the same mentality as this kind of political leader, perhaps it is important to start educating the public first. It would be useful here to apply the agenda-setting theory to understand how such extremists are adopting Trump’s opinions. In brief, this approach talks about the salience of certain matters on the news media which the public has views about (McCombs, 2006). This is where “elements prominent on the media agenda become prominent overtime on the public agenda. The media not only can be successful in telling us what to think about, they also can be successful in telling us how to think about it” (McCombs, 2006, p. 546). Consequently, Azari (2016) finds “that extensive media coverage...helped Trump amass supporters and defeat the Republican establishment...[and] that the media’s main institutional role comes from repeating, rather than challenging, promises, frameworks, and narratives” (pp. 677 - 679). To be more specific, the media are central to the reforming process of the public attitudes and behaviours. Once there is a policy to educate the public about prioritising integration over discrimination, things may start to fall into place. The understandings generated from the review of the literature have proven public relations can direct the media successfully; it builds media agendas and plans for garnering public support. My investigation shows that the Israeli government has used PR, which

employed the media and journalists, to bring people together, attempting to integrate them into one society. That “involves a cooperative, obedient, and “responsible” media oriented to serves [*sic*] as a unifier of the people more than as an independent guardian of [the] democratic system” (Toledano & Mckie, 2007, p. 396). As we have seen, those populists fuel hatred and lead propaganda of fear and conflict through all media platforms. Unfortunately, they all too often succeed. The question is how to reverse the effects of such practice. It is to understand what our choices are and how to start minimising the division they are creating in society. The thesis provides an understanding of how political PR can lead the progressive propaganda of integration (Toledano & Mckie, 2007), which will be dealt with in detail in the following chapters. The impact resulting from employing media skills can never be overrated. To demonstrate, “Farage would be nothing without the BBC: academic research suggests media coverage drove support for UKIP” (Jones, 2018, para. 6). Furthermore, Noam Chomsky has described the power of media in moulding attitudes and creating different ones:

...one must admire the incredible skills the media have in manipulating the population. They’ve managed to convince many that the most passionate Anti [-] Racist campaigner of the last 40 years, Jeremy Corbyn, is actually Pro-racist and Anti [-] Semitic. (Dewiapwiliam, 2018)

With the current rise of far-right movements, social cohesion may become marginalised. However, there is undoubtedly a way out. Mark Twain once wrote that “many a small thing has been made large by the right kind of advertising”. The test, again, is for political actors to make community cohesion work; “the challenge for all of us [is] to make this an ‘everybody’ issue and to make integration work in the places where we live” (British Future, 2018, para. 5). If the importance of inclusivity is clear for those in power, de-radicalisation and countering extremism and home-grown terrorism become virtually automatic as they are inextricably linked to issues of social cohesion. The matters raised from this introduction establish that radicalisation needs to be mentioned in the context of this thesis. Every concept

here is related to radicalisation in a way or another. People can be radicalised to become far-right supporters, ISIS extremists and terrorists. It all starts with words used and emotions aroused. A contrary view to consider is that the public can be de-radicalised and re-educated to become community cohesion advocates. Coppock and McGovern (2014) state that:

A focus on ‘radicalisation’ establishes the a priori assumption that the search for the ‘causes of terrorism’ is essentially to be found at the level of the attitudes and actions of the individual, the task at hand therefore established as the ‘rooting out’ of future terrorists rather than what might be thought of as root causes. (As cited in Novelli, 2017, p. 845)

Consequently, the issue of radicalisation is discussed in this study to highlight how political PR can intervene in the process of de-radicalising the nation, preparing it for social integration. Indeed, any valuable insight into social inclusion would pay its dividends. Nevertheless, consideration of the underlying factors demonstrate that the government’s actions and strategies have failed the Muslim community and ultimately, the nation as a whole (Appleby, 2010; Asthana & Walker, 2016; Hill, 2017; Mythen & Walklate, 2006). The government’s lack of response can add more weight to the problem and worsen the situation in the future as well. It is how this British political and social crisis can be successively (Asthana & Walker, 2016) mishandled, not only by making the wrong decisions but also by claiming that there is no crisis or avoid dealing with it.

Another gap in the research on the social use of political PR exists in the shape of counter-terrorism research. Spalek and Lambert (2008) state that in the field of counter-terrorism, there is “certainly no substantial academic research...[and] in the urgency to respond to terrorism and radicalization, there has been little attempt to empirically evaluate state responses, and more importantly, virtually no critical reflection about community engagement in this area” (pp. 257 - 258). According to Hallahan, community building or community engagement “involves the integration of people and the organizations they create into a functional collectivity that strives toward common or compatible goals” (as cited in

Kim & Cho, 2019, p. 298). Johnston and Lane (in press) believe that “[i]t is through CE [community engagement], a key practice area of public relations, that organization-community relationships are facilitated through communication and interaction, and through co-creating value for both community and organizational members” (p. 1). Viewed in this light, the purpose of this thesis is to investigate the most relevant approaches in public relations and how these may fit into a political setting. Engagement and communication, therefore, are explored and described extensively, being integral to the research question. Another argument shows how framing in PR is essential to winning publics’ minds and hearts. Gamson and Modigliani (1989) believe that “frames are ‘interpretative packages’ that establish the perimeters, which give a discussion directions, positions and a specific purpose” (as cited in Froehlich & Rudiger, 2006, p. 19). In the next section we will analyse how this technique is the starting point from which the government can work towards promoting social cohesion and de-radicalisation. The literature focuses on the significance of framing in terms of counter-terrorism and enhancing pluralism (Appleby, 2010; Asthana & Walker, 2016; Bourekba, 2016; Joppke, 2009; Qehaja, Perteshi, & Vrajolli, 2017; Trayner, 2017). And so, this research provides insight into what securitisation techniques, for instance, “profiling, hard-line policing, stop and search, surveillance, and detention” (Awan, 2012, p. 1166), have created in this regard. While such strategies rely more on hard power, the soft power side of the solution has been left unexploited (Bourekba, 2016; Ragazzi, 2017). In short, the chief purpose is to recognise what political PR can achieve apart from its traditional roles in spin and election campaigns. Most importantly, it examines what political PR may produce if it relies on framing, communication, dissemination, reconciliation, and in some instances, persuasion because “communities emerge from a combination of dialogue, dissemination, and interpretation” (Stoker & Tusinski, 2006, p. 168). Turning to the importance of media relations in PR practice, Kioussis and Stromback (2011) introduce Edelman’s framework,

which divides media relations into four categories: “mainstream [traditional mass media], new media [bloggers], social media [social networking sites], and owned media [mobile communications]” (p. 318). Based on this classification, scholars believe that media relations practices in PR have shifted to focus more on social media (Waters, Tindall, & Morton, 2010) and “own produced and delivered content by strategic communicators” (Zerfass, Vercic, & Wiesenberg, 2016, p. 499). Such a finding is central to this study – the government needs to use social media and employ professional practitioners to support their community cohesion efforts. Hence, media relations implies a strong sense of relationship management. Talking about building relationships and bridging communication gaps to enhance social integration, Lieber and Golan (2011) also highlight that PR and political PR is all about relationships. What is “[a]lso important, but insufficiently theorized in the context of political public relations, news management, and media relations, is the relational approach to public relations” (Lieber & Golan, 2011, p. 57). In the next section, therefore, the literature will elaborate on how the relationship management strategy and media relations are linked together in order to address the research problem. With a particular focus on Edelman’s framework, the researcher will explain how these four categories of media relations are needed in the context of this study as well.

Researchers on political public relations and PR have been encouraged to extend the industry to new dimensions (Edelman, 2008; Heath & McKie, 2016; Stromback & Kiouisis, 2011). Lugo-Ocando and Hernández-Toro (2016) write that “[c]ritical PR has argued for “going beyond the narrow organizational objectives of mobilization and resources allocation” to build relationships and a “regime of empathy” defined by both emotion and reason” (as cited in Munshi-Kurian, Munshi, & Kurian, in press, p. 6). Hence, Roper and Hurst (in press) “offer the hope that public relations could take an ethical role in helping governments shape policies that acknowledge and address societal concerns in globally urgent issues” (p. 2). It is

significant as multicultural societies nowadays seek to promote social integration. With this public concern comes the necessity to counter radicalisation, extremism and terrorism. These matters are arguably new to public relations. As we will show in a later chapter, various scholars have become interested in investigating political PR in recent years. For example, Kiousis, Kim, Carnifax, and Kochhar (2014) believe that “[a]lthough the role of public relations has been paramount in the U.S. political landscape, theoretical and empirical knowledge has been underdeveloped [because most scholarly work has investigated the influence of political PR in particularly presidential election contexts]” (p. 617). It means more understanding of the profession’s tools and opportunities is required. Correspondingly, a political PR function that transcends spinning and disinformation is needed. For instance, Stromback and Kiousis (2011) argue that we need to consider political PR as a new domain of research that needs further examination. Other academic researchers, such as Kiousis et al. (2014) and Stromback and Kiousis (2013) have come to the same conclusion. Engaging with their work, my thesis will argue that political public relations can be redirected and used as a tool for social cohesion with particular reference to the Muslim community in the UK.

Communication channels create new engagement tools. The rapid changes in these channels make keeping pace with the public demanding. It is also promising. What makes this more sensible and laudable is that building bridges of interaction between multicultural communities in a society may become critical. People frequently choose to remain in their bubbles rather than establishing relations with others. Hence, careful consideration of solutions that influence the general population and pave the way for long - term change to take place is necessary. Raising the publics’ awareness and attracting them to engage and talk is an essential mission. The rise of far-right populism (Vieten & Poynting, 2016) in many societies including Britain, however, may pull strings in the opposite direction during the process of reconciling relationships. To make the necessary impact, therefore, words and

ideas should be employed and communicated effectively. That is where political public relations can perform strategically, which brings me to my second point. Preparing the British public to attain new social, cultural and political frames considering promoting social integration and countering extremism can start with the use of the industry's mechanisms for change.

Turning to public engagement, this study brings this modern PR concept to the political arena. It indicates as PR is growing (R. Phillips, 2009); political PR can improve and eventually be redirected. Edelman (2008) focuses on the role of public engagement in engaging with and informing the public about how governments, for example, formulate strategies and create trust: “[t]he PR business must rise to the challenge, by creating a new form of expression that will work in today’s cynical and uncertain environment” (para. 8). By giving grounding to this notion, Heath and McKie (2016) consider terrorism as uncertainty expressed by psychological and ideological - driven violence. This uncertainty is a synonym for risk and “risk management is essentially the discipline of seeking to know but otherwise coping with the unknown, or the partially (and even badly), known” (p. 299). In this sense, Heath and McKie (2016) encourage PR professionals to “revolutionize the [PR] discipline...propos[ing] that public relations is a strategic intelligence for managing uncertainty reduction in ways designed to make society fully functioning” (p. 303). It is expected that PR copes with challenges and suggests remedies. For this reason, explaining how public engagement and communication can be applied in a political PR context that tackles community cohesion and extremism will be the main focus of this thesis. That may help to reassess political PR and understand how it can meet expectations. Relatedly, studies in the field of terrorism explain the negative influence of strategies like Prevent, which aims “to stop and prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism...[and] focuses on a “top-down” approach to tackling terrorist and extremist threats” (Awan, 2012, p. 1160).

There has not been an investigation, however, into the barriers that inhibit achieving real social engagement. This thesis intends to highlight these matters. In addition, the next section will consist of topics related to the government's doctrines of action and inaction in its attempt to promote social cohesion. It also explains how these have developed a greater sense of distrust and resentment among the Muslim community.

Multiculturalism has been perceived as a problematic goal for the West in recent years as some say claim conflicts with nationhood. Kaya (2018) describes how the concept of multiculturalism has been changed from one that entails tolerance and the creation of inter-cultural community, to “the declaration of the ‘failure of multiculturalism’ [which] has become a catchphrase of not only extreme right-wing parties but also of centrist political parties [in Europe]” (p. 6). Let's look at an example of Trump's rhetoric of the wall between the US and Mexico and the following inhuman treatment of illegal immigrants. In a book review, Haynes (2018) reveals how Trump “built impressive electoral support by playing on the fears of many Americans that they would be “swamped” by immigration, including both Mexicans and “Islamic terrorists” ” (p. 1317). It is elaborated further by Morieson (2017) who thinks right-wing populism:

...is linked to feelings of anger and disillusionment — to employment security, and to a feeling that one's culture and lifestyle is threatened by immigration and social change — as long as the vast majority of citizens felt secure in their societies and positive about their future prosperity, populist parties would remain on the fringes of Western politics. Today, however, it is clear that many Europeans and Americans do not feel secure in their own societies....The causes of this present-day disillusionment are not difficult to identify. Increasing income inequality, technological and cultural change, and employment insecurity have undoubtedly played an important role in the rise of populist movements. Yet perhaps just as important is the growing presence of Islam in Europe...and the series of Islamist terror attacks on civilian targets in France, Germany, and Belgium. (p. 88)

Belief in the success of multiculturalism is uncertain. Townsend (2018) writes how less than half of Britons believe that multiculturalism is not substantially successful. The article explains that this raises fears over inclusion, anti-Muslim racism and a general sense of

segregation. Townsend (2018), therefore, reports Nick Lowles' concern from Hope Not Hate who believes there is a lot to do in fighting extremism and promoting social cohesion. Versi (2018b), from the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), also recognises how Islamophobia has generally become a real issue in the society while what seems increasingly important is to "push our government to do something about it" (para. 17).

In a relevant context, with a little insight, we can see through the British paradigm of multiculturalism and the French model of integration. On many occasions, the Republican model (Boueshrin, 2015; Oberti, 2007) and the Dutch model (Herbert, 2013) of social cohesion have been worryingly disintegrating. This may be the result of the rise of far-right parties, counterproductive measures or policies, and identifying Muslims as a threat to Western societies. France and the Netherlands are among the European countries which choose an integration model. While both countries have had their failures and successes, the imperfections and weaknesses should be thought-provoking. So why do we need to learn from them? The answer is simple. It is because we need to push towards more groundbreaking strategies for Britain which may seek to implement an integration policy in the future. To be more specific, adopting the French model does not seem the most appropriate answer to the question of how to best integrate minorities and the Muslim community as "integration does not only mean equilibrium of a social system or a nation. It is also a process in which individuals and groups have been socialised into this system" (Barou, 2014, p. 645). Making advances in community cohesion, thus, should involve facilitating communication and engagement together with changing stereotypes.

The French model looks primarily at the concept of assimilating immigrants (Barou, 2014; Boueshrin, 2015). It may appear persuasive – putting pressure on newcomers rather than trying to integrate them properly. It means those migrants should alienate themselves from

their own culture and identity to fit into the adopted society. Consequently, Mazrui (2006) thinks “[t]he assimilationist policies of the French...have been seen as an expression of their cultural racism” (p. 513). That may create a sense of intolerance towards these people’s cultural backgrounds and in Britain, “perceived discrimination (both individual and group) has some of the strongest effects on negative outcomes. Discrimination is at least as plausible an explanation as multiculturalism for lack of integration” (Heath & Demireva, 2014, p. 177). This bigotry and hatred have previously caused the vulnerability of the Republican model of integration: “the French republic claims to be blind to cultural differences, but this colour blindness masks the actual existence of racial discrimination” (Barou, 2014, p. 651). It also contradicts one of the fundamental principles of that model which says “that individual rights prime over [*sic*] the collective rights. That is to say that no separate group of people, such as minorities or ethnic communities are favored, discriminated against or even recognized by the French Republic” (Bigea, 2016, p. 18). This seems similar to the situation in Norway as well. Jozelic (2005) criticises the way Norwegian Muslims are treated by the government and media. The article talks about the effect of the debate around the modernisation of Islam and war against terror on social integration efforts:

One of the government’s announced goals is that independently of background one has right to be seen as an individual and not only as a member of a group, culture or religion. The problem is that in practice we do not see any indication of this happening. (p. 3)

Another point worth mentioning is that Bigea (2016) proves the French model has failed and requires modification. The change means that this strategy needs to recognise those whom the country discriminated against and alienated (Bigea, 2016). According to the article, significant recognition is needed. Interestingly enough, Bigea (2016) also establishes a link between the republican model and extremism, explaining that the way the French government

approached the 2005 riots was ill-advised; both the government actions and inactions were not strategic and that:

...serves only to further inflate the issue, because through its inaction, the government shows its distance from the problems of these people. And perhaps at a societal subconscious level, although the claim is that the Republic does not see color, the truth is that it does not see these people at all. (p. 30)

Given the observed trends of social integration, it can be concluded that none of them have achieved real community cohesion. In this context, this study comes at a challenging time when there is a rise in right-wing populism and white supremacy movements in the US, Britain, and across Europe (Carr, 2011; Golinkin, 2017; Morieson, 2017; Valasik & Reid, 2018; Walker, 2019). In the British context and from an outside perspective, such threat can further extend the gap between communities. Accordingly, this research addresses the demand for a formula for communication and action within the PR profession. It describes how multicultural Britain can socially and politically prosper through the implementation of political public relations. This study specifically explores how political PR, in the form of NGOs, political actors, and political institutions, can make social integration and countering extremism more attainable. It is particularly significant as Muir (2017) criticises social inclusion in Britain stating that “many minorities...[believe the government] has failed and continues to fail to make the required investment in them and theirs” (para. 7). As a result, building and maintaining relationships between the Muslim community, in particular, and political institutions have become a real concern (Asthana & Walker, 2016; Khan, 2017) and is likely the best antidote to the lack of effective communication that exists today. Mindful of this, in the next chapter we will describe how creating interaction and collaboration is the essence of public relations. To summarize, the thesis represents one of the first attempts at addressing a number of gaps in political public relations’ scholarship where “there is neither much theorizing nor empirical research” (Stromback & Kioussis, 2011, p. 2). Kioussis et al.

(2014) also demonstrate that “our theoretical and empirical understanding of political public relations is underdeveloped when compared to other arenas of public relations and political communication scholarship” (p. 615). These gaps include issues such as reconciling community relationships towards enhancing social integration, countering extremism and rebuilding political trust:

Most public relations theory and research centers on public relations strategies and tactics in relation to the corporate sector...[and] despite the importance of political public relations, the general rule is that there is not much theorizing and research that manages or even attempts to bridge the gap between public relations, political communication, and political science theory and research. (Stromback & Kioussis, 2011, p. 2)

To turn to inaction, it is not a realistic or effective policy for social cohesion particularly in “Britain [which] has never had an explicit government policy of multiculturalism” (Osler, 2009, p. 90). Regarding British multiculturalism which “has failed badly, because there is relatively little interaction between the dominant and minority cultures” (Turner, 2006, p. 613), and the French experience, neither model has worked. And so, a reconciliation model can be more fruitful. Stoker and Tusinski (2006) identify reconciliation as “a new model of public relations, [which] is proposed as an alternative to pure dialogue. Reconciliation recognizes and values individuality and differences, and integrity [here, compared to dialogue,] is no longer sacrificed at the altar of agreement” (p. 156). Through “promoting the unpopular cause of reconciliation, the PR practitioner functioned as an activist” (Toledano, 2016, p. 278). By taking a PR specialist as a case study, Toledano (2016) explains how this practitioner worked for “an activist group who promote reconciliation between current enemies” (p. 278). In conclusion and in our attempt to move from celebrating diversity in Britain towards integrating communities, we cannot ask people to adjust their cultures and religions. The strategy of “in Rome they should do as the Romans do – ‘they should be more like us’” (Jack, 2016, para. 9) appears unproductive. We cannot pressure the public to do so as that would only widen the gap rather than bridging it. Doing so would also suggest that

they are not welcome; they are foreigners and strangers. Introducing them to Britain's language, identity and culture may support the integration efforts and make them more approachable.

Another possibility is the necessity to create and adopt well-woven psychological, emotional and cognitive PR frames for social integration messages. Successful social cohesion should also admit and embrace differences in customs and cultures. With all the global changes we are witnessing, there would be no need for anyone to look exactly like another. We may not look the same, but when it comes to the country we are part of, then we are all patriots. This is when relativism can become a productive factor. Britain has an opportunity to make a fresh and progressive attempt at applying social integration because "if we fall into the trap of old-fashioned assimilationist thinking, we will continue to create more problems than we solve" (Hirsch, 2019, para. 11). Therefore, in his initiative, The Green Paper, Sajid Javid "stresses that integration is not assimilation, but rather a two-way street...[it] conceptualises "true integration" as being defined by "communities where people, whatever their background, live, work, learn and socialise together, based on shared rights, responsibilities and opportunities" (Katwala, 2018, para. 7). The concept is new and urgent for this country. Britain can learn from others' experiences and become well - prepared. It is about emphasising the role of minorities in building the nation by respecting their cultural backgrounds and making them feel their worth. Therefore, "[t]he question is how far Britain is willing to change its ideas of Britishness to accommodate all the millions of people who have so much to give it" (Chakraborty, 2019, para. 13).

In fact, political PR has the power to affect national plans that encourage social cohesion. Accordingly, being well - equipped for this endeavour is a matter of rediscovering tools and skills. The literature sheds light on the communication approaches from which political PR

can start working. The dialogic theory may represent the dominant framework in this respect. The complexity of social cohesion and extremism, however, may take it to a different level. Given the worryingly increasing rates of hate and bigotry, dialogue alone may not prove to be strategic enough. The public may choose to be less attentive to conversations with the other as stereotypes remain unquestioned and sometimes supported by far-right populists and the media. On the one hand, this issue is addressed by describing how the political PR techniques of priming, framing, agenda building and issues' saliency, and dissemination can become mechanisms for positive causes since "[t]here is value in nonreciprocal forms of communication" (Stoker & Tusinski, 2006, p. 158). On the other, these tools can be employed to distract the public from the far-right political discourse and make new frames; to give new and engaging conceptualisations to the traditional non-interesting issues of social integration and multiculturalism. It is also necessary to prepare the public for change. That means to explain why such a shift in attitudes is important to them by making these issues a priority, distracting public's attention from the far-right political discourse and applying a revitalised sense of 'we' rather than 'them and us' (Katwala, 2018).

The second chapter will describe how turning social integration into a headline may become a PR mission. This is specifically significant as "[p]oliticians have talked a lot about integration, but have done too little to work out how to promote it in practice...[and] [t]he big test will be turning intentions into practice" (Katwala, 2018, para. 5 - 10). A further consequence of such inaction is seen in how the media are managing propaganda of hate against Muslims in Britain. Versi's article 'Anti-Muslim hate is now widespread in the UK- and the media is helping normalise it' is one of the best examples in this regard. Versi (2018a) talks about the influence of the media and journalism in fuelling hate, by calling Muslims a threat. He explains that "polls tell us that the majority of people find out about Islam and Muslims from the media, where over 90 per cent of reports are negative" (para. 9).

What is more, it could be the case that the media have even started to make favourable frames for white supremacists. This is risky and alarming. Positively represented extremists can negatively shape how the British youth, in particular, perceives social cohesion. Mahdawi (2018) describes how the Sunday Times portrays the white nationalist movement, Generation Identity's (GI), members as a musical group in an article titled 'Heil hipsters'. She also explains that this story "is the latest in a series of problematically chatty articles about fringe figures that have been published in mainstream outlets. [And] [i]t's only the most recent example of a dangerous trend of the media humanising and legitimising white extremists" (para. 6).

As we have seen, making a political contribution to social inclusion may help the nation. The media can also play a significant role, giving the issues of social cohesion and multiculturalism the momentum to start making changes. The fact that "[t]he media have surely played an important role in spreading moral panics, furthering ideological racism, and promoting hostility towards and criminalization of Muslim" (Bonino, 2012, p. 6), should be changed. Why is this important? Because the ongoing chaos needs to be slowed down. My investigation shows that media can help counter-terrorism ("Terror Attack Survivors", 2018). In their letter, the group encourages "media and social media organisations to do far more to take on and shut down those driving hate...[as] "The way we defy terrorism is by not going down that path of hate" (para. 14 - 20). This thesis can make doing this more approachable and potentially achievable, which brings me to my second point. Political public relations is known for packaging politics for media consumption. Kioussis et al.'s (2014) study gives "indicators on how political campaign messages are closely intertwined with media agendas in terms of the issues being discussed in news" (p. 617). It is where tools like framing can be reassessed to target the public with integration messages. This topic will be dealt with in detail in chapter 2.

It is also important to highlight that ignoring signs of social crisis can lead to severe consequences. This can be illustrated by the Whig government's response, and lack of response, to the Great Famine in Ireland in the mid-1800s. It is where the cultural prejudices of some politicians fuelled and worsened the crisis on a national scale. Donnelly (2011) explains how the British government regularly ignored signs of the Irish disaster. The Nobel laureate Amartya Sen says: "famine is almost always a preventable occurrence if only the government in question has the political will to prevent it" (as cited in Donnelly, 2011, para. 24). In a similar vein, Casey's recent report of social integration in Britain emphasises that "[t]he problem has not been a lack of knowledge but a failure of collective, consistent and persistent will to do something about it or give it the priority it deserves at both a national and local level" (Asthana & Walker, 2016, para. 5). Donnelly (2011), therefore, asks: "why didn't the British government do much more to mitigate the effects of the enormous initial food gap?" (para. 6) in Ireland. Indeed, the article shows there were no real difficulties or reasons that inhibited the Whig government from taking the necessary 'relief measures'. However, it preferred to ignore this crisis. Moreover, Donnelly (2011) reveals that some "prevailing ideologies among the political elite and the middle classes strongly militated against heavy and sustained relief" (para. 9). As the Whig government was Protestant, the deep - rooted ethnic bigotry against the Irish Catholics was one of the main reasons behind the government's lack of action. The article also clarifies that this 'racial or cultural stereotyping' was the reason why the educated people in Britain thought the Irish deserved this crisis. The Irish personality was perceived as morally incompetent; "disorder or violence, filth, laziness and...a lack of self reliance [*sic*]...[while those who died in the Famine were seen] as the cultural and social inferiors of those who governed them" (Donnelly, 2011, para. 20 - 23). Similarly, Kinealy (2010) demonstrates that the Irish people were "clearly...not regarded as equal partners with the Union even at a time of crisis...[and] it was men lacking vision and

compassion who determined how the British government responded to the unfolding tragedy” (para. 19 - 24).

To emphasise this, some political actors in the current right-wing Conservative government have contributed to a similar racial and cultural prejudice against Muslims. The Islamophobic political discourse can negatively influence the efforts of promoting social integration and countering extremism. Baroness Sayeeda Warsi, as quoted by Versi (2018a), says that “there was a simmering underbelly of Islamophobia” in the ruling party, where bigotry against Muslims is tolerated” (para. 8). Osborne and Sloan (2017) also show evidence “that Conservative policies have much less to offer British Muslims than either Liberal Democrats or Labour” (para. 23). Bob Blackman, for example, according to Khan (2018), is a Conservative MP who has shared Islamophobic content across social media platforms. Additionally, he “has enthusiastically embraced the Hindi and Jewish minorities [in his constituency of Harrow East] while neglecting Muslims” (Osborne & Sloan, 2017, para. 39). Furthermore, Osborne (2018) criticises the Tory government’s lack of response to the MCB’s formal investigation into the party’s racism against Muslims. It implies that the “actions taken by the Tory government to confront Islamophobia have been pathetic” (para. 6). Consequently, Malik (2018) highlights that “[t]he lack of pressure on Theresa May to act is an alarming indication of where rightwing [*sic*] politics is taking Britain” (para. 1).

Again, Versi (2017) explains how the government condemned an anti-Semitic MP, considering his views as a form of racism, and rejected him from standing for the party. In contrast, it chose to condone an Islamophobic MP and accept him to be elected as MP (Versi, 2017). Moreover, Versi explains that the Prime Minister refused, for instance, to see Zac Goldsmith’s 2016 mayoral campaign as an act of cultural prejudice against Muslims although the PM was aware that “there is a wealth of evidence to the contrary” (para. 6). Osborne and

Sloan (2017) describe Goldsmith's campaign "as one of the nastiest of modern times because of anti-Muslim bigotry [Although Osborne & Sloan] assumed that the Conservative Party would conduct an urgent internal inquiry into the use of anti-Muslim bigotry [they] were wrong" (para. 8 - 9). Hadj (2018) also criticises Theresa May's recent Commission for Countering Extremism in which "it was simply more of the same: more thought policing, more state surveillance, more counter-terror legislation" (para. 13).

The first thing to take into account is that the way in which the government addresses the rising popularity of Islamophobic arguments and social integration is generally disappointing. It is, nevertheless, thought-provoking. As this introduction has demonstrated, there is a need for a political change that can no longer wait or be delayed. Another argument is that although giant strides have been made in the fields of political public relations, counter-terrorism, public relations and social integration, there remain open questions. Enquiries like: How can political PR help to produce positive social and political outcomes? How can PR approaches be extended and introduced into rare fields of study? What are these new domains and why focus on them in particular? And finally, how can we effectively work on terrorism, extremism and social inclusion? Consequently, this research investigates the theoretical redirection of political PR; how it can be reassessed and put into practice. The aim here is to change political PR strategically from a tool for misleading into one of nation - building. Furthermore, how deliberative priming, previously used by spin doctors to build media agenda, is now highlighted as a way to work on issues' saliency and agenda building towards combating extremism and promoting social cohesion. Kioussis et al. (2014) describe issues' saliency by saying that one of the central aims in political PR is "to establish and communicate the salience of political priorities in media coverage, public opinion, and policymaking" (p. 516).

Obviously, social integration is discussed in British politics and news by public figures such as Dame Louise Casey, Chuka Umunna, and Sadiq Khan among many others. All these bring the problem into the public arena and encourage sensible debate. Hence, it can be useful to place these voices under scrutiny in a political PR context. It appears even more interesting to investigate this, as the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, "has become a toxic brand and is widely mistrusted" (Halliday & Dodd, 2015, para. 1). In this context, the literature provides evidence of how Prevent fails to enhance inclusivity. Most importantly, this issue is addressed by investigating the NGOs' views of Prevent and analysing the strategy itself. This study highlights the communicative barriers as well and recommends some PR tactics to overcome these obstacles. To understand the causes why Prevent has failed in achieving community cohesion, it would be useful to link this strategy to the political shift to far-right in Britain. Bonino (2012) explains that "Islamophobia and prejudice against Muslims are broadly linked to the European progressive shift to the far right [*sic*] and socio-political discourses that consider Muslims as a security, economic, social, and cultural threat" (p. 6). Therefore, "[p]reventative approaches [like Prevent] are considered to have targeted the wrong people, alienated Muslims, furthered intercommunity tensions and jeopardized some initiatives that could promote community cohesion" (Bonino, 2012, p. 18). Farage's breaking point Brexit poster, which is considered an Islamophobic trope in political campaigning, would also highlight the shift to far-right in British politics. By representing the UKIP party, Farage here "was branded 'fundamentally racist'...[and] Tory, Labour, Lib Dem and Green MPs united to condemn the poster...accusing Mr Farage of 'exploiting the misery of the Syrian refugee crisis in the most dishonest and immoral way'" (Dathan, 2016, para. 5 - 15). Instead, what we need is a type of posters that supports the propaganda of integration rather than this UKIP's far-right 'distasteful propaganda' (Dathan, 2016). Moreover, "[t]he rise of far-right parties throughout Europe at a time of economic recession

and political uncertainty suggests that the demise of state multiculturalism may only strengthen extremism” (Nayak, 2012, p. 462). This seems dangerous and would further justify this thesis, which focuses on enhancing social cohesion and pluralism and fighting against radicalisation, extremism and terrorism. By researching race, religion and British multiculturalism, Nayak also finds that:

Successive government policy on multiculturalism, citizenship and cohesion has served to divide up people across the imaginary fault line of race, frequently deploying the language of ‘culture’, ‘ethnicity’, or ‘community’ in its place...[thus] [s]tate multiculturalism has simultaneously allowed for the tolerance of difference and supported racial hierarchies and exclusions. (p. 462)

Equally important, the debate on far-right populism leads us to investigate if the Conservative party is far-right or not. By definition, the party is centre-right. Several examples in the following sections, however, suggest that some of the party members are adopting far-right policies and stances. In a study conducted in 2014, therefore, Webb and Bale concluded that:

...a startlingly widespread willingness among current Conservative Party members to countenance voting for UKIP at future general elections. Those most likely to do so are cultural conservatives, but they are not overly right-wing on the distributional dimension of politics. They are particularly concerned about immigration and the EU. (p. 967)

The issues raised from the review of literature establish that some troubling questions require meaningful understanding and analysis in the field of political public relations. As an example, Stromback and Kiouisis (2013) encourage future research to examine and apply PR theories in a political PR context; “we need theories that can help us understand and explain the practice of political public relations” (p. 11). A year later, Kiouisis and Stromback (2014) write about the importance of using their interest in political PR for future studies explaining that “the expansion of knowledge awaits” (p. 262). Tsetsura (2011) also invites future studies “to further examine how public relations can be understood as a socially constructed field” (p. 19).

Indeed, there is demand for exploring the industry's strategic capabilities. For instance, Edwards (2006) redefines the power of PR in society and finds that "[c]urrent views of power in mainstream public relations theories are poorly developed...[and that these] views of power are more explicit but still largely reflect agentic or structural perspectives" (p. 229). Drawing from this, the thesis portrays political PR as an alternative mechanism to support cooperation in society towards better results in furthering social cohesion and combating extremism. It is likely, therefore, that a soft-power attempt can bring balance to the way these matters are currently addressed. In the following section, the literature will demonstrate how the overreliance on hard-power strategies is not the answer. Significantly and by looking back into the history of public relations, it can be seen how authors such as Marston (1963) have for a long time believed, and continue to think that "much greater success in matters of safety, conservation, tax paying, recruiting, and post office aid depends upon understanding cooperation. Cooperation, in turn, requires public relations, and without it democracy may break down" (p. 23). In particular, cooperation means reaching out to the other in society and engaging with them. That is why communication and engagement are fundamental to supporting increased levels of cooperation. In fact, it is especially in order to halt or prevent radicalisation and ultimately, extremism and acts of terrorism. Without this sense of partnership, the social and political gap can remain and even intensify. This study, therefore, focuses on the use of political PR to bridge this gap and solve the crisis that this gap perpetuates and adds to the rationale for the topicality and importance of this investigation.

As observed in chapter 2, literature that focuses on a modern approach to political communication and how political PR practitioners can make it work tends to lack an understanding of framing. Hence, this thesis explains framing in PR and how it is employed to make the public understand issues in a certain way. Of course, framing is a critical factor in changing how the audience considers social integration and the other. Evidently,

radicalisation is the process of convincing others to obtain new attitudes, thoughts and beliefs. De-radicalisation, therefore, is about changing ideologies and conceptions. As a consequence, the key to addressing the research topics can be through employing words and concepts skilfully.

Besides, certain frames need to be adopted and people should be encouraged to think differently. The purpose of this thesis is to explore that through the use of soft power techniques. It can, again, be a matter of very skilful political PR professionals along with the requisite political will. To sum up, the fact that Britain has changed from multiculturalism to social cohesion is interesting. The literature demonstrates how British multiculturalism is no longer in stock and has become an outdated style of co-existence. Indeed, the situation is now critical, suggesting that Britain should look for better strategies and approaches. In fact, multiculturalism cannot remain the preferable model. This realisation can enable the government to move forward. It can be declared, therefore, that multiculturalism is not enough when it comes to establishing healthy relationships between different communities. Time has proved that this is true. Thus, integration is needed to bring people together, creating a society where there are neither suspect communities nor conspiracy theories. Everyone is involved in building the nation. To be more precise, that is when radicalisation, extremism, and terrorism can become history.

Moreover, the following chapter provides a synthesis around political correctness against the discourse of far-right populists. It also elaborates how PR professionals are social integrationists and cultural intermediaries. Equally, this thesis will discuss several approaches to the issue of redirecting political PR for social integration purposes. To illustrate, scholars focus on the relational framework and corporate social responsibility (CSR) in PR to build beneficial relationships with the public. Additionally, improving mutual understanding and

engagement levels is continually demanding. It can be a proven way of enhancing the public's trust in this 'post-symmetrical age' (Brown, 2010). This study sheds light on this concept of trust and how it becomes challenging to engage with a sceptical, cynical public. Specifically, Mattinson (2019) reveals that in Britain, "[t]rust has long been in short supply. Ipsos Mori's "veracity index" shows that just 19% believe politicians tell the truth—unchanged since 1983" (para. 8). Consequently, the literature review explains how to boost this trust. In short, the research seeks pragmatic outcomes, and one of the most significant objectives here is to apply this pragmatism. It means to make multiculturalism, social integration, and countering extremism work. Therefore, the questionnaire is employed to undertake part of the primary research. It asks public relations academics in British universities to give their expert informed opinions to help us redirect political public relations. Whereas, in another part of the primary research, conducting interviews with communication coordinators and community engagement managers, for example, helps to produce a practical guide towards evaluating failures and successes. This also involves specifying the key publics' (Muslim community) concerns and hopes based on theoretical discussion and analysis. As we will show in later sections, this thesis discusses the data gathered from the above, analyses the findings, draws conclusions and suggests some recommendations for political PR professionals working within the UK.

What follows will position the previously outlined concepts to explain the significance of this study as an intervention from the PR profession within the fields of social cohesion and extremism. The way spin-doctoring mechanisms will be discovered from a different perspective as will the potential implications that the researcher can consider taking with this study.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

Communication is a way of changing attitudes and moulding opinions to create new ones. Several scholars believe public relations is a persuasive model of communication. It was first established by Bernays in the 1920s and considered as a mechanism for change. It can be argued the change public relations brings is either coercive or propaganda oriented. However, public relations is significant to advocate social movements, improve public awareness, develop national strategies, and support multiculturalism (Anthony, 2012, 2015; Coombs & Holladay, 2014; L'Etang, 2013, 2015; Toledano & Mckie, 2007). The review explores how to apply these social and cultural functions of PR in a political setting and by political PR professionals. This section also provides a definition of public relations and political PR and the researcher's take on that in the context of this research. It describes how political PR can address pluralism, social integration, and extremism using the most relevant PR approaches and communication theories. Here, political PR frameworks and strategies are deployed in order to advance the argument and findings of this thesis as well.

The chapter also explains why political PR is entrenched in the promotional culture of spin and how to reassess it. The researcher describes what to explore in that transition of political PR. This is because the 'image problem' (Anthony, 2012) related to the industry highlights the importance of defining its social and cultural functions. At this point, it becomes clearer what the areas of inclusion in this literature review are and what are not. The researcher excludes global political PR and election campaigning, for example, for not being associated with the research topics. Additionally, this section reveals the current approach to political communication, how scholars consider the change in this field and its role in society. The

literature investigates the debate on political correctness and how far-right populists are contributing to this debate as well. It also describes the political discourse of right-wing populists given the research themes and what political PR can offer in this regard. In places, the literature cites some old academic sources. The purpose of some of these, however, is to prove the problem remains unsolved and challenging over time. The researcher gives historical groundings for almost every topic under discussion to form understandings and justify judgements. Consequently, this section highlights the recent evolution of central concepts associated with political PR.

The literature sheds light on the most current approaches to counter-terrorism, extremism and social integration. These techniques include those in the UK and other countries. Failures, successes, and suggestions are mainly presented in the British political context. The chapter also addresses one of the most significant issues in countering terrorism and enhancing social inclusion, which is the language used. There is a full explanation of how word choices and rhetoric have affected the way these sensitive matters tackled. Furthermore, the review investigates the moral foundation theory in public relations. This theory focuses on the importance of triggering value and emotionally-based argumentations (Trayner, 2017) when addressing terrorism and social integration. It is where the researcher brings the chief elements and precise focus of this study into view. Moreover, the literature proves there are few scholarly sources of how to use PR social responsibility in a political environment. However, many studies have examined the role of public relations in implementing positive social changes and national strategies. The surrounding literature also presents more studies from counter-terrorism and radicalisation's fields of study than that of political PR. It may indicate that PR scholars might not yet examine political PR in such modern contexts. As such, political PR scholarship has explored traditional topics such as news management, election campaigns, spin, and government communication. Finally, the conclusion brings

compelling justifications to the research. It demonstrates gaps in political PR, public relations, and counter-terrorism. It also positions political PR in areas rarely investigated in public relations, such as social inclusion and radicalisation, together with how the research problem evolves.

1. Far-right populism and the politically correct rhetoric of inclusion. Halikiopoulou

(2018) believes that:

The far-right umbrella includes parties and groups...[which] all justify a broad range of policy positions on socioeconomic issues on the basis of nationalism. The point here is not simply that they are all, to a degree, nationalist; but rather, that they use nationalism to justify their positions on all socioeconomic issues. (para. 7)

Populism, on the other hand, and as long as nationalism is concerned, “pits the people against the elites...While populism may or may not be an attribute of some far right parties, it is not their defining feature. Rather, nationalism is” (para. 8 - 9). The arguments of far-right populists, therefore, revolve around defending nativist values and national identity. Nevertheless, the easily-dismissed political correctness (PC) may still work with left-wing populism towards more culturally acceptable political discourse. The discourse of far-right populists can complicate the present situation of social integration, pluralism and extremism in Britain. It may even threaten the British social and cultural texture in which multiculturalism is already “weighed with historical baggage, burdened by context” (Muir, 2017, para. 1). This type of political discourse invites more reasons for the division while there is a need for inclusion and unity. Farage’s description of the Brexit vote “as a victory for real people” (Finkelstein, 2016, p. 1), and considering Brexit as voters’ rejection of liberalism and socialist left (Bushnell, 2017) are good examples in that respect. Beckett (2018) describes the current political environment as follows:

For the many voters who dislike confrontation and feel that democracy should be about dialogue and compromise, the new political disorder is frightening. Even the

most self-assured political veterans are horrified and baffled. As Tony Blair put it in a 2016 interview: “I’m not sure I fully understand politics right now.” The adjective commentators repeatedly use to describe it is “toxic”. (para. 4)

The present fissure of segregation and lack of communication can create a climate of misunderstanding and hatred. Scholars have referred to right-wing populists as conservative and discriminatory against minorities. Haynes (2018), for example, believes that “the populist right is destined to win electoral triumphs on the strength of a nostalgic electoral programme, based on the desirability of returning to a “lost” golden age by expelling migrants and making Western democracies racially “pure” (again)” (p. 1318). Therefore, their political discourse applies an extreme sense of segregation and causes the alienation of certain groups in society (Panayotu, 2017). Such a situation can be a crisis. Far-right populists consider immigrants as a social and cultural problem and target them with the rhetoric of alienation. Nevertheless, political actors can choose to handle this situation strategically to bring order to this chaos. It can be argued that the far-right’s discriminatory rhetoric can become the propaganda of integration. That is what Brubaker (2017) refers to when he says: “populism thrives on crisis...[but] [i]n the battle between representations of crisis and representations of non-crisis, crisis does not always win” (p. 380). It is about transforming society from the grip of crisis into a society that can thrive and grow.

The ideology of right-wing populists stems from their belief in freedom of speech, nationalism and the insignificant role of PC. This will create a climate of fear and bring more violence to society if not tackled through framing proper, fearless and national plan of social cohesion. Right-wing populism also relies on a strategy that “takes insecurity and anxiety as the necessary, unavoidable and indeed favourable product of the capitalist social relations, and transforms such insecurity and anxiety into the fear of the stranger” (Gandesha, 2018, p. 10). This exploitation of people’s emotions threatens the social texture. It indicates, therefore, the government should prepare plans and strategies. Left-wing populism, on the other hand,

regardless of the lack of historical and logical interpretations provided to understand it and improve its capability to act, believes in a progressive and inclusive approach to populism (Bray, 2017). According to Left-wing populists, what matters the most is the people while the elites who represent them remain under scrutiny and criticism (Bray, 2017). Since people are the main concern for leftist populists and PC advocates, they can be encouraged to do more to revive their political discourse towards enhancing community cohesion and creating mutual understanding.

Regarding the concept of freedom that right-wing populists use to express extreme attitudes, their excessive freedom has caused dire consequences. It creates more dissatisfaction in societies, cultivates far-right patriotism which sets people apart rather than bringing them together, fuels the already-existed climate of hate and fear, and undermines our political culture (Reno, 2016). This kind of political discourse has affected the Muslim community, which is treated with suspicion and blamed for terrorism. It is deepening the dangerous existence of the other within what is supposed to be one society. Bloul (2008) realises the problem of using Islamophobic rhetoric in the context of freedom of speech:

...the issue of free speech is particularly thorny in the case of religious anti-vilification as the legislator must solve a paradoxical situation: one must be free to criticize beliefs but should not use hate speech against people on religious grounds while, in practical terms, offenders do not distinguish between people and their belief systems and those offended identify with their belief system in such a way that as Q. C. Woinarski remarked, "If one vilifies Islam, one is by necessary consequence vilifying people who hold that religious belief". (p. 14)

Accordingly, the xenophobic rhetoric of right-wing populists seems destructive and divisive.

Turner (2006) argues:

If we fail to treat strangers with hospitality, they become aliens. If they are aliens, then they are not regarded as rights-bearing individuals, and we have no responsibility towards them. If we have no responsibility towards them, they remain outsiders, and they become targets of xenophobia. If they are the targets of xenophobic fear, then they are enemies. (pp. 607 - 608)

Based on this argument, it will be beneficial to provide some data on the position of Muslims in the UK. With 3 million of the UK population (Commission for Countering Extremism, 2020; Peach, 2006), “Muslims became the second largest individual religion” in Britain (Peach, 2006, p. 632). Ethnically, those British Muslims are from major ethnicities that ranged from Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim group, however, some included a significant Middle Eastern, African, North African, Cypriot, Mixed and White minorities (Peach, 2006). Turning to the position of Muslims in the UK, Peach (2006) demonstrates that “[t]he Muslim population, taken as a whole, is poor, badly housed, with low educational qualifications, suffers high levels of male unemployment and has a very low female participation rate in the labour market” (Peach, 2006, p. 637). Similarly, Abbas (n.d.) sheds light on a similar result where “ethnic minorities, [in many areas in Birmingham] are also Muslim specific, experience higher unemployment rates in comparison to the citywide average, and especially when compared with white people” (p. 10). Furthermore, Peach (2006) describes that these British Muslims have the biggest percentage of young adults and the lowest of old people compared to other religious groups. In the context of this research, this fact is significant – the Muslim youth needs to be politically recognised and involved in positive national causes such as community cohesion. Otherwise, they will be easy targets for extremist groups. The objective here is to explore how political PR techniques can be employed to listen to and engage with Muslim youth who can be radicalised and turned into walking bombs. Peach (2006) also finds that “the two largest Muslim groups, the Pakistanis and particularly the Bangladeshis are rather isolated and encapsulated” (p. 652). What is essential in this doctoral project, therefore, is to tackle this sense of social segregation in society. Moreover, by investigating the position of Muslims on health issues, particularly in Birmingham, Abbas (n.d.) states that “life expectancy is higher in white wards compared to those containing high proportions of ethnic minorities” (p. 14). With the fact that

Birmingham represents several challenges that are encountered by Muslims all over the UK

(Abbas, n.d.), Abbas concludes Muslim communities:

...have not benefited from the levels of mobility enjoyed by other migrant communities, and of their inability to move out areas which are facing high levels of social tension and economic deprivation through direct discrimination, racial hostility and cultural preference....It is not then a surprise that Muslims have low levels of engagement when it comes to state driven initiatives and reflect the greatest tendency to meet their needs through self-sufficiency, a strategy which has so far proved ineffective and is unlikely to significantly improve the position of the Muslim community. At the same time, the development of certain trends in separatism and extremism among some minority sections of the Muslim community could further increase the marginalisation of Muslims, and contribute to even more tension. (pp. 17 - 18)

Although the negative role of the media and British tabloids will be discussed later, it will be useful to highlight how these have affected the position of Muslims in Britain. Sian, Law and Sayyid (2012) write that each of the Daily Mail, The Sun, “and The Independent all constructed Muslims in a largely negative light...This can be seen to reflect the wider social, public and political discourses surrounding Muslims as fundamentally ‘problematic’ and as representing the ‘enemy’ of the west” (p. 266).

To summarize, picturing immigrants and asylum seekers as illegal aliens or referring to them as the other can pose threats to social integration. Most recently, right-wing populists are also feeding people’s sense of resentment and hatred (Gandesha, 2018; Panayotu, 2017).

Hameleers and Schmuck (2017) describe these populists’ views:

...as the perceived antagonism between the in-group of the ordinary people and causally and morally opposed others – the elites for anti-establishment populist attitudes and societal out-groups for exclusionist populist attitudes...such populist ideas can manifest themselves both as a characteristic of a political communication text...and as a frame of reference that citizens can use to interpret societal issues. (p. 1427)

Far-right leaders are described as “those modernising right wing parties, which appeal to resentments, prejudices and traditional values and offer simplistic and unrealistic solutions to

socio-political populism” (Lazaridis & Tsagkroni, 2015, p. 194). Their political discourse concentrates on the sensitive matters of terrorism, radicalisation and extremism. Hence, what is highlighted in far-right protests are securitisation issues related to how immigration has caused social and economic insecurities, the Islamisation of Western societies, and fear (Charter, 2015). In this sense, Islamophobia and securitisation techniques have left a negative impact on the relationship between the Muslim community and others in society. These have developed a passive-aggressive attitude towards Muslims. As such, Islamophobia can no longer be considered a term that refers to hatred only but related to a far greater sense of prejudice, bigotry and racism (Versi, 2018b). The far-right political discourse, thus, characterises an age of violence and hate-fuelled by “the rhetoric of the ‘othering’ in ordinary language and [the worryingly reduced] margins of tolerance in society” (Lazaridis & Tsagkroni, 2015, p. 200). In consideration of this, fear is the enemy and generator of right-wing speech of exclusion. Therefore, strategic framing in political PR may play a significant role in plans targeting extremism. Levels of fear and anger can be reduced based on the language used. It is to shape public attitudes and decide how the crisis is seen and framed for public consumption.

Carefully framing matters related to social integration becomes necessary and act of bravery. Left-wing politicians use patriotic language to bring people together and increase the effectiveness of their political discourse (Custodi, 2017). They “renew the language of the traditional left-wing narrative, providing new signifiers, as well as new significances to old signifiers...[leading an ideological renovation to support local integration strategies]” (Custodi, 2017, p. 25). In this sense, Ambrozik (2018) finds that US liberals and political left reject using the term CVE [Countering Violent Extremism] and encourage those that indicate a greater sense of inclusivity such as Community Resilience. However, “conservatives and moderates are almost as likely to support CVE programing regardless of the terminology

used” (p. 56). In the UK, Osborne and Sloan (2017) write that “[t]he Conservatives advocate a poorly defined “Commission for Countering Extremism” and a continuation of the flawed Prevent strategy. By contrast, the LibDems will scrap Prevent, and Labour pledges a review” (para. 27 - 28). These un-strategic choices made by the Conservatives and their negative impact on the Muslim community will be discussed later in this review.

What also affected British Muslims is Trump’s victory and Brexit. Some argue that these are based on political and economic causes. The real reason for both campaigns, however, was cultural (Finkelstein, 2016; Morieson, 2017). These political and economic measures strike at the heart of the ‘culture of lies’ (Paris, 2017) and the ‘post-truth era’ (Metz, 2016). It is where disinformation and subjectivity are the mainstream, and the truth remains hidden and twisted (McNair, 2004; Metz, 2016; Post-truth politics, 2016). Goodheart (2018) describes far-right populism as ‘Trumpian subjectivism’ and ‘KnowNothingism’ because Trump’s perspectives are the only truth available. He also refers to it as ‘cultural elitism’, which concerns “passing judgement on intellectual incoherence, false statements, [and] crude expression” (p. 3). Thus, we must revive the essence of political correctness. It is the language that enhances integration and the non-judgemental and affirmative rhetoric of inclusivity (Reno, 2016). This revival of PC would be useful if combined with a sustainable, well-equipped, and holistic communication strategy, especially with the Muslim community. It can represent a way of breaking barriers and winning the hearts and minds of the general population as well. Replacing far-right’s subjectivity with the truth, which George Orwell believes is the foundation of civilised society, is an urgent necessity. To expand on this:

...in...[Orwell’s] essay ‘looking back on the Spanish war’ he writes: Nazi theory specifically denies that such a thing as the truth exists and he says that you know, if the leader, in this case he is thinking about Hitler, says that 2+2 are 5 will turn to 2+2 are 5 and he says this prospect frightens me much more than bombs, and I think it is that...you have these absolute monoliths within fascism where whatever the leader says is the truth is the only sole reality. (Tinline, 2020)

Solutions and answers, therefore, are what the debate around extremism must behold and unfold (Goodheart, 2018). A debate that can positively thrive in the long-term process of tackling social inclusion. Furthermore, from a far-right exclusive perspective, the people addressed are only the real natives (Braidotti, 2016; Goodheart, 2018). This attempt to segregate communities, therefore, creates more brain-washed and radicalised extremists and terrorists. Governments and political figures, however, should highlight that:

All of us are “real” people living “real” lives. We all have interests and views and they clash. We must argue and compromise and no one has the “actual person” trump card...Our institutions-parliament, government, the courts-must serve a plural society, they must balance interests and protect rights [and when Brexit happens, that does not mean] we are going to allow anyone to undermine a liberal, pluralist, political democracy based on the rule of law. (Finkelstein, 2016, p. 2)

Turning to PC to act by the quote above is not strategically enough. Unfortunately, PC appears more vulnerable than ever. It may lack the right techniques to defend itself against criticism and cynicism in the rise of right-wing populism. As some blame PC for the recent wave of far-right populism (Phillips, 2017), others believe it destroys our sense of ‘ethical responsibility’ (Phillips, 2017). The culturally oppressive rules of PC have formed the extreme mentality of right-wing populists who attack these rules, celebrate populism, and define it as “a return to decency and reason” (Phillips, 2017, p. 2). Right-wing populism’s themes of xenophobia, conservatism and authoritarianism also employed to accuse PC of undermining freedom of speech, cultural identity, and traditional values (Charter, 2015). Hence, it can be suggested that any attempt to strengthen PC must come with the effective political PR formula of framing, priming and more.

In addition, the leader of the far-right Dutch Freedom party attacks PC since it suppresses their freedom and prevents them from keeping their national identity (Charter, 2015). Although populism is primarily against liberalism and socialist left, right-wing populists find themselves “rallying to defend long held rights that they now consider to be under threat,

such as freedom of speech, freedom of conscience and freedom of association” (Bushnell, 2017, p. 15). O’Hagan (2018), thus, writes how thousands of far-right protesters led a march in London to defend freedom of speech. This freedom, according to the article, is no longer the type which calls for reasonable and progressive causes: “[f]ar from being an innocent defence of Enlightenment values, the protest seemed more a Trojan horse for the ideas of the far right to insert themselves into the political mainstream” (para. 2). Such freedom of speech develops unhealthy political discourse and performs as a socially destructive mechanism rather than a developmental instrument. It cannot help a democratic society to prosper. As such, the government should address and defeat its fears to reimpose control over the divisive views of right-wing populists where Islamophobic rhetoric tolerated. Relatedly, the concerns made against PC may leave the door open for seeking more solid ground from which we can enhance the values stand behind it. One of the suggestions is through forming ‘Transnational populism’ calling for a progressive international populist approach that:

...will mobilize passions in a democratic and progressive direction...[attempting to follow the principles of DiEM25 (Democracy in Europe Movement 2025) which works] to construct an inclusive, democratic, and transnational idea of “the people” that can stand against the transnational European elites, the supranational structures of the EU and the global markets, with the aim of taking back democracy. (Panayotu, 2017, p. 2)

Predicting the rise of the importance of PC in response to right-wing populism can be the only positive effect resulting from the political discourse of far-right populism: “Donald Trump’s presidency will provide an eternal supply of the raw material that is necessary to reproduce the existence of the politically correct discourse” (Jrach, 2016, p. 6). There is also a need for a rapid rebuttal strategy against what emerges from far-right political discourse. It is an approach that gives reasons why the prejudice and accusations against the Muslim community are untrue. This reliance on the politically correct language to confront ugly reality and those who enjoy injustices is needed (Jrach, 2016) because the views of far-right populists are a threat to social integration. Their beliefs, however, can bring more

consideration to the mechanisms from which they can be undermined (Bushnell, 2017). This study is a good example in this regard.

- The central concept in the reforming process of political communication is PC. According to Fairclough (2003), PC describes why there is a growing interest in politics to attain political and social change through altering language and culture, and “what has happened socially that can explain the cultural turn and the language turn in politics, in social and political theory, and in other domains of social practice?” (p. 17). Fairclough (2003) thinks that in PC, discourses are not only used to explain realities but to create visions of how these realities can be: “if the politics of culture and language are to work as part of a political strategy with some prospect of success, they have to be integrated within a politics of structures and habituses- a hegemonic politics” (p. 25). Similarly, Chen (2016) explains that PC involves the implementation of social principles in a way that makes societies better integrated through fighting hostility and hatred. It is more about what is socially welcomed rather than what is right (Chen, 2016). Thus, “[t]o label a statement politically correct, then, is not to declare the statement correct, but merely acceptable to society” (Chen, 2016, para. 5). However, Weber (2016) criticises PC suggesting that what is socially more appropriate is to use ‘cultural acceptance’ or ‘cultural respectfulness’. These new terms provide a sense of clarity to the kind of symbols governments should defend (Weber, 2016).

What determines some words, ideas and actions are culturally acceptable is “our values and public discourse” (Weber, 2016, p. 114). Moller (2016) considers PC as a form of shaping public discourse carefully and addressing disrespectful remarks which may harm the social status of a specific group. Hence, Lorry highlights “the impressive degree of self-censorship political correctness can achieve or demand” (as cited in Moller, 2016, p. 4). The article defines PC as a prominent approach from which individuals bring specific interests into the public debate that may contradict some of our values and objectives. PC, therefore,

introduces specific patterns of speech, builds “public discourse, often by inhibiting speech or other forms of social signaling” (Moller, 2016, p. 1), and avoids causing offence to socially isolated groups. It is about “a system for moulding public discourse....[because] the target of political correctness is the insult itself (along with the corresponding threat to the public standing of the group), not the overall interests of the people involved” (Moller, 2016, pp. 2 - 3). Furthermore, Moller highlights the left distinctiveness of PC. In this sense, PC is a discourse created according to a consideration of the language used to eliminate offences and build positive attitudes (Moller, 2016). Whereas, the right “go[es] wrong and undercut[s] their own aims...by exhibiting a characteristic series of mistakes that are distinct from those most common on the left” (p. 6). Moller (2016) also believes what incorporates a politically incorrect speech is to make insults that could harm a group’s reputation. Consequently, the article considers the government’s description of immigrants as ‘illegal aliens’ to represent a dilemma. Using this terminology marginalises newcomers and creates a climate of hatred and fear (Moller, 2016).

Some scholars criticise PC. Taub (2015), for example, writes that PC is a lie and has no existence: “[w]hat defines it is not what it describes but how it’s used: as a way to dismiss a concern or demand as a frivolous grievance rather than a real issue” (para. 6). The article states PC is a tool for ‘ideological repression’ that threatens free speech and the free political marketplace. Moreover, the dismissal of counter-arguments and criticism as “PC “joke” are overwhelmingly likely to be raised by people who are less privileged and to concern issues that are outside the mainstream” (para. 12). Taub (2015) also believes PC has a negative connotation in which women’s appeals for online protection against harassments, for example, “are often dismissed as “politically correct” threats to free speech, rather than as a way to promote it” (para. 16). He sheds light on how dismissing sensitive issues as PC prevents from solving them. The article elaborates that when marginalised groups call for

promoting social integration, their calls get criticised and labelled unnecessary. Others warn that letting disadvantaged people's concerns from being heard "is dangerous, because doing so could potentially burden the lives, or at least change the speech, of more privileged people" (Taub, 2015, para. 24). Similarly, O'Neill (2011) writes that advocates of politically correct terminology claim that PC is an illusion. As such, it is "an invention of the critics of the so-called "progressive" program, designed to discredit the critics' opponents without proper argument" (para. 4). Nevertheless, the politically correct language rejects words that indicate stereotypes and encourages those that define people objectively; a language that intends to 'solve' (O'Neill, 2011).

Western (2015) highlights the increasing emergence of political incorrectness (PIC) compared to PC in areas such as online trolling of migration and white supremacy and far-right movements. He approached PC and PIC by conducting psychoanalysis. It revealed that PC's advocates stay behind the scenes while PIC's perform openly. By considering PC people as those who "inflect a new authoritarianism via the discourse of the university, using language, knowledge and discourse to create a softer but stifling-authoritarianism" (Western, 2015, p. 15), people may no longer perceive political correctness positively. A possible solution to that would be through promoting new terms like 'cultural respectfulness' (Weber, 2016). Searching for better alternatives may also mean that we need new social and cultural frames for social cohesion and multiculturalism. (L. Jones, 2018), for example, describes why the British public should no longer use the term PC. According to the article which talks about people's reaction to the latest series of Doctor Who, Jones (2018) finds:

People felt that equality, diversity and civil rights, otherwise known as political correctness, was being shoved down their throats. That it was synonymous with control; that the BBC was trying to drive an ulterior agenda and impose an ideology onto fans. (para. 14)

Sparrow (2017) describes the current American approach to PC. Here, political correctness does not mean anything and when anyone is labelled “‘politically correct’ [,] you’re saying that they’re innately ridiculous and not worth taken seriously” (para. 36). According to the article, PC no longer defends marginalised groups and moves instead to the use of rhetoric in a context which is not a highly cultural one. Sparrow (2017) refers to this phenomenon as ‘pop culture’. It is where Trump decries PC, and by doing so “he’s not urging a return to Plato but defending calling women “dogs” and ‘pigs’” (para. 22). This negative change and increasing cynicism in the arguments related to PC have started from universities’ campuses (Sparrow, 2017). It is where indecency, as Sparrow argues, is encouraged by British alt-right political commentator Milo Yiannopoulos who “tells students their teachers are cunts” (para. 24).

According to Paris’ (2016) editorial, most of the articles encourage students to discuss political issues that are related to their environment to help them better connect to society. Furthermore, Paris (2017) writes about the reaction of many US universities to the increasing rates of hate crimes. These colleges assured students that they were safe in their campuses, and everything was done to protect minorities. These messages, according to Paris (2017), also demonstrated that “[i]f standing with and protecting the vulnerable and responding to the racism...is political correctness, then let’s have more of it” (p. 4). Paris (2017) defends PC stating that it is necessary to have a rational and evidence-based argument. The article also argues that in this time of culture of lies, what we most need is that “[i]nstead of fearing the charge of “political correctness,” we should insist on serious sustained attention to politics...with an eye...to challenging what are likely to be public deceptions and destructive policies” (p. 5).

The challenge of far-right populism and racism seems to undermine Pitcher (2003) and De Beus’ (2011) call for moving towards a social form of political communication. Lounasmeri

(2018), however, thinks public relations has something to offer in this regard. This is because “[s]everal political communication researchers have attested to the close relations among media, politics and PR in today’s Western societies” (p. 378). By investigating how PR professionals understand their current function in the Finnish government (p. 378), Lounasmeri (2018) demonstrates that PR experts:

...serve as new producers of knowledge and intermediaries establishing connections among interest organisations, the media and political actors. Here, PR work is understood as comprising both PR and PA [public affairs] tasks and seen as a continuum of efforts to influence political processes...Thus, PR is closely connected to political influencing or lobbying, and traditional lobbying channels and connections are being complemented and connected to influencing the public sphere. (p. 379)

The article also explores how PR professionals see themselves affecting political practices and finds that they are:

...having the ability to set the agenda for political discussions; influencing the evolving discourse on how issues are discussed, both publicly and in elite circles; and being able to quiet undesirable issues...[Furthermore,] [w]hen asked about their position and potential to influence matters, they described themselves as mostly servants and interest-free providers of information. The [PR] consultants clearly detached themselves from political affiliations: they expressed wanting to build bridges and presented themselves as neutral, non-political professionals. (pp. 386 - 387)

By relating Lounasmeri’s (2018) findings to De Beus’ (2011) suggestion of replacing the term political communication with ‘public relations democracy’, Haubrich (2006) and De Beus (2011) invite political actors and institutions to engage with citizens in the form of political communication environments. It is when the availability of political information is more important than the political system per se (Pfetsch & Esser, 2014). These environments should impose some control over information as political players are no longer capable of managing how politics is communicated and interpreted in the public sphere (De Beus, 2011). That contradicts the traditional nature of political communication as a ‘quiet business’ where building relationships with the public can be through strategies such as spin-doctoring

(Franklin, 2004). Consequently, there is a need for change in the foundations of political communication into more socially and culturally-oriented politics (Bennett & Lyengar, 2008; Fairclough, 2003; Graber & Smith, 2005). Despite the role of economics, sociology and psychology in highlighting the function of communication in producing political behaviour, a significant line of research has only focused on the techniques used for disseminating content and shaping publics' orientations (Bennett & Lyengar, 2008). It comes while a "disjuncture among theory, social change, and research [has] beset [us] with new...paradoxes in communication processes that seem to elude explanation and often...appears to be no solid theoretical or empirical grip" (Bennett & Lyengar, 2008, p. 713).

Graber and Smith (2005) encourage political communication scholars to address some of the field's most neglected gaps. The first gap is the challenge of "preserving the open marketplace of ideas" (p. 495). Developments such as terrorism and 'security-related' concerns have restrained people, political actors and journalists from freely involving in debates related to these issues (Graber & Smith, 2005). Governments, therefore, have to engage people in a free marketplace of ideas to gain responsible social practice (Asthana & Walker, 2016; Fall, 2008). The second gap is the role of "[m]edia as agents of political socialization" (Graber & Smith, 2005, p. 496). It is where the function of political communication in political socialisation is ignored, and digital media threatens social integration (Graber & Smith, 2005). According to Dahlgren et al., that ignores the importance of media in political socialisation (as cited in Graber & Smith, 2005). Consequently, "people will find it increasingly difficult to agree on common political agendas and that norms of tolerance that are so crucial in democracies may weaken" (Graber & Smith, 2005, p. 496). It happens while political communication academics have not yet provided enough measures for action regarding how media can contribute to this political socialisation (p. 496).

Bylund (2012) talks about the significance of planning in politics and if planning beyond politics or not. Apart from the standard definition of PC, the article asks: “should we be concerned with a kind [of PC] which works through theoretical positions?” (p. 2). Bylund (2012) states that during ‘Is planning Past Politics’ symposium, many papers highlighted the notion of politics and planning performing side by side on certain matters. These papers, however, find “democratic deficits and simply bad (or evil) planning” (p. 2). A post-political correctness approach, therefore, sheds light on “proper political attitude [that] could very well be to encourage many different languages, vocabularies, practices of making diagnosis and propose possibilities” (Bylund, 2012, p. 4).

2. Brexit and Euroscepticism: how Englishness may work in local integration context in light of the UK’s European disintegration. Scholars have different views over Brexit. Some say, “Brexit voters, like Trump supporters, are motivated by identity, not economics” (Kaufmann, 2016, p. 1), and that Brexit “was about gut-wrenching issues like borders, culture, and the homeland” (Gietel-Basten, 2016, p. 678). Employing the identity factor in the referendum was strategic and impressive (Vieten & Poynting, 2016). It helped to support the Leave vote and Take Back Control campaign. Haynes (2018) explains how right-wing populists play and win:

...existing democratic frameworks are being significantly undermined by the rise of right-wing populism and the traditional parties seem at a loss how to deal with it...[As] [m]any have switched their vote to right-wing populists...[,] [t]he democratic cost is that many people in Europe, South Africa and the US are now prepared to reduce or eliminate the fundamental rights of immigrants in order to “get rid of them”, or...force them to “go back to where you came from”. (p. 1318)

A further consequence of this xenophobic rhetoric is seen in how the Muslim community has been impacted, which brings me to my second point. Inglehart and Norris (2016) use cultural backlash theory to explain Brexit, and how UKIP gained the public’s vote which is “in large part [considered] as a reaction against progressive cultural change” (pp. 2 - 3). This populist

party places emphasis on the sense of resentment among those whose culture was predominant and are anxious about losing their cultural status (Inglehart & Norris, 2016). In the conceptual framework, we will explain this further in the context of this thesis. According to Henderson et al. (2016), Europe has become ‘Englishness’s other’ (as cited in Bachmann & Sidaway, 2016). It means “those strongly identified with English nationalism were more prone to vote Leave, and those who identified with Welsh, Scottish and Irish nationalism leaned towards Remain” (Olivas-Osuna et al., 2019, p. 17). Therefore, it may come as no surprise when UKIP’s Paul Nuttall said that “[t]he next big issue that’s going to come up in British politics beyond Brexit is Englishness” (Elgot, 2017, para. 7). This framing of otherness seems locally familiar as well. Islamophobia is feeding the divisiveness in Britain given that a recent report by MPs finds:

British society at large, by virtue of normalised prejudice against Muslim beliefs and practice, have come to imbibe a panoply of falsehoods or misrepresentations and discriminatory outlooks...[and] because there is no commonly agreed definition of Islamophobia, it has been allowed to “increase in society to devastating effect. (Dearden, 2018, para. 4 - 11)

With some establishing connection between Englishness and Brexit, it can be assumed that UKIP realised what Englishness meant to English people. According to Elgot’s (2017) article ‘English patriotism on the rise’, a study finds “a growing correlation between identity and political behaviour, with numerous polls during and after the referendum showing that those who felt most English were most likely to vote leave” (para. 5). Consequently, some politicians have employed what seems untapped from others in the British political scene. It is the use of nationalism, which is “inherently [among the terms] linked with the Brexit vote” (Bachmann & Sidaway, 2016, p. 48). The UKIP and far-rights’ plans seem valid because there is continuing success to garner public support. This cannot be denied or ignored. A new alarming report sheds light on the problem. Walker (2018) writes about a six years study conducted by Hope Not Hate. It investigated how attitudes on immigration, multiculturalism

and Islam differ in Britain being more positive in the plural and wealthy cities while they tend to be negative in poor and socio-economical deprived communities in suburbs of cities or towns with the majority in north or central of England. ““The strong view in many of these communities is that they have been abandoned and left to rot by the political establishment in preference to addressing the needs and wishes of new arrivals in the cities”” (Murray, 2018, para. 5). Later in this literature review, we will see how ignoring these communities’ needs and emotions, have influenced the relationship between them and the Muslim community and ultimately multiculturalism in Britain.

It appears that any argument made in this literature review refers to political and governmental inactions in one way or another. The English people want attention and answers to prepare them psychologically for social integration. The Muslim community also needs understanding and recognition. Tackling radicalisation and extremism may start once realising the significance of these issues. That is while bearing in mind that “Islamist extremism is a ‘chronic and pernicious’ issue that has persisted in the UK for decades with hundreds of young Muslims leaving the country to fight for Isis” (Marsh, 2019, para. 2). If the public’s most long-standing concerns are left untreated, extremists such as Tommy Robinson and Anjem Choudary can radicalise people turning them into extremists or even worse, terrorists.

Any social cohesion policy that will inevitably counter extremism should recognise the importance of the moral values of patriotism and national pride. These are fundamental elements of English identity. Directing the media, for example, to target newcomers and the Muslim community with messages related to these values would be beneficial. Moreover, providing English classes for immigrants from this community, in particular, may help to support community cohesion. It is essential as “[i]n Britain, researchers found that 45 per cent of churchgoing Christians, 47 per cent of non-practising Christians and 30 per cent of the

non-religious agreed that 'Islam is fundamentally incompatible with our values and culture'" (Associated Press & Pleasance, 2018, para. 14).

Left-wing political parties need also to show more understanding of Englishness nationwide. The Labour party, in particular, is relevant in this context. Hunt (2017) reveals that "[s]queamishness about English patriotism speaks to a widening culture gap between Labour and the people it seeks to represent" (para. 1). Similarly, Bogdanor (2013) asks: "how can Labour come to terms with the rising tide of Englishness?" (para. 9). It may become significant and a game changer if key politicians embrace Englishness. In his article 'Labour must embrace Englishness – and be proud of it', Hunt (2016) suggests: "[w]e must add to our heritage or lose it, we must grow greater or grow less, we must go forward or backward. I believe in England and I believe that we shall go forward" (Hunt, 2016, para. 12). Englishness is an essential part of enhancing social integration and countering extremism. It can help British Muslims come to terms with their identity and boost their sense of belonging as well. The attachment to notions of Englishness is not wrong, but the way some would negatively frame it in the public sphere may cultivate a sense of segregation in the society. This can disrupt any social integration policies in the future and alienate the Muslim community even further. Harvey and Hubbard (2016) go on to expect that "there is a risk that a vote to leave might... result in the disintegration of the UK. We might well substitute ever greater discord for ever closer union" (p. 9).

Englishness involves addressing and stimulating emotions. This corresponds to one of the main arguments in this literature review. It is to use emotional appeals to promote inclusivity while highlighting Englishness can certainly lend a helping hand. Freeden (2017) demonstrates that "current scholars of ideology are now inclined to regard emotion as a standard feature of all ideologies....[thus] [n]o wonder that sovereignty shares top billing with anti-immigration on the list of the political demands surrounding Brexit" (pp. 6 - 8). In

this study, moral foundation theory suggests activating value-based argumentations from which PR professionals should understand how identity affects people's actions and attitudes (Trayner, 2017).

As a result of Brexit, the relationship between Britain and the EU comes to the disintegration stage. This happens while there was no real sense of integration between the two before: “[d]espite four decades of membership, the UK never fully took the European Union to its heart” (Curtice, 2016, p. 4). Hence, one may ask: How can we expect the UK to integrate the Muslim community as it possibly failed to integrate with the EU while the two seem to have many things in common? Despite all complications and with the “absence of a literature on disintegration” (Rosamond, 2016, p. 866) from EU scholars, probably through developing a national strategy of social integration, the UK can manage its European disintegration. On both sides, it is a matter of mastering the art of negotiations. That can be a successful blend of communication and action. Agreements, therefore, need cooperation and mutual understanding to bring solutions.

Some researchers interestingly refer to the failure of multiculturalism as a reason for Brexit (Braidotti, 2016; Inglehart & Norris, 2016). With the crises of European disintegration, far-right populism and extremism, the UK faces a more demanding challenge of enhancing social inclusion with its multicultural minorities, especially with the Muslim community. This can be more important than European integration years ago. It can be argued that any failure to deliver this national approach of community cohesion may cost Britain more than its European disintegration given that: “[i]n the shadow of the 2016 referendum stands one basic assertion that few would contest: Britain is now more divided than ever” (Goodwin & Heath, 2016, p. 4). Ashcroft and Bevir (2016) write that the UK government, in the aftermath of terrorist attacks such as 7/7, promoted inclusion rather than cultivating conformity and adaptation which brings a sense of multiculturalism that lacks real cohesion. As such, many

social and political actors, according to the authors, think that British multiculturalism allows minorities to prioritise their individual needs than trying to shape their new identity as real citizens. This has caused alienation and no real social integration (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2016).

Consequently, a multicultural post-Brexit Britain is about re-emphasising the significance of pluralism and focusing on empowering the local and embracing diversity (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2016). If there is reluctance towards addressing these dilemmas, then nothing can resolve them in coming few years. The UK's lack of an action at a national level, particularly with the Muslim community, may come as a reflection of what it chose to ignore that led to widening the gap with Europe and became one of the reasons behind Brexit. Hobolt (2016) describes Britain as a nation that has always shown reluctance when it comes to being part of the European project. According to the French president De Gaulle: "England is in effect insular...She has, in all her doings, very marked and very original habits and traditions" (as cited in Hobolt, 2016, p. 1273).

As bad as Brexit may appear (Gietel-Basten, 2016; Modi, 2017; Olivas-Osuna et al., 2019; Walker, 2019), there are lessons learnt. The referendum sheds light on the need for Britain to reconsider its local integration strategy with the Muslim community, manage multiculturalism, protect English people's sense of identity (Englishness) and recognise nationalism as a value that everyone should explicitly tolerate and embrace. This 'constructive nationalism' is positive and differs from ethnic nationalism which "should certainly be condemned, a non-intrusive multiple nationalism in which English ethnicity remains vibrant is a legitimate goal" (Kaufmann & Harris, 2014, p. 107). Viewed in this light, Ashcroft and Bevir (2016) write how post-Brexit Britain may look like:

Cross-cultural dialogue is...vital. Organisations such as London Citizens have provided spaces for productive discussion at the local level and we must build on these efforts. Such initiatives address deep cultural and religious differences more effectively than government policies such as Prevent, which unhelpfully muddled

community relations with counter-terrorism...Cultural renewal is a necessary part of building a Britain that is both inclusive and comfortable with pluralism. (p. 357)

Kaufmann and Harris (2014) also provide a relevant insight and explain the reasons why social integration and pluralism have failed in Britain:

A top-down approach...flattens and alienates minorities who wish to maintain their culture and white British who view their English ethnicity and their nation as organically connected. We recommend an official approach to national identity that simultaneously validates ethnic, civic and multicultural visions. Within society, however, the task of propounding a positive sense of Englishness remains. What underlies white disorientation is a deeper fear over the loss of a community of people who share an ethnically English perspective on the nation [thus]....So long as the ethnic majority accepts minorities as fully equal and legitimate members of the British nation, a more optimistic majority ethnicity should improve ethnic relations in the country...As long as this ethnic majority respects the rights of minorities it could prove an engine of integration, helping alleviate popular anxieties in an age of mass mobility. (pp. 104 - 108)

Using Ashcroft and Bevir (2016) and Kaufmann and Harris (2014) as points of departure, post-Brexit Britain should be prepared for a national strategy on social integration. The support of NGOs is in the centre of this debate. The understandings generated from this review of the literature on the use of political PR for community cohesion entails investigating political institutions or governmental bodies that are working on these matters. Unfortunately, the researcher is not able to analyse how these campaign for a social change in politics. Instead, chapter 5 will reveal how some of British NGOs work to promote community cohesion, support multiculturalism and counter radicalisation. Providing a background about these organisations, therefore, seems necessary. The following synthesis looks into NGOs to see whether they are using the most appropriate tools to tackle the research problem or not. If they do, why does it seem difficult to see real changes on the ground? In accordance with such inquiries comes the importance of formulating the research questions as follows:

The central research question

1. Can political public relations be used as a tool for social integration, with particular reference to the Muslim community in the UK?

The research sub-questions.

2. What PR approaches and communication theories can be employed to support social integration and counter extremism?
3. How can political PR change the British public's perception of fear of the other to encourage engagement with the Muslim community?
4. How do NGOs use different media platforms to engage with the public and young Muslims?
5. Do NGOs have a PR team? If yes, what PR strategies are used to communicate and engage with the Muslim community?
6. How do NGOs manage their relationships with the public effectively?
7. How do NGOs' messages and campaigns refer to the Muslim community?

3. *UK non-governmental organisations and social integration: Make NGOs great once and for all?* Community cohesion, pluralism and extremism are serious matters that affect civil society. Since this study intends to provide a road-map to the authorities in Britain to start working on these concerns, NGOs are also key players and influencers. These organisations “exist because Government cannot do everything” (Bhati, 2013, p. 338). Consequently, we expect them to be effective, particularly in the context of this thesis. According to one survey and in comparison to politicians, “[t]he public at all levels trusts NGOs...[while] Governments, big business and the media rate poorly” (Blood, 2004, p. 124). As much as this trust in NGOs needs to be exploited in the best way possible to lay the message of integration, this thesis primarily plans to boost the public's trust in the British government.

Promoting community cohesion must start with a political decision and first enacted by the authorities – NGOs then will provide a supportive role.

By asking ‘What are NGOs?’, scholars believe NGOs are “‘purposive actors with their own identities and interests’ rather than ‘passive carriers of transnational norms’” (as cited in Cusumano, 2019, p. 244). This precise definition hits at the very core of this study. We are looking for a purposefully active kind of NGOs, fully equipped to tackle the research problem. A contrary view to consider is the type of NGOs that are traditionally passive and, thus, ineffective. Such organisations should be either eliminated from participating in a national strategy for community cohesion or strategically empowered. In this sense, scholars talk about a collaborative approach in which NGOs are engaged with governments on many levels and certain agendas. To be more specific, NGOs may cooperate with the Prime minister and other political players. The issues raised from this review of literature, therefore, establish that community cohesion and extremism can be addressed from a collaborative approach where NGOs work with the government on these topics. Correspondingly, Cusumano (2019) describes that:

NGOs differ in their relationship with political authorities: While some are more willing to cooperate with military and law enforcement organizations and other government agencies in exchange for access to crisis scenarios and greater effectiveness in delivering aid, others attach greater value to their independence from political actors. (p. 245)

Most importantly, Hilton (2011) emphasizes on the fact that:

NGOs have played a vital role in modern Britain. They have transformed the nature of social and political interaction and they have done so according to changing needs, values and interests of citizens such that it...has always proved impossible to shape civil society and the voluntary sector according to the priorities of governments. (p. 2)

In a report that investigated these organisations from 1945 until 1997, Hilton explains how the British public has used NGOs and for what purposes:

...there to be approximately 900,000 organisations all over Britain, ranging from the tiny, local and informal to the huge, global and highly organised NGO leaders. Moreover, it has been estimated that 29 per cent of UK citizens formally volunteer every month, rising to 44 per cent annually. Every year, 38 per cent of the population contacts an elected representative or government official, attends a public meeting or rally, takes part in a demonstration, or signs a petition. They turn out in huge numbers for NGO-organised events: 250,000 in Edinburgh in 2005 in support of Make Poverty History; 400,000 in 2002 backing the Countryside Alliance in its defence of fox hunting; and anywhere between one and two million in 2003 to oppose the impending war in Iraq. (pp. 1 - 2)

Shockingly but interestingly, Hilton's report does not refer to the kind of NGOs that address community cohesion, multiculturalism or extremism – these are not mentioned as flourishing organisations as well. What is named as active organisations, however, are those concerned with climate change, for example, and poverty. This could tell us that the research problem does not seem a priority for NGOs and Britons as well, which brings me to my second point. Trust is a defining factor that represents the reason why people participate in social movements and NGOs: “in an increasingly complex world, the public has opted to support increasingly professional and expert-driven civic groups through arms-length, ‘cheque-book’ activism” (p. 3). In this sense, if the British public turns to these NGOs looking for experts and professionals to trust, how can the government restore that long-awaited social trust from NGOs? As observed in this literature review, such trust cannot be gained unless the authorities are capable of addressing the population's most significant public concerns – why not starting with multiculturalism and social integration then?

As a national project on community cohesion needs techniques and skills, it is essential to go through the public relations' tools that these NGOs are employing to deliver their message, whatever their causes are. By investigating how refugee community organizations (RCOs) helped to integrate refugees, Griffiths, Sigona, and Zetter (2006) find that in Liverpool and Birmingham, the primary work of the majority of these organisations:

...was providing advice and signposting to the statutory authorities. Only a minority of organisations in the different areas were able to offer more specialised services – such as health advice...or assistance with education, training and employment, as in three of the better-established RCOs in London. (p. 889)

One of the main questions in this thesis is: how do NGOs manage their relationships with the public effectively? The above quote can give us some indications. As much as asylum-seekers and refugees need to be integrated into the host society, these RCOs' tools seem primitive. Although NGOs can and “want to make a political impact” (Blood, 2004, p. 122), enhancing community cohesion maybe again, not on the country's national agenda. Nevertheless, it is significant to reveal that Griffiths et al. (2006) conclude “NGOs were essential to the formation of...[RCOs], providing training and assistance and the back-up and know-how involved in setting up organisations” (p. 892). Additionally, Webster (1998) states that the type of ‘information networking’ between NGOs included information exchange, communication, and collecting data. By discussing the importance of information technology for NGOs' work, Webster (1998) also reveals that it “is...being used by organisations to improve efficiency, to use a wider range of methods and to facilitate increased political involvement” (p. 15). Moreover, Blood (2004) writes that NGOs represent civil society to either oppose the political establishment or work with governments. At the moment, however, a prominent section of civil society, “wants to change the state, in particular, by redefining democracy from hierarchical representation to community participation” (p. 127).

This thesis puts such a proposal forward. NGOs are a powerful force which can bring community leaders, the youth and influential figures in a down-top approach to address social integration especially because “[w]hile NGOs multiply, traditional political institutions struggle” (Blood, 2004, p. 128). It can be argued, therefore, that political public relations should be introduced to achieve that goal bearing in mind that NGOs is just like corporations, “vulnerable to the emergence of smarter competitors” (Blood, 2004, p. 130). In the context of this study, it can draw attention to the powerful PR machine used by competitors such as that

of Daesh, Al-Qaida, far-right extremists and white supremacists movements. The propaganda of integration, therefore, needs highly strategic approaches and players, which is what we expect from the NGOs and political institutions involved. Seo, Kim and Yang (2009), for example, investigate how NGOs in the USA used digital media tools such as websites and blogs in their online PR strategies. It is interesting to note that the article concludes that “NGOs still put more emphasis on relations with mass media than on two-way communications with publics in their public relation activities that make use of new media” (p. 124). Seo et al. (2009) also believe that NGOs need to expand their online PR to get more different forms of digital media involved, rather than having websites and blogs only. By examining a group of South African NGOs that worked in the development area of expertise, Naude, Froneman and Atwood (2004) state that “[t]he people responsible for public relations were in most cases part of the dominant coalition of their organizations” (p. 90). Besides, the article illustrates the majority “of the other NGOs did not have procedures for eliciting input or handling conflict, and their views of public relations were limited to media relations and centered around the distribution of press releases when a specific event was planned” (p. 91). Theoretically speaking, Naude et al. (2004) explain that one out of ten NGOs employed the two-way symmetrical model of communication but “did not practice it in a pure form...[it] rather followed the mixed-motive model approach where persuasion might also be part of their actions (in the mixed-motive model the needs of both the organization as well as the relevant stakeholders, are served)” (p. 91). In addition, Bhati (2013) reveals that NGOs in India used specific PR techniques to educate the key publics about a particular issue, communicate with ‘funding bodies’, raise public awareness, gain positive media coverage and make behavioural change. And so, one PR strategy was personal meetings which “can be purport source of interaction with the members of the community” (p. 340). Other approaches, according to the article, included relationship building and media relations. To

summarize, Bhati (2013) believes “[g]ood public relations can not only assist in getting money but also building trust...[it] can help NGOs in communicating effectively with various stakeholders” (p. 340). In short, it can be argued that NGOs show an underestimation of public relations. British NGOs that are keen to enhance social integration and fight radicalisation and extremism should employ strategic approaches to get their message heard. Indeed, this thesis intends to prove that political PR can be beneficial to these NGOs. In the qualitative section, we will analyse how some of the NGOs in Britain are using PR strategies for community cohesion purposes.

Relatedly, this study will investigate seven organisations. An elaboration of what each NGO does, therefore, needs to be addressed. According to their website, Peace Education Programme (PEP) provides those who have direct contact with Muslim youth such as parents and imams with educational programmes to identify and counter ‘extremist narratives’. Abdullah Quilliam Society, on the other hand, aims at refurbishing the mosque (Abdullah Quilliam, 2020). Additionally, Quba Trust is a “grassroots initiative a spate of international disasters provided the impetus for the group to launch into the work...Characterised by its involvement with young people...[to respond to crises like Syria crisis]” (Quba Trust, 2020, para. 3 - 4). Whereas, Integrate UK is “[a] youth-led charity that campaigns for gender and racial equality and cross-cultural cohesion” (Integrate UK, 2020, para. 1). Moreover, British Future supports “integration in Britain, so that people from all backgrounds contribute fully to the society that we want to share” (British Future, 2020, para. 4). New Routes Integration also “promote[s] social inclusion for the public benefit by preventing people from becoming socially excluded and assisting them to integrate into society” (New Routes Integration, 2020, para. 2). Finally, the anonymous Islamic NGO (A) is working on enhancing community cohesion. As we will show in the following section of this literature review, political public relations will be explained and positioned to address the research problem. PR, political

communication and other related issues will be also explored and put into the context of this thesis.

4. Reconstructing political PR strategies: Activism and beyond. This study introduces a renovation of political PR for social integration purposes. Political public relations and PR, thus, are defined and explored. It can be also beneficial to clarify what the profession meant for earliest Britain's PR professionals during the Great Depression. By describing PR in interwar Britain 'as a social movement', Anthony (2012) explains:

...[PR was used] to create new democratic forums rather than serve short-term business objectives. By contrast, Edward Bernays saw public relations as 'the conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses [and] the executive arm of the invisible government....[Sir Stephen Tallents, who was the first president of the Institute of Public Relations in Britain, however, believed that PR] was an imaginative process of arbitration that interpreted competing demands into forms that its practitioners deemed as best serving the majority interest. (pp. 14 - 131)

Most recently, PR is defined as "a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics" (PRSA, 2020, para. 4).

Similarly, Stromback and Kiousis (2011) describe political PR as:

...the management process by which an organization or individual actor for political purposes, through purposeful communication and action, seeks to influence and to establish, build, and maintain beneficial relationships with its key publics to help support its mission and achieve its goals. (p. 8)

Another aspect of scholars' portrayal of political PR is the focus on strategies used. Molony and Colmer (2001), for instance, reveal that:

Of all PR forms, political PR is the most influential because of its proximity to state and regulatory power....Political PR is, however, more than 'spin doctors' doing media relations. In political marketing models, it is the communications activity which follows the policy design, adjustment and implementation phases of policy development...Speechwriters, copywriters, website designers, event managers, and image consultants also do political PR, and never more intensely than during elections. (pp. 957 - 958)

Viewed in this light, this thesis intends to redirect political PR from spin-doctoring into supporting social and national objectives. Spin theories, therefore, will be seen later in this review from a politically and socially constructive perspective. Since we are talking about employing political PR for nation-building purposes, activism may be involved. This concept of activism has not been novel to public relations' area of specialism – it is even at the core of the profession. Holtzhausen and Voto (2002) highlights that PR “[p]ractitioners displayed organizational activism through situational ethical decision making, a desire for change, the use of biopower to resist dominant power, a concern for employee representation, and the practice of dissensus, to mention but a few” (p. 57). Several studies have also described public relations' practitioners as activists and advocates (Berger, 2005; Saffer & Taylor, 2013; Smith & Ferguson, 2016) who employ specific PR techniques to reach out for the other (Toledano, 2016). According to Holtzhausen and Voto (2002), “[i]ntroducing practitioners to the idea of activism in public relations gave these practitioners a new understanding of the potential for resistance to unfair and unethical work environments” (p. 79). Besides, Holtzhausen discusses “that public relations practitioners can help the practice contribute to grassroots democracy through activism and radical politics” (as cited in Waymer, 2013, p. 323). This finding is central to this study – it indicates political PR can also support a down-top approach, a radical change in politics where a top-down strategy is a norm.

Hoffman (2009) defines social activism as “a way to open one’s eyes to the world, gain new knowledge, see injustice, question the reasons for the inequity, and learn how to act” (p. 409). It can be argued that this cannot effectively be accomplished without a successful PR blend of communication, engagement and relationships. Perhaps this is how the activist role in PR differs from mere activism; every step in public relations carried out professionally. Hence, to deliver the message of change:

The practitioner as organizational activist will serve as a conscience in the organization by resisting dominant power structures, particularly when these structures are not inclusive, will preference employees' and external publics' discourse over that of management, will make the most humane decision in a particular situation, and will promote new ways of thinking and problem solving through dissensus and conflict. (Holtzhausen & Voto, 2002, p. 64)

Activism in political PR, however, does not seem well-trodden. Nevertheless, Pieczka (2011) believes that “[t]he constitution of public relations professional jurisdiction needs to be broad and extensive in terms of communication theories, applications, and practice in order to sustain the profession in times of change” (as cited in Somerville & Kirby, 2012, p. 236). In the proposed ‘Muslim post-multiculturalism’ (Poynting, 2013) era, there should be modern ways to open the nation’s eyes to social integration, gain a better knowledge of how this can further build the country, defy racism and Islamophobia, and educate the British public how to act on that. As this literature will later prove the failure of British multiculturalism, it can be suggested that social movements and activists who have been also calling for promoting community cohesion and countering extremism have not yet achieved their goal.

Political PR techniques, therefore, are investigated to see if they can perform as such. According to Froehlich and Rudiger (2006), “the main goal of political PR is the use of media outlets to communicate specific political views, solutions, and interpretations of issues in the hope of garnering public support for political policies or campaigns” (as cited in Trammell, 2006, p. 402), which is what a national project for community cohesion needs – employing political PR by political actors, such as MPs, to introduce social integration as an urgent political solution for social segregation and exclusion in Britain. In addition, Molony and Colmer (2001) demonstrate how the major UK political parties implemented political PR during the general election in 2001. By focusing on the ‘PR production’ of political messages, campaigns, events, slogans and images, the study shows that the presentation or ‘presentational trellis’ prevailed over policy and personality, which are political

material. Molony and Colmer (2001), however, reveal that using political PR “[f]or politicians...enhanced democracy by making for more media coverage and by signalling that general elections are important public events. For voters, this signalling may have created more engagement with a great democratic ritual” (p. 967). Using such presentational trellis for social integration purposes is a significant tactic in the propaganda of integration that this thesis proposes. The literature demonstrates how political PR has exploited the media successfully, packaging politics for public consumption (Franklin, 2004). Moreover, Somerville and Kirby (2012) show that PR strategies were used by the main political parties in Northern Ireland during their campaigns which led to the Good Friday Agreement. The article highlights that:

...when public consent was required to legitimize the Agreement those for and against it presented their case to the general public...[who] favoured the more appropriate (and equally ethical) one-way communication models of dissemination, persuasion and argumentation. In the end it was clear that the people of Northern Ireland were more impressed by a message of hope and unity in diversity rather than one of fear and division. (p. 252)

Indeed, how messages are put forward determines outcomes and indicates that “[i]n essence, every organized effort to influence public opinion or specific target groups, directly or through the media, involves the use of public relations strategies and tactics” (Stromback, Mitrook & Kiouisis, 2010, p. 73). Somerville and Kirby (2012) also describe the PR effort during the Good Friday Agreement referendum campaign as a ‘reconciliatory PR activity’. To summarize, the UUP party hired a PR image expert who “reorganized the party’s media relations with clear priorities...Sinn Féin organized publicity events...whereas the SDLP...designed their campaign to avoid excluding either community” (p. 251). Consequently, Edwards (2016) explains “that the role of political public relations is to both maintain publicity and reputation, and facilitate deliberation in society” (as cited in Choy, 2018, p. 753). In fact, “political PR plays a critical role in the media-source relation and as such in the (trans)formation of the electoral, political and ultimately the democratic public debate” (Lengauer & Holler, 2013, p. 304). Put differently,

Choy (2018) investigates how a politician used a culturally-oriented type of political PR communication on social media that eventually led to his ‘unexpected’ victory in elections. The article finds that “[i]f political public relations can get through the first layer candidate to public communication – of conveying the socio-cultural relevance of the candidate to online public – the scale, depth, and networked multi-layers of public-public canvassing can then be garnered” (p. 759). This reveals political PR can convey a socio-cultural type of political messages that resonate to the public. It can be argued that multiculturalism has never been relevant to the general population the way it is now, especially after Brexit. Therefore, Choy’s (2018) conclusion can give the political establishment more clues into how political PR can lay the message of inclusivity.

The following parts of this review will describe how the profession can sow the key publics’ trust in the political system to tackle the research problem. Relatedly, Painter (2015) applies the relational framework, which has four areas of organization-public relations, to political PR. According to the article, political PR manages relationships with organizations’ main public based on ‘control mutuality, satisfaction, trust, and commitment’ “because organizations and their strategic publics are interdependent, and this interdependence results in consequences to each other that organizations need to manage constantly” (p. 802). Painter (2015) also sheds light on the PR scholars who demonstrate that the communication techniques used by the major political parties in the US were particularly dialogic or two-way, which “are positively associated with citizen–political party POPR [political organization-public relations] states, attitudes, and supportive behaviors” (p. 802). This sense of symmetry, as the surrounding literature will show throughout this literature review, is necessary to address the research focus.

As extremism and social segregation are risks and matters of uncertainty, Erzikova and Bowen (2019) introduce some of the most strategic PR techniques to encounter risky environments. The article highlights each of risk and issues management, relationship building, and crisis

communication, which all involve the symmetrical type of communication together with listening, as the PR efforts taken in times of political distrust, conflict and change. For instance, in issues management, what is central for PR professionals is to “[d]o your research, know your publics, prepare for the worst, and always have a plan in place” (Erzikova & Bowen, 2019, p. 7). Strategies for enhancing community cohesion and fighting against radicalisation need to be carefully planned, as stated above. The researchers also suggest framing as a technique where PR can position the problem as a crisis but a chance to learn and thrive as well. Besides, during unexpected political crises, PR responds effectively through “government relations and public affairs [which] are an intrinsic part of public relations” (p. 6). This seems equivalently essential to what Rice and Somerville (2013) have concluded. The researchers show that “[t]he potential for public relations in nation-building, reconciling divided societies...and mobilizing public support for political agreement...is evident” (p. 300). To promote dynamic civil communities, PR “can [also] serve as a cultural interpreter between diverse ethnic, cultural, religious, or class-based groups” (Sommerfeldt, 2013, p. 286). Most of those PR strategies will be subsequently dealt with in detail.

Discussing the redirection of political PR means that political communication is involved. Hence, it is essential to look into the contemporary academic approach to political communication. Scholars identify a new thrust toward developing political communication strategies. They believe that change in this field of study is the only constant, and the lack of innovation is not a choice (Bennett & Lyengar, 2008; Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995; Pfetsch & Esser, 2014; Semetko & Scammell, 2012; Vliegenthart, Boomgaarden, & Boumans, 2011). In Britain, however, “experience suggests that academic advocacy for change, even when it is welcomed and supported in principle, can quickly wither on the vine...when entrusted to politicians and media organizations for implementation” (Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995, p. 107). Haubrich (2006) defines modern politics as “the attainment of national policy

objectives and the value-oriented solution of societal problems” (p. 399). In this sense, De Beus (2011) believes there is a necessity for a professional term for political communication such as “informational politics, government by spectacle, [or] public relations democracy” (p. 19). That means politics now needs to be more honest and less manipulative as spin practices have caused indifference in the British public sphere (Pitcher, 2003). What follows will investigate how spin-doctoring tactics can be seen from a constructive perspective to tackle the research focus.

5. Spin-doctoring theories – strategic framing and priming: one approach. Framing and priming are the best theoretical approaches associated with spin (Esser, 2008; Fall, 2008; Gjerazi, 2015; Goltz, 2012; McNair, 2004). Spin and public relations, therefore, have been intertwined and labelled as the key contributors to the culture of lies (McNair, 2004). According to Sumpter and Tankard, “framing decisions are perhaps the most important strategic choices made in public relations efforts” (as cited in Frenkel-Faran & Lehman-Wilzig, 2007, p. 430). Gjerazi (2015) defines spin-doctoring as giving “a positive spin on events, shedding the truth and spreading the information via mass communication channels [which] raises the discussion of information trends and perception to the potential publics” (p. 161). Ribeiro (2014) also considers spin as “the millennium propaganda” (para. 28), and “in Albanian, doctor of false allegations” (Gjerazi, 2015, p. 163) backed with the most current communication approaches (p. 163). Broadly, propaganda and public relations (Fall, 2008; Ferre, 1999; Goltz, 2012; Jowett & O’Donnell, 2006; Ribeiro, 2014), together with packaging politics for media presentation (Esser, 2008; Fall, 2008; Franklin, 2004; Gjerazi, 2015) and ‘PR’ization of politics’ (Frenkel-Faran & Lehman-Wilzig, 2007) are spin manoeuvres used by political actors and their communication officers to mislead public, journalists, and news media. Frenkel-Faran and Lehman-Wilzig (2007) explain that ‘PR’ization of politics’ means that spin doctors used PR techniques to influence media agenda:

Public relations may not just influence what topics are covered in media coverage, but also how those topics are portrayed and ultimately how they are defined in public opinion. Public relations professionals fundamentally operate as frame strategists, who strive to determine how situations, attributes, choices, actions, issues and responsibility should be posed to achieve favourable objectives. (p. 430)

Framing and priming techniques of PR professionals and spin-doctors, according to Frenkel-Faran and Lehman-Wilzig (2007), have originated from political players' role in misrepresenting facts and establishing disinformation communication: "[t]hey attempt to deal with negative turns of political events, and intervene earlier in the news-making process" (p. 432). Some scholars, however, point out the difference between spin-doctors' techniques in managing stories to please the media, which are seeking the type of stories spin-doctors provide, and how this differs from the typical media role of public relations such as news releases and media relations (Fall, 2008; McNair, 2004; Ribeiro, 2014). In the same context, Medvic defines deliberate priming as spin-doctors' role in disseminating 'issues-related' messages to create a favourable climate for a politician to be voted for based on these messages (as cited in Esser, 2008). This highlights spin-doctors' critical function in agenda building. It is where the media strategically recruited to frame and alert audiences' perceptions of specific issues and themes (Esser, 2008).

The literature identifies spin doctors as framing strategists from two different viewpoints. Firstly, the realist perspective where spin-doctors are not taken very seriously as part of the PR profession because "it is not the practice of PR that is inherently unethical, rather that...it is broadly neutral" (Butterick, 2011, p. 74). Thus, spin-doctors are just political PR practitioners who shape stories and weave issues to serve their agendas: "they are merely doing their job' through simply being propagandists; trying to...[de-legitimise] other stories that contradict with their own version" (Goltz, 2012, p. 178). Spin doctors' narratives are also masterfully weaved for politician or institution's self-interest, while public relations' role is much more than that (Goltz, 2012). The difference between spin-doctors and PR

professionals ranges from PR functions in strategic educating, planning and researching, counselling, building relationships, doing news releases and utilizing the media, setting goals and communication methods, the way ethics approached by both strategists, the claims being made by each of them, to their different interest in reputation, self-image, and self-promotion (Coombs & Holladay, 2014; Esser et al., 2000; Gjerazi, 2015; L'Etange, 2013; Ribeiro, 2014). Ferre (1999), therefore, writes that “[b]ooks about PR, historical or not, tend either to support the practice of public relations uncritically or to condemn it unmercifully” (p. 152).

From a constructionist perspective, on the other hand, spin-doctoring is not related to specific professions (Esser, 2008; Fall, 2008). It means someone is capable of communicating and acting skilfully with a particular set of attributes (Esser, 2008; Fall, 2008). That is what Frenkel-Faran and Lehman-Wilzig (2007) refer to as ‘outsourcing’ public relations. In this sense, PR outsourced for purposes like managing political leadership and creating political stances through strong soundbites, ambiguous slogans, and hypothetical examples without providing evidence (Frenkel-Faran & Lehman-Wilzig, 2007). Another constructionist view argues that spin doctors’ growing number of news reports were a result “of a new, modernized, and media-centered approach to policymaking and campaigning (→ Media Democracy; Media Logic)” (Esser, 2008, p. 4786). Accordingly, spin doctors’ manipulative use of framing and priming has caused public’s lack of trust in British government’s policies and initiatives with sharp sense of cynicism (Brants & Voltmer, 2011; Brown, 2011; De Vreese & Elenbaas, 2009; Klausen, 2009; Martinelli, 2011; Park & Cho, 2009; Robinson, 2016).

This public mistrust has also reflected on the publics’ willingness to perceive official strategies and initiatives positively (Martinelli, 2011). Martinelli describes how political language employed in debates, press briefings and announcements was extremely ‘deliberative’. Therefore, approaches to building bridges of trust with the Muslim community

to counter terrorism and radicalisation have been unsuccessful due to the language employed in these policies (Appleby, 2010; Klausen, 2009). This language is the same used in Blair's third-way strategies, which has caused confusion and the failure to attain real social engagement (Appleby, 2010; Klausen, 2009). Hay (2016) describes this language as vague, incoherent and unclear: "what it sanctions or embraces is far from clear; it is far clearer about what it rejects than what it sanctions or embraces" (para. 19). Talking about using imprecise language, Munshi and Edwards (2011) recognise the influence of framing in PR. They refer to 'implicit' framing as that which spin-doctors use strategically to state something and indicate something else. This technique, according to Fear and in the context of ethnic minorities, also called 'dog-whistling':

...a strategic use of language used in political appeals to select publics that deliberately draw on certain phrases or metaphors to establish implied connections with issues of race and ethnicity...and this very often involves talking about *others*, such as asylum seekers or indigenous people, not in terms of race but in seemingly benign terms of how people [for example] need to respect the "Australian way of life". (As cited in Munshi & Edwards, 2011, p. 354)

Some scholars think the challenge of spin-doctoring "remains open" (Gjerazi, 2015, p. 171). In Portugal, for example, the most recent extension of PR techniques is 'corporate spin-doctoring' (Ribeiro, 2014). Hugo Young also believes British spin-doctors "are here to stay because of their central role in contemporary politics" (as cited in Franklin, 2004, p. 55). In PR, however, there is a growing need for facts and evidence-based argument (Coombs & Holladay, 2014; Fall, 2008; Frenkel-Faran & Lehman-Wilzig, 2007; McNair, 2004; Trayner, 2017). Consequently, the literature suggests ways to escape the unethical strategies of spinners and political PR professionals while the threat they represent remains. Frenkel-Faran and Lehman-Wilzig (2007) suggest engaging in active citizenry to avoid PR ploys and their negative scenarios. The article also recommends a peer-to-peer shift. According to Fritz et al., this technique helps to improve democracy and provide "a diversity of ideas and perspectives

to bear on the issues and widening the bounds of political conversation, as well as helping to hold the media organizations and politicians accountable, thereby improving the prevailing political culture” (as cited in Frenkel-Faran & Lehman-Wilzig, 2007, p. 438).

Martinelli (2011) describes how the online peer-to-peer strategy creates a “strong sense of community” (p. 42). Krishnan, Smith and Telang (2003) define it as a system that “allow[s] a distributed community of users to share resources in the form of information, digital content, storage space, or processing capacity...[These] resources are located in and provided by computers at the edge of the network” (p. 32). Another way to escape the unethical practices of spin doctors and avoid cynicism and mistrust is to keep political PR strategists behind the scenes to identify their real purpose eventually (De Vreese & Elenbaas, 2009). It comes as “credibility is the ‘Achilles heel’ of public relations...because the message is being judged according to who communicates it” (Gjerazi, 2015, p. 170). Moreover, Gjerazi (2015) encourages the effective use of digital media for citizens to “become... communicator[s] of facts, evidences, [and] data” (p. 170). Fall (2008) also suggests replacing propaganda and persuasion with ‘motivation’ because the public is happily “motivated than persuaded...[and] to broaden our thinking to that of motivating particular behaviours that influence positive changes in our society and of the free marketplace of ideas” (p. 4789). Here, motivation cannot be “the act of cheering and encouraging others...[but] providing reasons and motives for action” (Formanchuk, 2019, para. 1).

- **The two-way asymmetric model of communication and deliberative approach: how to form action and reaction.** Spin-doctors and political PR practitioners have used these two communication approaches with the public to listen only to persuade (Coombs & Holladay, 2014; Edwards, 2016; Gjerazi, 2015; Karlsson, Clerwall, & Buskqvist, 2013; Martinelli, 2011; McNair, 2011). Grunig and Hunt established the asymmetrical model for ‘mere persuasion’ (Butterick, 2011). It “attempts ‘scientific persuasion’ rather than the crude and

sometimes manipulative techniques used by publicists” (Butterick, 2011, p. 27). With the real absence of dialogue in the asymmetric model despite its so-called two-way brand of communication, PR campaigns and messages here are considered counterproductive and designed only to persuade the public into changing their attitudes (Butterick, 2011; Canel & Sanders, 2012; Erturk, 2015; Hallahan, 2000). Likewise, Park and Cho (2009) find that this model cannot be used strategically “especially when the two sides independently overemphasized their own-self” (p. 354). With spin-doctors using the asymmetric approach, Heath considers PR as “the art of deception, false claims, [and] abuse” (as cited in Gjerazi, 2015, p. 164). Strategically speaking, this study provides insight into how political institutions can use political PR to promote social integration. This indicates any counterproductive models of communication, such as the asymmetrical approach are not pragmatic or recommended.

Frenkel-Faran and Lehman-Wilzig (2007) demonstrate how spin-doctors and political PR professionals’ excessive use of framing, priming, asymmetric and deliberation strategies have created promotional culture. It means that mediating politics through journalists and media outlets has become the paramount feature of political communication (Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995; Brants & Voltmer, 2011; McNair, 2011; McNair, 2004; Vliegenthart et al., 2011). By building a media agenda and journalists’ perceptions, spin-doctors and political PR practitioners master issues’ saliency: how topics skilfully framed, deceitfully portrayed, and manipulatively weaved and defined for public consumption (Hallahan, 2011; Kioussis & Stromback, 2014). This mediation of politics focuses “on marketing policies and politicians, and monitoring and managing public opinion...[which means] [t]he quality of public debates is correspondingly weaker, because matters of public concern are ignored” (Edwards, 2016, pp. 63 - 64). PR scholars understand media relations and news management in political PR by focusing on agenda-building (Franklin, 2004; Kioussis & Stromback, 2014; Lieber & Golan,

2011). While agenda-setting concerns how media shape public opinion through the way issues and events are covered, agenda-building focuses on how media agenda and issues saliency are organised to garner public support. Issues' saliency in agenda-building depends on elements that can foster media coverage and boost messages' impact such as using information subsidies, framing emotional appeals, and moulding well-versed rhetoric (Aelst, Thesen, Walgrave & Vliegenthart, 2014; Hallahan, 2011; Kioussis & Stromback, 2014; McNair, 2011).

Furthermore, the deliberative approach in PR means the organisational self-interest is the goal and practitioners implement all communication approaches to reach that aim (Edwards, 2016). This deliberation in PR also implies the strategic use of rhetoric and language (Edwards, 2016). The most successful political PR campaigns, therefore, invest in crafting words, catchphrases, soundbites, positions and emotional appeals in political discourses to control debates and obtain the power to manage impressions, reputation and image (Edwards, 2016; Raj & Chandran, 2006). That is because “[t]he battles for wording and meaning are struggles for dominance and democracy [,] [t]hey voice perspectives [,] [p]erspectives presume terminology, as does ideology” (Heath, Waymer, & Palenchar, 2013, p. 277). The manipulative use of these techniques may highlight scholarly belief of PR as an anti-democratic profession (Ferre, 1999; McNair, 2004). Stuart Ewen believes PR and democracy are, to a great extent, ‘foes’ (as cited in Ferre, 1999). He writes how PR prevailed over the main principles of the progressive era in the 1920s when facts, enlightenment, and rational debates were employed to build societies. All that, according to Stuart Ewen, transformed with the advent of PR into an era where propaganda dominated and democratic rules undermined by Bernays’ Engineering of Consent.

6. Public relations practitioners as social agents and national integrationists, public relations and managing relationships: a relational framework. Edwards (2006) suggests

“that adopting a relational view of public relations as a profession defined by its relationships will help explicate the nature of power [in PR] more effectively” (p. 229). Broom, Casey, and Ritchey (2000) explain relationships in PR as that which:

...are represented by patterns of interaction, transaction, exchange, and linkage between an organization and its publics. These relationships have properties that are distinct from the identities, attributes and perceptions of the individuals and social collectivities in the relationships. Though dynamic in nature, organization-public relationships can be described at a single point in time and tracked over time. (As cited in Stromback & Kioussis, 2011, p. 238)

In this sense, Taylor (2000a) explains PR from a relational perspective to “lay the groundwork for a public relations approach to nation building” (p. 203). Scholars also talk about the shift in PR practice from a tool for publicity towards the two-way symmetric and asymmetric models of communication (Swart, 2012; Taylor, 2000a). The relational approach comes as the foundation of PR cooperative and communication-based model (Taylor, 2000a). It is where managing strategic relationships enhances society and empowers citizens to obtain a deep-rooted and ethical form of social inclusion (Swart, 2012; Taylor, 2000a; Toledano & Mckie, 2007). PR studies have examined relational framework in many organisational contexts. However, there has not been an investigation as to whether political PR practitioners can employ this approach in political environments addressing pluralism, extremism and community cohesion.

Scholars identify relationship management as a significant approach for PR practitioners working in culturally diverse environments whether in the context of nation-building (Anthony, 2015, 2012; Chaka, 2013; Kioussis & Stromback, 2011, 2014; Park & Cho, 2009; Toledano & Mckie, 2007), or CSR (Molleda & Ferguson, 2004; Moss, Warnaby, & Thame, 1996; Ruiz-Mora, Lugo-Ocando, & Castillo-Esparcia, 2016; Saffer, Taylor, & Yang, 2013). Anthony (2012, 2015), for example, demonstrate how British PR pioneers used PR as a developmental instrument during the Great Depression. Its management function helped to

engage innovatively in building the nation and allowed the media to play a significant role in real behavioural and social change (Anthony, 2012). Many scholars also put effort into defining what relationship management in PR concerns, “[h]owever, few scholars have empirically tested the concept of community-building from a relationship management perspective” (Kim & Cho, 2019, p. 298).

Using Taylor (2000a) as a point of departure, she believes “[a] public relations approach to nation building focuses on relationships between governments and publics as well as the creation of new relationships between previously unrelated publics” (pp. 183 - 184). In this sense, it can be argued that political institutions can rely on a more enlightened and socially aware form of political PR to build social integration in Britain. Taylor (2000a) also thinks that “it is time for a paradigm shift in the treatment of communication in nation building, and public relations is an appropriate place to turn” (p. 183). A public relations ‘integrationist approach’ can build relationships, soothe stress among minorities, create awareness about multiculturalism, and resolve cultural patterns (Taylor, 2000a). According to Deutsch:

...it was communication as a medium that created the potential for members of a nation to transmit information to each other, form efficient patterns for teamwork, and create new patterns of teamwork for new purposes. Such new patterns of teamwork or political and social institutions are a major part of the nation-building process because they create and facilitate cooperative relationships. (As cited in Taylor, 2000a, p. 187)

Verwey realises if there is “understanding of the cultural nuances’ impacts on the implementation of public relations strategy” (as cited in Swart, 2012, p. 343), PR relationship-building strategies can be affected (p. 343). Thus, managing organisation-public relationships is based on having an appropriate PR interest in social issues (Swart, 2012). Mindful of this, Swart (2012) suggests relationship management can represent PR communication model. Berger et al. define relationship management as “to manage uncertainty and anxiety” (as cited in Chaka, 2013, p. 354) from which tension can escalate if

relationships are not well-organised (p. 354). Hence, Ledingham's theory emphasises the shift in PR from communication to relationships, which means a thrust towards enhancing mutual understanding, improving trust, and approaching key publics (as cited in Swart, 2012). This happens as "[p]ublic relations needs to respond to the call for the strategic management of OPRs [organisation-public relationships]" (Swart, 2012, p. 336).

Toledano and Mckie (2007) employ several PR approaches for nation-building purposes. They explain how PR direct the media to address the public, and a social consensus approached. Public relations, soft propaganda, and what Ellul calls "propaganda of integration" (as cited in Toledano & Mckie, 2007, p. 387) were used to provide explanations: useful journalism was enhanced, and one socialistic discourse and social responsibility framework were used by the media to promote inclusion and public trust (pp. 389 - 390). According to Kouts, using PR in this sense was because what mattered the most for the press was not freedom of expression, but to support government agenda of social inclusion, harmonise cultures into one, and avoid criticising the other (as cited in Toledano & Mckie, 2007). Kioussis and Stromback (2014), therefore, believe relationship management is necessary "to capturing the short-term and long-term orientations regarding the engagement of political organizations and the multiplicity of their key publics" (p. 253). Furthermore, Moss et al. (1996) find that PR works strategically in CSR. This can be through responding to political, economic and social pressures because PR practitioners act "as having a broader strategic role in which communication is used to help resolve conflict" (p. 71) and build relationships with key publics (p. 71). Similarly, Chaka (2013) writes how PR practices were used to resolve dissimilarities in the social system and manage and maintain successful organisation-public relationships in the process of nation-building. Tiffany Lin (2007) also finds "the Chinese financial public relations industry has been a critical force in providing a medium through which businesses, investors and the media are able to communicate with one

another” (p. 75) by building positive perspectives and creating mutually beneficial relationships with key stakeholders (p. 75).

- **Public engagement in political public relations: communication and beyond.** Public relations literature shows the little investigation into how engagement is perceived and practised apart from its role in the relational framework (Devin & Lane, 2014; Dhanesh, 2017; Jelen-Sanchez, 2017; Johnston, 2014; Taylor & Kent, 2014). PR scholars and professionals, however, have focused on the increasing importance of engagement and how it becomes more demanding to improve this essential PR concept (Dhanesh, 2017; Edelman, 2008; Jelen-Sanchez, 2017; Johnston, 2014; Johnston & Lane, in press). Kim and Cho (2019) demonstrate that “[i]n recent years, community-building and community engagement have received increasing attention [in PR literature where scholars recognise community-building]...as a key construct relating to how public relations can serve society” (p. 299). According to Nabatchi and Amsler (2014), “many local governments in the United States have pursued direct public engagement to address local issues, generate support, and develop the community” (as cited in Kim & Cho, 2019, p. 297). Johnston and Lane (in press) also explain that PR community engagement (CE) projects “help to address complex and sometimes ‘wicked’ problems involving diverse community groups and settings” (p. 1). According to Grant-Smith and Osborne (2016), “wicked problems are ‘socially complex, unstructured, unstable, cross-cutting, relentless, complicated, and multi-causal with no clear solution’” (as cited in Roper & Hurst, in press, p. 3). Hence, (R. Phillips, 2009) identifies public engagement as “the codification of where we are today– a recognition of the new order that is emerging from the continued chaos...[it] embraces the current reality and faces the future” (p. 3). It is why Furco (2010) “identifies authentic engagement is needed when the engagement is around topics that have outcomes for the greater good, or when dealing with complex social issues of significance” (as cited in Johnston & Lane, in press, p. 4). As

engagement has gained momentum and few theoretical examinations and implementations in PR, it may seem a new approach in political PR which “in both theory and practice can be approached from many perspectives” (Stromback & Kioussis, 2011, p. 8). This investigation of public engagement responds to Turk (1986) who “call[s] to look to future methodologies as way of moving beyond the technical, functional skills that have typically defined PR” (as cited in Roper & Hurst, in press, p. 8).

Given the rapid social and technological improvements, engagement represents one of the most recent responsibilities for PR, which can help to reconsider the industry (Jelen-Sanchez, 2017). It is ‘key factor’ in relationship management research, and scholars have discussed it from specific theoretical perspectives such as dialogue theory, crisis communication theory, community building theory, message effectiveness theory and rhetorical theory (Jelen-Sanchez, 2017). Additionally, Kim and Cho (2019) discuss engagement from a government-public relationship point of view where “community participation can be defined as community members’ active engagement with the local government to address common issues” (p. 299). Bernays has identified the significance of engagement in PR as well (Stromback & Kioussis, 2011). He explains how PR practice is just as old as the community and its role is a combination of communication and action: “informing people, persuading people, or integrating people with people” (p. 1). Jelen-Sanchez (2017), however, finds that “[t]he engagement studies have...not (yet) embraced and/or enhanced a paradigmatic shift from organization-focussed functionalism to socio-cultural and critical approaches” (p. 942).

Ovatt (2008) sheds light on what Richard Edelman, the president and chief executive officer of Edelman’s PR firm, has said about engagement. Edelman believes that it can strategically help moving public relations from the ‘pyramid model of influence’ to “a sphere of cross-influence” (para. 4). Edelman also focuses on reconsidering a communications approach to uniquely position PR in a domain that combines both the strategy and communications areas

of responsibility (Ovaitt, 2008). According to Ovaitt, Edelman states that this urgent need for engagement can be the best mechanism to enhance public trust in institutions. As this study discusses how to improve the British public's trust in the government, engagement here seems central bearing in mind that in Britain, "[s]eventy-four per cent conclude that our political system is no longer fit for purpose, and 83% feel let down by the entire political establishment. Just 6% believe politicians understand them" (Mattinson, 2019, para. 9). As such, Dhanesh (2017) defines engagement as:

...an affective, cognitive, and behavioral state wherein publics and organizations who share mutual interests in salient topics interact along continua that range from passive to active and from control to collaboration, and is aimed at goal attainment, adjustment, and adaptation for both publics and organizations. (p. 931)

This definition springs from Dhanesh's (2017) model of engagement where issues' saliency is the core value that connects organisations with the public. Dhanesh (2017) states that the public can be interested as long as there is debate and communication on matters that are cognitively and actively important to them. Johnston (2014), therefore, explains that engagement means "the need for authentic stakeholder involvement" (p. 381). It promotes communication between community and institutions, and it is the basis for building beneficial relationships (Johnston, 2014). According to Johnston, the engagement roles investigated in PR include community building, improving publics-institutions relationships, and inviting more involvement from publics in institutional activities. Johnston (2018) also defines "engagement as a dynamic multidimensional relational concept featuring psychological and behavioral attributes of connection, interaction, participation, and involvement designed to achieve or elicit an outcome at individual, organizational, or social levels" (as cited in Saffer, Yang, Morehouse, & Qu, in press, p. 3). Dhanesh (2017), therefore, warns that "[f]ocusing on engagement solely as communicative interaction threatens to ignore the majority of publics, who are communicatively passive" (p. 932). That is why in public relations, "the strength and value of CE is its ability to 'connect' organizations with groups and individuals who

authentically represent or reflect perspectives of the community they are seeking to reach” (Johnston & Lane, in press, p. 3). In this sense, some PR scholars describe engagement “as a verb or action that is somehow beyond the routine communication behaviors...[in which] organizations have to make a conscious effort to do something special to engage publics” (Dhanesh, 2017, p. 387).

In political PR, it can be argued that public engagement necessarily goes beyond the profession’s acts of communication. Stromback and Kiouisis (2011) consider political PR as both “purposeful communication and action” (p. 8). Theoretically, Choy (2018) interestingly thinks of political PR “as a communication practice (a recurrent and meaningful pattern of message-endowed action)” (p. 1). According to the article, political PR also employed in political communication research as “purposeful activities by political actors to influence the media, their agendas, and how they frame events, issues, and processes” (p. 7). Hence, it can be suggested that engagement in political PR is about how actions are successfully led and executed. It can be through transforming what seems interactively dull into open and interesting invitation for participation. Social integration and extremism require engaging with publics’ hearts and minds (emotionally and cognitively). As this struggle can get fiercer, calling for more revolutionary and non-traditional methods, “empirical research on the use of public relations as a tool for engagement suggests that it can strengthen civil society in some contexts, particularly in conflict and post-conflict societies” (Edwards, 2016, p. 65). In this sense, Bernays proves public relations’ role is always ‘boundless’:

News is any overt act which juts out of the routine of circumstances...A good public relations man [or woman] advises his [/her] client...to carry out an overt act...interrupting the continuity of life in some way to bring about a response. (As cited in Ewen, 1996, p. 18)

Similarly, Marston (1963) discusses ‘Action in public relations practice’. The author draws examples of PR practitioners engaging in actions that are ‘effective’ and interesting. Here,

‘action’ concerns that what they ‘did’ becomes more significant than what they ‘said’ (Marston, 1963):

The public relations man [/ woman]...becomes an expert not only in saying, but in doing. He [/she] influences the course of events by instigating action as well as by writing about it, and sometimes his [/her] influence can be very great indeed. This broadening of the concept of public relations adds interest to its practice. It is not just a mirroring of events but actually a creator of them. As a researcher, the public relations man [/ woman] delves into reasons and causes; as a communicator he [/she] tells about them; but as an activator he [/she] is a man [/ woman] of affairs who knows the thrill of setting up events and gambling upon their success or failure, of making policy, and of personifying organizations by their deeds. (p. 166)

Consequently, public engagement is taking the lead to elevate public relations’ performance to a more sophisticated level of involvement. In a similar vein, Lemon (in press) investigates engagement from an employee engagement perspective. By asking workers to define what does it mean, some of them thought-provokingly:

...discussed the idea of employee engagement in terms of management’s communicative behaviors and actions. Participants describe employee engagement as management, “getting out and listening” and “actually being out with our folks.” As one communication manager said, “To me, it’s managers, face-to-face, one-on-one engagement with employees. (p. 5)

In this age of far-right populism and with the emotional confusion and irrational discourse it creates, engagement is about addressing publics’ cognition (Dhanesh, 2017). It is also about triggering specific emotional appeals, especially if extremism and inclusion are involved. Friedman (2008) provides relevant insight in this context. He highlights a significant issue concerning:

...‘how’ you do things matters more than ever, because so many more people can now see how you do things, be affected by how you do things and tell others how you do things on the Internet anytime, for no cost and without restraint. (para. 5)

Therefore, how the UK government responds to social inclusion and extremism fundamentally matters. The counter-productive decision of appointing Sara Khan as the chief

of Commission for Countering Extremism is an example in this regard. Khan (2018) writes how British Muslim leaders reacted to this appointment. By appointing this commissioner, they believe the government does not consider the Muslim community as a real partner in countering extremism efforts. Those leaders also accused Sara Khan “of being a mouthpiece for the Home Office” (para. 8). Furthermore, Hadj (2018) writes an article titled ‘The Commission for Countering Extremism is a spectacular PR failure’. He states that this appointment can bring nothing new to the way the government intends to counter extremism. Hadj (2018) even describes the whole matter as a failed PR gimmick. The article reveals that Sara Khan got this position because she has “become an “expert” in making distorted, government-spun statements, [and] it seems [she] is now living inside her very own illusionary bubble” (para. 8). Thus, it can be argued that the lack of a genuine interest in engaging with the Muslim community, being the key public here, can undermine their trust in the political institutions, deepen the gap between them, and create more hostile debates in the society.

Public engagement can be essential to improve the relationship with the Muslim community. It means the government must recognise British Muslims and is willing to work with them as the term engagement indicates “a promise to do something” (Taylor & Kent, 2014, p. 396). Taylor and Kent (2014) explore engagement from a dialogue perspective where it “is both an orientation that influences interactions and the approach that guides the process of interactions among groups” (p. 384). Nevertheless, engagement may still perform more strategically than this, especially in a political PR context. It is important because by “[t]aking a long historical view, the political systems that are more open and interactive have tended to last longer and brought more wealth to people” (D. Phillips, 2009, para. 11). Engaging with the British public is challenging. Publics who are taking part in digital media platforms and social, economic and political causes in the age of right-wing populism become

more aware of any asymmetrical persuasive approach and unprofessional symmetrical attempt. Also contributing to this might be that political PR has an image problem and sinister connotation (McNair, 2004). This may inhibit achieving the required impact and gaining public trust. Hence, it can be suggested that engagement is among the most professional PR tactics in the future. It is about forming actions and behaviours that cognitively (Dhanesh, 2017) and emotionally matter to the public.

Scholars differentiate between dialogue and engagement. Botan believes the importance of public engagement comes from the fact that “sometimes publics would not want to engage in dialogue and that it might not be the most effective way to interact with publics in some circumstances” (as cited in Taylor & Kent, 2014, p. 390). Toledano (2018) investigates dialogue in PR and finds that it “is about empathic turning towards the other without a self-interested agenda. To conduct genuine dialogue [however] participants should have great capacity for listening to and respecting the Other...dialogue is the improved understanding of the Other” (p. 134). In a similar vein, Eyre and Littleton (2012) identify ideas, being the raw material for messages, as weapons. In the context of effective strategic communication, they believe these ideas must be understood and framed according to the publics’ ‘social dynamics’. It means engaging strategically in ‘local dialogue’: “[i]f the people are the focus of any successful communications effort, understanding the social structure, narratives and emotions, loyalties and rivalries, is the most fundamental precondition for success” (Eyre & Littleton, 2012, p. 183). Drawing from this, the current approach to dialogue includes a significant sense of engagement while the traditional PR dialogue may not work anymore, particularly in the context of this research. Stoker and Tusinski (2006) refer to a similar inference:

Individual distinctions, let alone group differences, make the symmetry of dialogic communication an elusive goal. Although many communication theorists would like to believe that true communication means reaching agreement or achieving an

understanding, the reality is that communication is both a “bridge and chasm,” bringing people closer to agreement and exposing the disagreement lying in between...Peters defined communication as the project of reconciling self and other. To think it might do more may be a recipe for failure. (p. 157)

Devin and Lane (2014) also find that organisations understand engagement in the context of CSR as a form of communication and action. The article reveal that organisations develop ‘meta-level’ type of communication, which means “organizations need to communicate with stakeholders about their CSR-related behavior” (p. 441). This meta-level includes “communicating about the antecedents, implementation, and consequences of engagement” (Devin & Lane, 2014, p. 449).

- ***Digital political public relations: motivations and opportunities.*** PR scholars investigate digital media tools from relationship-building perspective and as means of interaction and engagement which are the essence of political PR, political communication, PR and politics (Allagui & Breslow, 2016; Choy, 2018; Coombs & Holladay, 2014; Kiouisis & Stromback, 2014; Saffer et al., 2013; Semetko & Scammell, 2012; Valentini & Kruckeberg, 2012). Social integration and extremism are sensitive social and political crises. It is necessary, therefore, to look at digital communication in political PR from a strategic perspective where framing and emotional appeals are managed successfully. In the context of crisis communication, Ip, Liang, and Feng (2018) examine how a social company handled crisis online. They also investigate how that affected the public attitude, and “specifically, the effects of framing by news media and opinion leaders...[because] [w]hen a crisis occurs, people attribute crisis responsibility and have emotional reactions” (p.785). As online platforms are accessible media outlets, Ip et al. (2018) believe that anyone can use them to produce, disseminate and consume data. It indicates that framing crisis is no longer a job for traditional media only, but something bloggers and online news media can also do (Ip et al., 2018).

Crises like radicalisation and extremism can surely spark online. These, along with social cohesion, require online efforts. Here, we are talking about attitudinal and behavioural change, turning ideologies and perspectives, and confirming news while refuting others. Such a very dynamic process cannot be left unattended or poorly followed. Therefore, framing these crises is an essential and active process. Ip et al. (2018) shed light on the bloggers and journalists' ability, for example, to frame crises online and affect public attitude. The study shows that the public's understanding of crisis is influenced by how those choose to frame it. It also finds that "public relations practitioners should focus on reducing damage through strategic crisis communication [that is, framing effective online messages]" (p. 790).

Avery and Graham (2013) argue that government public relations, as a form of crisis communication, has been affected by the emergence of social media. The article states that "[g]overnments have more opportunities than ever before to interact with and engage stakeholders, and social media offers an inexpensive and swift communications channel through which to do so" (p. 274). Hence, Saffer et al. (2013) encourage political PR professionals to use the relational approach and extend social capital to include others in the form of coalition. Social capital is to connect actors to others online. It can be suggested that political PR practitioners in Britain may create a coalition of political institutions with NGOs, community leaders, and youth activists to promote social cohesion and counter-radicalisation online. This seems necessary, as Park and Cho (2009) decide that:

By minimizing the distortion of message and strengthening connectedness between government and public, social media promises the possibility of restoring public trust in government. Thus, government public relations practitioners should pay more attention to utilities of social media and take more proactive actions to apply social media to government public relations. (p. 14)

Social media reflect the nature of PR and politics, which is to communicate and engage. Smith et al. (2018) think that Twitter, for example, allowed social interaction and dialogue by

featuring similar hashtags about the terror attacks in Paris and Barcelona “which social media publics use to connect to and gain awareness in the community of publics discussing the crises” (p. 7). As there is a demand to focus on the origin of PR as a mechanism for social interaction (Choy, 2018), social media for political actors “has become the key to winning public support and achieving political goals” (p. 2). That is while Taylor and Kent describe the turn in PR from using social media for marketing purposes to building relationships as rarely used (as cited in Smith, Smith, & Knighton, 2018). Choy (2018) also refers to social media as an engagement tool in political PR used to not only build candidates’ image and communicate with the public about what concerns them the most “but also [political actors use cultural discourse on social media to] have place-based and relational relevance for the public” (p. 8).

Capizzo (2018) sheds light on the concept of open dialogue in PR. The article reimagines dialogue in the public sphere as “organizations and public relations practitioners...must acknowledge that not only does the world around them influence the creation of meaning, it is otherness that enables meaning” (p. 6). That means going beyond the traditional two-way model of communication, which the dialogue offers, into general public debate and exchange of ideas and meanings (Capizzo, 2018). All that evidence can make using social media to enhance community cohesion and counter extremism effective but also untapped. Social media can be a proper mechanism in this respect. Whether for politicians, political institutions or NGOs that work on these matters, it can be suggested that social media may bridge any communication chasm between those parties and their publics. These digital platforms can also make the public debate more productive and allow positive changes to take place.

Ott (2016), however, explains how dangerous some social media platforms can be to public discourse. Twitter on some occasions, according to Ott (2016), “destroys dialog [*sic*] and

deliberation, fosters farce and fanaticism, and contributes to callousness and contempt....Twitter [also] breeds dark, degrading, and dehumanizing discourse; it breeds vitriol and violence; in short, it breeds Donald Trump” (pp. 60 - 62). By referring to this era as the Age of Twitter, the article considers it very alarming that young people are relying on social media to gain information. It is because of the regular dissemination of fake and manipulated content on social media (Ott, 2016). Consequently, the article warns that Twitter can replace television as today’s source of information and “we are likely to witness a growing intolerance for cultural and political difference” (p. 66).

Social media can be a double-edged sword. Creating the right online political environment can divert users’ attention from social integration, being a socially and politically frightening issue, into a topic that matters for our generation and those yet to come. With the rise of right-wing populism, social media can become a very challenging tool used for implementing positive changes. Giving far-right populists a digital platform can also complicate things and increase their online followers. That is why the government should find new online strategies to engage and communicate with the British public. Alternative plans and experts, therefore, should come forward. Talking of skilful practitioners, Allagui and Breslow (2016) demonstrate that PR professionals believe “that social media are becoming the preferred channel of engagement” (p. 21). The researchers have analysed many PR campaigns on social media and identified that the public favourably chose to engage with that aimed at communicating and building community relationships.

Scholars discuss the positive effect of social media on promoting community cohesion. Valentini and Kruckeberg (2012), for instance, believe social media “must be at the heart of public relations activities because...[they] can enhance organization-public relationships by increasing and improving community relations” (p. 11). It is important here to explain the evidence used to support this result. According to Kruckeberg and Starck, communities

disintegrated long ago, and that created the demand for PR practice (as cited in Valentini & Kruckeberg, 2012). With the emergence of globalism, redistribution caused fragmented society and “call[ed] for the restoration and maintenance of a sense of community [which] is more possible technologically than ever before” (p. 12). Additionally, Vujnovic and Kruckeberg write that the social feature of social media platforms can encourage institutions to build community relationships through relying on the sense of participation that these platforms bring (as cited in Valentini & Kruckeberg, 2012). Finally, Kruckeberg and Tsetsura find that “public relations must no longer be about persuading individuals or being aligned with a corporation’s goals, but about supporting communities” (as cited in Valentini & Kruckeberg, 2012, p. 12).

By using social media in government public relations, PR practice has shifted from persuasion towards reciprocity (Park & Cho, 2009). Park and Cho (2009) explain that “[t]he interactive dialogue between government and public may alleviate information asymmetry and change the attitudinal view on the government performance to [a] positive way” (p. 5). Hence, it can be argued that political PR, with positive political causes, can move from spin doctoring to supporting social inclusion in Britain. It comes as Saffer et al. (2013) discuss how organisations, through the use of political PR on digital platforms, can become political players with political agendas. Organisations now can bring ‘different’ groups together “within a network to achieve political objectives...[And] [w]ebsites and social media tools hold the potential to bridge individuals and organizations....to build public support [and social capital]” (Saffer et al., 2013, pp. 6 - 7). Moreover, managing government-public relationships has the advantages “that allow...government to achieve its goals such as loyalty to government; however, it is noteworthy that quality relationships can not only engender public support for government activities but can also create social capital, which maintains democratic societies” (Kim & Cho, 2019, p. 297).

Unfortunately, governments do not seem to invest in social media strategically. From a political communication perspective, Momoc (2013) reveals that political actors use online platforms to build their reputation rather than develop a relationship with their public. It can be noted that Momoc was writing this in 2013, but it seems very relevant in 2019. These political actors are still building a relationship with their public nowadays but in a very different way. It may be considered shallow, maybe populist, and may take the form of easily digested soundbites. Social media, according to Momoc (2013), is employed by politicians for only personal political purposes such as protesting and voting and not for dialogue or discussing political plans: “social media are useful Public Relations tools for the politicians, but...rational arguments are not cultivated on these platforms” (p. 120).

Avery and Graham (2013) differentiate between e-government that provides citizens with information and considered as a one-way communication method and social media, which represent an interactive tool for dialogue and two-way communication approach. According to Azyan, the public these days are “socially informed generation [who] calls for and expects dialogue as governments shift their views of citizens from consumers to allowing citizens to contribute online to the development of government” (as cited in Avery & Graham, 2013, p. 279). Furthermore, “[g]overnments are increasingly held to account by a digitally active citizenship, as calls for transparency intensify and as transparency itself is further empowered by the digital world” (R. Phillips, 2009, p. 3). Therefore, Avery and Graham (2013) approach social media through dialogic theory, stakeholder theory, democratic theory, and citizen engagement theory. As the literature refers to public engagement as an evolution in PR (Jelen-Sanchez, 2017; Johnston, 2014), social media too “forced changes in the public relations practice” (Coombs & Holladay, 2014, p. 26) because of the sense of interaction these channels can create (p. 26).

Shehata and Stromback (2014) also call modern politics a mediated politics, which indicates that political messages are transmitted through media platforms. Consequently, Kiouisis and Stromback (2014) define social media as innovative techniques in political PR because they imply a sense of engagement and conversation. The authors, however, believe it is to a smaller extent that governments use digital technology to engage and co-create strategies with the public. Momoc (2013) has previously recognised this fact, as shown earlier. In the context of social integration and extremism, Prevent is considered a top-down policy. Although this strategy tackles social and political concerns, it is not communally co-created. The government has not also reviewed this approach based on the public's feedback despite the confusion it has created and continued to generate (Halliday & Dodd, 2015). So far, the literature has demonstrated how the British government can employ digital platforms for such purposes.

In a similar context, Park and Cho (2009) ask how PR can use blogs in social media as part of government public relations. They consider government PR as “a policy instrument to advertise or notice the purpose of public policy and to improve the government-public relationship so that [it] contributes to enhance[ing] public trust in government” (p. 2). The researchers also shed light on the government's ‘Twitter Strategy’, which allows public servants to post Twitter messages many times during the day. It can be suggested that this feature can be employed by the PM and MPs to voice pro-social inclusion attitudes, support diversity and condemn all types of extremism. Additionally, Sweetser (2011) looks at digital communication in political PR from a relational perspective where “a focus on relationships may have been even more present in political public relations than general public relations, as political communication has always taken a personal approach to connecting with its publics” (p. 293). He describes that in the US, the number of those seeking political information online increased with every election campaign since 2000. According to Sweetser (2011), online

tools have offered people a platform to express their political attitudes and allowed them “to engage with others not only as peers, but as influencers, and in some cases agenda setters” (p. 304). Accordingly, Kiouisis et al. (2014) conclude that “using social media tools is an integral part of political public relations campaigns and offers great potential to practitioners to plan future campaigns” (p. 617).

Social inclusion and extremism are among the most heated debates in the UK. Therefore, people talk about these matters online, especially with the emergence of far-right movements. The question is: where does the British public get political information about these issues? In a book review, Lilleker (2010) describes ‘civic commons’ as that where the internet “users are able to contribute to public agendas and contribute to the process of decision-making and so have a tangible effect on the issues that affect their lives” (p. 186). According to Lilleker (2010), the book, which addresses democratic citizenship over the internet, encourages a government to implement the strategy of ‘civic commons’ and commit to collaborative and down-top political plans.

Concerning radicalisation and de-radicalisation, digital media are critical in fighting against radicalising British youth, whether they are ISIS or EDL enthusiasts. Bennett et al. (2012) argue that “the image of a citizenry whose interaction with traditional public information involves passive consumption of top-down mass communication content no longer holds for most people under 30” (p. 128). According to Patterson, American youth are more relying on their social media platforms and the internet to get political information (as cited in Bennett et al., 2012). Hence, “[i]f the news itself is in free fall, are there other information sources that young citizens may be using” (p.129). The authors use online gaming as an example to explain how we can benefit from it to create real community engagement. These games enhance youth’s sense of responsibility in the online community, which we can apply to real-life (Bennett et al., 2012). Kahne et al. also describe that an original research “of the relation

between games and civic orientations showed that playing games that encourage cooperation, address social issues, and involve playing with others, along with participation in online forums about games, are all predictive of higher civic outcomes” (as cited in Bennett et al., 2012, p. 134).

Similarly, Semetko and Scammell (2012) describe one of Obama online campaign initiatives called ‘Call Friends’. The authors show how this App turned the supporters’ mobiles into a ‘mini-campaign tool’: “[l]isted contacts became targets for automatically generated messages reminding them to vote...[and] helped to create a sense of involvement and even ownership of the campaign” (p. 64). A book for Joe Trippi, according to Semetko and Scammell (2012), also explains how such online communication helped “to break down the ‘us and them’ mentality that had dominated previous presidential campaigning ‘war rooms’ and to establish a new grass or netroots supporter-led model” (p. 64). Mindful of this, it can be argued that online political PR campaigns are central if NGOs and political institutions in Britain are seeking better results for enhancing inclusivity and fighting against extremism.

Castle (2015) writes about the UK government’s strategy to fight online extremism by preventing the articulating and publishing of extremist views on social media. He explained: “the government wants to ‘support a network of credible commentators who want to challenge the extremists and put forward mainstream views online’” (para. 16). Moreover, Robinson, Gardee, Chaudhry, and Collins (2017) discuss how some social work practices can help to fight against radicalising British Muslim youth. As young Muslims have become involved in social media more, “consideration of online activity is an important consideration for social work” (p. 282). It seems significant because the article reveals that the “[y]outh exposed to extremism (online or elsewhere) rarely go to the imams in the community. [And] [f]or each theological argument an imam makes, extremist recruiters provide youth with a counter argument” (p.282). Hence, Robinson et al. (2017) identify extremists’ exploitation of

youth's vulnerability as a new concern. They also emphasise that what is important is to engage and empower youth. This can be crucial since many cases have shown teenagers can quickly become extremists. Robinson (2016), for example, reports how a young Muslim was radicalised to fight with ISIS in Syria, turned from a devoted son into an extremist. According to the article, some of 850 ISIS fighters were from Britain. Robinson (2016) also talks about the teenager's mother who established counselling and prevention office called Families for Life to support others. She explained that during her son's disappearance, "[t]here was no...support in Birmingham [for families with such cases and therefore, Families for Life came as a result because she] decided to fill in a gap" (para. 51 - 53). It can be noted that the government is very much busy and active to counter online radicalisation. To summarize, recruiters' ability to brainwash the youth can continue in the future while what we hear is revolving around: "[h]e [/she] was vulnerable, and somebody swooped in" (Robinson, 2016, para. 50).

- ***Public relations' social responsibility: the moral foundations theory.*** The literature demonstrates several functions for public relations in the context of society and culture. Scholars identify PR practitioners as cultural and social intermediaries (Benecke et al., 2017; Erturk, 2015; Hodges, 2006; Pitcher, 2003; Sison, 2017; Toledano & Mckie, 2007), change agents (Coombs & Holladay, 2014; L'Etang, 2015), and activists and advocates (Berger, 2005; Saffer & Taylor, 2013; Smith & Ferguson, 2016). As such, Molleda and Ferguson (2004) believe ethics and social responsibility make public relations strategically equipped to perform in roles such as "monitoring (formative research), counselling and advising, planning, [and] implementing" (p. 346). Cutlip et al. also argue that "public relations fulfils its social responsibility when promoting the well-being of people and assisting social systems to adopt and respond to changing needs and environments" (as cited in Molleda & Ferguson, 2004, p. 332). According to Smith and Ferguson (2010), social responsibility in PR achieves

two purposes. It improves the circumstances of an activist public and keeps on-going interest in the movement that supports organisational targets by creating a kind of advocates. Additionally, Hodges (2006) believes public relations professionals' (PRPs) socio-cultural impact means "they will bring with them a system of values, attitudes and expectations from the wider culture(s) of which they are part" (p. 87). A recent study, however, finds that:

...cultural knowledge from practitioners was not always being utilised or applied in a public relations context...One interviewee [who is a PR specialist] explained "...a lot of workplaces still see PR as being [purely] communication based, whereas in reality, when you're dealing with, say, Asian cultures, it's culturally based." Another participant in the study "referred to those communicators who possess the skills to combine communication skills and cultural knowledge within their work context as "shining stars"". But it appears, sadly, that the 'shining stars' were a rare breed. (Clift, 2018, para. 6)

Cultural knowledge is essential for PR professionals working on social integration. In this sense, the following question seems relevant: "What cultural competences and expertise are required of professionals leading public relations efforts in ethnic advocacy or ethnic activist organizations?" (De Moya & Bravo, 2016, p. 245). In response to this inquiry, Sison (2017) argues that growing cultural diversities demands PRPs to acquire a great understanding of cultural values to obtain all benefits of diversity. Therefore, highly skilled, intelligent and socially active professionals required "to help us navigate our complex and fast-changing environment...[and] invite, include, listen to, work with and empower those whose voices have been previously absent" (Sison, 2017, p. 131). According to Bardhan and Macnamara, cultural differences are also approached by considering "the other as a co-creator of meaning, problem solving as a creative process, and diversity as beneficial" (as cited in Benecke et al., 2017, p. 28). Furthermore, Benecke et al. (2017) highlight the importance of PRPs to engage in multicultural societies in the form of a long-term strategy that springs from the social system, histories, interactions, explanations and meanings. It is especially significant as "media and PR practitioners [are advised]...to observe and glean cultural nuances, along with

developing and growing their media and communications skills” (Clift, 2018, para. 10). Accordingly, this thesis builds on and contributes to work in the cultural function of PR.

Scholars elaborate the social role of public relations and how it can affect society. Toledano and Mckie (2007) explain how the Israeli government has employed PR to educate people, make them understand the new multicultural nation, give reasons why this is important, and shape their understanding of events around them. In response to increased challenges, Molleda and Ferguson (2004) also demonstrate that the U.S. and Latin American scholars focused on the social role of public relations to support moral values in society. From this perspective, L’Etang (2015) highlights that when practitioners understand the social function of PR, it may lead to “a less dichotomous understanding of relations between public relations and...their societal, as well as organizational locus” (p. 38).

PR theorists ask about the role of PR in a society that has ideological and demographic changes, and how PR can counter dissimilarities (Coombs & Holladay, 2014). Pitcher (2003) goes further to state that if there is need to prepare for cultural change, then “we need politics to set an example” (p. 250). Consequently, PR professionals are encouraged to try resolving the public’s most significant issues and set the truth free as it can ultimately pay dividends (Pitcher, 2003). According to 2016’s World Public Relations Forum, “public relations has changed, not just channel use, but also...the very nature of conversations and their purpose, reach and effect requires communicators to reconsider a range of issues and topics affecting culture” (as cited in Gregory & Thurlow, 2017, p. 1). It appears from Hodges and McGrath that “PR as a social practice, provides opportunities for bottom-up support, co-creation of knowledge, addressing citizen concerns and the design of projects that empower citizens and enhance collaboration” (as cited in Benecke et al., 2017, p. 26). According to Edwards, PRPs also considered “as influencers who actively produce meaning” (as cited in Benecke et al., 2017, p. 26). Given the importance of the cultural role of PR, this study contributes insight

into how to gain grassroots (down-top) support to enhance social cohesion and counter home-grown terrorism. Mindful of this, Trayner (2017) identifies the significance of moral foundations theory to the communication processes used to address cultures and society. The theory assumes:

...that our instinctual reaction to issues and debates is hugely impactful, and how we intuitively feel about a topic matters more than how we may post-rationalize a stance, [thus] making the connection to deep-seated values...[is] the key to opinion and behaviour change....[and] how different arguments resonate depending on which moral foundations are activated. (pp. 125 - 126)

In this theory, PRPs are encouraged to find the right tone while addressing “a public mood which is highly sceptical of institutional motives” (Trayner, 2017, p. 128). Trayner (2017) thinks that through engaging in cultural challenges, institutions and chief influencers “are expected to have a stance on continuous social and ethical choices” (p. 124) by relating communication to fundamental values (p. 124). PRPs employ some emotional appeals in political campaigns to trigger certain beliefs, and this is why they “build public knowledge by understanding which foundations to evoke” (Trayner, 2017, p. 128). Similarly, Butterick (2011) states that moral evaluations in public relations are stemmed from philosophical perspectives such as Kantian morality (The Deontological approach). This aspect goes beyond evaluating why we take a specific process into what motivates those who undertake it (Butterick, 2011). It implies that there is a commitment to do the right thing, and PRPs should pursue a moral foundation strategy to do that because it “emphasizes the intrinsic worth or value of the action itself” (p. 81).

Additionally, Trayner (2017) talks about the new contrasted value-driven and political public information environment. This “requires...public relations professionals to understand how people’s identity and values hardwire their decisions and actions” (p. 123). Thus, if PRPs want to change attitudes, they must go beyond providing information only into referring to

inherited motivations and people's background, which hardwire their perspectives (Trayner, 2017). That is why Al From argues that "political policies need to be an embodiment of values" (as cited in Trayner, 2017, p. 124). It indicates that disseminating messages is not promising in the long-term and communication practices should rise above that (Pitcher, 2003).

Edelman's (2018) study 'Earned Brand' explains how it becomes significant for brands to take a stand on social and political matters and lead the 'belief-driven' type of communication to enhance their relationship with customers. By answering a question about believing in brands' ability to be a powerful mechanism for change, 53% think "[b]rands can do more to solve social ills than government" (p. 14). This means the British government has several ways to use PR. By adopting pro-integration value-based and belief-driven stand, the government can employ brands to land the message of inclusivity and help to build the nation. Every effort counts. Edelman (2018) also shows that 65% of UK respondents, the highest in this category, believe "[m]arketers spend too much time looking for ways to force me to pay attention to their messages and not enough time thinking of ways to make me 'want' to pay attention" (p. 20). This result reveals two issues in the context of this thesis. Firstly, the British public is highly aware of the value behind the message itself. It indicates their beliefs hardwire their decisions, which implies that the message of social integration should represent values. In that direction, such communication effort should relate to concepts like nation-building and patriotism. Secondly, the British public 'wants' a strategic type of messages. Forcing them to adopt a positive attitude about social inclusion is highly counterproductive. That can bring political PR a step forward to win the nation's hearts and minds.

Thus far, public relations has shown how it can contribute to a social change in Britain. What supports this is that "public relations activities have typically emerged at historical points of emerging change, transformation and contestation" (L'Etang, 2015, p. 28). Therefore, it

appears from Holtzhausen that the activist role in PR represents PRPs' function as change agents: "a 'conscience' of the organization, and to give voice to those...who lack power in their relationships with the organization" (as cited in Coombs & Holladay, 2014, p. 56). Coombs and Holladay (2014) also believe that this role can be an ethical way of communicating with the public. Hence, theorists suggest we should accept PR acting more ethically in society and "the ethic of care" (Coombs & Holladay, 2014, p. 56) it may represent.

- *The symmetrical and asymmetrical approaches to nation-building: modern possibilities?* Scholars provide several definitions for nation-building. What is important, however, is how communication and PR are associated with this concept. In the context of this thesis, nation-building means "[g]overnment policies aimed at creating a strong sense of national identity...[One of its forms involves] propaganda to encourage social harmony and...build...different ethnic groups into one national entity" (MBN, 2020, para. 23 - 30). In the field of social integration, Jozelic (2005) focuses on the fact that "[b]eing different from the majority does not mean that communication between the two is therefore impossible" (p. 3). Hence, Chaka (2013) talks about the importance of communication "in nation-building and national identity formation...[and] in the coupling of political and socio-economic transformation with the social-psychological aspect of forging abroad and inclusive national consciousness" (p. 352). Under the headline: 'Integrationist Approach: Communication Decreases Tension', Taylor (2000a) also discusses how communication is necessary for nation-building. By explaining Deutsch's theory of integration, Taylor (2000a) writes that "[r]elationships create social integration...[and] communication as a social phenomenon, in general, and as a medium of control, in particular, is what creates a national identity that allows people to think together, see together, and act together" (pp. 187 - 188). Similarly, communicating and improving dialogue between the government and other parties means

there is an opportunity “to harmonise ideas, activities and approaches. This includes better cooperation of activities to counter not only violent extremism, but also to increase tolerance among religious communities” (Qehaja et al., 2017, p. 11). Mindful of this, dialogue and reciprocity are the two communication approaches used to establish better relationships and communication outcomes in PR (Avery & Graham, 2013; Park & Cho, 2009; Ruiz-Mora et al., 2016).

From government public relations point of view, Park and Cho (2009) establish a direct link between public trust and government reciprocity. The article emphasises that political miscommunication means there is “lack of contacts to public and limited access to government [which] worsens the negative image of government...[This] [i]ncrease[s] public distrust [and] implies the public’s withdraws of supports for government and less willingness to comply with government decision” (pp. 4 - 5). Thus, Coombs and Holladay (2014) recognise symmetrical communication model as a tool for nation-building because it can create balance, dialogue and broad reciprocity of messages with kind of persuasion. As such, Taylor (2000a) believes PR is capable of leading public and interpersonal communication for nation-building purposes:

In a move toward a public relations approach to nation building, relationships will become the focus of research and a more communication-centered and participative model will emerge. When this happens, it will benefit all parties involved because building relationships, especially cooperative interethnic relationships, strengthens a nation-state and improves the lives of all the people living there. (p. 208)

Regarding extremism and social integration, the political implementation of the two-way model of communication seems pressing. These matters need cooperating with the public and listening to their views and concerns. If the government does not engage with people, it cannot achieve anything useful. Simply put, “[t]raditional one-way communication, which government is major prominent of information and decision making, has been challenged the

needs of collaboration in public service delivery” (Park & Cho, 2009, p. 6). Avery and Graham (2013) discuss symmetry and dialogue in government public relations by making use of social media. According to Azyan, “[t]he current, “socially informed” generation, expects dialogue, and governments at all levels are being compelled to shift their views of citizens to contribute online to the development of governments” (as cited in Avery & Graham, 2013, p. 4). Ruiz-Mora et al. (2016) also argue that PR uses dialogue and exchanges information to benefit both public and institutional interests. It means “that publics cannot be considered a subsidiary element of the relationship. Instead, they need to be acknowledged as a core element in achieving a real communication between the organisation and its publics, where both parts have the same status” (p. 405).

Bosnia’s PR experience seems appropriate. Taylor (2000b) sheds light on how PR in Bosnia has shifted from being only traditional business industry into playing “an important role in the development of civil society” (p. 1). She believes public organisations and NGOs can use media relations and two-way type of communication in PR to reconcile relationships between segregated members of society and governments. The article also finds that “[p]ublic relations is a tool for bringing like-minded groups together to articulate needs, pressure governments, and represent isolated groups” (p. 12). That is what this thesis highlights. In Britain, NGOs, political institutions and political figures can use PR to facilitate building communication channels and support social integration efforts. Consequently, building successful relationships in PR contradicts with the asymmetrical model (Chaka, 2013). Park and Cho (2009) describe this communication approach as “‘imperfect communication channel, information gap, information asymmetry, lack of transparency, ineffectiveness and policy alienation’ ” (p. 3). On the other hand, Butterick (2011) argues the symmetrical model is more effective in government institutions rather than corporate environments because it allows “engag[ing] in a real dialogue...not just to persuade, but also to listen, learn and, most

importantly, to adapt organizational behaviour as a result of the communication process” (p. 28), where compromising and negotiation are core values (p. 28).

Grunig explains that considering symmetry as the perfect PR model of communication is inappropriate because organisations cannot only rely on one communication model due to conditions (as cited in Butterick, 2011). Therefore, PR practitioners can use the symmetrical model to support other asymmetric efforts (Butterick, 2011). Martinelli (2011), however, writes how PR academics have criticised the asymmetrical model for excessive emphasis on persuasion being “counterproductive to dialogue and relationships” (p. 44). Persuasion “is an anathema to public relations theorists because of its connotations of manipulation and coercion” (Hallahan, 2000, p. 465). Shifting to the focus of this thesis, any asymmetrical approach or unprofessional symmetrical one cannot be productive. The sensitivity of the research topics highlights their complexity. Alternatively, Hallahan (2000) introduces ‘motivation, ability, and opportunity’ model to influence the public in general and inactive ones in particular. This strategy “involves enhancing the motivation and ability of the parties to communicate, as well as the creation of opportunities to communicate, and moves the question into the realm of actionable strategies that organizations can pursue” (p. 475). As we are in ‘post-symmetrical age’ (Brown, 2010), symmetry in public relations has changed from persuasion to professional and moral method of communication (Brown, 2010). Brown believes symmetry produces well-balanced outcomes and that contradicts Bernays’ two-way asymmetrical model of communication. Similarly, Park and Cho (2009) demonstrate that the PR role has changed from one-way to reciprocity, which is similar to the change in government public relations towards the two-way type of communication.

From a different angle, Somerville and Kirby (2012) use ‘dissemination’ in PR as a tool for reconciliation: “the communicator presents their view to the general audience but is under no obligation to attempt to engage in a dialogue with them” (p. 237). The article shows that this

approach is useful and morally preferable since messages here are source for agreement and hope rather than a cause for conflict and anxiety. Whereas, dialogue and symmetry, according to Peters are “largely irrelevant and unnecessary for the ethical and socially useful communicative activity required in contemporary liberal democratic societies” (as cited in Somerville & Kirby, 2012, p. 238). In dialogue and symmetry, it “is not necessarily to reach consensus but rather to engage with the ‘other’ while acknowledging diversity” (Somerville & Kirby, 2012, p. 240). Hence, Somerville and Kirby suggest that when there are deep ideological differences, political actors will consider engaging in dialogue un-useful. According to Roper, communication, in this case, will bring “a fake dialogue [and] arguably produces a fake consensus and ultimately fake agreement” (as cited in Somerville & Kirby, 2012, p. 252).

Using Somerville and Kirby’s (2012) ‘dissemination’ as a point of departure, Erturk (2015) defines public information as “the public relations approach which aims for providing mutual goodwill and trust by sharing the organization-related information with target audience in complete openness and honesty” (p. 25). This approach allows disseminating political information, supports transparency and engagement and improves trust (Erturk, 2015). Trust in this sense, according to Paliszkiewicz, “has emerged as a basic factor affecting intercultural communication and various types of cooperation” (as cited in Erturk, 2015, p. 37). As such, this research addresses ways from which the political establishment can gain public trust because it is a defining factor in the process of promoting social cohesion. It seems complicated due to spin and the culture of lies’ impact on the British public. If the government, however, realises the importance of public trust in tackling inclusivity and terrorism, then it is halfway there.

7. The Current Status of and Approaches to Social Integration and Countering Terrorism, Counter-terrorism and social inclusion: how framing theory works.

Framing depicts issues and attitudes strategically. The literature demonstrates how framing effective strategies to counter-terrorism and enhance social integration becomes challenging (Appleby, 2010; Awan, 2012; Bourekba, 2016; Ferguson, 2016; Heath-Kelly, 2013; Orehek & Vazeou-Nieuwenhuis, 2014; Peat, 2017; Qehaja et al., 2017; Ragazzi, 2017; Sanz Sabido, 2012; Trayner, 2017). Mahon and Wartick (2003) define framing as “a process of ordering beliefs around an issue” (p.19). According to Gamson, frames, in the context of terrorism and social inclusion, “define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgements and suggest remedies” (as cited in Ryan, 2004, p. 378). In a cultural context, frames can enhance “ideas and more concrete concepts that constitute the system of beliefs [and] values” (Hallahan, 2011, p. 181). Frames are also a tool for supporting cultural inclusion and “relationship building and political reconciliation” (Hallahan, 2011, p. 200). Froehlich and Rudiger (2006) characterise two levels of framing. According to the article, thematic frames explain an issue to discuss it in the public debate, and position frames provide specific political meaning to a problem and suggest political solutions. Here, publics respond to framed messages according to what they can gain if they make an action or the losses they obtain from not taking that action (Johnston & Lavine, 2012). It should be noted, therefore, that political institutions with agendas in community cohesion should understand framing to master messages and policies.

Hallahan identifies seven applications of framing in political public relations (as cited in Kiouisis & Stromback, 2014). These are: ‘framing of situations’ which creates a context for issues; ‘framing of attributes means the strategic’ use of words and phrases in the message itself; ‘framing of risk’ indicates how framing is used in politics to stimulate the public about a possible threat; ‘framing of arguments supporting actions’ which focuses on emotions to highlight messages; ‘framing of issues’ responds to the nature of the problem. It is “when

communicators portray topics in terms of disputes and arguments involved in a conflict” (Kiouisis & Stromback, 2014, p. 256); ‘framing of responsibility’ addresses the responsibility undertaken for political issues; and ‘framing of stories’ through creating a particular set of narratives to make these stories publicly memorable.

All that makes political PR well-prepared to address crises, because framing particularly strikes at the very definition of political crisis communication (Coombs, 2011). This leads us to identify three crisis frames: Denial, indicates refusing to admit there is a crisis; Threat, suggests there is a crisis labelled as a threat; and Opportunity, means there is a crisis that presents thrust for change (Coombs, 2011). Talking about social cohesion in Britain, the government cannot start successful political crisis communication unless it admits there is a ‘crisis’, the lack of social cohesion poses as a ‘threat’ to society, and there is an ‘opportunity’ for change by framing this crisis carefully. Because of the importance of creating messages in public relations, practitioners struggle to provide a common ground when perceptions hugely contrasted (Hallahan, 2011). Maybe it is why many scholars recognise framing as persuasion mechanism where “positively valenced frames are presumed to lead to positive attitudes” (p. 180). This thesis describes how framing strategic messages and plans can tackle social integration and radicalisation. One of the best examples is the use of the phrase ‘British Values’ instead of framing terms such as ‘Our Shared British Future’ (Ibrahim, 2018). Looking for broader terms that include everyone can ease the tension and pave the way to perceive ‘the other’ as part of the society. Political actors can set a positive example in this regard, as some of them lack such a strategic and diplomatic vision (Khan, 2018a). Framing the most appropriate words, catchphrases and even soundbites play a pivotal role in promoting social integration.

The way the media and journalists frame these issues is also critical. Shpiro (2002) writes that governments cannot defeat terrorism by hard strategies only. The article suggests that a

professional media strategy can play a role if it becomes part of countering terrorism and the politics of conflict. In Britain, however, Pantazis and Pemberton demonstrate that the media's way of reporting news about the Muslim community can mark them 'Jihadists' or 'Islamists' and shape the perspective of the suspect community in society (as cited in Awan, 2012). It is why Awan (2012) believes "that the contemporary nature and threat of extremism provides a need for a more robust community-led approach to tackling the extremist threat that does not demonize and discriminate against a single community because of their faith, race, culture, or ethnicity" (1161). In Norway, Jozelic (2005) also criticises the Norwegian media and public platforms for attacking certain groups in society. He asks: "where did we get the idea that the integration of the same group could be easier after it was stigmatised publicly?" (p. 3). Jozelic (2005) highlights the negative impact of the 'war against terror', which "very quickly can be an obstacle for integration, a cause of immigrants with Muslim background feeling marginalized. These days Muslims are almost a synonym for potential terrorists" (p. 3). According to Mythen, using phrases like the 'war against terrorism' "depicts a titanic battle between good and evil waged against 'terror networks' and rogue states" (as cited in Mythen & Walklate, 2006, p. 129).

Framing terrorism in general and terrorist attacks, in particular, remains a critical mission (Ryan, 2004). Mythen and Walklate (2006) believe the media are framing terrorism in a way that makes some communities blamed for its consequences. After the 2005 suicide bombings, this uncertainty in the UK becomes clear and "terrorism has featured as an academic and political football [while]...poor governmental communications" (pp. 125 - 127) have caused public mistrust. The use of terms such as 'new terrorism' and 'war against terrorism' in the British political discourse implies "a struggle against a determined enemy...the indeterminacy of the phraseology and the carelessness with which it has been applied...[and] launching of hostilities against an abstract noun rather than an identifiable nation" (Mythen &

Walklate, 2006, p. 129). In parallel, Klausen (2009) talks about community policing in the UK, which is part of the counter-terrorism strategy. Unfortunately, the language used in community policing was the same applied in Blair's third-way strategies (Klausen, 2009). This type of terminology is "Orwellian and obfuscating the coercive realities of new policies — especially since much of what was promised in the way of actual community involvement never happened" (Klausen, 2009, p. 407).

Therefore, achieving effectiveness in counter-terrorism and security "is meeting unprecedented constraints" (Haubrich, 2006, p. 399). Also contributing to this might be that the public mood is already anti-government because of the lack of response to political and economic needs (Haubrich, 2006). As such, it is significant to distinguish between the type of terrorist threats whether highly likely or not, internationally or domestically and the failure to clarify this "has already invited miscalculation and, if continued, will lead to more damaging strategic exhaustion in the future" (Haubrich, 2006, p. 420). Furthermore, Awan (2012) describes how the government's prior Prevent strategies "have risked alienating the Muslim community [and] the new Prevent strategy 2011 also has the risk of the depoliticization of Muslim communities from wider civic society and risks creating a mosaic for extremist ideologies" (p. 1158). Given that Prevent Strategy 2011 "focuses on a 'top-down' approach to tackling terrorist and extremist threats" (Awan, 2012, p. 1160), the House of Commons Select Committee for Communities and Local Government finds that "Prevent had risked being labeled too weak because its core focus of community cohesion and partnerships had been blurred by the many Prevent programs that did not directly influence policy decisions on tackling extremism" (as cited in Awan, 2012, p. 1164).

Thomas-Johnson (2018) recently reports on the United Nations' special rapporteur on racism, xenophobia and intolerance's evaluation of Prevent Strategy. She finds that "Prevent had given public sector workers a mandate to "make life-altering judgments on the basis of vague

criteria in a climate of national anxieties that scapegoat entire religious, racial and ethnic groups as the presumptive enemy” (para. 22). Likewise, Hill (2017) warns that:

Policies such as Prevent are perceived to have disproportionately impacted upon Muslim communities; contributed to an environment of suspicion and tension within communities; and undermined the resilience of communities to extremism by inadvertently shutting down public spaces for dialogue and debate, pushing individuals to take their concerns into the less governed space of the internet. (p. 19)

The government’s exclusion of some of Islamic partners from Prevent programmes branding them Islamists has caused these programmes to be “counter-productive, in (1) portraying the partnership programmes as purely mouthpieces for the government and (2) shifting the legitimacy towards organisations that oppose a government perceived as biased” (Ragazzi, 2016, pp. 728 - 729). According to Ragazzi (2016), the literature has discussed the damaging impact of applying the counter-terrorism strategies on a specific community. This has fuelled a sense of exclusion while “[t]he effects of softer, community-oriented approaches are less present in the literature” (p. 736). In Norway, Jozelic (2005) states that this negative branding of specific groups by both Norwegians and the media has also caused “a systematic stigmatisation” (p. 2) which makes it more difficult for these groups to integrate into society (p. 2).

With the challenged UK counter-narrative strategies (Ferguson, 2016), the time comes to try different approaches. Ferguson (2016) believes that the use of other communication and media techniques would “contribute to efforts tackling root causes of division, prejudice and IBV [Identity-based violence]” (p. 17). In a different and relevant context, Qehaja et al. (2017) find that Kosovo’s policy in countering violent extremism (CVE) was not implemented effectively due to reasons like “the absence of community involvement” (p. 3). According to the study, it is the result of excluding the role of Muslims in society, little programmes and jobs for Muslim youth, and lack of critical thinking approach in schools. All

these have shaped vacuum for extremist beliefs to fill and manipulate (Qehaja et al., 2017). This thesis, therefore, corresponds to this concern by discovering alternative tools for countering extremism and social segregation through providing the most appropriate PR approaches and communication theories.

Scholars are calling for softer and more efficient ways to fight radicalisation. Bourekba (2016) finds that the number of foreign fighters is growing in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) countries as “‘hard’ strategies inspired by security-focused approaches have prevailed over other strategies and approaches to violent extremism” (p. 1). The study demonstrates that these strategies are challenged and cannot prevent young people from being radicalised. Thus, the lack of strong community relationships and a weak sense of belonging are the main factors leading youth to join extremist groups (Bourekba, 2016). This review highlights similar outcomes resulted from applying hard strategies. The thesis elaborates this fact and presents political PR as a soft-power mechanism working through communication and engagement. The point here is to prove the hard policies are not the answer in the long run. They may work in countering possible terrorist attacks, however, it can be argued that as preventive measures, hard strategies do not seem pre-emptively effective enough. Mindful of this, Ragazzi (2017) identifies the UK’s growing interest in the ‘securitisation of social policy’. He defines it as “the increased submission of social policy actors and their practices to the logics of security and social control” (p. 163). Moreover, Bourekba (2016) highlights that MENA’s soft techniques are the counter-narratives which explain the effects of extremism and the essence of Islam. However, the article shows that these counter-narratives are rarely effective because of their focus on ideology, religion or security-based policies rather than engaging with youth. Such narratives have also failed to make the necessary impact as they are framed by “untrusted traditional actors” (Bourekba, 2016, p. 6). At later stages of this research, the same ‘untrusted traditional actors’ echoes what is happening in

Britain and has led to similar ineffective outcomes (Hadj, 2018). In short, it can be noted that the soft-power approaches are un-strategic.

As a result, Ragazzi (2016) finds that counter-terrorism strategies have created division and 'policed multiculturalism'. The study explains that "the management of diversity through a security perspective- has an important consequence in that it removes fundamental questions about pluralism from political debate, casting them instead in a depoliticised language of security" (p. 724). Ragazzi (2016) also refers to Cameron's speech in 2011, which has established a direct connection between home-grown terrorism and the government's failure to achieve multiculturalism. By the arrival of a Conservative-Liberal government, "the orientation of the PREVENT programme shifted away from social programmes and focused on 'counter-narratives' and 'ideology'" (p. 166). According to Ragazzi (2017), "Contest, PREVENT and UK's counter-terrorism policy have generated an equal amount of criticism in academia, primarily in the fields of criminology and critical security studies" (p. 166). In addition, Hill (2017) highlights that "[c]urrent policy approaches to CVE, such as the Prevent Duty, are attracting resentment and suspicion to the point of being counterproductive" (p. 15). These counter-terrorism strategies, according to Birt et al., have developed a racialised perception of Islam (as cited in Ragazzi, 2017). While these strategies seem as soft-power techniques, it is apparent that "'softer' forms of influence are always embedded in a broader range of practices of power, which include an important degree of coercion" (Ragazzi, 2017, p. 171). Similarly, it appears from Thomas that British Preventing Violent Extremism "has been a vehicle for a significant growth in state surveillance of Muslim communities, which is contrary to the aims of other key governmental priorities such as Communities Cohesion" (as cited in Silverman & Thomas, 2012, p. 288). Therefore, Robert Lambert, from the Metropolitan Police's Muslim Contact Unit, believes:

...how unhelpful certain Home Secretaries have been in tackling the issue of Islamist extremism, and the impact this has had on fostering good relations between the police and Muslim communities...[hence, the UK's community cohesion agenda] has arguably resulted in a greater cultural polarisation within communities, and thus greater social segregation. (Silverman & Thomas, 2012, p. 288)

It appears that treating ethnic minorities as real social components is more strategic than picturing them as national threats. Prevent Strategy, for example, identifies the Muslim community “as both ‘risky’ and ‘at risk’...This framing of Muslim communities as collectively ‘at risk’ or vulnerable has the paradoxical effect of also securitising them concerning what they might produce” (Heath-Kelly, 2013, p. 405). According to Omand, it implies that there is “‘focused diplomacy’ and ‘military intervention overseas’ before the ‘winning back of the hearts and minds of young British Muslims’ [which] became centralised within the pre-emptive approach to terrorism” (as cited in Heath-Kelly, 2013, p. 407). In a similar vein, Silverman and Thomas (2012) describe the government’s response to emigration in 2006. They recognise the official response to immigration and asylum policies as the alarmist discourse of the government. According to Blunkett, the Home Office failed to function strategically during the implementation of these policies (as cited in Silverman & Thomas, 2012). Besides, the media played a significant role in accelerating the public sense of insecurity by framing immigrants “as a mass of ‘illegals’ [and]...asylum seekers...as ‘uncivilised’,...‘violent’ and thus the threatening other” (p. 284). Similarly, Innes (2006) refers to the UK community intelligence as “the ‘dirty work’ of democracy” (p. 8) because secretive means are used by democratic organisations to maintain social control and counter-terrorism (p. 8). The article finds that the policing community role was successful in building relationships. A “sort of common view” (Innes, 2006, p. 13), however, is what interacting with the public still missing. Accordingly, Innes (2006) asks: how the police can be prepared to react to terrorist threats while they do not have an understanding of the situation they encounter.

Police's counter-terrorism strategies are excessive (Sanz Sabido, 2012). Thus, Sanz Sabido (2012) thinks "it is important to design effective law enforcement training beneficial for the local police and welcomed by the community" (p. 95). She argues "that social alienation and 'othering' of Muslims is a factor in the development of the 'enemy within' and home-grown terrorist threats" (p. 95). On the other hand, Obrien (2010) describes the role of Chinese policing public relations offices in Beijing as "direct liaisons...a step in the right direction provided that [they] will be fair and transparent instead of propagandist" (para. 2 - 4). Heath and Ni (2010) also show how PR community relations role in police departments can bridge gaps and improve collaborative efforts between the police and the public. Community relations is when the organisation recognises "its civic responsibility and takes an active interest in the well-being of its community, then it gains a number of long-term benefits in terms of community support, loyalty, and good will" (Heath & Ni, 2010, p. 558). That indicates a significant PR role to counter-terrorism. A function that extends to working in the field hand in hand with communities. It also sheds light on the current British approach to counter-terrorism, which has proved to be counterproductive. It can be noted that public relations keeps showing how valuable it can be in building community relations and supporting cooperation.

8. The rhetorical features of the current British political discourse: constructing a culture of fear. Iversen (2015) defines 'rhetoric' as "the study of (attempted) persuasive communication...concerned with deliberations around future actions and future choices" (p. 161). Some PR scholars criticise the persuasiveness of rhetoric and prefer to understand it from a social perspective employed for advocacy purposes (L'Etang, 2010). The rhetorical tool, therefore, is a method that influences publics' way of perceiving a particular point of view and determining how to act: "a tool having a performative potential" (Cislaru, 2012, p. 1). Additionally, rhetorical communication means delivering facts, how the public interpret

them in the public sphere, and how facts explain actions: “rhetoric is crucial for human understanding” (Ihlen, 2010, p. 61).

Political communication practitioners create messages using a combination of emotions, logic and accuracy while sometimes any of these can prevail over others (Iversen, 2015). Among all emotional appeals in rhetoric, fear is the main feature of the current British political discourse by installing ‘fear-as-topic’: “the concerned topic is identified with fear” (Cislaru, 2012, p. 5). In this sense, fear is employed to exclude others and refer to them as being negatively different from others in society (Marko, 2013). Marko introduces fear as ‘shared emotion’ in society and believes that this fuels social segregation. The article explains that “controlling fear means having control over the ‘shared emotion’ of the population...[therefore] having control over human fear, and acting as a protector and safeguardian, means holding power” (p. 216). Consequently, “[t]hose who control the language, control the power” (Appleby, 2010, p. 432).

Having said all that, Mythen and Walklate (2006) believe that to understand what fears terrorism implies, then “we need to attend to the cultural networks through which such fears are constructed and actualized” (p. 133). Mythen and Walklate (2006) examine the relationship between framing fear and the concept of responsabilization in the UK and US. They define responsabilization by explaining how New Labour launched a campaign in 2004 to advise the public on how to react to a crisis. The government distributed ‘22-page emergency advice’ booklet, made it accessible online and advertised on television and radio. This guidance booklet “tends to individualize emergency situations, to responsabilize people for their own risk management rather than clearly laying out institutional security strategies” (Mythen & Walklate, 2006, p. 134). It is an attempt to explain what you, as a citizen, can do to save yourself and your society in the time of risk far from describing the government’s

responsibility in such situations, that is, what the country is doing to defend you (Mythen & Walklate, 2006).

Accordingly, Mythen and Walklate find that responsibility and choice are rooted within New Labour philosophy, while the USA “new strategy is not to command and control but rather to persuade and align, to organise, to ensure that other actors play their part, and key to this encouragement ‘are publicity campaigns targeted at the public as a whole’” (p. 134). It is significant to put this in a historical context, giving indications of New Labour’s policy in the late 1990s. During that time, Labour’s approach called ‘new’ because politicians represent the party’s values differently and manipulatively: “the triumph of spin over substance and a consequence of the betrayal of true socialism by ‘New’ Labour policies...[That represented] Blair’s move to the right, and the ascendancy of the ‘soft’ left” (McNair, 2004, p. 330). According to McNair (2004), Labour’s communicative strategies, being equivalent to spin, had “the negative connotation of spinning a yarn — lacking truthfulness, not to be trusted, of suspect motivation” (p. 328). Mindful of this, Labour’s discourse is similar to Al-Qaida’s in the way they manipulate the other through word choices (Appleby, 2010). Consequently, Appleby (2010) suggests that “[r]emoving labels [such as ‘other’ and ‘threat’ from the British counter-terrorism discourse] and empowering the individual, rather than creating artificial collectives, could provide a means of addressing the problem” (p. 421). Mythen and Walklate (2006) also emphasise that, in some situations, the UK government “communication of the terrorist threat has been ambiguous, patchy and ill conceived [*sic*]” (p. 124). This problem continues as Hadj (2018) believes the Commissioner for countering extremism in Britain, Sara Khan, “is known for vociferously engaging in the language of catastrophe by throwing words like ‘extremist’ and ‘Islamist’ at anyone who disagrees with her” (para. 38). It can be suggested that this dangerous framing of terrorist threats needs changing to gain better results in combating terrorism and supporting social cohesion. Hence, the thesis focuses on the

political PR power of framing. It comes in a time when Hill (2017) finds that “[d]ivisive rhetoric within national political and media spheres, [and] the alarming rise in Islamophobia and suspicion...[have] served to disempower whole sections of the [Muslim] community and decrease spaces for young people to build cross-community understanding and relationships” (p. 13). In addition, Mythen and Walklate (2006) write that the government:

‘new terrorism’ has built upon and escalated a cultural climate of fear and uncertainty...reduced notion of safety [and] pave the way for the simplistic construction of a non-white ‘terrorist other’ that has negative consequences for ethnic minority groups in the UK...[it is] amiss both in terms of the messages conveyed and the levels at which it attempts to engage with the public. (pp. 123 - 137)

Appleby (2010), thus, warns that the British counter-terrorism discourse, which uses terms such as ‘terrorist’ and ‘extremist’, does not only imply these two categories are not parts of society, but it may also indicate the exclusion of Islam too:

Although legal documents concerning counter-terrorism do not make any connection between the ‘terrorist’ label and Islam, the accompanying texts produced by the Labour government as a means of advice clearly place Islamic discourse at the heart of the perceived threat. (p. 421)

Using the most appropriate terminology in British political discourse is more critical than ever. It influences the efforts of social cohesion and countering extremism. For example, Britain’s use of the term Islamophobia has affected the counter-terrorism policy and “fuelled the quest for ‘respect and recognition’ that stands to be disappointed in a liberal state” (Joppke, 2009, p. 453). Hence, Joppke (2009) thinks “British Muslims to be more disaffected and alienated than other Muslims in Europe...[and] this raises the question of the limits of integration policy, which is obvious but rarely posed” (Joppke, 2009, p. 453). Furthermore, Asthana and Walker (2016) review Casey’s 2016 report, which shows ‘successive’ UK governments have failed to promote social integration causing a ‘vicious circle’ “in which Muslims felt they were being blamed for terrorism and extremism, leading to suspicion, mistrust, and hostility” (para. 18). Most recently, Ibrahim (2018) states the MCB refused the

new political phrase ‘British values’. According to the article, this phrase failed the Muslim community and indicated “that such values have been conceived in a kneejerk fashion because some people are considered ‘not quite British enough’ and therefore must be subject to a civilising mission” (para. 4). The Council suggested using ‘Our Shared British Future’ instead (Ibrahim, 2018).

Insensitive political statements can engender fear in the public sphere. Khan (2018a) writes that the Conservatives’ judgement of Boris Johnson’s remarks comparing veiled Muslim women to ‘bank robbers’ and ‘letterboxes’ were ‘respectful and tolerant’. According to the article, the MCB responded that Johnson “is a member of parliament, and as such has a responsibility to set the tone for the rest of the UK to follow. In this case, it is far-right Islamophobes who have been empowered to follow his rhetoric” (para. 9). A few months later, watchdog highlighted that “Islamophobic attacks on Muslim women who wear veils increased...[and] Tell Mama, which records hate crimes, said there was a ‘direct link’ between the comments and an uptick in incidents targeting women who wear the niqab” (Khan, 2018a, para. 5 - 6). It can be noted that the panel found using this kind of language is “‘provocative’ but claimed it would be ‘unwise to censor excessively the language of party representatives or the use of satire to emphasise a viewpoint, particularly a viewpoint that is not subject to criticism’” (Khan, 2018a, para. 8). Gambert and Linne (2018), however, believe “irony and ambiguity are worth taking seriously...Irony allows for extremist views to hide in plain sight – in the words of prominent neo-Nazi Andrew Anglin, “non-ironic Nazism masquerading as ironic Nazism” (para. 18). The use of satire is one of the “common traditions [in Britain which include:] (a common language, good manners, care of children, [and] ironic humour targeting politicians, priests and do-gooders)” (Osler, 2009, p. 89), but that does not suggest a sense of irony that targets ethnic minorities. Thus, Poynting (2013) classifies such words as racist:

...the markers of putative cultural inferiority and incommensurability are inscribed on the body, or perhaps in the clothing of the body of the othered (e.g. the veil): racism as it is practised and experienced has to do with inextricable interlinking of culture and embodiment. (p. 300)

Using the strategic type of rhetoric is politically essential. In Britain, political language is one identified source that has led to public distrust (Martinelli, 2011). Appleby (2010) uses labelling theory to explain the influence of labelling certain groups on society. It indicates that “the use of the label ‘Muslim’ creates a singular collective community that does not politically acknowledge other forms of individual identity...[and] forms division within society” (p. 422). That, according to Mythen and Walklate (2006), has affected how the public understands risk, responsibility and control in the contexts of security and fear. It also creates similarities between crime and terrorism by “localised and routine cultural practices that shape personal fears” (p. 137). It appears from Russell that shaping this ‘collective fear’ “stimulates herd instinct, and tends to produce ferocity toward those who are not regarded as members of the herd” (as cited in Appleby, 2010, p. 421). According to Beck, the problem that “what is politically crucial is ultimately not the risk itself but the perception of risk” (as cited in Silverman & Thomas, 2012, p. 283). Thus, Orehek and Vazeou-Nieuwenhuis (2014) warn that while counter-terrorism campaigns are implemented to improve public awareness by using subway posters, warning systems and visual advertisements, these can also stimulate people’s sense of fear. The way politicians and media have communicated terrorist attacks “add[s] fuel to the emotional fire [and] determines how much the psychological harm spreads among the population” (p. 252). Whether it is terrorism or, for example, “ethnic ‘gang rape...As well as appraising the ideology that blames whole communities and their cultures...the obsession with these practices is disproportionate to their actual extent and level of risk posed” (Poynting, 2013, p. 301). In his article ‘Britons are overwhelmingly

swayed by myths about immigration — these are the five facts we often get wrong’, Duffy (2019) explains:

We overestimate what we worry about as much as the other way round. So our overestimates of immigration levels are as much a signal of our concern as a carefully calibrated estimate of reality. Our view of reality is coloured by our emotions, and this means that simple myth-busting alone will have limited impact. (para. 12)

In parallel, Vilcu (2014) identifies media and politicians as negatively responsible for stimulating society’s fear of newcomers instead of integrating them properly. Otherwise, he believes both immigrants and host communities should engage in “intercultural dialogue...- it is about learning about each other, asking relevant questions and being prepared to listen, understand, and respect the others and their culture” (Vilcu, 2014, p. 677). Fear and anger are essential emotions used in the rhetoric of political and media discourses (Cislaru, 2012). Emotions are necessary since logic only cannot sway beliefs (Trayner, 2017). According to Forgas, it is because certain emotions influence “how an individual encodes and retrieves information that is consistent with the felt emotions” (as cited in Luo & Jiang, 2014, p. 136). Therefore, Ćosić, Srbljinović, and Popović (2018) believe that framing emotionally-based messages is critical in forming counter-narratives, challenging extremist views, and developing de-radicalisation programmes. As a result, scholars encourage PR practitioners and organisations to attract public attention and change behaviours by applying values-based communication “linked to a broader repertoire of emotions” (Trayner, 2017, p. 124). How to frame risk and crisis is also significant. Mythen and Walklate (2006) talk about the importance of framing risk discourse by focusing on word choices and ethical values: “there is a real need for the social sciences to rally against the snap judgements [and] unnecessary stereotyping...that are vectored through ‘the war against terrorism’ discourse” (p. 130). Poynting (2013) believes that this type of rhetoric and:

...mobilisation in the 'war on terror'...[have] been used to 'launder' racism. The means and the myths by which Muslims are othered in this process are globalised, just as the attack on multiculturalism is shared and distributed globally: 'the particular equation of multiculturalism and Muslims is always positioned, but it mediates broadly comparable structural anxieties and garners political energy from a process of transnational validation'. (p. 300)

The literature focuses on the negative impact of media coverage and media's lack of responsibility and uncertainty in addressing terrorism which intensifies public concern (Heath-Kelly, 2013; Qehaja et al., 2017; Silverman & Thomas, 2012). Heath-Kelly (2013) demonstrates how the UK government and media have made unfavourable rhetorical choices while addressing the Muslim community. The article shows that in 2001, for instance, a racist gang attacked Bangladeshi and Pakistani neighbourhoods. The media reacted by blaming these communities and claimed that they refused to integrate. The government also "characterised the rioters with populist law-and-order rhetoric about 'thugs'" (Heath-Kelly, 2013, p. 410). According to Kundnani, "it was a declaration of the end of multiculturalism [and the] [g]overnment mistakenly presented this fragmentation as the result of an over-tolerance of diversity which allowed non-white communities to self-segregate" (as cited in Heath-Kelly, 2013, p. 410). In a broader context, Qehaja et al. (2017) find that some media debates about preventing extremism in Kosovo have also failed. The media, according to the article, do not understand what motivates radicalisation and adopt a hostile attitude against Muslims by labelling them, extremists and terrorists. In this sense, Mythen and Walklate (2006) argue that media's presentation of terrorist risk is significant because terrorist attacks "are given meaning through cultural, political, economic and social processes...[and] [p]ublic responses to terrorism are shaped not solely by the nature of the emergency but also by pre-existing assumptions, underlying cultural values and political attitudes" (p. 131). Radicalisation, therefore, "has fitted a gap in the governance of terrorism, and the governance of the future" (Heath-Kelly, 2013, p. 412). The literature proves that the political framing of

terrorism and pluralism has raised concerns over the years. As such, this thesis provides insight into how governments and media can use political PR to frame their responses strategically.

9. *The future of social integration and countering terrorism: what the literature suggests.*

Scholars demonstrate several and, to a great extent, similar approaches towards what tools needed to combat terrorism and promote community cohesion. Awan (2012), for example, believes:

... the UK government clearly needs to develop a better understanding of how to prevent people from following a path of extremism [and] counter-terrorism policy needs to address the problem of building trust among the state...; [m]ore detailed information from the Muslim community is an important future goal and could help build such trust. (p. 1177)

Al-azami (2018) also focuses on engaging with the Muslim community by relying on the British principles of mutual respect and liberty. Under the heading ‘A better way forward’, he believes it is significant for the government to nurture the Muslim’s sense of belonging and make them “feel they are full members of this society make for better citizens” (para. 26). Here, “[i]t is noteworthy that managing the government-public relationship is less effective in developing the community when a sense of community is absent” (Kim & Cho, 2019, p. 305). Therefore, “[a] sense of belonging is built when individuals adhere to an identity, choose to form part of a group, and share a culture” (Formanchuk, 2019, para. 3). Additionally, Al-azami (2018) encourages government officials not to make Islamophobic remarks and to be more culturally literate about the Muslim community and its values. The article supports establishing communication channels and suggests “[t]he Muslim community needs to be part of the British government’s conversation concerning its strategy for confronting extremism in a more meaningful way” (para. 22). Moreover, Hill (2017) warns that young Muslims should involve in society because being stigmatised as extremists

disengages them from their communities. Consequently, “greater platforms for young Muslims must be established to enable them to develop a sense of belonging and to answer questions of identity, in addition to building links with the wider community” (Hill, 2017, p. 10). Similarly, the MCB has “called on the government to adopt a ‘positive collaborative approach’ and said that integration should be a ‘two-way street’” (Ibrahim, 2018, para. 2). Sayeeda Warsi, politician and member of The House of Lords, also confirms “a community is best integrated when it feels it belongs and matters” (Ibrahim, 2018, para. 16). In addition, Peat (2017) reports Sadiq Khan’s warning of the growth of radicalisation and terrorism. As such, what is important for Britain now is to “build bridges” (para. 12). That is because “pluralist societies are best advised to seek practical accommodation amongst the existing groups, rather than restricting or offending any in pursuit of an unnecessarily broad ideal of neutrality” (Hampsher-Monk, 1995, p. 1). Viewed in this light, radicalisation in Britain:

...cannot be addressed without active community involvement. The problem of a ‘circle of tacit support’...has become a large concern for counter-terrorism officials and policy-makers....[There is]...need to improve communication with Muslim communities, to find ways to marginalize the extremists and, ultimately, to promote social integration. (Klausen, 2009, pp. 408 - 410)

Besides, Mark Rowley, UK’s most senior counter-terrorism officer, thinks that “increased public engagement will be central to countering future threats” (Jackson, 2017, para. 2).

Likewise, Talha Ahmad, MCB’s treasurer, believes that:

The challenge is for society as a whole...to play a role is not marginalising a single community as a suspect community...[and] the moment we do that, we lose an opportunity to create an environment in which it is difficult for terrorists to thrive. (Jackson, 2017, para. 17 - 18)

The same demand is required in other societies dealing with radicalisation and social cohesion, indicating a need for change in the approach and techniques used towards adopting more effective ones. In Norway, Jozelic (2005) highlights the significance of bridging

communication gaps as “[m]utual respect and lasting dialogue between different religions should be the goal for Norwegian authorities....An invitation of immigrants with Muslim background to a dialogue as equals could also solve a lot of problems” (pp. 4 - 5). Jozelic (2005) also believes authorities should apply better ‘cohabitation strategy’. He suggests that Norway can only overcome the increasing challenges through preparing for integration politics led by a clear vision of objectives. Hence, the Norwegian parliament announced that inclusivity needs the government and society to respond to the national call of integration, having the desire to communicate (Jozelic, 2005).

In a similar vein, Sahin (2016) urges the Turkish government to integrate Syrian immigrants who will become “the leading force in the economy and social life in the next decades” (p. 116). In addition, Qehaja et al. (2017) suggest that the tools used to avoid more extremist threats in Kosovo “should be seen from a developmental perspective” (p. 4). They also find the growing lack of dialogue between Muslims and authorities in Kosovo implies opportunities to avoid extremism are not well-exploited: “there is a need to increase the dialogue between Muslim believers, secular society and state authorities...to harmonise ideas, activities and approaches” (p. 11). Besides, Bin Hassan (2019) stresses that in Denmark, “there is a continued need for preventing and countering violent extremism programmes to gain support and acceptance from the wider public. These programmes need to be consolidated, developed and adapted based on local circumstances and risk factors” (p. 16). According to Coaffee (2009), the real concern in the West now is how to *pre-emptively* plan for counter-terrorism strategies:

...there is a clear need to enhance communication between citizens and the state regarding national security in ways that do not generate fear of terrorism as an ambient characteristic of urban areas....The challenge is for a more nuanced and reflexive approach to emerge for counter-terror and security policy-making, and by extension urban planning: one where adequate time is taken for reflection and for developing a longer-term view of what is the appropriate response linked to local

contingences of place and one which can better balance risk management with the public interest. (pp. 351 - 352)

Moreover, Bourekba (2016) believes in MENA (the middle east and north Africa) countries:

...a more comprehensive approach entailing interrelated push and pull factors of different nature (economic, social, effective, psychological and political) is needed. Not only could this open up new ways of addressing [violent extremism] phenomenon, but it could also contribute to preventing young people from joining violent extremism groups. Addressing this objective requires turning the existing short-term and security-focused strategies into a long-term comprehensive plan. (p. 2)

In the British context of inclusivity and terrorism, Ferguson (2016) highlights that “[t]he need for trust and credibility again is crucial [and] [t]he projects that are most successful...aim to facilitate conversation, encourage awareness, or dispel misinformation” (p. 25). There is a need for a strategic approach to address these public concerns given that: “there has been little reflection about how, and the ways in which, Muslim communities can be engaged for the purposes of countering-terrorism, including counter-radicalization” (Spalek & Lambert, 2008, p. 257). Similarly, Ragazzi (2017) finds that in spite of the increasing academic interest in counter-terrorism, “little has been written specifically on the relations among counter-terrorism, counter-radicalization and social policy” (p. 167). Ragazzi (2017) suggests some interesting questions which relate to this thesis’ proposal and the issues under investigation. He asks: What “the autonomy of certain professions’ [can do] to counter-radicalization policies? [And] what are the long-term consequences of subordinating one of the bases of the fabric of democratic societies-relations of trust-to a constant logic of suspicion?” (p. 172). Correspondingly, Bourekba (2016) gives clues into what tools should the possible academic or practical field involve:

Programmes of the local level require multi-agency approaches to establish dialogue in a climate of trust and confidence with an extensive range of actors at different levels [not only] national authorities, police and intelligence services, but should engage families of FFs [foreign fighters], ex-detainees, community members, teachers, local leaders, local authorities, human rights NGOs and other actors. (p. 7)

In this sense, Qehaja et al. (2017) recommend finding ways to facilitate discussions with young people and coordinate with public organisations to implement a national strategy for countering extremism. Moreover, Sanz Sabido (2012) stresses on re-educating community through media and establishing a deeper connection between police and community through creating relationships. According to the article, counter-terrorism measures have shown effectiveness in investigating attacks after they happened while what is necessary is to use techniques that can prevent these attacks from taking place. This emphasises the essentiality of having pre-emptive programmes to protect society and disable any extremist plans. It is about being proactive instead of reactive. With the fact that in Britain “there has been no dramatic change in [integration] policy” (Joppke, 2009, p. 462), British counter-terrorism strategies have caused Muslims to become “a homogenous group and set apart from the rest, thwarting the integrative intent of these measures” (Joppke, 2009, p. 467). These hard power techniques have also shown that ““75% of people stopped in British airports under schedule 7 have been asked to spy on their communities’, feeding into the narrative that the only relationship between communities and government is one based on surveillance” (Hill, 2017, p. 12).

Under the counter-terrorism law, Schedule 7, Muslims are illegally portrayed as suspects in British airports which is why “there was criticism levied towards the lack of oversight and scrutiny of Schedule 7 powers to ensure interventions are lawful and proportionate” (Hill, 2017, p. 11). Likewise, Thomas-Johnson (2018) writes how Prevent police officers in Wales approached Muslim asylum seeker and “suggested they could help him with his immigration status if he was prepared to work as an informant in local mosques” (para. 8). The article indicates that many social activists have condemned Prevent Strategy and considered it commonly biased against Muslims and based on surveillance. Accordingly, Ćosić et al. (2018) believe that establishing soft power techniques to improve anti-terrorism and anti-

radicalisation policies “would strengthen prevention and deterrence of radicalization and terrorism” (p. 196). The thesis addresses this issue by introducing political public relations as a soft-power mechanism. The literature demonstrates how the profession can bridge communication gaps and enhance mutual understanding to increase community cooperation levels.

Britain needs to get prepared for real social integration strategies. This is particularly important as British multiculturalism is ‘under-threat’ and integration policies described as “misguided...[while] putting high hopes on the state is still strangely counter-tide [*sic*]” (Joppke, 2009, p. 455). Klausen also explains that European upper-class political Muslims are generally hopeful and pro-integration, “but again there is one exception: Britain, whose Muslim leaders were found to be ‘exceptionally unhappy with current policies’” (as cited in Joppke, 2009, p. 454). Moreover, Adachi (2011) investigates inclusivity in ‘post-multiculturalism’ Britain. The article believes there is a need for modern theory and strategy to arrange matters related to social integration since “the measures needed to create social unity and recognize cultural diversity seem to be politically contradictory and incompatible” (p. 108). Additionally, Mandaville (2009) explains how accusations and restrictions made under the British counter-terrorism policy against some Muslim leaders “have pushed some Muslims from the communal-pluralist camp towards a more communitarian stance- a development which clearly does not bode well for Muslim integration processes” (p. 504).

Hence, Hill (2017) recommends supporting multiculturalism in Britain through better representation of the Muslim community in official and political bodies: “[g]reater pluralism would help stop the monopolisation of platforms by those at the extremes who are not representative of the Muslim majority...and ensure that future strategies and policy do not miss crucial community insights” (p. 11). Mythen and Walklate (2006) also believe what we need now is to consider mechanisms for risk communication. It is through taking social,

political and cultural contexts into consideration, how people realise such communication, how they perceive information, and how that influence their minds and hearts (Mythen & Walklate, 2006). Moreover, Asthana and Walker (2016) highlight Chuka Umunna's response, the APPG for Social Integration and Home Affairs Committee member, to Casey's 2016 report on social cohesion. Chuka Umunna warns against considering the report's suggestions as an attack on multiculturalism. He emphasises that "breaking down the barriers between communities is the best defence of the diverse country we have become" (para. 44). This requires the public to trust the government on its efforts to promote social cohesion. However, there is "a well-ingrained popular view across the country that our political institutions and their politicians are failing, untrustworthy, and disconnected from the great mass of the British people" (Martinelli, 2011, pp. 42 - 43). The lack of political trust can make reconciling community relationships more complicated. At the same time, it gives political PR opportunity to intervene and act.

Policy-makers and communicators in the UK should focus on the publics' emotional reactions to counter-terrorism messages and examine if these might stop threats or not (Orehek & Vazeou-Nieuwenhuis, 2014). Relatedly, Hill (2017) sheds light on the media's role in working with the government and communicate information responsibly. According to Hill's (2017) report, the media "should help to inform national discourse and challenge negative stereotypes, however, 'a Muslim is more likely to be described with a negative adjective 20 times more than a positive adjective'" (p. 11). Therefore, he encourages the government to adopt down-top strategy instead of the traditional top-down approach and "[e]stablish greater avenues for dialogue between Muslim communities and the political establishment, so that community perspectives can better inform policymaking" (p. 19). In a similar vein, Katwala (2018) demonstrates how Sajid Javid and Sadiq Khan believed the time is ripe for introducing integration to political agenda. Both political figures called for a

fundamental change in integration policy with Khan establishing London Social Integration Strategy and Javid's Green Paper (Katwala, 2018). According to Katwala (2018), London Strategy "cites 'reducing inequality and promoting fairness and opportunity for all,' as one of its core components" (para. 9). In parallel, the Green Paper focuses on integration as "a two-way street...[and] an integrated society would be 'a society in which everybody is a potential friend'" (para. 8). In the next section, the researcher will provide a synthesis of the concepts discussed in this literature review and how these are related to each other.

10. Conceptual Framework. At this stage, the conceptual framework is "the researcher's explanation of how the research problem would be explored...[It] presents an integrated way of looking at a problem under study" (Adom, Hussein, & Agyem, 2018, p. 439). Consequently, an analysis of the historical context of race relations in the UK is required. It is to link the evolution of this term with multiculturalism, terrorism, Islamophobia and framing of otherness, white supremacy and fear that formulate some of the debate around Brexit and the Muslim community in Britain. This section identifies how these concepts are connected and discusses them in light of right-wing populism and hate crimes as forms of cultural violence. Racism can be defined as unacceptable behaviour towards those who are culturally different such as 'hate crimes' (Duell, 2018; Gill, 2017; Roberts, 2018). It also means language shift towards xenophobic and Islamophobic rhetoric and a general feeling of fear and anxiety in the west (Braidotti, 2016; Chaitin, 2019). It can be argued that multiculturalism arises as a defining factor that led to all this confusion. Savage (2019) even believes "that 'failure' of multiculturalism has led to rise in bigotry" (para. 2).

Scholars discuss moving from the traditional concept of multiculturalism. Correspondingly, Munshi and Edwards (2011) ask: "If we are denied the easy option of treating ethnic communities as homogenized groups, how can they best be reached?" (p. 363). Given that PR can build relationships and manage cultural diversity (Anthony, 2015, 2012; Toledano &

Mckie, 2007), Kymlicka (2012) considers multiculturalism “as the pursuit of new relations of democratic citizenship, inspired and constrained by human-rights ideals” (p. 21). This description explores the purpose of pluralism and contradicts a superficial one that lacks real community relationships and portrays multiculturalism “as [only] a feel-good celebration of ethnocultural diversity, encouraging citizens to acknowledge and embrace the panoply of customs, traditions, music, and cuisine that exist in a multiethnic society...the ‘3S’ model of multiculturalism in Britain — saris, samosas, and steeldrums” (Kymlicka, 2012, p. 4). In this sense, “[m]ulticulturalism tended to highlight folklore, music, and cuisine rather than any profound discussion of differences in values and culture” (Susser, 2018, p. 251). It is why scholars such as Poynting (2013) talks about ‘post-multiculturalism’. This indicates an attempt to move from multiculturalism which “has come to stand internationally as an imagined cause of the real insecurities produced by neo-liberalism; it is a ‘grab bag’ in which a mass of socio-political disjunctures and ‘social bads’ can be stuffed” (p. 300). Poynting (2013) also explains it in the context of universal framing of otherness:

It is, of course, the Muslim ‘other’ that is the archetypal unassimilable subject, to be excluded by Western states as risky when ‘over there’, or partially and conditionally included by them through ‘integration governance’ when already ‘here’...The Muslim post-multiculturalism is not a mirror, but a palimpsest. There is no unitary Clash of Civilizations; instead the Muslim is a partner in many anxious binaries, and...there is almost no end...to what can be reanimated in contradistinction to their difference. (p. 299)

If this sense of otherness persists, it can define how the Muslim community and other ethnic minorities approached in the future given that:

The historical, political, economic, and social contexts of othering make the particular experiences of South and South-East Asian migrants to the United States and the United Kingdom vastly different from the experiences of Caribbean migrants to the United Kingdom or the African American or Native American minorities in the United States — and this, in turn, affects their engagement with communication. (Munshi & Edwards, 2011, p. 362)

Kymlicka (2012) also recognises this age as the ‘post-multiculturalism era’ where “we need an alternative framework for thinking about the choices we face...if we are to identify a more sustainable model for accommodating diversity” (p. 2). It is what the literature describes as a social and cultural crisis. This prepares political PR to perform as an alternative approach set for positive causes. In this post-multiculturalism age, however, right-wing populism and the controversial issue of Brexit can affect the public’s willingness to proceed with great speed. Some scholars such as Inglehart and Norris (2016) address Brexit using cultural backlash theory. Besides, Braidotti (2016) defines it from a cultural perspective:

We find ourselves in a “democratic” political regime where factual truths play no role at all: in the Brexit, as in the Trump campaign, people were shamelessly lied to. What mattered most to them was the expression of negative emotions and violent passions, like hatred, intolerance, rage, cynicism and opportunism. (p. 3)

This being said, Kymlicka (2012) believes multiculturalism realises the cultural change it brings and:

...as-citizenization [multiculturalism] is a deeply (and intentionally) transformative project, both for minorities and majorities. It requires both dominant and historically subordinated groups to engage in new practices, to enter new relationships, and to embrace new concepts and discourses — all of which profoundly transform people’s identities. (p. 9)

Such progressive thinking, however, can be again disrupted by the rise of right-wing parties and movements (Lockwood, 2018; Vieten & Poynting, 2016). From a racial hierarchy viewpoint, Huber et al. (2008) think the word race is related to the notion that community is superior over others in society, and that white supremacy is the essence of racism. Huber et al. (2008), therefore, define racism as “the assigning of values to real or imagined differences, in order to justify white supremacy, to the benefit of whites and at the expense of People of Color, and thereby to defend the right of whites to dominance”(p. 41). In line with nativism,

Huber et al. (2008) state that nationalism is the basis of nativism, which is anti-immigration.

By combining racism with nativism, the authors identify ‘racist nativism’ as:

...the assigning of values to real or imagined differences, in order to justify the superiority of the native, who is to be perceived white, over that of the non-native, who is perceived to be People and Immigrants of Color, and thereby defend the right of whites, or the natives, to dominance. (p. 43)

Poynting (2013) refers to ‘new racism’ or ‘cultural racism’ (Carr, 2011) as that which “essentialises and hardens certain cultures as incompatible and inherently problematic...[the] ‘race’...[in this context] was always a cultural construction; its meanings and consequences lie in cultural, not biological, reality” (Poynting, 2013, p. 300). Using Poynting (2013) and Huber et al. (2008) as points of departure, their perspectives around racism correspond to the research argument. It can be argued racism nowadays in the age of ‘Trumpian subjectivism’ (Goodheart, 2018), white supremacy (Vieten & Poynting, 2016), and far-right populism is based on ‘cultural differences’ (Carr, 2011) and entrenched in biological superiorities. It happens while bearing in mind that in Britain, a report “argues anti-Muslim prejudice has replaced immigration as the key driver of the growth of the far right” (Perraudin, 2019, para. 3). This also follows:

...an increase in religious or racially motivated hate crimes. According to Home Office data, such crimes increased from 37,417 in 2013-14 to 79,587 in 2017-18. MPs such as Labour’s Naz Shah have linked the increase with support for extreme far-right groups. (Savage, 2019, para. 10)

As it is not unique to Britain, Mazrui (2006) writes that “[c]entral to British cultural racism is a particular fear/hatred of Islam, which is seen as a challenge to secular modernity partly because ‘in some...Western societies the group that is deemed to be most unassimilable is Muslims’” (p. 513). In his book review, Mazrui (2006) confirms what Poynting (2013) mentions earlier that biological and “physical appearance[s] become...mere marker[s], with

Islamic culture the essential basis of racialisation and racial prejudice” (Mazrui, 2006, p. 513). Susser (2018) approaches this framing of otherness from different perspectives, such as the orientalist and racist point of view. It is where “[t]he linkage of Otherness and racism had colonial origins. [And] [i]n both the British and French versions of colonialism, Otherness was indeed equated with inferiority” (p. 250). Hence, Edward Said believes “Orientalism was an integral part of this colonial construct. Orientalism highlighted the uniqueness and Otherness, and thus the implied inferiority, of the Muslim world, all the better to serve the domination and exploitation of the East by Western imperialism” (as cited in Susser, 2018, p. 250). In this sense, Orientalism, according to Said, discriminates between ‘us’ and ‘them’:

...and was never far from...the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non- European peoples and cultures. There is in addition the hegemony of European ideas about the Orient, themselves reiterating European superiority over Oriental back-wardness” shot through with “various kinds of racism, imperialism and the like. (As cited in Susser, 2018, p. 251)

Consequently, Vieten and Poynting (2016) write that with the current:

...right- wing racist populism...populists...[such as Farage and Le Pen]...invoke the racialised Other as a threat to ‘our’ way of life, while blaming urban elites for ignoring or even indulging this threat, and banishing popular fears about it to the realm of the unsayable. This ideological rhetoric has unmistakable resonances of historical populisms such as fascism. (p. 535)

This ‘new racism’ (Poynting, 2013) sheds light on the necessity to explain Islamophobia and whether it is racist or not. Carr (2011) believes Islamophobia is a form of racism and “in an international context, Muslims are increasingly vulnerable to prejudice and discrimination on the basis of their faith and the ascribed negative imagery” (p. 574). According to Allen, “Islamophobia is an ideology, similar in theory, function and purpose to racism and other similar phenomena, that sustains and perpetuates negatively evaluated meaning about Muslims and Islam” (as cited in Carr, 2011, p. 578). This echoes O’Donnell’s (2018)

explanation of Islamophobia as that which “articulates, at least overtly, not a fear of Muslims per se but of the ‘Muslim’ as a modality of ‘Islam’” (p. 16).

O’Donnell (2018) discusses Islamophobia from a broader perspective. This exceeds xenophobia to the politics of identity which is central to Islamophobic conspiracism in America and “have always dictated who has held the right to be part of ‘We the people’ and who has been forced to embody the occluded insides and constitutive outside on which that people feed” (p. 22). The article talks about the far-right Center for Security Policy’s (CSP) strategy that “combines a vision of essential, irreconcilable difference between ‘America’ and ‘Islam’ with one that constructs abstract societal systems — especially governmental ones — as at best suspect and at worst evil” (p. 22). O’Donnell (2018) also explains that for CSP, Islamophobic conspiracism implies “it is all the ‘forces of shariah’ — all ‘Muslims’ — who are the co-conspirators, tied together in a plot to subvert and invert the proper providence of ‘America’” (p. 19). This is why Trump’s slogan ‘Make America Great Again’, according to the article, comes to eliminate Muslims from American politics, rebuild the nation and restore its superiority and greatness. ‘Conspiracist framing’, in this context, combines conspiracism which indicates “an understanding of history as governed by demonic forces, an evil whose locus ‘lies outside the true community, in some “Other, defined as foreign or barbarian, though often...disguised as the innocent and upright” (O’Donnell, 2018, p. 9), and Islamophobia which “is the fear that the sovereign will of ‘the people’ might be misled, that a conspiracy might direct it away from its rightful teleology towards an errant future” (p. 11).

In parallel, Bloul (2008) quotes the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia’s (EUMC) definition of Islamophobia as that which “has fed racist hostility against people of Middle Eastern, Arab and South Asian origin and has in turn been bolstered by racial prejudice and xenophobia” (p. 10). Kaya (2015) also states there are “facts and figures imply that the anti-Muslim prejudice in the West is far from being marginal...[and]

these negative views and expressions increase social fractionalization, and undermine social harmony” (p. 451). All that fuels hostility and misunderstanding in society while radicalisation and extremism become ultimate outcomes. Moreover, Kaya (2015) recognises Islamophobia as “unfavourable prejudgements of Muslim individuals on the basis of their religious background” (p. 452). Hence, the overall modern tide of Islamophobia based on “a tendency in the West to figure Muslims...as ‘slaves, soldiers, and terrorists of Allah: fanatical devotees of a remote and terrifying sublime power’” (O’Donnell, 2018, p. 15).

The term Islamophobia “is now hard to be ‘discarded from the European lexicon’” (Kaya, 2015, p. 451). Accordingly, there are demands to define Islamophobia in Britain (Barnes & Khan, 2018; Bloul, 2008; Dearden, 2018a; Soubry & Streeting, 2018), and outlaw Islamophobia as an act of discrimination and racism across Europe (Bloul, 2008; Carr, 2011). It seems significant in the context of social cohesion as “[c]ivic integration emphasizes the importance of immigrants’ integrating more fully into mainstream society and advances a number of core principles...[such as] [t]he necessity of antidiscrimination laws and policies” (Kymlicka, 2012, p. 16). Viewed in this light, Barnes and Khan (2018) write that the government needs to define Islamophobia to help to classify it as an act of racism. The article reveals that “the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims proposed “Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness” as an official definition” (para. 5). Similarly, Soubry and Streeting (2018) who:

...are Conservative and Labour MPs respectively, and co-chairs of the [APPG, believe that]...The adoption of this definition provides an opportunity to help the nation turn the tide against this pernicious form of racism, enabling a better understanding to tackle both hate crimes and the underlying institutional prejudices preventing ordinary British Muslims from achieving their level best across different aspects of our society. (para. 12 - 16)

Others think that this description of Islamophobia “needed to be given further consideration” (Elgot, 2019, para. 4). According to Labour’s shadow equalities minister, it “shows a worrying trend of seeing British Muslims through the lens of terror and security, and the Prime Minister must distance herself from this immediately” (Wickham, 2019, para. 20). This again highlights the importance of framing. The way words put into context matters more than ever. Additionally, Carr (2011) argues that addressing the problem and creating:

Awareness of the extent of Islamophobia can not only inform effective State policy but the resultant policies may also change the negative perception that currently surrounds Muslims and Islam across Europe. To conclude with the insights of Liz Fekete: “if the authorities do not speak out, public tolerance of [right-wing, racist] violence will grow”. (p. 586)

Consequently, if political parties, for example, engage with Islamophobia and do not care to prosecute Islamophobes, then what does one expect from the public but to continue with discriminatory behaviour. This thesis, therefore, intends to redirect political PR to describe how the message of integration can be broadcasted, which can positively affect political trust. Gaining the key publics’ trust is central to promote community cohesion and combat extremism. Establishing political trust means the government recognises the Muslim community as partners, which indicates standing for any discrimination against them as well. It can be a political manifestation of how serious the government is in addressing social cohesion. Besides, it is significant given that “the process of ethnicization of Muslim identities is accelerated and the gap with Western majorities widened. This can only be expected to continue if the legal vacuum surrounding Islamophobia is neglected” (Bloul, 2008, p. 21). What seems threatening also is that:

...as Muslims are presented as ‘alien’ to Europe, as Islamic and European values are shown as ‘incompatible’ and as Muslims living in Europe adhere to their culture and reject to integrate (that is, of course, assimilate), then consequently it follows that discrimination against Muslims is justified and reasonable. (Gunduz, 2010, p. 45)

This thesis positions political PR in the realm of planning and execution. There is a need to work on realistic solutions leading to a positive fundamental transformation in policies, perceptions and attitudes:

In the midst of our technologically mediated social relations and in response to the paranoid rhetoric of our post-truth democratic leaders, how can we labour together to construct affirmative ethical and political practices? How can we work towards socially sustainable horizons of hope through resistance? What tools can we use to resist nihilism, escape consumeristic individualism and get immunised against xenophobia? The answer is in the doing, in the praxis of composing alliances, transversal connections and in engaging in difficult conversations on what troubles us. “We” need to re-radicalise ourselves. (Braidotti, 2016, p. 5)

Calling for re-educating and re-radicalising the public is the first step into making social integration more likely. Mapping the evolution of multiculturalism in Britain can help to understand the debate over social cohesion, why calls made to move from multiculturalism to inclusivity, and why British multiculturalism failed. Through answering these questions, more can be done to counter radicalisation, extremism and home-grown terrorism. The failure of British multiculturalism (Kaufmann & Harris, 2014; Kaya, 2018; Kymlicka, 2012; Poynting, 2013; Turner, 2006) illuminates the necessity to find new strategies to counter these issues.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the concept of the culture built on radical perspective where a nation involved certain beliefs and customs (Wright, 1998). After that, some anthropologists took a more enlightened view of the meaning of culture “[b]y treating ‘culture’ as the product of historical and social forces, not biology, [and] criticiz[ing] racial determinism” (Wright, 1998, p. 8). Moreover, Wright (1998) demonstrates that extreme nationalists in the 70s took “idea of ‘a people’ having ‘a culture’...not simply to champion claims for independence and sovereignty but also to pursue the politics of xenophobia [and] exclusion” (p. 8). British sociologists, according to the author, were blamed “for seeking the

unique ‘authentic culture’ of another society in the form of an integrated system of consensual ‘essential meanings’ which self-reproduced regardless of economic and political change” (p. 8). In addition, Wright (1998) cites improvements in how British anthropologists understood the culture and developed cultural studies: “cultural identities are not inherent, bounded or static: they are dynamic, fluid and constructed situationally, in particular places and times...[that] led us to understand that ‘cultures’ are not, nor ever were, naturally bounded entities” (p. 9).

Wright (1998) also talks about ‘cultural racism’ in British politics. The author reveals that the New Right driven by Margaret Thatcher reconsidered the modern perspective of ‘culture’ from “an active process of meaning making and contestation over definition, including of itself...[which indicates] sites are not bounded — people draw on local, national, [and] global links” (p. 10) into “oppos[ing] the dilution of separateness...and turned difference into an essentialist concept to reassert boundaries: the distinctiveness of Englishness must be defended...[where] the New Right defined Englishness, as the hegemonic core of Britishness, through culture” (p. 10). Panayi (2004) traces the adjustments made to British nationality legislation from 1914 till the 1960s. These indicate shifting from the ‘Jus soli’ – the right of soil to ‘Jus sanguinis’ – the right of blood: “hostility towards non-white immigration meant changes in immigration and nationality laws...[this] suggests that multiculturalism through the immigration of people with different ethnic backgrounds but with British citizenship happened by accident” (pp. 470 - 471).

Throughout legislative transformations, Panayi (2004) sheds light on the 1976 Race Relations Act. It “introduce[d] the concept of indirect discrimination, which was, however, not very clearly defined...local councils in Britain [then] have...made attempts to lessen racial prejudice and promote integration” (p. 472). Nevertheless, Amin (2002) argues that the Muslim community’s national and cultural sense of belonging, Islamophobia, and racial

violence have increasingly come to public debate since 1999. Therefore, the 2001 tension in cities like Bradford “was a palpable reminder of the geography of racism and cultural intolerance in Britain...[and] that the temptation to associate ‘race trouble’ with entire cities or particular types of city...should be avoided” (p. 960). This 2001 incident in Bradford, Oldham, and Burnley revealed the white community’s hatred and fear, bearing in mind that social segregation was the main reason for this disturbance (Amin, 2002). As such, the article introduces communication and dialogue to solve such community tensions:

The term ‘intercultural’ is used to stress cultural dialogue, to contrast with versions of multiculturalism that either stress cultural difference without resolving the problem of communication between cultures, or versions of cosmopolitanism that speculate on the gradual erosion of cultural difference through interethnic mixture and hybridisation. (p. 967)

The link between multiculturalism, racism, Islamophobia and xenophobia in Britain explains why pluralism failed to achieve inclusivity. It appears that multiculturalism was only the first step towards promoting social integration. Admitting that diversity responds to global economic and social demands and can enrich society rather than become a burden. Racism, however, remains central in the argument surrounding multiculturalism and social cohesion. Nothing can be gained in these areas of nation building if Islamophobia remains unquestioned and tolerated. Gunduz (2010), for example, believes that after September 11, multiculturalism was criticised across Europe even from social democrats and liberals because:

...cultural diversity pushed Muslims to live according to their own beliefs and remain un-integrated in their own ghettos. Neither industrial decline, nor economic depression nor institutional racism was blamed, but Muslims themselves, who rejected blending, were held responsible. Besides, multiculturalism was accused of encouraging the building of ghettos via “self-segregation”. Subsequently racism on the institutional and personal level was not considered sufficiently, although it kept on being the most important impediment to the formation of a truly interconnected society. (p. 45)

That can further highlight the focus of this study, which is to investigate the research problem and justify why it becomes necessary to find better approaches and reconcile community relationships. It can make the research findings generalizable and meaningful. Osler (2009) then examines multiculturalism and racism after the London terrorist bombings in 2005. In December 2006, the political establishment, represented by Prime Minister Tony Blair, and Gordon Brown, put emphasis on British values to build society: “liberty, responsibility, fairness...belief in democracy, the rule of law, tolerance, [and] equal treatment for all” (Osler, 2009, p. 86). Nevertheless, Osler (2009) believes these principles are universal guidelines, not British only. What matters, according to the article, is the way these values applied to enhance people’s sense of Britishness, citizenship and belonging. The article considers liberty, in particular, as an inherited British value even before the U.S. adopted it. However, Turner (2006) addresses this liberty from different angle stating that “British liberalism enforced negative liberty and left migrants to fend for themselves. This policy of “benign neglect” was not incompatible with a degree of multiculturalism, but British liberal attitudes towards cultural diversity are now in a highly defensive mood” (p. 610).

Shedding light on Brexit and nativism, the political discourse of Gordon Brown, according to Osler (2009), highlighted a progressive form of patriotism where everyone is respectful and attentive: “[t]he overall emphasis is on participation and civic engagement that is assumed to follow from patriotism” (p. 89). It is also what Kymlicka (2012) states in this regard: “[s]ince the mid-1990s...we have seen a backlash and retreat from multiculturalism, and a reassertion of ideas of nation building, common values and identity, and unitary citizenship — even a call for the ‘return of assimilation’” (p. 3). Mindful of this, after London bombings, The Chair of Commission for Racial Equality has identified multiculturalism is the problem:

Britain needs to abandon a model of multiculturalism which is leading people to live separate lives...: “we are sleepwalking our way to segregation. We are becoming strangers to each other, and we are leaving communities to be marooned outside the mainstream”. (Osler, 2009, p. 89)

While this withdrawal from multiculturalism is seen nowadays in the political discourse of right-wing populists:

...the center-left [also believes] that multiculturalism has failed to help the intended beneficiaries — namely, minorities themselves — because it has failed to address the underlying sources of their social, economic, and political exclusion and may have unintentionally contributed to their social isolation. As a result, even the center-left political movements that initially championed multiculturalism, such as the social democratic parties in Europe, have backed. (Kymlicka, 2012, p. 3)

Turner (2006) points out to the same retreat from multiculturalism in Britain. In short, he describes the British multicultural approach as follows:

...it has had until recently no ideological view of multiculturalism... Britain has had a race relations policy rather than a multicultural policy, and governmental strategies towards race have been provoked by, rather than developed in response to, a series of public crises mainly involving black British communities who came originally from the West Indies. Britain’s Race Relations Acts in 1965, 1968 and 1976 were designed to address problems relation to discrimination. (p. 612)

It is significant here to clarify one of the consequences of the first Race Relations Act in light of nativism and racism. According to Jeremy Seabrook:

[One result]...of the 1965 Race Relations Act was to make people preface anything they might say about migrants with the words, “Well, of course, I’m no racist”, before going on to provide “a sweeping and eloquent testimony to the contrary”. Half a century later, when immigrants are as likely to be white as black or brown, the sentence, “Well, of course, I’m no nativist”, may be emerging as that preface’s overdue replacement. (As cited in Jack, 2016, para. 3)

Therefore, Turner (2006) finds that “British liberalism was in many respects poorly equipped to deal with emerging multiculturalism” (p. 612). The British approach to pluralism, according to the article, was practical and ‘gradual’ regarding social relationships and

understanding racial differences. Turner (2006) also considers the killing of Stephen Lawrence in London in 1993 and the Rushdie affair in 1989 as crucial occurrences that changed race relations in Britain. It indicates “the existence of institutional racism in British society, including the police force [in the case of Stephen Lawrence, while after the Rushdie affair and London bombings, there was]...growth of racial disharmony in major British cities” (p. 613). This racial division may bring more hostility to society, especially with the rise of nativist’s views because they identify non-native groups and perspectives as sinister and dangerous (Mudde, 2017). In his article, Mudde (2017) states that nativism is the real issue, not populism: “within the core ideology of the populist radical right, populism comes secondary to nativism, and within contemporary European and US politics, populism functions at best as a fuzzy blanket to camouflage the nastier nativism” (para. 12).

In a similar vein, Jack (2016) thinks nativism is feeding the same discriminative gap between British people and ethnic minorities. Nativism, according to Guia (2016), “does not function as a nation-building ideology in the way nationalism worked in the modern period...[it] emerges rather as a mechanism to modify already existing constructions of nationhood along ‘native’ and ‘non-native’ lines” (para. 1). Using moral foundation theory in public relations as a starting point, Jack (2016) refers to an interesting fact. Through explaining Seabrook’s 1971 book, *City Close-Up*, Jack (2016) states that Seabrook conducted interviews with British people surrounded by neighbours from different ethnic minorities in Blackburn. According to the article, those interviewees talked about immigration “angrily and emotionally...until the paroxysm spends itself...an expression of pain and powerlessness brought on by the “decay and dereliction” of their own lives and surroundings as much as by the unfamiliar dress, language and behaviour of their new neighbours” (para. 10 - 11). Jack (2016) describes that there was a lack of listening and paying attention to those people’s concerns and pain, while their anger cannot be called bigotry. Interestingly, the article reports what then Blackburn’s

MP said to Seabrook “warning him against writing about social discord and getting things ‘blown up out of proportion’” (para. 13).

That takes us back to what the literature illustrates as general governmental inaction with the denial that social crisis exists. It can be argued that such consistent political and media negligence for Britons’ anger and interests can be partially regarded as a reason people were successfully drawn to vote in favour of Brexit. Olivas-Osuna et al. (2019) support this claim as they find that “racism and unease with increasingly visible ethnic divides were...associated with Brexit” (p. 7). Similarly, Jack (2019) confirms that “[t]he division between migrants and natives long predated Brexit, and the vote was a consequence rather than a cause of it” (para. 3). As “[r]ational economic calculations have not weighed as much in the Brexit vote as discontent and emotions” (Olivas-Osuna et al., 2019, p. 18), it can be suggested that leaving emotional concerns like anger, fear and suspicion untreated can pave the way for racist standpoints to grow. It can invite right-wing populists to exploit this vacuum and further manipulate people’s hearts and minds. This is because right-wing populism’s ‘structuralist justification’ “drawing on accounts of the roots of populism in economic and political marginalisation amongst those ‘left behind’ by globalisation and technological change” (Lockwood, 2018, p. 712).

In a relevant context, Furedi (2017) explains the development of identity politics over history. The article talks about opposing enlightenment universalism. It is through shifting from advocating universalism which “opposed to the traditional idea that who you are is defined by your birth, biology and your place in the natural order” (para. 10), to “condemn[ing] the idea of human universality and claim[ing] that the only identity that mattered was that of particular peoples and groups” (para. 5). Furedi (2017) believes this change has contributed to nationalism. In this sense, every country has ‘cultural spirit’ and values which led to separatism: “different cultures had different ways of knowing effectively fossilised national

identities” (para. 9). With the rise of white supremacy and right-wing populism, therefore, identity politics has the:

...tendency towards fragmentation and individuation...a growing tendency towards the proliferation of identity groups and towards separatism...with growing calls to protect ‘white identity’, identity politics has become a caricature of itself... [Thus,] [h]uman solidarity is one of the main casualties of identity politics. Once different groups retreat into their respective safe spaces, there will be little common ground left for those committed to the politics of solidarity and the ideal of universalism. (Furedi, 2017, para. 40 - 41)

Separatism threatens social texture and calls people to withdraw from communicating and engaging with others in society. In western democracies, however, the identity of cultural minorities needs to be recognised: “a fundamental right of cultures and ethno-cultural communities to express their specificity and preserve this specificity is appealed to” (Cojanu, 2016, p. 33). According to Cojanu (2016), this kind of recognition is a threat to these societies’ way of life because “as inherited identities (traditions, religions) build social life upon determinism and affiliations that limit the freedom of agents, they are regarded with suspicion” (p. 34). This sense of suspicion has created suspect communities and increased framing of otherness. With the failure of assimilation (Gunduz, 2010) and multiculturalism, it is again a reminder that cultural minorities should keep their identities. Any social integration strategy should respect this point to succeed. It stems from, “[h]ostility towards traditions and belonging identity comes...from the fact that...[ethnic minorities’] founding values are not negotiable” (Cojanu, 2016, p. 33). The problem is how to address hostility towards these minorities’ choice of preserving their identity, which cannot be a rejection to hosted society’s way of life. It is to create new connections for these minorities, calling them to integrate into society. Respecting others’ choices of religion and traditions is fundamental to liberalism. The main issue is how to create a successful balance between inherited identity and the newly adopted one. The answer proved to be not in assimilation or simple notion of celebrating

diversities. It cannot also be a matter of imposing community cohesion on minorities such as what Tony Blair assumes here: “migrants should be forced to integrate more to combat [the] far right” (as cited in Savage, 2019, para. 1). It can be argued that social integration is about recognition, communication and engagement.

Accordingly, Cojanu (2016) calls for reconsidering political theory to change the political status of coexisting with multi-ethnic communities. This reconsideration can position political communication and political PR as a tool for nation-building, given that:

...the strength of cultural diversity is like a two-edged sword...If appropriated properly, diversity could be ingredients required for the realization of the ideal of civil society, political integration and participation, development, concern for the common good and building a national culture. There is need for trans-ethnic cooperation towards nation building [because]...[j]ust like ethnicity is central to the emergence of conflict, it can also be used for conflict resolution as well as development. (Seemndze, 2016, pp. 166 - 167)

Munshi and Edwards (2011) realise debate around race is growing, and suggest incorporating it in the theoretical level of PR to understand it better. Likewise, Karen Miller Russell urges PR scholars “to “embrace the embarrassing” and go beyond our comfort zone and desire to promote a communication practice with professional ambitions” (as cited in Theofilou & Watson, 2019, p. 190). This study explores the cultural and social roles of PR in the contexts of social integration and racism. Nevertheless, Munshi and Edwards (2011) write that in public relations, “critical approaches look at PR as a social and cultural phenomenon but...[both PR critical and functional methods]...by and large, bypass race as an inherent part of the social and cultural domain” (p. 349). The authors, therefore, introduce dialectical methods to understand race ‘in/and’ PR. According to Martin and Nakayama, “thinking dialectically forces us to move beyond our familiar categories and opens us up to new possibilities for studying and understanding intercultural communication” (as cited in Munshi & Edwards, 2011, p. 359). That further highlights the importance of this research project. It

indicates this thesis fills another gap in PR literature and explains the profession's need to investigate race more often.

Conclusion

The literature review demonstrates political public relations is much more complicated than some imagine. It performs strategically and goes far beyond the simple process of transmitting messages. This springs from the PR nature of bridging gaps, establishing credibility and creating relationships. These functions may depict a modern view of political PR towards using it as a social and cultural mechanism. It comes in a time when far-right populism, extremism, terrorism and social integrating are defining factors of our generation. The appeals to skilfully address these concerns are seen in public debate leaving the field open for taking more serious consideration on the ground. The surrounding literature highlights gaps in areas such as PR, political PR, social integration and counter-terrorism. Public relations' scholarship shows there is need to examine PR and political PR in untraditional contexts (Cutlip & Center 1982; Sanders, 2011; Stromback & Kiousis; 2011, 2013, 2014; Tsetsura, 2011). It also reveals a theoretical and practical gap in understanding public engagement in PR. Johnston (2014), for example, encourages researchers to explore this term which is an "increasingly significant area" (p. 382) of inquiry. Similarly, Jelen-Sanchez (2017) writes that:

...future development of much needed engagement studies in public relations...[PR] scholarship needs to uncouple itself from traditional approaches and devote more attention to publics...and their motivational, affective and behavioural predispositions to (dis) engage in interactive participatory deliberations, co-construction of meanings, socially situated understandings and collective decision making within different cultures. (p. 943)

The literature confirms there is no substantial research into how the Muslim community can be engaged to counter-terrorism and enhance social cohesion, what the government has done

in this regard, and a little empirical evaluation of the government's responses (Bourekba, 2016; Coaffee, 2009; Haubrich, 2006; Mythen & Walklate, 2006; Qehaja et al., 2017; Ragazzi, 2017; Spalek & Lambert, 2008). Furthermore, the review encourages scholars to find new communication techniques to tackle these matters (Innes, 2006; Mythen & Walklate, 2006; Qehaja et al., 2017; Sanz Sabido, 2012). Other researchers focus on finding ways to develop the media's role in combating extremism and improving social cohesion (Shapiro, 2002; Silverman & Thomas, 2012; Qehaja et al., 2017). A growing need for responsible and strategic rhetorical choices in political discourses is highlighted as well (Appleby, 2010; Heath-Kelly, 2013; Joppke, 2009; Mythen & Walklate, 2006; Orehek & Vazeou-Nieuwenhuis, 2014).

The literature investigates terrorism and extremism from outside the PR area of research. Most of these journal articles are focussed on politics, law, crime (policing), communication, strategic communication, and security sciences. It may indicate the issues of inclusivity, radicalisation, extremism and terrorism have not yet been examined thoroughly in political public relations. Additionally, the literature describes how two-way symmetrical communication, framing, relationship management (relational approach), dialogic theory, rhetorical- anger and fear in politics and social life, social constructivism and moral foundation theory can help to address the research problem. Scholars, however, explore most of these theories in corporate PR setting rather than a political one. Furthermore, the literature describes political PR as a new area of inquiry which demands investigation and analysis in light of its vibrant essentiality. This thesis, therefore, attempts to redirect political PR and rediscover its tools as it deserves theoretical development and empirical scrutiny. Framing, for example, shows it can support the efficiency of political PR messages. Researchers have examined framing in various settings that demand professional PR efforts such as strategic

thinking, decision making, management and argumentation (Coombs, 2011; Froehlich & Rudiger, 2006; Hallahan, 2011; Stromback & Kiouisis, 2011).

The government can use framing to develop strategic plans and messages. Scholars suggest that governments can use PR to improve their relationship with the public (Coombs & Holladay, 2014; L'Etang, 2013, 2015; Moss et al., 1996; Tiffany Lin, 2007; Toledano & Mckie, 2007). It appears what matters in public relations is to listen and establish symmetrical communication which can increase persuasion efforts and create the necessary changes in public attitudes and behaviours (Anthony, 2015; Coombs & Holladay, 2014; Kent & Taylor, 2002; Painter, 2015; Park & Cho, 2009; Sison, 2017). Political institutions with agendas in counter-terrorism and social integration, RICU- the Research, Information and Communications Unit, for example, can employ political PR practitioners to design messages and campaigns. Those experts can persuade the public to support a cause and make them believe in the necessity for change (Benecke et al., 2017; Coombs & Holladay, 2014; Erturk, 2015; Johnston & Lavine, 2012; Marston, 1963; Stromback & Kiouisis, 2013).

Choosing a strategic language in political discourses is one of the most prominent factors in political PR. Political public relations professionals, who are engaging in dialogue with sensitive and multicultural publics, are encouraged to employ rhetoric, persuasion and framing to win publics' support and increase their awareness of issues involved (Cislaru, 2012; Coombs, 2011; Hallahan, 2011; James, 2014; L'Etang, 2015; Martinelli, 2011; Stromback & Kiouisis, 2013). With technological changes in the media landscape, political messages can be manipulated, corrupted, quoted out of context and misrepresented. Political public relations is aware of this vulnerability and can form publics' awareness as well as influence citizens' participation through different media platforms such as social media (Avery & Graham, 2013; Park & Cho, 2009; Sweetser, 2011; Toledano & Mckie, 2007). Through applying agenda-building, political PR can also strategically use media to garner

public support and facilitate implementing social plans (Franklin, 2004; Froehlich & Rudiger, 2006; Jefkins, 1983; Kiouisis & Stromback, 2014; McNair, 2011; Swart, 2012; Taylor, 2000a).

That is particularly significant because the literature reveals the media has failed to address terrorism, extremism and multiculturalism professionally (Heath-Kelly, 2013; Mythen & Walklate, 2006; Orehek & Vazeou-Nieuwenhuis, 2014; Silverman & Thomas, 2012). Scholars write about lack of understanding, as regards the importance of word choices, terminologies, rhetorical expressions and well-versed political discourses to counter-terrorism and promote social inclusion (Appleby, 2010; Heath-Kelly, 2013; Mythen & Walklate, 2006; Orehek & Vazeou-Nieuwenhuis, 2014). Furthermore, the Home Office website shows that ‘researches and analysis’ section has not yet explored alternative communication strategies (The Home Office, 2017). This puts this study in a good position by bringing change to current communication policies and also responds to researchers such as Neumann and Koehler who encourage decision-makers and academics “to work harder to understand and embrace a concept [of (de) radicalization] which – though ambiguous – is likely to dominate public discourse, research and policy agendas for years to come” (as cited in Ćosić et al., 2018, p. 197).

This research investigates issues that are timely, under-investigated and essential. The multidisciplinary nature of this study reveals promising findings, recommendations, and implications in several contexts. It may seem like giving hard promises, but this thesis will meet expectations. Furthermore, extremism, social integration and pluralism are inseparable. Thus, introducing useful insights into any of them may fit into the other. This investigation is also different from what has been previously attempted in many aspects. It brings issues that are increasingly at stake to more consideration by exploring crises and trying to present solutions. PR functions of framing, relationship building, value-based argumentations and

agenda-building can incorporate what successful engagement and communication plans involve. Given the complexity of extremism and social cohesion, re-educating the British public about nation-building is one of the most vital factors in the path to success. Educating the public can be the essence of public relations. According to Hallahan, the ‘PR process’ consists of “fact-finding, planning and communicating [and evaluation]” (as cited in Macnamara & Likely, 2017, p. 4). In this sense, Bernays, the father of public relations, describes “the public relations expert...[as] ‘an applied social scientist,’ educated to employ an understanding of ‘sociology, psychology, social psychology, and economics’ to influence and direct public attitude” (Ewen, 1996, p. 10). Stoeckle (2018), therefore, writes that considering public relations as social science improves media intelligence: “[t]o understand communication, we also need to look at it as a human science, and consider insights from psychology and the neurosciences, for example” (para. 16).

To foreshadow the direction of the next chapters, the following sections analyse how PR academics consider the notion of redirecting political PR towards realising its social function. These sections also examine NGOs such as Integrate UK, analyse stories and techniques, and determine weaknesses, goals and concerns. That comes as a road map to recognise what the literature illustrates as the general thrust for renovation and innovation.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This study sought to answer the research questions by exploring the social and cultural roles of PR. This came in light of the literature and to address some of the gaps in political public relations' scholarship. Investigating those functions suggested that if political PR could move from a tool for manipulation to positive political mechanism. It also indicated searching for PR models and communication theories to address social integration. Besides, some of the research's sub-questions explained the role of NGOs that were tasked with countering extremism and supporting social cohesion, like the Quba Trust.

Public relations practice has developed from tool for publicity “to an enlightened, morally desirable and conveniently more effective form of public relations characterized as ‘two-way symmetrical communication’” (L’Etang, 2015, p. 30). Accordingly, the surrounding literature pointed out the importance of providing “closer examination to take into consideration varied levels of analysis and theoretical frames that impact relationships between public relations and society, and different perspectives and readings of those relationships” (L’Etang, 2015, pp. 28 - 29). Along these lines, scholars also call for a better understanding of political PR practice:

The most important shortcoming within the field of political public relations research is that most public relations theories and concepts have seldom or never been applied in the context of political public relations. To do so, and extend political public relations to domains seldom investigated, should be the most important priorities in future research on political public relations. Not only would it increase our understanding of political public relations per se; it would also test the validity of public relations theories beyond traditional contexts. (Kiouisis & Stromback, 2014, p. 262)

1. Research design. The main thrust of this research was to provide a combination of quantitative and qualitative research design. It was to support this study and convince others it “should be done, can be done, and will be done” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 9). Both research methods were triangulated in one research design “to obtain complementary quantitative and qualitative data on the same topic, bringing together the different strengths of the two methods” (Punch, 2014, p. 309). Each of these approaches was considered useful on its own and “they are also powerful when used in conjunction with each other” (Miyata & Kai, 2009, p. 65). Triangulation was one of the types of mixed methods design. Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) believe researcher could use this design to build up quantitative findings with qualitative evidence. While the objective was to provide an interpretation using findings from both methods, the researcher applied triangulation design to further validate the quantitative results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Therefore, adding an open-ended question to the questionnaire “provide[d] the researcher with interesting quotes that can be used to validate and embellish the quantitative survey findings” (p. 65). This study also merged quantitative with qualitative data “into one overall interpretation...[through relating] the quantitative results to the qualitative findings” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 64).

On the one hand, a standardised questionnaire was used to gather “comparable answers from all participants” (Flick, 2011, p. 106). Specifically, “Email questionnaires were selected due to their cost effectiveness, fast transmission and response turnaround” (Michaelidou & Dibb, 2006, p. 291). Moreover, the questionnaire was short, included a Likert scale and an open-ended question. This was because “[p]revious research on both online and mail surveys emphasises the relationship between length and response rate/quality” (Michaelidou & Dibb, 2006, p. 291). The researcher sent an attached questionnaire in an email to PR academics. This particular sample was also chosen because “the sampling frame must closely reflect the

research objectives and subject under study” (Michaelidou & Dibb, 2006, p. 294), which positively affected the response rate (p. 294).

On the other, the researcher conducted non-standardized semi-structured interviews with some NGOs “to obtain the individual views of the interviewees on an issue” (Flick, 2011, p. 112). Using both methodologies proved to be ‘very pragmatic’ while “mono-method research is the biggest threat to the advancement of the social sciences...[A]s long as we stay polarized in research, how can we expect stakeholders who rely on our research findings to take our work seriously?” (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005, p. 384). These research methods represented the most appropriate approaches for this study because “research is most useful when there is genuine uncertainty about the answer to a question” (Bricki & Green, 2007, p. 7). Regarding interviews, some NGOs performed as case studies where interviews took place. The case study strategy, in this sense, “entails immersion in the setting and rests on both the researcher’s and the participants’ worldviews” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 61). It was the best approach to use since “the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident” (Yin, 2013a, p. 16). Additionally, Hancock and Algozzine (2006) refer to the case study as a research approach commonly “addresses a phenomenon (e.g., a particular event, situation, program, or activity)” (p. 15). As such, Bryman (2016) believe using multiple case studies was an opportunity for “the researcher...to examine the operation of generative causal mechanisms in contrasting or similar contexts” (p. 68). In the context of this thesis, Yin (2018) state that “the distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena...[because they] allow you to focus in-depth on a ‘case’ and to retain a holistic and real-world perspective” (p. 5). In addition, this study applied the ‘representative’ case, which ‘exemplifies’ and “implies that cases are often chosen...because either they epitomize a broader category of cases...[or] they allow the researcher to examine key social processes” (Bryman, 2016, p. 62). This research invested in

this idea of exemplification and chose case studies that represented similar cases working in social integration and extremism.

The use of more than two case studies was essential because the researcher “trie[d] to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what results” (Yin, 2013a, p. 15). A multiple case study approach helped to explore natural settings and get answers. Such answers were to questions like how NGOs managed their communication activities, events and campaigns and how they framed messages. The central objective was to describe what happened in these settings and find out what caused communication gaps between these organisations and their publics. It also explained what made engagement strategies not effective enough or otherwise, successful. Therefore, further theoretical exploration took place as “[t]he main argument in favour of the multiple-case study is that it improves theory building” (Bryman, 2016, p. 67). Similarly, Yin (2003) describes the importance of theory in multiple case study design as it determined similarities and differences between cases and “without sufficiently strong theory, the differences or similarities...would be difficult to interpret” (p. 23). Yin (2003) also considers that robust identification of ‘descriptive theory’ helped researchers to focus on the most relevant information and narrow down the scope of research.

This study examined multiple cases as they, to a great extent, shared the same interest of working on social inclusion, radicalisation and extremism. This ‘similarity’ (Bryman, 2016) of engaging with the public in these issues could bring what the researcher sought to describe. Some of these cases represented highly engaging NGOs involved in campaigns and covered in some media platforms such as British Future and MCB while others not. In this sense, comparing multiple cases revealed that any dissimilarity between them meant communication strategies were either successful or not. Bryman (2016) explains that the reason behind employing “largely matched cases...is to uncover the factors that may be responsible for

differences that are observed” (p. 68). These cases, therefore, allowed the researcher to explore the techniques used and explain any factors that might cause differences among them. Yin (2003) refers to this kind of case studies as descriptive, which gave “a complete description of a phenomenon within its context” (p. 5). Gillham (2000) also highlights how case study research combined subjectivity with a sense of objectivity. This objectivity made the researcher collecting information about what NGOs’ participants had achieved, how they considered themselves, their role in their environments, and “their experiences of what is going on [which together with the research results]...can be key to understanding what needs to be done to change things” (p. 7). Furthermore, Baxter and Jack (2008) demonstrate that “[i]n a multiple case study, we are examining several cases to understand the similarities and differences between the cases...[and] the evidence created from this type of study is considered robust and reliable” (p. 550).

Baxter and Jack (2008) introduce the components that contributed to designing proper case studies. These involved issues such as propositions, how to logically relate data to these propositions, the appliance of a theoretical framework, and the basis used to interpret results. Baxter and Jack (2008) believe when the researcher applied certain propositions, it “increases the likelihood that the researcher will be able to place limits on the scope of the study and increase the feasibility of completing the project” (p. 551). According to the literature, potential propositions included the failure of Prevent Strategy as social policy, the absence of real social engagement, and communication gaps that left strategies ineffective. Also contributing to this was the call for alternative communication techniques to support the efforts of social integration and combat extremism. The researcher applied a theoretical framework as well to decide the best participants and how theoretical concepts developed and related to each other (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

According to Yin, “returning to the propositions that initially formed the conceptual framework ensures that the analysis is reasonable in scope and that it also provides structure for the final report” (as cited in Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 553). Furthermore, Easton (2010) describes how examining multiple cases “can provide a great deal of, largely qualitative, data which can be written up as a case study, offering insights into the nature of the phenomena” (p. 118). Once the case determined, Yin (2018b) believes it was significant to focus on ‘bounding the case’, which meant to describe cases. According to the author, it was to identify direct participants as sources of information and “whether to include the entire or only some part of the life cycle of the entity that will become the case” (p. 31). Bounding the case also helped the researcher to focus on the most relevant data and show a direct link between research propositions and inquiries and these cases (Yin, 2018b). Moreover, Yin (2018b) demonstrates that the more specific the case study was, the better it became: “[t]he desired case should be a real-world phenomenon that has some concrete manifestation” (p. 31) such as institutions.

This study examined cases that were specific and essential for understanding the research topics and problem. It also investigated a small number of cases in the form of NGOs to evaluate the current situation and suggest new insights. Easton (2010) believes case study research was generally small, which indicated no generalisations made based on numerical analysis. From a positivist perspective, Eisenhardt thinks that increasing the number of cases to 4-10 generated similar findings from every case involved (as cited in Easton, 2010). Additionally, Easton (2010) views case study research from a critical realism point of view in which causes described reality. Conducting case studies implied that apparent developments led to a research topic asking why these changes happened and “[t]he final result is the identification of one or more mechanisms that can be regarded as having caused the events” (p.128). Consequently, this study analysed the causes behind many observations, such as why

British NGOs could not achieve a holistic approach to tackling social integration on a national scale. It was also meaningful to investigate why several political actors, according to the literature, called for exploring different techniques to address community cohesion. As such, Taylor (2013) believes:

...the use of multiple cases allows for a ‘more convincing and accurate case study’... [accurate here means using methods such as] reflexivity and thick description [it] highlights the skills required to produce the descriptions that bring to life the context in which the cases sit, the way in which the analytical process is conducted, together with the details of the overall research approach, and the choice of examples from the raw data, such as quotes, that brings out the meaning of the research for the reader. (p. 4)

Employing a case study design provided a chance to address some of the research questions. Questions needed to describe a situation in its natural setting and understand processes and behaviours. Luo and Jiang (2014) described how using qualitative approach strengthened their in-depth understanding of a little-known phenomenon. Yuanzhong (2005) also explained how combining questionnaire and interview “would ensure...to get more reliable and deep information...[and that the researcher] had bigger flexibilities to adjust the questions to the interviews” (p. 44). The explorative nature of the research questions made it necessary to answer some of them “in qualitative terms” (Chaka, 2014, p. 356). These terms were the most appropriate to use because, according to Mason, “the aim is to produce a holistic understandings of rich, contextual, and detailed data” (as cited in Hazen, 2010, p. 28). To engage in qualitative research meant that the researcher “support[ed] a way of looking at research that honors an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation” (Creswell, 2014, p. 4). Bryman (2016) demonstrates that case studies “tends to take an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research” (p. 62). Moreover, this study used a combination of close and open-ended email questionnaire to support the data collected from interviews. In this sense, “[q]ualitative

research is also useful for deeper interpretations of quantitative findings” (Miyata & Kai, 2009, p. 65). This thesis investigated views and described realities which made the epistemological position a combination of positivism and pragmatism. Giddings (2006) “argue[s] that mixed methods dwells within positivism; the ‘thinking’ of positivism continues in the ‘thinking’ of mixed methods...[which] rarely reflects a constructionist or subjectivist view of the world...[consequently] [t]he thinking is clearly positivist and pragmatic” (p. 200). Here, positivism, according to scholars, means that “researchers learn about an objective world by seeking out rules, laws, and cause-effect relationships that govern the material world” (Atkinson, 2017, p. 29). Moreover, pragmatism, according to Dewey, implies that “the environment is not fixed but in flux. [and] [t]his constant change presents situations that require adaptive behaviors from individuals, which is why Dewey argues inquiry is critical to manage this uncertainty” (Hall, 2013, p. 17). Dewey also elaborates that what mattered in pragmatism was ‘intelligent action’. According to Murphy (1990), this intelligent action in pragmatism “makes foresight possible and secures intentional preparation for probable consequences” (as cited in Hall, 2013, p. 24). Besides, intelligent action started with identifying the problem, however, “the task of identifying the components of a problem, like truth, is never completely settled and continues throughout the evaluation process as new understandings come into focus” (Hall, 2013, p. 18). Viewed in this light, the researcher kept ‘thinking’ of the research problem objectively, seeking out cause-effect relationships. Since the social climate around the topics of community cohesion and extremism was constantly changing in Britain, during this research project, adaptive behaviours and attitudes from the public were required, which was why the researcher found it critical to question the use of political PR to manage this uncertainty.

Furthermore, Creswell (2014) argues pragmatism was a philosophical paradigm that appeared due to situations, actions and consequences. He states that using philosophical worldview

supported the researcher's qualitative choice of inquiry, and gave indications about what were the beliefs she was trying to bring to that inquiry. As a qualitative researcher, fascinated by daily social interactions (Marshall & Rossman, 1999), it was also about how participants contributed to these interactions which "foster pragmatism in using multiple methods for exploring the topic of interest" (p. 2). This combination between reality (ontology) and how this reality known (epistemology) could bring a full view of knowledge and how it related to us. In pragmatism, ontology or "reality is constantly renegotiated, debated, [and] interpreted in light of its usefulness in new unpredictable situations...[whereas epistemology] solves problems [as] [f]inding out is the means, [and] change is the underlying aim" (Patel, 2015, para. 12).

Researchers in pragmatism research philosophy, according to Rossman and Wilson, "emphasize the research problem and use all approaches available to understand the problem" (as cited in Creswell, 2014, p. 10). Furthermore, Burnham (2013) demonstrates that in pragmatism "the purpose of thought is not to represent the world but to deal with it, and the "truest" ideas are therefore those that help an individual adapt to, and thrive in, a particular context" (p. 28). According to Feyerabend, pragmatism is not to ask "[w]hat is happening? [but] must ask: What shall we do?" (as cited in Burnham, 2013, p. 31). This pragmatism or critical realism developed 'prescriptive dimension' which implied that "theories ought not to be seen as simply logico-deductive devices; they are the outcome of a creative process in which the unfamiliar is apprehended through ontologies with the familiar" (Baert, 2005, p. 95). Hence, empirical research was used to examine the presence and "causal power of the alleged mechanisms" (p. 95). Baert (2005) also draws attention to authors who argued a 'critical realist perspective' was needed to provide an "anti-positivist stance, maintaining that a proper explanation goes beyond the surface level of events and actions" (p. 99). Therefore, critical realists or pragmatists viewed the aim of social science as "to explain and depict the

outer world as accurately as possible...[with] little attention to other reasons why people might feel motivated or inspired to investigate their social surroundings” (Baert, 2005, p. 102). The author thinks “pragmatism heralds a new direction in social science, in which knowledge is no longer conceived as mirroring or depicting the outer world, but rather as intimately related to practical achievements” (p. 105). Viewed in this light, the qualitative nature of this research was related to pragmatism. Qualitative analysis “is pragmatic, interpretative, and grounded in the lived experiences of people” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 2). I believed pragmatism shaped this thesis to explore if politicians and political institutions could use the newly proposed technique of political PR to achieve practical improvements in social integration.

Here, pragmatism was similar to ‘sensiblyness’ (Lipscomb, 2011), which employed anything that functioned and made sense. This approach supported the core value behind operating public relations in non-corporate settings. It is because “[t]he most significant methodological implications of pragmatic philosophy are located in its ideas about the ontologically co-constituting relationship between inquiry practice and future possibilities” (Rosiek, 2013, p. 692). Conducting empirical research often required combining explanatory and exploratory designs to address the research questions. The “empirically reductionist ‘postpositivism’, constructionism...empowerment or issue orientated ‘participatory’ worldviews” (Lipscomb, 2011, p. 3) in pragmatism allowed the researcher to analyse complicated situation according to its components. As such, political PR might be theoretically and empirically improved by relying on what the phenomenon itself implied. It was to go beyond the traditional roles of political PR by applying PR practices in political institutions. Hence, modern pragmatism was:

...the “new materialisms” that can help us rethink the purpose and practice of social science research...It suggests that some portion of our discussions about our social world can appropriately shift from debates about inviolate normative commitments

and the problematics of representation, to debates about the plausibility and desirability of narratives about the future...[Pragmatism] offers the future as a site of post-representational methodological activity. (Rosiek, 2013, p. 701)

2. *Researcher's background, beliefs, and biases.* Qualitative researchers tended to “explicitly identify reflexively their biases, values, and personal background...that shape their interpretations formed during a study” (Creswell, 2014, p.187). I worked as a public relations practitioner, communication officer, translator, teacher and lecturer. These experiences were PR-oriented. In each role, I was asked to improve dialogue quality, reaching a better level of understanding, cooperation and trust. That shaped my communicative abilities and created passion, driven by high ambitions, towards pursuing my career aspirations. Tsetsura (2011) also recognised how her background as a PR practitioner was significant. Therefore, she employed the concept of connoisseurship “which implies an in-depth understanding of the ways in which participants might experience the studied phenomenon, [and] is essential in any qualitative research” (p. 10). Pursuing a PhD in political PR stemmed from my genuine belief in public relations as communicative power and strategic force. My experience in corporate PR allowed my knowledge to go beyond traditional PR contexts. Jordan did not extend the profession to politics, which might indicate the absence of political PR in the country. The majority of PR practitioners in Jordan were mainly practising their roles from a marketing perspective, which I thought might simplify public relations and its strategic capabilities. This view of PR urged me to think differently. Sam Black, a British PR pioneer, says “that the essential difference between public relations and marketing is not in the techniques employed, since they are somewhat similar, but in the ideology” (Anthony, 2012, p. 17).

As life in the UK became more complicated, for example, with the increased threat of terrorism, and high levels of hatred and social segregation, politics needed to find ways to

build community relationships and promote mutual understanding. Hence, I recognised the significance of reviewing political public relations' role in the context of social integration and counter-terrorism in the UK. This sprang, as I believed, from the power of public relations to create positive changes, reconcile relationships and impose some control over the empathy-vacuum the world became. I chose to study political public relations in British setting due to the vibrant and innovative nature of the industry in Britain.

3. Population, participants, and sampling technique. This study population comprised of two categories. The researcher interviewed members from NGOs working in social inclusion and extremism. An interview questionnaire, therefore, was prepared for semi-structured interviews. Given the complexity of the issues under investigation, the researcher sometimes asked “longer questions [with ‘a medium-length introduction’, which led] to more accurate reporting as they may convey the idea that the task is important and deserves serious effort” (Lietz, 2010, p. 251). The simplicity and preciseness of interview questions were maintained as much as possible, however. The interview schedule also included some sensitive questions about Prevent Strategy – how NGOs perceived the approach and more importantly, what the key publics thought about it. In this sense, the researcher designed two questions about Prevent. The ‘indirect’ one, for example, began with ““What do you believe other people think about...[the strategy?]’...whereby the assumption is that respondents will more easily admit to views or behaviours that they think are not shared by the larger society by projecting their own views onto others” (Lietz, 2010, p. 252). As we will show in chapter 5, the researcher believed “an in-depth semi-structured format using an interview schedule prepared in advance would be the best approach...[because it] allow[s] clear differences and similarities to emerge between respondents but would also be flexible enough to allow further probing” (Prescott, 2011, p. 19).

The second research population included PR academics in British universities who might or might not have expertise in political communication and spin. Those specialists responded to e-mail questionnaires, which will be dealt with in detail in chapter 4. The size of this category included 50 universities with public relations departments. These included 138 PR academics who were surveyed using e-mail questionnaires. Twenty-six NGOs, however, were sent e-mails to ensure availability of sampling frames, and participants then selected for interviews. These participants and respondents were appropriate sources of information. They brought valid responses to the researcher's questions, identifying problems and purposes. Their significant role in unfolding and describing the meanings attributed to their functions allowed discussion of the issues related to research aims. They also provided attitudes that could form some recommendations. Furthermore, participants were experts in their fields. They gave academic and practical insights into how the redirection of political PR could be. These characteristics were compelling and gave the best possible context for data collection.

Examining a group of case studies made them representatives of the research population. Despite the small number of participating organisations, Luo and Jiang (2014) believed participants brought depth through "their own frame of references" (p. 140). The researchers faced difficulties in convincing five companies to participate in their study as only one company responded. Therefore, solicitation e-mails were sent until they gained the participation of three out of five organisations. Moss et al. (1996) also experienced a small sample, but it was "indicative of a range of retail institution types" (p. 73). While the researcher applied sampling technique to one of the research populations, complete surveying (census) was used to the other. The researcher used a non-probabilistic purposive sample in which cases and interviewees were chosen strategically by maintaining a beneficial level of variance in the sample (Bryman, 2016). Creswell (2014) states that "the idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites (or documents or visual

material) that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question” (p. 189).

When the objective of a qualitative study was to find out how the community perceived a specific issue, then samples “are usually purposive and typically small” (Bricki & Green, 2007, p. 9). According to Patton (1990), ““qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth on relatively small samples, even single cases, selected purposefully”” (as cited in Coyne, 1997, p. 627). Luo and Jiang (2014) used purposive sampling and approached this sample by sending solicitation e-mails. Tsetsura (2011) also employed purposeful sampling as a very efficient method for collecting data “because [it] allow[ed] researchers to uncover participant’s experiences through everyday talks” (p. 10). One of the most important objectives was to conduct interviews with participants who were engaging with the public and describe their plans and campaigns. Thus, “purposive samples are used if description rather than generalization is the goal” (Dawson, 2009, p. 53). Additionally, Bryman (2016) explains that choosing a purposive sample was through two steps: of cases (that is, the NGOs) and then of interviewees. More justifications and details will be provided about this topic in chapter 5.

For the second research population, complete surveying (census) was applied to ask everyone in the research population. It was to collect the same data from “the whole population of interest” (Aldridge & Levine, 2001, p. 25). This research population comprised of public relations’ academics teaching in media and communication, public relations, business and marketing, and political communication departments in 50 British universities. These respondents were sent email questionnaires and asked to take part in this study. This sense of heterogeneity in the second research population was believed to bring more richness to the analysis. The examination of every PR academic was also meant to give accurate results by reducing the margin of error and enhancing ‘precision’ (Bryman, 2016). The researcher

reached saturation level whenever interviews and questionnaires failed to provide new answers. Charmaz believes researchers “stop collecting data when the categories (or themes) are saturated: when gathering fresh data no longer sparks new insights or reveals new properties” (as cited in Creswell, 2014, p. 189). In line with this, Tsetsura (2011) conducted one more in-depth interview once she reached a saturation point.

4. Data collection procedures. Punch (2014) explains that mixing research methods means that the researcher should keep three aspects in mind: “timing, weighting, and mixing” (p. 308). This study applied the two research methods at the same time to achieve ‘concurrent’ (Punch, 2014) way of collecting data. The researcher gave both techniques equal importance and weight as questionnaires and interviews measured what the research questions wanted to cover. Mixing both approaches, according to Creswell and Plano Clark, indicate there was “separate collection and analysis of the two types of data, which are then merged...at the interpretation-of-results stage” (as cited in Punch, 2014, p. 309). This triangulation of interview data with other methods enhanced objectivity during interviews (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Choosing interviews as a method brought better appropriateness to the research. It was significant in “studying complex and sensitive areas...[and] in situations where in-depth information is required” (Kumar, 2014, p. 182).

In-depth semi-structured interviews helped to “explore the meaning of events and actions held by participants” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 138) and allow the researcher to examine emerging explanations. The validity of semi-structured interviews, according to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, “refers to the extent to which the researcher gains access to their participants’ knowledge and experience” (as cited in Yuanzhong, 2005, p. 45). Luo and Jiang (2014) conducted semi-structured interviews with multiple interviewees such as middle managers in a way that enriched the study with ‘different viewpoints’ and enhanced credibility. Similarly, Yuanzhong (2005) arranged a face-to-face interview and gained first-

hand material which provided a 'full picture' of the topic under investigation. Moreover, Tsetsura (2011) used in-depth semi-structured one-on-one interviews, which were audiotaped and transcribed. These were conducted for 40-120 minutes "to make sure that during the interviews all areas of research interest were covered" (p. 10). Moss et al. (1996) also conducted series of semi-structured interviews "to ascertain the role, scope, organization, and type of practices used within the public relations function" (p. 73). Similarly, Taylor (2000a) carried out in-depth interviews in which "responses were recorded, transcribed and coded for analysis" (p. 191).

On the other hand, using questionnaires supported interviews and appropriately addressed the research questions. It gave knowledge needed to answer questions about the use of political PR in the fields of social inclusion and extremism. The appropriateness of questionnaires stemmed from their ability to bring personal attitudes and beliefs together. Flick (2011) believes a questionnaire was most relevant when "the knowledge about the issue allows you to formulate a sufficient number of questions in an unambiguous way, and...a large number of participants will be involved" (p. 111). In this study, questionnaires were a combination of eight statements and one open-ended question. These items were measured by the Likert scale which was "a multiple-indicator...of a set of attitudes relating to a particular area...to measure intensity of feelings about the area in question" (Bryman, 2016, p. 154). It came to give participants "easy-to-follow designs [and]...reduce the likelihood of 'respondent fatigue'" (Bryman, 2016, p. 222). It was also to avoid wasting time gathering questionnaires that lacked accuracy and validity: "[i]t is not only necessary that enough questionnaires are returned '50% would be quite a good ratio here'; in addition, enough of those returned must have been filled in completely" (Flick, 2011, p. 110).

The literature showed that researchers used questionnaires to collect data. Molleda and Ferguson (2009) conducted a self-administrated survey where academics and specialists

refined 44 statements after they were pre-tested. The researchers divided the questionnaire into two categories: “19 questions to measure the internal role activities of Brazilian practitioners and 25 questions to evaluate the external role” (p. 337). Additionally, Avery and Graham (2013) surveyed a research population of more than 3,500. After sending solicitation e-mails, only 463 participated in a questionnaire that applied (1-5) scale to measure how far local government’s officials used social media.

5. *Data analysis plan.* Marshall and Rossman (1999) believe “[r]aw data have no inherent meaning; the interpretive act brings meaning to those data and displays that meaning to the reader” (p. 153). Creswell (2014) defines data analysis as “to make sense out of text. It involves segmenting and taking apart the data...as well as putting it back together” (p. 195). Data analysis in research based on case studies entailed a full description of people or environments supported by analysis of data for conclusions or themes (Creswell, 2014). The aim of analysing interviews was to provide a descriptive thematic analysis. As such, the researcher described cases and interviewees’ perspectives and how they considered future possibilities for the research problem (Bryman, 2016). Bryman explains that qualitative researchers had been increasingly using thematic analysis. The author introduces thematic analysis as ‘the basis for a generic approach to qualitative data analysis’ and what procedures and cautions it involved. Bryman identifies these steps as reading material to understand the passage’s meaning: ‘decoding’ (Saldana, 2016) and making initial codes which might extend to ‘hundreds’ (Lofgren, 2013). It was also about reducing codes’ number and “writing summaries of what is meant by the codes/themes in the form of memos” (Bryman, 2016, p. 588). Besides, the process involved refining and combining codes to create ‘higher-order’ ones and labelling or conceptualising themes to best reflect the codes: ‘encoding’ (Saldana, 2016).

Saldana defines code as a phrase or term that captured the essence of data. As interviews in this study examined functions and routines, coding for patterns seemed necessary. He describes it as “repetitive, regular, or consistent occurrences of action/data that appear more than twice....[and] become more trustworthy evidence for our findings since [these] patterns demonstrate habits [and] salience” (pp. 5 - 6). Saldana (2016) also encourages qualitative researchers to create patterns while coding and use any unfitted codes to reflect on their role in the general context of this study. He recognises six types of patterns where data might imply some over others. ‘Causation’ came first and meant that one thing led to another, ‘correspondence’: things occurred in regard to actions, ‘sequence’: events came in particular order, ‘frequency’: things frequently or rarely happened, ‘difference’: events took place in various predictable forms, and ‘similarity’: things occurred similarly.

With the richness of the recorded data, the researcher focused only on the most relevant information since “not all of the information can be used in a qualitative study” (Creswell, 2014, p. 195). Planning for data analysis meant certain stages took place such as reading carefully through data, transcribing interviews, referring to significant issues and ideas, considering marginal notes, and coding and categorising data into terms and units (Creswell, 2014). Hoyos and Barnes (2012) think that it was to generate themes, label them and form concepts in a process called ‘conceptualisation’. This also involved explaining how these themes related, their relation to the research questions, and how this helped to describe the research focus (Hoyos & Barnes, 2012). Hence, evaluating data involved “identify[ing] main themes by analysing the content of the information...[from which] [t]hese themes become the basis of your write-up” (Kumar, 2014, p. 269). The data analysis was variable-oriented for the questionnaire and case-oriented for interviews.

The data was thematically coded and analysed. The qualitative analysis measures were “capable of providing a highly valid source of detailed or “deep” information about a text”

(Neuendorf, 2002, p. 14). Flick (2011) explains that each interview described and then summarised to “include a statement which is typical for the interview, a short characterization of the interviewee with respect to the research question...and the major topics mentioned in the interview with respect to the issue under study” (p. 152). Flick (2011) believes that this allowed the researcher to deal with every interview as a case by breaking it down into phrases. Throughout reading transcripts carefully, the researcher created the most relevant codes to produce categories and themes. It helped to prepare for labelling themes and establishing how they related to each other (Lofgren, 2013). Generating a thematic structure meant themes needed to be “continually assessed for all further cases...modif[ied]...if new or contradictory aspects emerge[d]...[and] use[d]...to analyse all cases that are part of the interpretation...Thus, you analyse and assess the social distribution of perspectives on the issue under study” (pp. 152 - 153). Bryman (2016) also explains that constructing themes “provides the researcher with the basis for a theoretical understanding of his or her data that can make a theoretical contribution to the literature relating to the research focus” (p. 584). Therefore, the researcher modified codes and refined themes throughout data analysis.

According to the literature, Tsetsura (2011) analysed data and “interviews were scrutinized several times to identify the overarching themes” (p. 10). She also recognised all significant statements and prepared them for analysis. Similarly, Benecke et al. (2017) applied qualitative content analysis and employed inductive method “to identify themes and categories from the interviews and observations” (p. 29). To best exemplify this, Taylor (2000a) conducted interviews with open-ended questions to answer, “How do the officials of the Department of National Unity (DNU) of the Malaysian government see themselves contributing to national unity through communication campaigns?” (p. 184). Data analysis showed four themes: “campaigns offer information and education, campaigns build relationships, campaigns lead to national development, and campaigns build on tradition”

(Taylor, 2000a, pp. 193 - 194). Moreover, Luo and Jiang (2014) stated that in their analysis, “patterns and themes were identified by repeatedly reading the organized data and interpreting how the data were related to each research question” (p. 142). The researcher also explained questionnaires using a thematic approach for the open-ended question and critical discourse analysis for the Likert scale – the following chapter will expand on that.

6. Issues of trustworthiness. Trustworthiness determined the quality of a qualitative study. According to Guba and Lincoln, trustworthiness refer to four main aspects: “credibility (paralleling internal validity), transferability (paralleling external validity), dependability (paralleling reliability) and confirmability (paralleling objectivity)” (as cited in Kumar, 2014, p. 219). Elo et al. also consider trustworthiness as “applying rigour when collecting and analysing data, and when presenting the results, and ensuring that every stage is thoroughly described: that respondents are authentic and that content is analysed by describing the richness of the data gathered” (as cited in Benecke et al., 2017, p. 30). In this study, the researcher applied these ethical issues to both the quantitative and qualitative methods. Bryman (2016) explains that validity and reliability were inseparable in quantitative research: “if your measure is not reliable, it cannot be valid...[i]f the measure is not stable over time, it simply cannot be providing a valid measure...[i]f a measure lacks internal reliability, it means...the measure cannot be valid” (p. 162). Consequently, credibility (internal validity) answered the question: “Are we measuring what we want to measure?” (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 112). It also indicated how much participants would agree with research findings and “the higher the agreement of the respondents with the findings, the higher the validity of the study” (Kumar, 2014, p. 219).

Moody (2002) states qualitative researchers could not ensure credibility because they tended to be selective in data. Hence, to maximise study’s credibility, Bricki and Green (2007) suggest researchers should “ensure that...conclusions are based on supporting

evidence...include[ing] analysis of cases that do fit within...conclusions and [providing] enough context for reader to judge interpretation” (p. 27). As such, the researcher sent a copy of the results to two of the case studies. Unfortunately, these NGOs refused to give feedback or comment on findings. Credibility, therefore, was enhanced by supporting conclusions with evidence and detailed analysis.

Creswell (2014) argues that several strategies could be taken to obtain qualitative credibility. The most appropriately applied to this study were: firstly, accuracy (validity) of results. This achieved through triangulation of research methods and “by examining evidence from...sources and using it to build a coherent justification for themes” (p. 201). It was “one method for increasing validity of findings, through deliberately seeking evidence from a wide range of sources and comparing findings from those different sources” (Bricki & Green, 2007, p. 26). Secondly, the researcher achieved credibility by approaching some of the interviewees, asking them if results or themes were accurate. According to Creswell (2014), if respondents proved not, the researcher could conduct an interview to follow-up with their comments. Thirdly, the author believes credibility improved by providing a self-reflected image on interpretations in a way that highlighted the researcher’s experiences and beliefs. Fifth, giving evidence that did not support the theme was to prove this theme’s validity (Creswell, 2014). It was when researchers brought evidence that contradicted category, and that made the report “more realistic and more valid” (p. 202). The researcher discussed these points in the following chapters.

Finally, reviewing this study by external examiners, according to Creswell (2014), should add to the thesis’ credibility and give an objective evaluation of the research. To sum up, the researcher gained credibility by applying several measures. Triangulation was the first; implementing more than one method enhanced this study’s credibility: “[t]he choice of other methodologies helped to ensure that the study achieved validity” (Chaka, 2014, p. 355). The

researcher also provided evidence-based analysis to support conclusions. Reflectivity too could be seen through describing some of the researcher's experiences to form some explanations. Furthermore, creating a sense of synthesis by presenting themes and what contradicted them, together with reviewing this study by the external examiner maximised this study's credibility.

Reliability (confirmability, dependability, objectivity), on the other hand, "is the extent to which a measuring procedure yields the same results on repeated trials" (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 112). In a qualitative study, researchers could achieve reliability if they provided "extensive and detailed record of the process for others to replicate to ascertain the level of dependability" (Kumar, 2014, p. 219). Objectivity could also be increased if the researcher "[a]nalyse[s] the whole set of data" (Bricki & Green, 2007, p. 27). In qualitative analysis, Bricki and Green (2007) write that ensuring reliability meant to keep "meticulous records of all the interviews...and document the process of analysis you went through in detail" (p. 26). Quantitative reliability, however, "is fundamentally concerned with issues of consistency of measures" (Bryman, 2016, p. 156). It involved three main criteria: "stability, internal reliability, [and] inter-rater reliability" (Bryman, 2016, p. 157). Punch (2014) considers stability as a tool that measured the instrument's ability to give the same results, by asking the same participants, under the same conditions, yet in another time frame. It would be reliable if the researcher obtained the same results. Internal reliability, on the other hand, referred to how the research method was administrated to ensure internal consistency: "test-retest reliability and coefficient alpha tap the two different meanings of consistency" (Punch, 2014, p. 238).

This study gained reliability by applying the coefficient alpha and keeping a detailed record of the data and analysis. Gibbs offers several procedures to attain a reliable qualitative method (as cited in Creswell, 2014). In this study, the researcher applied two of these

techniques through reconsidering transcripts for any possible mistakes and bringing a clear meaning of codes by regularly matching them with the data (Creswell, 2014). Shifting to generalisability (external validity, transferability), Moody (2002) believes external validity was “usually concerned with a single case; limits generalizability to other settings” (p. 2). According to Marshall and Rossman (1999), transferability in qualitative studies is always considered controversial and “weakness in the approach” (p. 193). This weakness, according to the authors, could be minimised by relying on this study’s theoretical framework and investigating more than one case study. This demonstrated how theoretical concepts guided data collection and analysis allowing others to decide “whether or not the cases described can be generalized for new research policy and transferred to other settings” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 193). Bryman (2016) believes researchers could also generalise whenever the sample was taken from large cities like, London then it would be appropriate to transfer to similar places. This because “[w]hen we are considering generalization, it is important to determine the range of application for research findings” (Miyata & Kai, 2009, p. 71). Additionally, researchers could achieve transferability through providing “sufficient descriptive data for implementers to make better transferability judgements [as] [r]esearchers should suggest possible methods of verification” (Miyata & Kai, 2009, p. 72). In short, Lipset, Trow and Coleman suggest that even when the researcher examined a single case study, the aim was to “do a ‘generalizing’ and not a ‘particularization’ analysis” (as cited in Yin, 2013a, p. 21). Similarly, Rossman and Marshall (1999) state that “[a]lthough no qualitative studies are generalizable in the statistical sense, their findings may be transferable” (p. 43).

Furthermore, Yin (2013a) believes case study strategy was “generalizable to theoretical propositions...[because] your goal will be to expand and generalize theories (analytic generalizations) and not to extrapolate probabilities (statistical generalizations)” (p. 21).

Other scholars provided another way to achieve transferability in qualitative studies. Kumar (2014), for example, argues generalisability could be attained through “extensively and thoroughly describe the process you adopted for others to follow and replicate” (p. 219). It “requires good documentation of qualitative procedures, such as a protocol for documenting the problem in detail and the development of a thorough case study database” (Creswell, 2014, p. 204). By investigating seven case studies, the researcher was able to address transferability. This study also relied on theoretical concepts during the data collection and analysis, which might help to extend these theories to other similar settings. The following sections also gave a detailed description of the data allowing the reader to make generalisability judgements. The researcher explained how this study built its qualitative and quantitative chapters as well. All these could make transferability more approachable.

However, generalisability from quantitative findings might seem less achievable. By sending questionnaires to all respondents, transferability was meant to be less challenging. Nevertheless, the response proved that generalisability was unreachable. The researcher still described how we could positively see this low response rate. Consequently, it could be argued transferability from both types of results might be possible. Giving such practical reflection of the results was significant since “the researcher must argue that his [/her] findings will be useful to others in similar situations, with similar research questions or questions of practice” (Rossman & Marshall, 1999, p. 193).

7. Role of the researcher. The qualitative approach made questions of bias rise to the surface. Experiences and beliefs were significant factors that threatened this study’s credibility. Thus, “multiple strategies for validation are necessary to demonstrate the accuracy of the information” (Creswell, 2014, p. 188). As mentioned earlier, this study applied measures to prove it was credible. The researcher’s experiences stemmed from corporate PR environments, which meant political PR was a new experience for her. The literature

encouraged scholars to extend PR theories and practices to political contexts. Consequently, the researcher, in some places, reflected her beliefs and experiences on the analysis, interpretations and findings. I also believed my identity as a Muslim was a benefit and problem in the research process. It helped me to understand the research problem and broaden the scope of questions asked to Islamic NGOs, and that allowed me to bring more data for analysis. However, I thought my identity was an issue for RICU which did not respond to my request for over five months. This thesis tackled some of the increasingly essential matters in Britain today, which was why I assumed RICU would cooperate to identify weaknesses and improve performances.

Confidentiality was a priority throughout this study. The researcher remained objective to prove this study's internal and external validity. My role in collecting the data was through conducting interviews and distributing questionnaires. Kumar (2014) suggests interviews could "provide in-depth information if used in an interview by an experienced interviewer" (p. 186). The researcher employed this, which emphasised objectivity (Harvey, 2017). It also indicated "flexibility...[from which] the interviewee frames and understands issues and events - that is, what the interviewee views as important in explaining and understanding events, patterns, and forms of behaviour" (Bryman, 2016, p. 468). The same was true for questionnaires. The researcher applied various procedures to improve the credibility of themes and codes with no pre-assumptions or personal attitudes. She also transcribed interviews and sent the findings to some of NGOs to confirm they were similar to participants' preferences. The researcher's responsibility included all that along with building coherent and evidence-based argumentation in every step taken.

8. Ethical procedures. Undertaking research implied ethical issues. It included "consent and confidentiality" (Bricki & Green, 2007, p. 5). These factors covered every phase in this study: "[p]rior to conducting the study, [b]eginning the study, [c]ollecting data, [a]nalyzing data,

[and] [r]eporting, sharing, and storing data” (Creswell, 2014, pp. 93 - 94). This study protected participants from any coercive attempts and asked to interview them voluntarily. Consent also meant respondents “should be well-informed about what participation entails” (Bricki & Green, 2007, p. 5). Hence, the researcher wrote two separate participants’ information sheets. In the same context, the researcher applied confidentiality by respecting examined environments, participants’ identity and data sensitivity (Creswell, 2014). All these elements were protected from being exposed or freely available without restrictions as well (Creswell, 2014). Furthermore, the researcher met the ethical concern of how the research problem could help and benefit participants (Creswell, 2014) through clarifying this in the information sheets. Respondents were also asked to be interviewed and participate in questionnaires without any coercion.

During data collection, it was significant to “[r]espect the site, and disrupt as little as possible” (Creswell, 2014, p. 93). This ethical concern was met by planning carefully for all details during interviews, treating respondents similarly, identifying them as “collaborators” (p. 94), and treating data sensitivity and respondents’ privacy as a must (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, it was beneficial to explain the real objectives of this study “and how data will be used” (Creswell, 2014, p. 93). Therefore, the researcher maintained being honest and trustworthy to break the ice with respondents and improve the quality of the data collected. Moreover, the researcher did not gather the information that could harm participants and used “questions stated in an interview protocol” (Creswell, 2014, p. 94). However, that did not stop her from developing questions that might serve this study’s interest.

The researcher followed specific ethical procedures to address some issues. Throughout analysing data, the ethical concerns that might appear were related to “siding with participants...disclosing only positive results...[and] respect[ing] the privacy and anonymity of participants” (Creswell, 2014, p. 94). Accordingly, this study avoided biases and

subjectivity by focusing on participants' perspectives and providing different attitudes to the same questions (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, positive findings were sometimes supported by what contradicted them to improve conclusions' credibility (Creswell, 2014). The researcher also respected participants' identity as one NGO asked to remain anonymous.

In the process of "[r]eporting, sharing, and storing data" (Creswell, 2014, p. 94), many ethical concerns encounter researchers. Firstly, it was necessary to remain credible at this critical phase of sorting out the data and avoid misrepresenting facts, evidence and results (Creswell, 2014). This study kept being honest in reporting and classifying evidence, findings and conclusions as well. Secondly, APA guidelines were used to cite quoted information and prevent plagiarism. The researcher gave accurate citations for evidence, quotes and paraphrased data to prove this study's professionalism and credibility. Thirdly, this thesis used unbiased and proper language to avoid ambiguity and remain straightforward to research's audience (Creswell, 2014). Fourth, sharing data was another ethical issue and was addressed by the researcher's intent to share findings with PR and political PR scholars and professionals. The researcher would also send copies of the thesis to some participants who asked for it and publish this study in Arabic. Here, the data were stored, protected and destroyed by the APA code followed in such cases (Creswell, 2014).

Chapter 4

Quantitative Chapter

Overview of the Design

This study employed an open-ended qualitative question along with a Likert scale in the questionnaire to answer some of the research questions. Mixing these two types of data in one research method clarified the redirection of political PR further. This qualitative question provided necessary information about the PR approaches and communication theories that could be employed to address the research problem. Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) explain that “[o]ne type of evidence may not tell the complete story” (p. 33). Thus, they believed that combining two research approaches (qualitative and quantitative) would enhance results’ validity and help researchers to “inform efforts to plan, implement, and evaluate intervention strategies” (p. 33). Furthermore, Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) discuss using mixed methods if ‘A Need Exists to Explain the Quantitative Results’. According to the authors, qualitative data here employed to describe quantitative findings by referring to respondents’ language and beliefs. When quantitative results required clarifications, qualitative data revealed why participants answered a questionnaire in a certain way (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Gillham (2008) refers to this kind of question as an easy one with a ‘specified response’. Despite being simple, this kind of questions could be valuable to use at the end because it “can be motivating for the respondent, and they enable the researcher to trawl for the unknown and the unexpected” (Gillham, 2008, p. 34).

Giving respondents a space for comments and ‘free text boxes’ to express their attitudes enhanced quantitative statements and considered good practice in questionnaires (Thwaites Bee & Murdoch-Eaton, 2016). The authors believe “a single comment is as valuable in

understanding an issue and can be as powerful as a commonly held belief” (p. 212). A questionnaire should be carefully thought and delivered to achieve the maximum response rate. In this sense, Thwaites Bee and Murdoch-Eaton (2016) introduce three points from which it could be well-managed: “preparation — evaluation — [and] delivery” (p. 210). According to the scholars, preparing the questionnaire meant being fully aware of the material involved, language used, research population, sample size and general layout. It was also to ensure this research instrument achieved validity. Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) define this preparation process as employing findings to generate useful interpretations. The authors focus on the content validity of the questionnaire: “how judges assess whether the items or questions are representative of possible items” (pp. 133 - 134). Moreover, Oppenheim (2009) sheds light on ‘concurrent’ validity, where a questionnaire provided facts and measured what it intended to measure (the truth). Evaluating, however, allowed participants and academics to evaluate questionnaire which suggested clarity of aims, purpose and design, and length to avoid survey fatigue (Thwaites Bee & Murdoch-Eaton, 2016). Delivery, on the other hand, was to deliver a questionnaire professionally. It included getting consent forms signed, keeping confidentiality as a priority, sending participants’ information sheet, and thinking carefully about the time of distribution to achieve a good response (Thwaites Bee & Murdoch-Eaton, 2016).

The questionnaire employed the Likert scale to measure respondents’ points of view. Bryman (2016) explains that in this method, “the format for indicating level of agreement is [commonly] a five-point scale going from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’” (p. 154). Oppenheim (2009) also believes ‘attitude scaling’ “allow us to study the ways in which such an attitude relates to other variables in our survey” (p. 187). Through developing a Likert scale, statements should be relevant to each other to achieve internal reliability and prove ‘consistency’ (Oppenheim, 2009). Accordingly, the Likert scale in this study consisted of

eight statements and internal consistency achieved by creating items that coherently articulated around one topic only. Using a Likert scale helped the researcher “to make use of the links that an attitude may have with neighbouring areas and to uncover the strands and interconnections of its various components” (p. 200).

1. Population/ sampling technique. The research population comprised of British universities with an academic PR team. Two of these universities were international, with campuses in London. INSEEC University is a French business school, and Limkokwing University is a private university based in Malaysia. These institutions were all approached by e-mails. After searching for every British university with a PR department, the researcher identified 50 universities. At this stage, one of the most important aspects the researcher looked for was the richness she could derive from the heterogeneousness of the research population. Bryman (2016) explains that “[w]hen a population is very heterogeneous...a larger sample will be needed to reflect the varied population” (p. 186). The vast majority of this population was public relations academics from outside political PR field of study. It ranged from Business, Corporate PR, Public relations and Media, Journalism and PR, Advertising and Marketing Communications, Creative and Cultural Business, Communication, Culture and Conflict, International public relations and Global Communications Management, to PR and Brand Communication.

This variety was thought to be useful in producing future insights about political public relations. It was to invest in those academics’ expertise to explore new political PR practices. While it was significant for the researcher to make generalizability feasible, this objective might change due to low response. Additionally, the questionnaire contained variable-question about academics’ background: Are you a political PR academic? Bryman (2016) referred to this kind of variables as ‘Dichotomous’, where respondents chose between two groups (Yes/ No). Dichotomous variables were better to be treated “as if they were ordinary

nominal variables” (p. 335). The former meant that spaces between categories differed from each other, and the latter indicated category could not come in a specific order or preference than others (Bryman, 2016). The question ‘Are you a political PR academic’ was a ‘technical’ one for two reasons (Bryman, 2016). Firstly, it revealed political PR academics could come in the same order with other PR academics, but the distance between both categories (Yes/ No) was not equal, but an ordinal variable. Secondly, it showed that (Yes/ No) could not come in a specific order, which indicated both kinds of academics were somehow ‘equal’ (Bryman, 2016). Therefore, we could not say we preferred or valued perspective of political PR academic more than that of PR scholar with business or marketing background, that is, nominal variable (Bryman, 2016).

Investigating how perspectives might differ according to academics’ expertise was interesting. Various opinions mattered and might pave the way for reconsidering political PR in the future as well. Furthermore, Bourque and Fielder (2003) write how using online questionnaires could cover distant areas and broad sections of a research population while disadvantages included aspects such as low response rate and ‘language’ used. Consequently, the researcher did not use a research sample and applied complete surveying (census). This step was taken to support validity, avoid bias and achieve representativeness. Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) write that in quantitative research, “[t]he sample needs to be large enough...that will make it possible for the researcher to draw inferences with some confidence that the sample reflects the characteristics of the entire population (if that entire population could be studied)” (p. 113). Bryman (2016) defines census as “the enumeration of an entire population” (p. 174). In this sense, the researcher sent 138 questionnaires to all respondents using their e-mails provided by universities’ websites.

2. Restrictions/ limiting conditions. Price and Murnan (2004) describe limitation as “the systematic bias that the researcher did not or could not control and which could

inappropriately affect the results...[these restrictions are] threats to internal validity and threats to external validity” (p. 66). Internal validity was about causality, which meant the independent variable represented the cause, and the dependent variable was the effect resulted from that cause (Bryman, 2016). Concise, internal validity asked: “how confident can we be that the independent variable really is at least in part responsible for the variation that has been identified in the dependent variable?” (Bryman, 2016, p. 42). This study explained that redirecting political public relations (independent variable) was the cause behind effect, as regards using the social function of PR as a tool for social integration in the UK (dependent variable). Whereas, external validity (generalizability) was whenever findings could be the same if researchers examined the whole research population again (Price & Murnan, 2004). It was also to choose a representative sample from the research population (Bryman, 2016). This study gained its validity by using valid research methods and applied census.

Employing the questionnaire provided a complete evaluation of academics’ perspectives. However, the research encountered limitations, and such a goal was not fully achieved. These restrictions prevented this study from gaining more insights to refocusing political PR. They were beyond the researcher’s control and, more importantly, these had not failed this study. The questionnaire provided meaningful attitudes, especially those derived from the open question. Gillham (2008) explains that “[i]f you use a range of methods you can put together a more complete picture” (p. 99). Adding an open question to the questionnaire and triangulating it with semi-structured interviews were useful. The use of qualitative and quantitative analysis together strengthened research conclusions, brought more depth and enhanced validity. Gillham (2008) writes that: “[i]f the basic research questions are complex...then your data are going to look pretty thin and superficial if all you can report are the results of a questionnaire” (p. 99).

The research restrictions were:

1. Low response rate: With only seven fully-answered questionnaires out of 138, this study scored a low response rate. Although complete surveying was applied to receive a high response, the questionnaire did not deliver this result. In this sense, non-response was whenever respondents chose not to take part in this study or could not be reached (Bryman, 2016). In the case of using a research sample, the problem of low response was related to bias issues and not to the number of participants who refused to take part (Bryman, 2016). By applying census, however, “we need to find out whether the reasons for the non-response are somehow connected with the topic of our research” (Oppenheim, 2009, p. 106). Consequently, it was significant to shed light on what reasons affected the response rate, caused the non-representative sample and made generalisability non-attainable. While it was a good idea to examine the entire population, the majority of those who lacked an academic background in political PR and political communication was unable to participate. Many respondents e-mailed back explaining they did not possess the research knowledge to contribute an expert informed opinion of the questionnaire. In a follow-up e-mail, however, respondents were asked to answer the open question where academic expertise in political PR would be unnecessary. Many preferred not to respond while one academic answered. Nevertheless, the analysis showed there were non-political PR scholars who participated in the questionnaire. This indicated that other non-political PR academics could answer some of the statements on the Likert scale, given that these items were about PR and not political PR. It meant there was evidence that PR academics in business and marketing, for example, would contribute to the research, but they chose not to do so. Bryman (2016) explains that “[t]he significance of a response rate is that, unless it can be proven that those who do not participate do not differ from those who do, there is likely to be the risk of bias” (p. 224). Therefore, the whole population might be capable of answering some of the items and open

question. By looking at the layout, Ekman, Klint, Dickman, Adami, and Litton (2007) highlight that questions and their order might cause frustration and influence the response rate. The scholars found that questionnaire with an easy-to-hard design was more likely to gain better response and “[b]y optimizing the design of web-based questionnaires the response rates will be increased” (p. 298). The researcher applied an easy-to-hard layout to enhance the response rate. Nevertheless, Fielder and Bourque (2003) describe the low response as one of the significant difficulties of mail questionnaires where researcher “can probably expect no better than a 20% response rate” (p. 16).

2. Lack of e-mail providers: The researcher approached academics using their university e-mails. However, four universities did not provide staff directory. These were: INSEEC University, Richmond University, London College of International Business Studies, and Limkokwing University. As every questionnaire mattered, the researcher found this a limiting condition.

3. Lack of academic expertise in political public relations: The majority of respondents were professionals from research backgrounds different from political PR and political communication. It is noteworthy that an academic from a school of business claimed that any PR approach supposed to be successful, whether in a corporate or non-corporate environment. It meant he was not aware of the nature of political PR. It might shed light on how research expertise in a particular field of study made a difference. A political PR academic could be more aware of the complexity of political PR, recent developments in the literature, how it worked, and how we could redirect it academically and practically.

3. *Procedures.* Before distribution, the questionnaire was sent to study skills department at the University of Chester to assist clarity, as the researcher was unable to send it to PR or political PR academic. Hence, validity was achieved by how respondents commented on questions and perceived the research topic. They expressed their agreement and excitement regarding the questionnaire and the research focus. The researcher described these marginal comments in the discussion below. Moreover, respondents who participated in the research had not asked for information or clarification. Other participants, however, raised some inquiries first, and the researcher answered by sending the research problem, questions and objectives. The questionnaire was distributed to 138 PR academics in 50 universities on the 5th of March 2018. Respondents were told to send these back by the 10th of April, the best time to gain a good response rate as academics were in Easter break. On the 11th of April 2018, the researcher sent 115 e-mails. These encouraged respondents to participate and explained how every questionnaire mattered. The following page included the survey used in this thesis.

Reconsidering Political PR: How Communication and Engagement Can Reconcile Community Relationships [An Analysis towards Enhancing Social Integration and Fighting Extremism] Questionnaire

To help us provide a reconsideration of political PR and how it can be used in the fields of social integration and extremism, please complete this questionnaire and send it back to us at (1526406@chester.ac.uk).

- Are you a political PR academic? Yes No

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1) <i>I believe political PR can move strategically from a tool for spin to a social and cultural one.</i>					
2) <i>I think political PR can play a role when implemented in political institutions with agendas in social integration.</i>					
3) <i>I believe political PR can play a role when implemented in political institutions with agendas in countering radicalization, extremism, and terrorism.</i>					
4) <i>I believe political PR can help to renovate the contemporary approach of political communication turning it into a more social and cultural-oriented one.</i>					
5) <i>I think PR can be reconsidered to perform as a national and developmental instrument as it was used in the time of the Great Depression in Britain.</i>					
6) <i>I expect PR can successfully lead 'propaganda of integration' in Britain.</i>					
7) <i>I think NGOs can rely on PR's 'relationship management' approach to reconcile relationships between the Muslim community and others in the society.</i>					
8) <i>I assume political PR can win the hearts and minds of the Muslim community to better address social integration and extremism.</i>					

1. What do you think are the most effective communication theories and PR approaches to enhance inclusivity and counter extremism in Britain?

4. *Critical discourse analysis (CDA): Discussion and results.* CDA highlighted how the concept of triangulation, which indicated that there was no standard way of gathering data, was significant “[f]or the analysis of the interrelationship between discursive and other social practices and structures” (Amousson & Allagbe, 2018, p. 15). Before analysing the data using CDA, it was essential to describe the type of questions employed in the questionnaire. Gillham (2008) classified them into two categories. The first one was ‘subject descriptors’, which meant questions asked for information about who answered them. The second type was “questions that provide data on the topics you are investigating - the ‘meat’ of the questionnaire” (p. 50). The subject descriptor question was job-related that asked for academic expertise. It might seem useful to investigate how such occupational inquiry would make a difference in answers given. The researcher, however, formulated this question merely for traditional purposes. It meant that from the very beginning, PR and political PR academics were expected to make an almost similar meaningful contribution to the questionnaire. On the other hand, a five-point ordinal variables scale was used as a ‘multiple-indicator measure’ of each concept since “there are potential problems with a reliance on just a single indicator” (Bryman, 2016, p. 153). Oppenheim (2009) calls this attitude scales in which attitude items were framed to decide how participants disagreed or agreed with each of them. Throughout writing attitude statements, the researcher had to make sure “that they should be meaningful and interesting, even exciting, to the respondents...[who] seem eager to provide us with more examples....[These items are right whenever respondents showed] few signs that they reject...[them] by making amendments or deletions” (Oppenheim, 2009, pp. 179 - 180).

Besides, the ordinal variable was “[a] categorical variable in which the categories have an obvious order (e.g. strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)” (Upton & Cook, 2008, para. 1). Lalla (2017) describes categories (attributes) measured “with ordinal

scales...[as] qualitative and ranked, and then they are still variates...[and] are strictly monotone increasing” (pp. 438 - 439). The non-parametric approach identified the nature of ordered data as that best measured by an ordinal scale and not the ratio or interval scales of measurements (Lalla, 2017).

There were eight returned questionnaires, with only one answering the open question. There was also missing data in one of the scales measured from a PR academic in marketing who failed to rank items. However, a follow-up e-mail was sent, encouraging her to contribute to the open question. That meant only seven questionnaires left to be measured. It is significant to mention here that the researcher planned to use computer software (SPSS) to analyse the questionnaire quantitatively. Unfortunately, due to the low response rate, a purely qualitative analysis seemed like a better choice. The Likert scale, therefore, was analysed using discourse analysis while the open-ended question was discussed through employing a generic approach to thematic analysis. Moreover, the ratio of non-responsiveness made it difficult for results to be representative and generalizable, but that did not prevent the data from incorporating significant insights and generating meaningful results.

The data showed that five PR and three political PR academics answered the questionnaire – one of those five PR experts answered the open-ended question only. This indicated both categories were able to contribute similarly. In consideration of this, CDA was applied to discuss their views on the topics involved. Dijk (1995) writes that CDA is “a special approach to the study of text and talk, emerging from critical linguistics, critical semiotics and in general from a socio-politically conscious and oppositional way of investigating language, discourse and communication” (p. 17). Since CDA’s work, according to Dijk, is ‘problem- or issue-oriented’ and investigates many types of discourse especially those of, for instance, rhetoric and pragmatic approaches, it “is typically inter- or multidisciplinary, and especially focuses on the relations between discourse and society (including social cognition,

politics and culture)” (p. 17). Consequently, in CDA, the scholarly effort is related to politics and society, which means that techniques, theoretical frameworks, data collection and matters are constantly political in discourse researches (Dijk, 1995). Wodak (2001) also demonstrates that in CDA:

...‘critical’ means not taking things for granted, opening up complexity, challenging reductionism, dogmatism and dichotomies, being self-reflexive in one’s research, and through these processes, making opaque structures of power relations and ideologies manifest. ‘Critical’, thus, does not imply the common sense meaning of ‘being negative’-rather ‘skeptical’. Proposing alternatives is also, [according to Kendall, 2007] part of being ‘critical’. (As cited in Amousson & Allagbe, 2018, p. 12)

This is what Wodak (2013) also explains as “having distance to the data, embedding the data in the social, taking a political stance explicitly, and a focus on self-reflection as scholars doing research” (p. 9). In that endeavour, the researcher applied Wodak CDA’s discourse-historical approach, which considered discourse as a kind of ‘social practice’ (Amousson & Allagbe, 2018). In this sense, Wodak:

...has focused on the interdisciplinary and eclectic nature of CDA, since problems in our society are too complex to be studied from a single point of view. Thus, to understand and explain the object under investigation, one needs to integrate diverse theories and methods. She thus contends that "studies in CDA are multifarious, derived from quite different theoretical backgrounds, oriented towards different data and methodologies"...[therefore] [o]ne important tenet of CDA is “that all discourses are historical and can therefore only be understood with reference to their context”. (As cited in Amousson & Allagbe, 2018, p. 15)

In addition, according to van Leeuwen, CDA examines discourse “as the instrument of power and control as well as...the instrument of the social construction of reality” (as cited in Wodak, 2013, p. 9). Viewed in this light, the researcher investigated the PR academics’ discussion of the research problem objectively through paying attention to the words and expressions employed because “[f]or CDA, language is not powerful on its own it gains

power by the use powerful people make of it” (Wodak, 2013, p. 10). Therefore, the powerful people here were knowledge providers, that is, PR and political PR academics.

To summarize, the analysis went through specific stages under CDA guidelines. By adopting a problem-oriented and pragmatic strategy, recommended by Wodak and Fairclough (Meyer, 2001), the following analysis firstly recognised and explained the social problem to be considered and identified its suggestive (semiotic) features (Meyer, 2001). Through considering the questionnaire’s answers from a semiotic perspective, Nehaniv (2000) states that “[s]emiotics provides an insightful approach to understanding meaning in terms of a relational (rather than a naïve mapping) framework....[it also] acknowledges the situated nature of the making of meaning. The connection between a sign and what it signifies (the signified) is mediated by an interpretant (the relation between them)” (pp. 1 - 2). Secondly, the ‘dominant’ words and remarks that formed this semiotic perspective were identified together with determining the difference in discourses (Meyer, 2001).

The questionnaire discussed some of the most prominent social concerns in the UK, asking whether political PR could help or not. CDA, therefore, was employed because it “addresses the prevailing social problems by opposing dominant ideological positions...a critical discourse analyst [thus] needs to resort...to a range of methods. This means that the linguistic approach should be combined with historical, socio-political, [psychological], etc., perspectives” (Amousson & Allagbe, 2018, p. 16). The answers indicated that respondents’ views were relatively similar, regardless of academic background. The researcher analysed each statement separately to explain how the production of words that ranged from ‘Strongly Agree’ to ‘Strongly Disagree’ carried cultural significance. In CDA, these phrases “have an impact on how communities are formed and what readers believe about the world” (Taylor, 2019, para. 47). The Likert scale’s qualitative narratives presented as follows:

1. 'I believe political PR can move strategically from a tool of spin to a social and cultural one'. Four respondents agreed to this, one stayed neutral, and two strongly agreed. These specific attitudes conveyed an 'imperative mood' – the meaning behind choosing such a tone could be an academic belief that political PR should be used as a social and cultural mechanism (Amousson & Allagbe, 2018). The 'vocabulary' used in the above statement also indicated a shift in the ideological stance of political PR from manipulation to nation-building. This respondents' acknowledgement of this change in political PR together with the metaphor that depicted the industry as someone who could move from one position to another conveyed the academics' agreement to the researcher's positive representation of political PR (Amousson & Allagbe, 2018). In consideration of Amousson and Allagbe's (2018) question: "Which implicit information can be deduced or inferred from discourse on the basis of pragmatic contexts?" (p. 16), the analysis implied the government and MPs could redirect political PR from a tool of disinformation to one that broadcasts social integration messages, which is an original contribution to knowledge.

2. 'I think political PR can play a role when implemented in political institutions with agendas in social integration'. Four academics strongly agreed to this and three only agreed. The tone approved to be indicative and 'declarative' (Amousson & Allagbe, 2018), which meant respondents declared here how the redirection of political PR looked like – political bodies such as the Home Office should take the lead and enhance community cohesion. By answering how CDA investigated vocabularies in a text by asking a question like: "How are words used to show ideology?" (Amousson & Allagbe, 2018, p. 16), the phrase 'political institutions' in this statement revealed that the researcher believed there should be a governmentally-driven ideology into social integration. From a pragmatic perspective, that

implicitly 'declare' political PR can be a key player in the context of inclusivity (Amousson & Allagbe, 2018).

3. 'I believe political PR can play a role when implemented in political institutions with agendas in countering radicalization, extremism, and terrorism'. Three respondents agreed, two strongly agreed, one neutral, and one disagreed. This statement implied what Amousson and Allagbe (2018) called 'interactional control features' in CDA – it showed that the topic: 'political PR believed to be an effective tool to change the status quo of community cohesion and extremism in the UK' controlled the questionnaire. With the fact that five academics interacted positively with this statement, the 'mood and modality' continued to be 'declarative' and indicative (Amousson & Allagbe, 2018). Again, this implicitly announces that political PR can address these public concerns, which is also a general contribution to knowledge.

4. 'I believe political PR can help to renovate the contemporary approach of political communication turning it into a more social and cultural-oriented one'. Three academics strongly agreed, two agreed, one disagreed, and one neutral. Through looking for 'tone words' which help to "figure out what the author is trying to convey" (Taylor, 2019, para. 7), the words 'renovate' and 'turning into' should tell us that the researcher strongly believed in the political PR's capability of changing how politics could be mediated and used to support social causes. As five academics 'agree' with this, they confirm the questionnaire's author message that the industry can be employed to enhance community cohesion. Since the mood keeps being 'declarative', this choice of the pattern means the respondents believe political PR can address the research problem, which is a genuine contribution to knowledge.

5. 'I think PR can be reconsidered to perform as a national and developmental instrument as it was used in the time of the Great Depression in Britain'. Three academics were neutral, one disagreed, two agreed, and one strongly agreed. Before analysing this statement and these answers, it was worth mentioning that one of these respondents who agreed to this statement was a political PR academic, another one from this academic expertise strongly agreed and the third political PR professional was neutral. The other two neutral academics were PR scholars while the only one who disagreed was a PR lecturer, however. This revealed that those who have academic knowledge in political PR believed that the industry could be employed by political actors in Britain to develop the social and cultural life. According to CDA, the vocabulary here showed ideology, where the adjectives 'national' and 'developmental' highlighted a political outlook. This connotation conveyed through the academics' response to this statement (Amousson & Allagbe, 2018). The analysis also shed light on 'transitivity'. According to Amousson and Allagbe (2018), CDA investigates "what patterns of transitivity are found? Who is depicted as Agent (and therefore empowered), and over whom (the affected)?...Do passive verbs also delete agents of power? What is the ideological function?" (p. 16). Correspondingly, this fifth statement included two passive verbs in which PR academics were the agents at the beginning of the sentence and British PR pioneers empowered in the second verb over public relations (the affected). It can be noted that those verbs deleted agents of power, which implied that the industry needed to be firstly 'reconsidered' by the academics to address the research problem. Secondly, those who could make it perform in a way similar to that used during the Great Depression were British PR professionals. The ideological function of the passive used here was to highlight that PR could be redirected by the scholars in this field of study who were qualified to provide the practitioners with a road-map into using PR and political PR as a social and developmental mechanism. PR is all about ideology – you can have the necessary tools to get the mission

accomplished, but what finally matters is what motivates these techniques. As two political PR respondents react positively with this particular sentence, the tone stays highly declarative. In addition, Taylor (2019) states that in CDA, the analyst should “think about the way your text has been produced. Textual production means how a text was created, which includes the historical context, cultural context [and others]” (para. 22). This statement, therefore, was analysed from a cultural and historical view as well. In this sense, the researcher wants to convey a message that PR can be revived and developed from a social perspective in the same way it was used previously in Britain.

6. ‘I expect PR can successfully lead ‘propaganda of integration’ in Britain’. The adverb ‘successfully’ suggested an ‘imperative’ tone that PR was not only successful in leading a negative kind of propaganda, but it could manage a socially-enlightened one as well. Four participants were neutral, and three disagreed to this, however. As four academics stayed neutral, it could be argued that the mood continued to be positively-oriented. According to the literature, scholars have researched political PR in traditional areas such as election campaigning and news management (spin). Alternatively, the data revealed academics encouraged investigating political PR in new roles. However, it was strange to note that academics were not sure whether political PR was capable of leading propaganda of integration. On the contrary, PR scholars placed the stress on the developing of the industry to cope with multi-ethnic societies. Yeo and Pang (2017) believe PR needs to dedicate more studies and training on multicultural communication, stating that “being culturally competent to communicate effectively with culturally diverse publics both intra- and inter-countries has never been more critical” (p. 112). A shortage of skilful PR practitioners who can communicate with multicultural communities, therefore, means that problems will remain (Yeo & Pang, 2017).

7. 'I think NGOs can rely on PR's 'relationship management' approach to reconcile relationships between the Muslim community and others in the society'. Three academics were neutral, three agreed, and one strongly agreed. As CDA considers the historical and psychological contexts, these answers were encouraging. The 'tone word' (Taylor, 2019) here was 'rely', and the given replies made the mood more 'declarative'. The researcher also 'assumed and pre-supposed' that the relational approach could bridge the communication and engagement gap between British Muslims and others in the society "which...[was] not explicitly stated" (Amousson & Allagbe, 2018, p. 16) in the sentence above. With four respondents agreed to this meaning, an original contribution to the knowledge, therefore, is in the making. The industry is perceived as a tool for social integration, where techniques like relationship management can start working. It is how this statement is understood in light of the discourse's 'pragmatic contexts' (Amousson & Allagbe, 2018). By studying the vocabulary provided, the word 'rely' also implied a metaphor. It depicts the relational strategy as a reliable person, which conveys the strong connotation that PR and political PR approaches can perform for nation-building purposes.

8. 'I assume political PR can win the hearts and minds of the Muslim community to better address social integration and extremism'. Three disagreed, one neutral, two agreed, and one strongly agreed. With the absence of 'strongly disagree', it can be argued that the mood kept being indicative. Furthermore, in CDA, the analyst should "[c]onsider how the text includes or exclude[s] readers from a community" (Taylor, 2019, para. 13). Mindful of this, the Muslim community remained in the questionnaire at the centre of the debate around community cohesion, radicalization, and extremism. The format of this final statement indicated that the researcher was addressing British Muslims only while the most appropriate choice of language was to target the whole society, winning their hearts and minds in the

battle of supporting social integration. Consequently, the response to this last statement might change if it read: 'I assume political PR can win the hearts and minds of the British public to better address social integration and extremism'. Moreover, 'win' was considered a tone word that showed the ideological dimension of political PR, which is to 'win' – the industry designed and prepared only to win. It can be suggested that if 'winning' was not the strategic outcome, political PR would not be applied professionally. In short, the Likert scale gives valuable insights into the redirection of political PR to tackle the research problem.

5. *Qualitative analysis.* As already explained in this chapter, the qualitative question brought what respondents were not able to discuss on Likert scale. In public relation, researchers are keen to use qualitative techniques that “are effective in obtaining information about perceptions, views and attitudes of the target group” (Yeo & Pang, 2017, p. 115). The qualitative question was: What do you think are the most effective communication theories and PR approaches to enhance inclusivity and counter extremism in Britain? It enabled the researcher to not only delve into academics' views but to understand how they thought of using PR in such rare contexts. These perspectives turned answers into rich and live texts. Consequently, thematic analysis was applied to test and investigate every word.

The role of political PR as a tool for social integration required understanding. This section addressed this gap in knowledge by providing an answer to the following research questions: What PR approaches and communication theories can be employed to support social integration and counter extremism? And, how can PR change the public's perception of fear into a concept that encourages engagement with the Muslim community in society? Although the sample size was small, the questionnaire was answered by particularly important respondents with a crucial insight. With rich PR background and academic experience, participants were perceptive. They understood the research problem in its natural setting,

which helped to give a further diagnosis of the communication and engagement crisis. Academics also explained common government communication strategy along with what the literature previously highlighted. They addressed the qualitative question from a broader perspective where the whole society was the target instead of the Muslim community. That implied a more strategic approach to the research focus. It indicated that respondents' theoretical contextualisation of the problem was relevant and valid. Their interest in giving detailed answers was another reason the sample was significantly justified. Fortunately, some respondents described their experiences and what the implications in the research context could be. One of the main restrictions was the lack of academic expertise in political PR, which made answers provided by three political PR academics, in particular, valuable. Since it was academically necessary rather than practically, academics were the most appropriate source of information because they were more aware of the nature of political PR. This study did not merely talk about PR; it was about redirecting political PR with all its complexities into realising its social and cultural responsibilities. It was why most respondents were not qualified to answer the Likert scale while the qualitative question could be explained by any PR academic or professional.

It was generally difficult to gain a high response rate in questionnaires. Therefore, results obtained seemed useful and reasonable. The sample size did not stop the researcher from collecting knowledge needed to answer the two research questions mentioned above. Presenting extract from the data would give clues about how creative respondents were in portraying problems and solutions. One PR academic with diversely-rich background wrote: "it would seem that a key component driving radicalism — whether you're a Britain First supporter, a Daesh enthusiast, or an 'eco-warrior' — is that this target audience is rejecting top-down authority structures. A lot of theory from the political psychology side of things bolsters this premise. Going back to the Nazis, extremists of all sorts seem to share the

diagnostic criteria for authoritarian personality disorder. Thus, a top-down communications strategy would likely be ineffective. How do you land a message designed to appeal to narcissists then? You make it about them”.

The researcher formulated codes by realising the conceptualisation of ‘underlying patterns’ (Lofgren, 2013). Many codes generated, analysed, grouped and categorised into concepts. Saldana (2016) called this process ‘themeing the data’. Oppenheim (2009) suggested that to remain accurate throughout coding, one should understand the objectives of the questionnaire and the aim of the question under investigation. Furthermore, the researcher avoided ‘loss of information’ of any possible codes or themes. This was not only through “do[ing] justice to the responses...[but also by] design[ing] the coding frame that this loss of information will occur where it matters least” (Oppenheim, 2009, p. 267). The researcher, thus, coded the data which mattered the most in light of conceptual frameworks and research questions, which helped to analyse the data effectively (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Given the perceptive style of responses, each one of the eight qualitative answers accompanied by an elaboration of what academics mean in the form of ‘analytic memos’, which also developed new themes (Bryman, 2016). These memos established a connection between the data derived from the qualitative question and statements explained in the quantitative chapter. The following section, thus, will reveal and discuss the results of the qualitative question. It should be noted, however, that the researcher does not provide a graph identifying themes and sub-themes. Nevertheless, a further direct quote from one participant will be given for illustrative purposes. This is because some of the respondents gave simple and rather short answers. Again, a generic approach to thematic analysis is provided in the best way possible.

6. *Results*. According to Mason, during interrelating concepts and themes, it was necessary to “acknowledge that pre-existing theories drive the entire research enterprise” (as cited in

Saldana, 2016, p. 15). These themes also equipped “the researcher with the basis for a theoretical understanding of his or her data that can make a theoretical contribution to the literature relating to the research focus” (Bryman, 2016, p. 584). The researcher explained codes in light of theoretical and conceptual frameworks. This section described codes and concepts related to them and how they were all connected. Categories provided a full picture of what respondents wanted to discuss. The researcher grouped codes and labelled them into seven themes/concepts. By taking notes and memos into consideration, many codes were conceptualised and turned into a more explanatory and a general level of coding (Lofgren, 2013; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Miles and Huberman (1994) called this process ‘pattern coding’ where ‘inferential’ codes “pull together a lot of material into more meaningful and parsimonious units of analysis. They are a sort of meta-code” (p. 69).

The researcher divided codes under the following themes: **stereotypes, cause & effect, un-strategic policies, political outlooks, counter-productive techniques, communication theories and PR approaches**. The first theme, **stereotypes** comprised of the following codes: demonization, racial (differences) and extremist Islam. These explained the stereotyped pattern of how the British public perceived multicultural communities in general and the Muslim community in particular. This pattern also represented varying forms of stereotypes that happened regularly and frequently (Saldana, 2016). Secondly, the theme **cause & effect** comprised of the codes: accusations & trust issues, understanding & respect, asymmetrical & imbalanced relationships and top-down & radicalism. Saldana (2016) called the effect that mostly happened as a result of and in correspondence to actions: ‘causation’, which meant there was a relationship between cause and effect. The outcome from the relationship between the above causes and effects was either positive or negative. Thirdly, the category **un-strategic policies** was used to label the following codes: the standard (western) style of

communication, negative press and top-down. The variation in these codes made it hard to identify a specific pattern. However, it was this irregularity “and deviations that intrigue us, that stimulate us to question and to investigate why they exist concurrently” (Saldana, 2016, p. 7). The codes incorporated in **un-strategic policies** related in many ways, but most importantly, they drew attention to strategies that one should avoid when communicating with the Muslim community being the key publics here.

Fourthly, **political outlooks** which came as rich concept/theme that reflected respondents’ experiences in fields such as industry, international public relations, political elite communications/public opinion, and global communications management. The codes under this theme were identified as problem recognition, listening & responding, socially-oriented politics, neutral stances, youth engagement & empowerment and co-creation. These were among the most complex codes in this analysis because they combined political PR with political communication and media and social media’s fields of study. Although these codes were somehow ambiguous, not following a specific pattern, they allowed extensive analysis and encouraged reflection on the social and political reality of Britain (Saldana, 2016). Fifthly, **counter-productive** techniques which identified the codes soft-soaping, propaganda, and persuasion as unfruitful PR techniques. These three codes followed ‘similar’ (Saldana, 2016) patterns as they primarily relied on persuasion, which some scholars considered unethical in public relations (Hallahan, 2000). Sixthly, **PR approaches** represented one of the main concepts in this analysis, responding to the research’s objectives and questions. Respondents considered the following codes as ideal PR approaches to tackle extremism and social inclusion: dialogue, socio-cultural PR, relationship management, two-way symmetrical, community engagement, campaigns and framing. The vibrant nature of these codes prevented from allowing codification for a pattern. Nevertheless, this again paved the

way to understand how to relate them to the research focus and literature. Finally, the theme **communication theories** included the following codes: cultural adaptation, emotionally-based communication, terminology & rhetoric, micro and macro-levels of interaction, outreach interaction and down-top model. A ‘similar’ pattern (Saldana, 2016) was observed among these codes as they addressed the research focus of multiculturalism, extremism and social integration by using different communication approaches.

Explaining how the researcher used the data to identify these seven categories was essential to provide “a transparent account of the process” (Bryman, 2016, p. 588). Some respondents produced passages of data describing their attitudes. The themes and their occurrences were carefully recognised by reading transcripts many times looking for every word that would add to our understanding of the research problem. The researcher summarised and analysed the data in the form of (memos), which implied to think deeply, write analytically (Saldana, 2016) and make some remarks (Lofgren, 2013). It became clear what the most relevant codes were and what the emergent themes would be. Furthermore, justifying categories was necessary as it indicated “draw[ing] inferences about the themes’ interconnections with each other and their implications” (Bryman, 2016, p. 588). After going through codes and ‘clustering’ them to “see ‘what goes with what’” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 245), the next step was creating a sense of integration between categories by describing how they related to each other. The themes demonstrated strong relationships with one another and to the literature as well. **Stereotypes’** codes, for example, were also a result of **un-strategic policies** and **counter-productive techniques**. This meant a more thorough diagnosis of what had already been mentioned in the literature was needed. **Stereotypes**, however, related positively to other themes such as **political outlooks** in the process of defying its codes. Besides, categories **cause & effect, political outlooks, communication theories and PR approaches**

interconnected against other themes such as **un-strategic theories & policies** to provide reasons for and solutions to the problem under discussion.

8. *Discussion.* Implementing the coding method ‘research question alignment’ (Saldana, 2016) allows the researcher to answer the ontological research question: What PR approaches and communication theories can be employed to support social integration and counter extremism?, and the epistemological research questions: How can political PR change the British public’s perception of fear of the other to encourage engagement with the Muslim community?; Can political PR be used as a tool for social integration, with particular reference to the Muslim community in the UK? That coding strategy brings necessary information not only to answer these research questions but also discuss the research problem. In the conclusion section, all the research questions will be argued and fully answered. While the results below only revolve around these research questions, this chapter also explains the significance of the findings with little consideration of the literature (Bryman, 2016; Lynch, 2014). The researcher combines quantitative data with the categories to produce the following argument. The aim is to seek an enlightened form of political PR, which two respondents describe as ‘fascinating’. The findings suggest there is a very positive indication believing in political PR to perform as a social tool. This result responds to scholars who highlight the social and cultural role of PR calling to improve the public engagement function in the future (Chaka, 2013; Coombs & Holladay, 2014; Dhanesh, 2017; Edelman, 2008; Jelen-Sanchez, 2017; L’Etang, 2015; Sison, 2017). The data show a very high expectation of political PR to support the contemporary approach of political communication as well. More encouraging is that the theme of **political outlooks** indicates a thrust towards this result. This finding is consistent with De Beus (2011), who suggests replacing political communication with ‘public relations democracy’. Butterick (2011) also

believes spin is not an ‘inherited’ part of PR. Additionally, Erturk (2015) describes ‘public information’ as a PR method employed to disseminate political information and support engagement with the public to improve trust.

Themes derived from the open question explain the PR approaches and communication theories that the academics recommend using to address the research problem. The thematic analysis proposes the following strategies for tackling extremism and social integration: dialogue, relationship management (relational framework), two-way symmetrical, socio-cultural PR, engagement, framing and campaigns. This finding echoes the literature which highlights the same approaches in the context of the social and cultural functions of PR (Benecke et al., 2017; Coombs & Holladay, 2014; Eyre & Littleton, 2012; Ruiz-Mora et al., 2016; Kiousis & Stromback, 2014; Taylor, 2000a; Taylor & Kent, 2014; Toledano, 2018). Additionally, respondents encourage using the relational framework to reconcile community relationships. It seems that Stromback and Kiousis (2011) identify the same result when they define modern political PR as a mechanism to establish and maintain relationships with the public. The analysis also demonstrates that engagement is what PR needs in the future, which is what the literature highlights frequently (Dhanesh, 2017; Edelman, 2008; Jelen-Sanchez, 2017; Johnston, 2014).

By favouring the symmetrical model of communication, another result emerges. This PR model contradicts persuasion, which the respondents consider as a counter-productive approach. It can relate to the theme **cause & effect** where the asymmetrical model creates imbalanced relationships. The literature highlights the same outcome (Butterick, 2011; Canel & Sanders, 2012; Erturk, 2015; Hallahan, 2000; Martinelli, 2011; Park & Cho, 2009). With the absence of the symmetrical model, codes such as accusations & mistrust may become prominent. Moreover, the respondents refer to campaigns as one of the PR techniques employed to promote inclusivity and counter extremism. Interestingly, one finding suggests

using inclusive campaigns against all forms of extremism, whether it is far-right populists/movements or Islamists. Such a result helps to address themes like **stereotypes** where ‘the other’ frequently demonised. The literature encourages bridging communication gaps with the Muslim community to enhance multiculturalism and defeat stereotypes (Al-azami, 2018; Appleby, 2010; Benecke et al., 2017; Ferguson, 2016; Heath-Kelly, 2013; Ibrahim, 2018; Qehaja, Perteshi & Vrajolli, 2017; Vilcu, 2014). From a self-reflection perspective, effective campaigns with strategic advertising, framing and dissemination come with incredible results in long-term plans and strategies. Besides, several codes explain the communication theories that the government can use for social cohesion purposes. Firstly, cultural adaptation corresponds, according to the literature, to socio-cultural model in PR. It indicates that understanding cultural differences are among defining factors in addressing pluralism and extremism. In political communication, scholars believe it is to pay attention to society and cultures involved (Bennett & Lyengar, 2008; Fairclough, 2003; Graber & Smith, 2005). That is why politically correct rhetoric of inclusion is encouraged more than ever (Jrach, 2016; Reno, 2016).

The reliance on communication to promote cultural understanding goes together with the code emotionally-based communication. The literature highlights the importance of emotional appeals to tackle extremism and social integration, along with the significance of terminology and rhetoric. The category **communication theories** also provides evidence that engagement in PR can be employed to increase our understanding of communication in public relations. The codes in **communication theories** are micro-level (interpersonal and regular connections) and macro-level (communities and representatives) interactions, outreach interaction and down-top model (less state and more audience-driven campaigns). These codes, especially the last one, are identical to what has already come in the literature (Hill, 2017; Lilleker, 2010). Considering interpersonal communication as one of the best

strategies accompanies Martinelli (2011) who believes interpersonal approach “and the use of homophily, the belief that someone is similar to us, are both highly effective persuasive strategies” (p. 42). Part of Danish’s de-radicalisation programme relies on this sense of micro-level interaction. Bin Hassan (2019) explains that ‘Exit Talks’ model, as a phase in this programme, addresses those who show signs of extremism and radicalisation to prevent them from taking such a pathway. Consequently, this approach employs trainers to gain good outcomes:

Possessing specific knowledge about radicalisation processes and broad experiences in building relationships, coaches carry out extensive engagement with individuals who are involved in extremist circles. Under the premise that personal contact is a vital component to help people leave an extremist environment, the coaches will try to foster, within the affected individuals, an understanding of the consequences of extremism and a criminal way of life. (p. 14)

Furthermore, the findings show that 3 respondents are neutral about PR supporting the propaganda of integration. This evidence may be consistent with the theme that considers propaganda a counter-productive approach. However, this contradicts Toledano and Mckie (2007) who explain how soft propaganda is used to build the nation. From a more enlightened perspective than that the academics suggest here, Martinelli (2011) writes that “[a]lthough many people who hear the term political public relations may think it is synonymous with propaganda, most public relations scholars today would strongly disagree” (p. 33). Similarly, the theme **un-strategic policies** identifies the standard (western) style of communication, negative press, and the top-down approach as unproductive strategies. The literature proves that the top-down approach is not strategic if the government wants to support community cohesion and counter-terrorism (Awan, 2012; Hill, 2017; Qehaja et al., 2017; Ragazzi, 2016; Thomas-Johnson, 2018). Qehaja et al. (2017), for example, state that “[p]reventing and countering violent extremism requires joint initiatives by state institutions and civil society. Civil society should be viewed in a broader sense and not necessarily from the sole

perspective of NGOs” (p. 11). Additionally, the code negative press confirms with the literature in identifying negative media as a reason for fueling segregation and extremism (Cislaru, 2012; Heath-Kelly, 2013; Hill, 2017; Jozelic, 2005; Mythen & Walklate, 2006; Orehek & Vazeou-Nieuwenhuis, 2014; Silverman & Thomas, 2012; Vilcu, 2014).

Using an illustrative example to explain how the standard (western) style of communication is un-strategic policy appears significant. Respondents draw attention to the work of Lt. Cmdr. Steve Tatham, the head of the British Royal Navy’s media operations in Northern Arabia Gulf during 2003 Iraq invasion. Tatham wrote a book titled *Losing Arab Hearts and Minds: The Coalition, Al Jazeera and Muslim Public Opinion*. The work describes how the coalition could not win the Arabs’ hearts and minds because it treated them as ‘the other’ and alienated Arab media and Al Jazeera and blamed them for bias (Goodman, 2006). In a book review, Smith (2007) explains that Tatham sympathises with Arab media as they are “denied information, excluded from briefings, and at times vilified by the U.S. authorities...[and] treated in accordance with the Bush administration’s with us or against us policy” (para. 2). Smith (2007) also focuses on Tatham’s criticism of U.S. army, which underestimated the significance of building a strategic connection with Arab media to win the hearts and minds of the Arab public. Tatham writes: “it was U.S. arrogance, and hostility towards and misunderstanding of the Arab media – particularly Al Jazeera – that precluded effective military-media relations” (Smith, 2007, para. 3). Consequently, PR academics call for a fundamental change in this western style of communication if Britain wants to tackle social integration without presuming that ‘the other’, who is part of society, is the enemy. It is again to deal with the Muslim community as a partner because the strategy ‘we and them’ is not working anymore.

The theme **political outlooks** emerges and responds to the research questions. This category presents political implications for political PR in political settings. It also has a broader

significance of how political actors and institutions are supposed to address extremism and social integration. The theme includes the following codes: listening and responding, socially and culturally-oriented political communication, youth engagement & empowerment, and co-creation of policies & sharing visions. The analysis suggests that these codes are essential in understanding the role of political public relations in changing the public's perception of fear into a concept that encourages engagement with the Muslim community.

The theoretical approaches used in this study are all about communication and engagement, which is implied in the theme **political outlooks** and many others. As the literature highlights the urgent need to build publics' trust (Brants & Voltmer, 2011; Brown, 2011; Gjerazi, 2015; Klausen, 2009; Robinson, 2016), it can become one of the best outcomes that result from engagement and communication activities. This finding addresses political actors and institutions as well. The codes incorporated in **political outlooks** encourage political players to recognise there is a social problem to resolve. These codes also call political figures to make neutral ideological stances given the sensitivity and complexity of the British public. The literature depicts this issue and calls for more responsible and reasonable catchphrases, strategies, language and statements (Appleby, 2010; Khan, 2018a; Klausen, 2009). Mindful of this, findings derived from the Likert scale give political PR significant evidence towards gaining the trust of the Muslim community to address the research focus.

Chapter 5

Qualitative Chapter

Overview of the Design

This study applied a multiple case study design to describe communicative techniques used by some of NGOs working in social integration and extremism. This approach was not only to capture efforts of these NGOs but also to trace reasons behind what seemed ineffective strategies at the national level. By investigating a group of case studies, the researcher addressed some of the research questions regarding why NGOs applied particular techniques, how case studies carried out these plans, what improvements made in this process, and what the results were (Yin, 2018). Bryman (2016) identifies the case study used in this research as ‘representative’ or ‘typical’ in which “a case may be chosen because it exemplifies a broader category of which it is a member...[and in a way cases] will provide a suitable context for certain research questions to be answered” (p. 62). The purpose of examining multiple cases was to analyse roles, programmes and strategies. According to Daymon and Holloway (2011) and Leedy and Ormrod (2010), the analysis showed that applying this design allowed the researcher to compare and figure out “the similarities and contrasts of two or more cases to identify their distinctive features as part of the specific phenomenon” (as cited in Zongozzi & Wessels, 2017, p. 267). It explored causes for what generally observed as a lack of common ground from which NGOs could enhance social integration and defeat extremism. Chuka Umunna referred to such observation:

Although we’re very diverse, different groups in society do not meet and mix as much as they should do...For society in general, it’s a bad thing because if there is not that mixing of relationships there’s a lack of trust and that leaves a vacuum into

which the peddlers of hate and those who want to set different groups against each other seek to exploit and fill. (Channel4NewsDemocracy, 2017)

It might indicate that much to be done in these challenging areas from everyone concerned whether NGOs or other political parties. Bryman (2016) discussed this causation from a critical realist perspective in which we looked for the dynamic means that caused noticed recurrences in reality and how these worked in specific situations. Therefore, this investigation was “to explain the presumed causal links in real-world interventions that are too complex for survey...[and] illustrate certain topics within an evaluation...in a descriptive mode” (Yin, 2018, p. 18). According to Ackroyd, “the intensive nature of most case studies enhances the researcher’s sensitivity to the factors that lie behind the operation of observed patterns within a specific context” (as cited in Bryman, 2016, p. 68). Hence, “scientific contributions of case studies...[are] namely theory building, tested theory, tested hypothesis, generalised theory, analytical generalisation and replication” (Zongozzi & Wessels, 2017, p. 270). Moreover, Zongozzi and Wessels called ‘representative/typical’ case as one of the purposeful case selection strategies. One of the main rationales for choosing a case study as a research strategy was its ability to assist ‘bounding the cases’ (Yin, 2018). It meant that it became clear what organizations to examine, how much time would it take, whom to interview or identify as persons of interest and the most relevant data to explain given phenomenon (Castillo, 2018; Yin, 2018). Employing multi-cases shed light on their lively nature and made it highly possible to delve into these NGOs’ dynamics:

...case study research is generally more exploratory than confirmatory; that is...to identify themes or categories of behavior and events rather than prove relationships or test hypotheses...[It also] creates opportunities for the researcher to explore additional questions by the act of investigating a topic in detail. (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006, p. 16)

Ranasinghe (n.d.) describes the case study strategy as “a puzzle that has to be solved [and writing it] is a bit like writing a detective story” (p. 1). The article revealed that this design went beyond a mere description of a situation into identifying problem, collecting data, analysing information, and figuring out what was happening that by the end the reader came to terms with what answers and remedies would be. It seemed that no researches had undertaken the research problem before which made cases’ sites more exciting.

1. Population/ sampling technique. The research population consisted of British NGOs that were concerned with improving community cohesion, empowering Muslim youth, and countering radicalisation and extremism. The mission statement of these NGOs carried one or more of these specific objectives and included Muslim and non-Muslim charities and mosques. The inclusion of mosques came because they were contacted directly and more frequently from the key publics compared to NGOs. These case studies followed a non-probability sampling, and the researcher chose them because they were increasingly engaging with the British public. It meant their programmes, events and workshops were noticed and published through media platforms, and they contributed to the public debate of inclusivity and extremism. Additionally, the background of NGOs differed according to the type of communities they were addressing, their staff background whether they were volunteers and culturally-diverse or not, the kind of issues these NGOs were interested in if social integration, extremism or other related matters, and if the NGOs were from London or other cities. All that could contribute to understanding how NGOs planned to meet the demands of their public. It would also show how seriously NGOs were taking their function and if they were strategically equipped to turn plural communities into integrated ones. Furthermore, being located in London or outside capital was necessary to identify how powerful and creative NGOs’ strategies were and if this was related to being in London and linked to a

skilful team or not, compared to others' performances, for example, those from Luton or Manchester.

Twenty-six NGOs were purposefully selected and invited for interviews. Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) define qualitative 'purposeful sampling' as that when "researchers intentionally select participants who have experience with the central phenomenon or the key concept being explored...[with] [t]ypically...a small number [of cases] is used, such as 4 to 10" (p. 112). Bryman (2016) also believes that "in purposive sampling the researcher samples with his or her research goals in mind...[and] organizations...and people...within sites are selected because of their relevance to the research questions" (p. 408). Viewed in this light, the following NGOs were targeted with emails: Muslim Leadership Foundation, Peace Education Programme (PEP), Muslim Association of Britain, Quilliam, Abdullah Quilliam Society, Quba Trust, MCB, Mend (Muslim Engagement and Development), Fosis (Federation of Student Islamic Societies), Maslaha, Ramadan Tent Project, Extreme Dialogue, Mohammed Shafiq/ Ramadhan Foundation, Institute for Strategic Dialogue and Strong Cities Network (SCN), Hope Not Hate, British Future, Inclusive Mosque Initiative, Citizens UK, Integrate UK, Islamic Unity Society, New Routes Integration, Tell MAMA (Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks), Cage, Nottingham City Council, Muslim Welfare House, and Nottingham Interfaith Council. The researcher followed what Yin (2003) regarded as significant during the selection process of case studies:

These multiple cases should be selected so that they replicate each other—either predicting similar results (literal replication) or contrasting results for predictable reasons (theoretical replication)...Thus the case study design, even for a descriptive study, followed a replication logic. Without sufficiently strong theory, the differences or similarities between states would be difficult to interpret. (pp. 5 - 23)

The researcher explained case studies based on the fact that they could all reflect/replicate each other to help to describe literal and theoretical replications. A snowball sampling

technique was to be carried out to conduct interviews with the most relevant units (individuals) (Bryman, 2016). Unfortunately, it emerged later that many NGOs were too busy that they could not allow interviewing more than one of their staff. Hence, “there were two levels of [purposive] sampling — of contexts/cases (that is...[the NGOs]) and then of participants (that is...[of interviewees])” (Bryman, 2016, p. 410). Using Creswell and Plano Clark’s (2007) four to ten number of cases as a point of departure, Plowright (2011) shed light on how many cases the researcher could use. The author clarified that as an inquirer, “precise counting is not being used here. You will draw on the number of cases as a guide, in order to make appropriate decisions about your research...That means you are left to make a judgement, a professional judgement” (p. 25). Therefore, Yin (2003) believes that through studying more than one case study, the researcher’s “chances of producing robust results will be better than using a single-case study” (p. 135).

From that perspective, the researcher found it very useful to examine as many cases as possible. It came for two reasons. Firstly, the contemporary nature of the research topic brought more importance to the type of communicative and engagement strategies used in NGOs. The literature also showed a demand to explore alternative techniques which implied that since the 2005 London bombings, there seemed to be no real improvements in how the government and media addressed the research problem. Accordingly, it was necessary to analyse these NGOs to figure out what they were missing. Secondly, the cases represented a group of national, local and Muslim and non-Muslim charities. The fact they covered several areas in Britain dealing with different types of the British public from various faiths and backgrounds enriched the analysis and brought more understanding into why little had been achieved to promote social integration and defeat extremism.

Looking more directly at the evidence for supporting trustworthiness in case study design, Baxter and Jack (2008) believe the researcher had to ensure this approach “is appropriate for

the research question...[and] purposeful sampling strategies appropriate for case study have been applied” (p. 556). These matters were signs of credibility and validity. This study triangulated a multiple case study approach with a questionnaire and applied purposeful sampling to answer the research questions. Additionally, transferability (generalisability) was a central concept in this study. The common question around transferability was: “[h]ow can you generalize from a single-case study?” (Yin, 2018, p. 20). It could be noted that such a question indicated there was an opportunity to generalise from multi-case research. From a different angle, Yin (2003) wrote that what was being looked for here was to use theory to transfer/generalise findings, which suggested making ‘analytic generalisations’ (Yin, 2018). Plowright (2011), on the other hand, finds generalisability as being “more achievable if there are many cases” (p. 25) in a research project.

2. Restrictions/ limiting conditions. While the case study “was able to identify other areas where the quantitative data set was limited” (Anderson, 2016, p. 240), one restriction was inevitable:

1. Lack of access: At the beginning of this study, the researcher intended to examine RICU, which is a political institution tasked with countering extremism and enhancing social cohesion. According to the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (2013), RICU “is a cross-departmental strategic communications body based at the Office for Security and Counter-terrorism (OSCT) at the Home Office...aims to coordinate government-wide communication activities to counter the appeal of violent extremism while promoting stronger grass-roots inter-community relations” (para. 1). This Unit was the most appropriate case study. The researcher approached it multiple times from December 2016 until June 2017. However, the request was neither confirmed nor declined. This lack of response indicated the case study was not feasible. Investigating RICU was to explore what such a political institution had

provided and planned to offer. Moreover, some NGOs which were highly involved with the public and located in London refused to take part in this study such as MCB, Quilliam and Tell MAMA. While MCB, for example, was busy, Quilliam did not respond. This lack of access prevented the researcher from finding out what kind of strategies these NGOs were using. Although this might seem limiting, those interviewed were “knowledgeable people” (Ranasinghe, n.d., p. 2). They were fully aware of their NGOs, and the strategies used since what mattered was “determining what the unit of analysis (case) is...[which is to] “analyse” the process” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, pp. 545 - 546).

3. Procedures. Yin (2018) highlights the importance of featuring “methodic procedures, especially the reporting of all evidence fairly...[because as a researcher,] your procedures and documentation need to distinguish your research case study from the other kinds of nonresearch case studies” (p. 20). Furthermore, Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) believe that “[i]n qualitative research, procedures need to be stated in detail” (p. 114). In this sense, the researcher followed a “‘theory’ of what needs to be described...[to] help to produce a sound descriptive case study” (Yin, 2003, p. 23). Scapens (2004) explains that such a thorough description enhanced authenticity: “[t]he text should give the reader a clear sense of the author having been there...by providing rich details of the case and by explaining the extent of the researcher’s relationship with the case” (p. 274). Thus, the researcher conducted seven semi-structured interviews with seven different NGOs. She sent e-mail invitations on 10th March 2018, and the first interview was on the 22nd.

The flexibility of the qualitative interviews allows the researcher to “depart significantly from the interview guide...[and] ask new questions that follow up interviewees’ replies” (Bryman, 2016, p. 467). This guide was developed by relying on the researcher’s ‘objective knowledge’ which made semi-structured interviews (SSI) “unique among interview methods for the

degree of relevancy it provides the topic while remaining responsive to the participant” (McIntosh & Morse, 2015, p. 1). McIntosh and Morse (2015) refer to SSI as ‘descriptive/interpretative’, which “is exemplified by research with the aim of discovering the experiential world of the respondent within topical dimensions...[and] epistemologically privileges the participant as knower” (p. 4). The interview schedule, therefore, comprised of questions that puzzled the researcher and needed examination (Bryman, 2016). Through preparing an interview schedule, it was necessary to keep it as a general framework during the data collection. While all questions in this guide were relevant to every NGO, they were sometimes replaced with new ones due to specific considerations. Some NGOs, for example, were involved in fighting against extremism rather than radicalisation and de-radicalisation programmes. Others might be engaged in promoting social inclusion and preparing asylum seekers to integrate with no particular agendas in extremism. In other instances, some Islamic NGOs had a more locally-driven approach that their focus was the Muslim community. Others, however, had a larger audience that included Muslims and non-Muslims. It should be noted that investigating the role of interviewed NGOs in countering radicalisation was particularly important. The way they attempted to de-radicalise the Muslim youth and extremists such as far-right fanatics is essential in the path of supporting social integration. As previously stated, becoming extremist, terrorist or even a community integration advocate can start by the use of certain words, ideologies and emotions.

It emerged that one NGO, which was supported by the government, could not answer questions about Prevent Strategy. Whereas, those not officially funded were less restricted in explaining concerns and hopes in this regard. Consequently, a few changes took place, and little issues borne in mind while preparing interviews. Additionally, the researcher turned to the NGOs’ websites to understand the cases because “[t]he more extensive the investigator’s knowledge, the more precisely can the aspects to be covered in the interview be outlined in

advance and the more significant questions may be posed” (McIntosh & Morse, 2015, p. 5). British Future, for example, was keen on engaging with the public through campaigns such as ‘We Are All England’ and ‘Poppy Hijab’. Abdullah Quilliam Society’s webpage also allowed the researcher to ask about what the mosque had done to counter radicalisation and support social integration in Liverpool, and what the website’s slogan Restore ‘England’s First Mosque’ (Abdullah Quilliam, 2020) should tell us about its plans. Preparing an interview guide that fitted each NGO helped to avoid selective plausibility through “build[ing] into the research design a recognition of, and an explicit search for, the types of evidence which would contradict the researcher’s theory” (Scapens, 2004, p. 274). It also enabled the researcher to distinguish between communicative tools and engagement techniques. This was similar to Taylor and Kent (2014) who describe that “[p]ublic relations scholars should seek out the places where engagement is occurring and study how meaning is created and changed by public relations communication” (p. 396).

As only seven NGOs responded, the researcher sent reminders to encourage others. Those participated in this study were: Peace Education Programme (PEP), Abdullah Quilliam Society, Quba Trust, Integrate UK, British Future, anonymous Islamic NGO identified by the letter (A) to ensure confidentiality and New Routes Integration. Some of them were interviewed face-to-face, whereas others chose telephone according to their schedule preferences. Both data collection methods were equally beneficial. The researcher interviewed five respondents by phone and two face-to-face. Bryman (2016) finds participants in qualitative telephone interviews “were quite expansive in their replies, and there were no significant recording problems...the method can certainly be regarded as very efficient when viewed in relation to the large volume of data collected” (p. 485). Using the telephone also allowed conducting more interviews “in a given time period than [that] might not be feasible with face-to-face interviews” (McIntosh & Morse, 2015, p. 7). During data

collection, the researcher employed two recording techniques. To remain accurate (Horton, Macve, & Struyven, 2004), face-to-face interviews were audio-taped, and telephone interviews were stored using Android App Boldbeast Recorder. All interviews were then transcribed using Transcribe programme which provided “exactly (word-for-word) from the tape and not paraphrased” (McIntosh & Morse, 2015, p. 8). This transcription gave the researcher “great benefits in terms of bringing...[her] closer to the data, and encouraging...to start to identify key themes, and to become aware of similarities and differences between different participants’ accounts” (Bryman, 2016, p. 483). Throughout this process, inferences and handwritten notes were created to document what seemed intriguing since “case study research involves ongoing examination and interpretation of the data in order to reach tentative conclusions and to refine the research questions” (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006, p. 56). Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) also write about ‘exploring before analysing the data’ which “means recording initial thoughts by writing short memos in the margins of transcripts or field notes...[and] forming broader categories of information, such as codes or themes” (pp. 130 - 131). Finally, interviews lasted between 30 minutes and two hours and all interviewees accepted to be taped and named, except one NGO. The following page included the interview questionnaire used in this thesis.

1. What is your title?
2. Do you have any interaction with the key publics, i.e. members of the Muslim community?
3. What kind of PR techniques do you use to build trust and relationships with your public?
4. What are the major outcomes from using these techniques?
5. What do you think are the most important skills and tactics to achieve strategic interactions and relationships with the key publics?
6. Do you use these tools in your NGO?
7. How do you respond to the suggestions and concerns of your public?
8. What kind of campaigns do you make and what is exactly your task?
9. Do you hold conferences and plan for meetings or discussion groups to tackle terrorism or radicalization especially with the youth?
10. (If appropriate) Are you funded by the government? If yes, how does the government use the information you provide to improve your performance?
11. Are you a public relations practitioner?
12. How do you think PR can be useful to your work?
13. (If appropriate) According to what you have experienced with the Muslim community so far, how do you assess the government's general efforts for countering terrorism and enhancing social inclusion?
14. What do you believe other people think about Prevent Strategy?
15. How do you describe the influence of this strategy?
16. How do the Muslim community perceive Prevent strategy?
17. When this strategy set for discussion, what are exactly the community's needs and concerns?
18. (If appropriate) Do you think that there is a need to improve your current communication techniques?
19. (If appropriate) Do you find it important for the government to start making a change into how homegrown terrorism is countered?
20. (If appropriate) Do you find it important for the government to start making a change into how social integration is being addressed nationally?

4. Thematic Analysis. For supporting the analysis quality, it was significant to maintain “collection and interpretation of only those data that are potentially meaningful to the research effort” (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006, p. 57). Following the quantitative section, this chapter also implemented a ‘generic’ approach to thematic analysis to interpret the qualitative data. By using a hand-coding method, the researcher was capable of “grouping evidence and labeling ideas so that they reflect increasingly broader perspectives...[Consequently,] codes are grouped into broader themes...[and] [t]hemes then can be grouped into even larger dimensions or perspectives, related, or compared” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 132). The unit of analysis in every case was communication and engagement strategies. Particular propositions were also applied because “[t]he findings of the case study will pertain to specific theoretical propositions about the defined unit of analysis...[and] [t]hese...will later be the means for generalizing the findings...to similar cases focusing on the same unit of analysis” (Yin, 2003, p. 114). The thematic analysis used previously was a generic and descriptive approach to coding. This section applied the same strategy but with sometimes a more complicated technique of coding.

The researcher started the analysis by creating memos. ‘Analytic memos’ “are one of the most useful and powerful sense-making tools at hand...[because they] are not just descriptive summaries of data but attempts to synthesize them into higher level analytic meanings” (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014, pp. 25 - 26). A memo was attached to every interview transcript as a separate paper along with handwritten or field notes. These memos provided chunks of evidence around research questions, code selections and meanings, new themes, existing theoretical frameworks and final research report (Miles et al., 2014). Riger and Sigurvinsdottir (2016) believed using this technique could increase the research’s transparency. Writing memos also revealed whether the concept of engagement was different from communication or not and how to relate this to public relations.

The analytic approach started by “[p]utting information into different arrays, reflecting different themes and subthemes” (Yin, 2018, p. 167). After producing many codes, the researcher kept the relevant ones, while some of the early codes were left behind (Lofgren, 2013). The same was with categories because “[s]ome potential themes may not be relevant to the research question, while others might be combined into broader ideas or divided into separate themes” (Riger & Sigurvinsdottir, 2016, p. 35). Petty, Thomson, and Stew (2012) describe how “codes are grouped to create a smaller number of themes that distill the key issues identified by the researcher; relationships between themes are then identified to create a thematic map” (p. 381). Generating propositions helped to achieve that since they were “used productively much earlier” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 29) before data collection, which made the data ‘analysable’ (Yin, 2018). Yin (2018) states that “[t]he preceding proposition shows how a theoretical orientation guided the case study analysis...[It also] helped to organize the entire analysis, pointing to relevant contextual conditions to be described as well as explanations to be examined” (pp. 168 - 169). By applying these propositions, the researcher enhanced the analysis quality because “a weak thematic analysis is one that fails to consider the theoretical framework that guides the work...[so, what is] most important is that...the analysis is clearly supported by data” (Riger & Sigurvinsdottir, 2016, p. 36).

Using propositions was combined with an analytic strategy called ‘plausible rival explanations’ (Yin, 2018). Producing opposing explanations and challenging arguments meant “looking for other ways of organizing the data that might lead to different findings...[and] thinking about other logical possibilities and then seeing if those possibilities can be supported by the data” (Patton, 1999, p. 1191). Plausible rival explanations was an exploratory and logical method of analysis. It implied failing to identify any confirming information/proof that supported these explanations “demonstrates intellectual integrity and lends considerable credibility to the final set of findings offered by the evaluator” (Patton,

1999, p. 1191). In this sense, the first assumption was: the observed outcomes of governmental and non-governmental efforts to enhance social integration and counter extremism were, the result of the type of communication and engagement strategies that had been the main focus of study. The most likely rival explanation would be the observed outcomes were in fact, the result of some other factors and not the nature of communication and engagement strategies. This competing explanation encouraged the researcher to remain open, looking for any alternative logical influences. Hence, “if you had found insufficient evidence, you would be less likely to be accused of stacking the deck in favor of the original hypothesis” (Yin, 2018, p. 173). The second assumption was that the observed outcomes were the result of some factors which had intervened in the process of carrying out strategies. The rival explanation here would be a ‘real-world’ one called ‘Implementation Rival’ (Yin, 2018). This meant the way these strategies implemented was, in fact, the reason why we got such results and not any real intervention: “(‘did we do it right?’)” (Yin, 2018, p. 173).

5. Approach to the cross-case analysis. The researcher maintained the data that significantly reflected the research topics and questions. It was also useful “to try and bracket...her focus to avoid seeing only what... she wants to see in favour of attaining a more reflexive distance from the data” (Cousin, 2006, p. 425). It helped, for example, to see how cases perceived Prevent, whether personally or based on publics’ feedback. When the analysis completed and an illustrative example given for almost every theme, the researcher read through the results many times trying to observe differences and similarities between the cases. Botes writes that in cross-case synthesis or analysis it was “to compare the...[multiple] sets of findings with one another to determine the degree to which the findings coincided” (as cited in Zongozzi & Wessels, 2017, p. 269).

The researcher examined seven cases according to four lines of inquiry: communication and engagement, media, effective and ineffective strategies/messages, and inadequacies and

opportunities. The researcher focused on building a full picture of these NGOs within these areas of investigation. By applying a ‘case-based approach to cross-case synthesis’, Yin (2018) reveals that “the goal is to retain the integrity of the entire case and then to compare or synthesize any within-case patterns across the cases” (p. 196). This method looked at every case as a whole system and asked how things were arranged and done to conduct “comparative analysis...[where] [w]e would look for underlying similarities and constant associations, compare cases with different outcomes, and begin to form more general explanations” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 30). The synthesis involved “combining, integrating, and summarizing findings” (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006, pp. 62 - 63). Moreover, the researcher applied analytical replication as a case-oriented strategy, which meant, according to Yin, that:

A theoretical framework is used to study one case in depth, and then successive cases are examined to see whether the pattern found matches that in previous cases. It’s also useful to examine cases where the pattern is expected on a theoretical basis to be weaker or absent. (As cited in Miles et al., 2014, p. 31)

This replication technique came after determining what patterns in one of the cases were (Yin, 2018) such as identifying if NGO’s communicative methods followed particular communication strategy. Consequently:

...the analysis proceed [*sic*] to examine whether there appeared to be replicative (literal or theoretical) relationships across the case studies...[where] the initial within-case queries could have involved analyzing “how” and “why”...and the subsequent cross-case comparisons would be checked further for literal and theoretical replications. (Yin, 2018, p. 197)

6. Results: cross-case analysis of themes. To enhance a professional and credible approach towards understanding the phenomenon investigated in real-world settings, Easton (2010) believes a case study strategy could be “warranted... [when it] is made on the grounds of the interesting and novel nature of the results, exemplifications of particular phenomena or applications of specific concepts or models” (p. 118). Mindful of this, the researcher started

with the data instead of research questions (Yin, 2018). The following analysis discussed the PR theories and approaches used in the literature review within the four areas of inquiry mentioned above. It was to explain general features and significant contrasts within cases. By presenting this study report, the researcher, according to Braun and Clarke, was able:

...to go beyond simply a description of the data to make an argument...[where] critical questions that need addressing [are produced]: what does this theme mean? What are the assumptions underpinning it? What are the implications of this theme? What conditions are likely to have given rise to it? Why do people talk about this thing this particular way (as opposed to other ways)? [And] What is the overall story the different themes reveal about the topic? (As cited in Riger & Sigurvinsdottir, 2016, p. 35)

1. Communication and Engagement (Means & Gains)

The dominant model of communication identified throughout the analysis encompassed two different structures. Depending on the context, the first pattern was dialogue while the second was engagement. Interestingly, the data showed a difference between the two approaches. Across all cases, interviewees frequently describing their NGOs' work using references to engaging and communicating in various forms. It might seem a literal replication of this same pattern, but it also could be argued that there was theoretical replication in some cases. The following codes and pieces of evidence elaborated this further.

Three codes were identified together as 'simultaneous coding'. Saldana (2016) justifies using this technique "when the richness or complexity of an event or participant's story makes it difficult for a researcher to assign only one major code to the datum" (p. 96). The co-occurrent codes were: ^{1a}**Intercommunity projects**, ^{1b}**Cross-cultural dialogue**, and ^{1c}**Open dialogue**. These codes indicated communication and engagement techniques, but they varied in meaning allocated to each of them (Saldana, 2016). All respondents recognised the patterns that these codes implied but at different levels. The Abdullah Quilliam Society

showed, for instance, a high degree of dialogue accompanied by a vibrant sense of engagement. The CEO explained:

We are overcoming lots of barriers through social and interactive programmes to bring non-Muslim friends and neighbours into the Mosque and telling them what we do. We hold a number of national days like visit my Mosque day and the national heritage day to open our Masjid to the public. We openly say come and set in the Mosque and talk to us and find out what Islam is. The result is that 99.9% of the people who have visited the Mosque have said, wow! This is not what we see on the television. We believe when people visit us they become more respectful and tolerant.

It could be argued that this excerpt demonstrated that dialogue was ongoing process driven by the consistent emphasis on holding events and activities. That went beyond arranging occasional conference or meetings to discuss thoughts, exchange ideas and introduce the public to each other. The complexity of community cohesion and extremism needed such persistence and richness in the way communication and action are brought together. Sometimes engagement would undoubtedly become key to make progress in these matters. British Future from London was the only NGO that talked about **open dialogue** while discussing its initiative 'The National Conversation'. This strategy took the discussion from a conversation between a limited number of people in one place to that included different types of public from many places in the country. British Future clarified: "120 meetings are being conducted in many areas in Britain asking people what Britain should do about immigration after [Brexit]. People want to talk about it, and they don't close or shut down the conversation when integration discussed".

No other case study adopted this same strategy in addressing social integration, which indicated the pattern **open dialogue** not literally replicated across cases. Nevertheless, other NGOs expressed hopes to plan for such a national approach, and efforts to make dialogue a process that involved everyone in society. These case studies also used dialogue and engagement but not in a similar way like Abdullah Quilliam Society and British Future. It

meant there was theoretical replication of the pattern. By the same token, PEP added: “In London, we make exchange visits. We bring students from a synagogue to our Mosque, and we sent a number of our students to a synagogue in Wimbledon. We use this kind of activities to promote mutual understanding”. **Cross-cultural dialogue**, on the other hand, was a regular communication pattern within all cases. New Routes Integration, which had a wide variety of volunteers from different cultural backgrounds, explained:

We bring [asylum seekers] together into discussing cultures and learn skills and create cross-cultural understanding. We engage in dialogue and discussions especially the women’s group which very much designed around subject areas which are important in women lives like domestic violence and what does it mean to different cultures.

PEP considered dialogue and discussion as “the main tool” to promote mutual understanding and support social cohesion. However, Abdullah Quilliam Society found that dialogue in this sense was necessary (means) but, not strategic enough (gains): “It is a matter of much more than dialogue because it only happens and stops when it stops”. Therefore, **Intercommunity projects** came as code that presented dialogue supported by engagement among all cases (literal replication). These projects included: discussion groups, exchange visits, workshops, religious programmes, social activities, training, conferences, events, meetings and study circles. PEP described: “we do workshops with university students and in mosques. [It’s about] ‘working’ with the Muslim community to prevent the youth from being radicalised”. Respondent (A) also added: “we bring people to engage in conversations and dialogue by ‘engaging’ them in [these activities]”.

British Future referred to that sense of engagement as jumping out of traditional dialogue to address the fear of ‘the other’: “promoting ‘more contact’ with people is the obvious way to improve things”. It could be noted NGOs defined what engagement entailed apart from communicating with the key publics. This finding is similar to how the literature considered

public engagement in PR. It is a step change (Jelen-Sanchez, 2017) tool for reconciling relationships (Stromback & Kiouisis, 2011) and increasing influence (Ovatt, 2008), a mechanism for collaboration (Dhanesh, 2017), and a set of powerful actions and interactions (Ewen, 1996; Marston, 1963; Taylor & Kent, 2014). Therefore, “[w]hen engagement is seen as collaborative processes and rooted in dialogue, the chances for building connection occurs” (Lemon, in press, p. 10). Moreover, **Intercommunity projects**, **Cross-cultural dialogue** and **Open dialogue** echo Bloul (2008) who suggests that “[j]ust as we must learn to accept Islam, our Muslim co-citizens must learn to engage with our different beliefs. Learning about the other seems a more promising beginning than verbally assaulting them” (p. 21). Besides, according to Martin Buber:

Genuine dialogue requires an open conversation aimed at increasing understanding of the Other with no attempt to persuade or to achieve specific outcomes. The participants in dialogue are committed to a process of listening to each other with empathy and to making sincere efforts to understand each other as the sole goal of the conversation. (As cited in Toledano, 2016, p. 282)

The code **Maintaining micro & macro interaction** encompassed engagement and communication together. It was a ‘concept code’ which “describe[d] broader processes at work....[and] extend[ed] beyond the tangible and observable to transcend to the conceptual” (Saldana, 2016, pp. 120 - 122). This coding method indicated an idea and a bigger image beyond what seemed noticeable (Saldana, 2016). Interviewees brought up three forms to define micro and macro interactions. As the theme showed, the three patterns were mainly means and gains and were replicated literally across cases: Interaction & empowerment, Engagement & understanding, and Cooperation & deradicalization. According to Integrate UK, the youth was significant. Educating and training them (e.g. making films and music videos) about social inclusion, radicalisation and extremism boosted their confidence: “they become activists when trained and involved”. New Routes Integration emphasised how

interacting with asylum seekers on the micro-level, through a 1-1 mentoring project, empowered them and made them understand their new environment: “we empower them...to become part of society. What we try to do is to help people understand that there are many ways to integrate”.

Lack of interaction with the Muslim youth (micro-level) and Muslim community leaders and imams (macro-level) required an urgent response as “the base should be the community” (Quba Trust). As such, Kim and Cho (2019) believe “it is expected that a sense of community, which is influenced by the public’s interaction with other social structures in the community (i.e., government community relationship), positively influences the public’s community participation” (p. 300). Talking about the authenticity of community engagement programmes in public relations, Johnston and Lane (in press) find that:

Authenticity of process describes how all steps of dealing with a community, such as interactions and response, are founded in honesty and transparency...People want evidence, or reassurance that they have been heard...[which can be] contributing to building trust as part of both the foundation and process of sustainable community relationships. (p. 9)

Hence, one identified mechanism for supporting social integration and countering extremism, according to Abdullah Quilliam Society, was interacting, engaging and cooperating with the Muslim community at all levels:

What we need to do is to work with community leaders in different programmes, a more bottom-up approach to the problem. If I am from an Asian or Arabic culture then I understand that culture and I am better to address it. But if I was trying to address an English culture being an Asian person, how stupid am I going to look? When they talk about radicalisation and extremism outside organisations, people from a different faith cannot deliver the programme and it will be someone from the same faith who understands the sensitivity and clearly knows how to address it without the people knowing that they are being [targeted]. [So,] it is about valuing people, respecting people, [and] putting a responsibility on people.

From a different but very relevant perspective, British Future referred to the importance of engaging with the anxious middle:

Roughly speaking, 25% of the country is migration liberals, 25% rejectionists who do not feel immigration is good for Britain, and then in the middle, we have got the anxious middle which is most of Britain. Those are anxious and worried. The anxious middle recognises immigration as brought benefits for the economy and society, but they are worried about how it is managed. Those are worried if Britain feels like Britain anymore. This group is not racists, they see pressures on benefits, and we think that quite a lot of PR and communications does not speak to them; it speaks to the 25% liberals who are already on side.

In line with this result, a survey on the country's perspectives towards immigration finds "the UK population appears to be slightly more positive than negative about the impact of immigration; however, 40% of respondents agreed that having a wide variety of backgrounds has undermined British culture" (Booth, 2018, para. 4). Another example can also illustrate that finding further. Doughty (2018) reveals details concerning the removal of the BBC's educational film about immigration. The film was criticised and withdrawn for breaching neutrality rules and being partial. The article shows the educational material discussed how "Britain was 'multicultural long before curry and carnival' and that debate over immigration had fuelled a 'huge rise' in support for far-Right politics" (para. 5). One of those who commented on the film believes Britain had never been home of migrants (Doughty, 2018). It can be argued the problem here is that the BBC may not be fully aware of how complicated the debate around immigration is and to what extent any material in this regard should respect others' views.

It can be assumed any debate which does not accept or address other's perspectives can be deemed counterproductive. The material also highlighted that multiculturalism is as old as ever for Britons; that it is in their genes (Doughty, 2018). Addressing the British public in this way can be regarded as dictating a way of thinking and imposing a message without realising

how complicated life has become. It means messages are not being heard, can be rejected and may even increase publics' sense of cynicism. Some criticism, according to the article, see that the film portrays those who are anxious about immigration as racists and how it is significant to address those people's concerns. Thus, Doughty (2018) writes: "Lord Green of Deddington, founding chairman of Migration Watch, added that the discussion between young people in the film was 'shallow, unbalanced and unrepresentative'" (para. 17). In this sense, a code later shows how audience analysis and testing messages, and evaluating them matters in the process of tackling social cohesion.

Social campaigns was a code that represented one of the main communicative techniques in this analysis. These were employed to make the public think and engage. Campaigns here addressed people, whether the Muslim community or society in general, about social cohesion and extremism. As significant as that seemed to be, only four cases replicated this pattern while the rest did not make campaigns. The researcher noted that some NGOs hoped they could evaluate campaigns to achieve better results. In talking to respondent (A), these campaigns were used to get society together. In describing their work, British Future employed historical references to boost campaigns' effectiveness:

History is important in the British sense of identity. So, we used the anniversary of the WW1 to highlight how one and a half million Indian soldiers were part of the British army back then. We did research and found out that many people do not know this. 400 thousand of them were Muslims. These campaigns are trying to make knowledge more widely known. Poppy Hijab campaign was controversial, but the point of it was to find a way that really projects to a wide audience particularly to the anxious middle audience. We have got a long history together, and it is a shared history. It was a message that reaches across and says we have got a lot in common than you think.

The Poppy Hijab campaign is contentious. It targets a community in particular rather than making Remembrance Day a national festival where everyone is invited. The analysis later shows such a campaign approach is counterproductive. It also discusses how respondents

believe messages should remain general and inclusive to avoid that specific community is being alienated or treated suspiciously. However, the communication manager at British Future considered the campaign successful: “I think it succeeded in doing [what it was designed to do]. We worked closely with the Islamic Society of Britain and the Young Muslim Fashion Design to make it. We have made a big effort to do that”. The campaign appears creative from a London-based NGO and a team with communication and journalism experience. Such a collaboration between NGOs to design that campaign can be positive and fruitful as well. Nevertheless, when a message singles out a community, it can draw a negative focus to that group implying there is something wrong with it and that what makes it a target for such campaigns.

That may ring a bell and re-establish the idea of ‘we and them’. It can be argued that such a strategy puts pressure on the receiver, whether Muslims or non-Muslims. This is not what successful campaigns should do. Allen (2014) writes an article titled ‘The poppy hijab is just Islamophobia with a floral motif’. According to the article, “Muslims are being asked to not only pledge their allegiance to Britain but so too its armed forces. Not only do Muslims have to prove they’re not the enemy but so too that they’re not a traitor either” (para. 7). The campaign sheds light on the research’s overarching themes and emotional appeals of patriotism, Islamophobia, hatred and fear and nativism. The point of designing Poppy Hijab is to talk about a little-known fact of the 400,000 Muslim soldiers who fought together with the British army in WW1 (Sanghani, 2015). However, it can be suggested that the public can be informed by just endorsing such a fact in a general and more inclusive campaign. Ahmed (2015) describes poppy hijab as:

...the most ill-conceived of the recent spate of “we are not extremists” initiatives...Buy a £22 hijab to prove that you’re not a terrorist, a wannabe ‘jihadi bride’, planning on running off to Syria to find your Isis prince in blood-stained camouflage...Refusing to wear the poppy is not an ‘extremist Muslim’ stance; it’s an

ideological position based on anti-war sentiment. Nobody would accuse a white person of extremism for refusing to wear one. (para. 2 - 7)

According to Ahmed (2015), poppy hijab confirms the existence of framing of otherness in the society where “[n]o other religious group is pressured to prove their allegiance in the same way...I don’t think we’ll be seeing a budding Jewish designer marketing a poppy kippa anytime soon” (para. 5). He thinks British Muslims remain as ‘the other’, and such a campaign is not helpful. What is useful is that social cohesion “needs to be addressed by wider British society. It requires open debate and discussion — not gimmicks” (Ahmed, 2015, para. 12). Hooper (2014) also demonstrates that those against this campaign believe “it entrenches divisions and plays on the insecurities of an already-marginalised community” (para. 2). Accepting other cultures is essential in Britain’s journey to promote social integration, especially with the failure of assimilation and multiculturalism. Globalisation affects everyone, and it increasingly becomes hard to find a nation that lacks a sense of diversity. (“The Guardian view”, 2018) suggests:

Cultures are dynamic things, developing organically from communities. They do not exist in isolation or remain static. Having a range of cultures in Britain is normal, not novel...[And as] [i]dentity is a fact about us...it should not define the horizon of our possibilities. (para. 2 - 5)

Two Islamic NGOs described how they cultivated balance in youth’s sense of belonging to understand their British identity in line with Islamic beliefs. The literature highlights that Muslim youth needs particular attention, whether from their communities or government. This is to protect them from being segregated and ultimately radicalised. Hill (2017) thinks that “greater platforms for young Muslims must be established to enable them to develop a sense of belonging and to answer questions of identity, in addition to building links with the wider community” (p. 10). Jackson (2017) also writes that “increased public engagement will be

central to countering future [terrorist] threats” (para. 2). Furthermore, the quantitative results show that top-down approach leads to radicalism. The questionnaire respondents believe youth engagement and empowerment is a political outlook as well. Hence, they suggest micro-level interaction as a recommended communication approach. In this sense, the present study informs academia and practitioners about the importance of political public relations in engaging with the key publics for better outcomes. Johnston and Lane (in press) explain that “[t]he role of public relations practitioners in CE is therefore to identify and involve voices that are authentic — that is, those that truthfully represent the extent and diversity of community sentiment” (p. 1).

As Integrate UK worked mainly with young people, the researcher noted that Islamic NGOs were more engaging with Muslim youth than other case studies. The interviewee from PEP explained:

Our training and workshops allow people to explore their identity and reconcile this with British identity. We help the youth to explore their real Islamic identity and teach them to be proudly British and Muslims at the same time. They think it is wrong to believe that one has to have only one identity and Islam allows this. We raise Islamic compatibility.

The same noted by Abdullah Quilliam Society when the CEO discussed identity and otherness in society. The following quote also describes what the thesis highlights regarding assimilating ethnic minorities as a tool for social integration. This study gives evidence that assimilation is not the answer, and it can even lead immigrants to become extremists (Bigea, 2016). People are generally proud of their identities, which makes assimilation a coercive attempt that represents a psychological and emotional burden to newcomers. Consequently, the literature and analysis chapters concentrate on communication and engagement as a way for reconciling relationships, defying stereotypes and reaching consensus (Asthana & Walker, 2016; Al-azami, 2018; Awan, 2012; Peat, 2017). What is increasingly required to recognise

this fact and respond to its consequences because denial can only cultivate segregation, radicalisation and terrorism:

I don't want our children to think that I am a Muslim; therefore, I am different from you. I am a Muslim; therefore, I need to stay away from you. I am a Muslim; therefore, I don't belong to you. We are working to embed that. There is no such thing as you are one and I am the other. We are all as one who works to bring tolerance and understanding to society. We embrace the British culture; we embrace the British values [and that does] not necessarily [mean] to forsake our fathers' ethnicity or forsake our religion. (Abdullah Quilliam Society)

One may ask what the theme **Communication and Engagement (Means & Gains)** implies, its implications, what conditions are likely to have given rise to engagement over communication in these environments, and why do respondents talk about engagement in this particular way. This is where the necessity comes to address the research question: How do NGOs manage their relationships with the public effectively? In order "to judge the extent to which a researcher's themes accurately and comprehensively represent the information collected in the study...[the analyst should ensure] the themes must reflect the purpose of the research and respond to the questions under investigation" (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006, p. 61). Therefore, this theme is central to the main focus of this study and provides an answer to one of the research questions.

The codes incorporated in **Communication and Engagement (Means & Gains)** highlight practices taken to manage the overall relationship between NGOs and the public. Interviewees rely more on activities that involve ongoing engagement and interaction. With the fact these communicative and engaging practices overlap, there appears to be that sense of favouring open dialogue or involving actions and exchange of attitudes than simple two-way kind of conversation. It may imply respondents' awareness of the complexity of the public and the sensitivity of the topics involved. It can also mean that cases identify some of the right keys to bring positive changes. Each of **Intercommunity projects, Cross-cultural**

dialogue, Open dialogue, Micro & Macro Interaction (Interaction & empowerment, Engagement & understanding, Cooperation & deradicalization) and Social campaigns are strategic ways to deliver messages and manage relationships. This importance of engagement is promising. It also corresponds to the literature where PR scholars believe public engagement is critical for the industry in the future. Kim and Cho (2019), for example, explain that “[t]he concept of community-building or community engagement appeals to many public relations scholars and practitioners because it interprets public relations as a proactive endeavor rather than as a reactive one” (p. 298). All the topics under discussion are getting more complicated as time progresses. Therefore, they need to be tackled using different and more effective approaches. The case studies realise this fact and act in line with it. Nevertheless, the main question here is: Does that look useful enough? Quantitative results show some similarity to this finding by taking engagement to a more sophisticated level. Although two-way symmetrical dialogue, according to the literature, is considered a strategic PR approach, engaging and interacting with the key publics emotionally and cognitively through **socio-cultural PR, relationship management, community engagement, campaigns, framing, emotionally-based communication, terminology and rhetoric, micro and macro levels of interaction** are deemed productive. It can only mean the research problem may become far from being resolved if the current approach of social exclusion and inaction remains.

With this in view, Townsend (2019) wrote an article titled ‘Brain scans show social exclusion creates jihadists, say researchers’. The column explains that ground-breaking international research investigated how the mind of a radicalised person reacted to being socially alienated. It is interesting how the results “confirm that exclusion is a leading factor in creating violent jihadists...[whereas] focusing on alleviating interpersonal discrimination can keep those with extremist leanings on the non-violent and negotiable side of the fence” (para. 3 - 12). Mindful

of this, Bin Hassan (2019) refers to effective collaboration as one of the three principles of Danish's de-radicalisation approach. The article describes that Dane Mayor explains how important cooperation is for de-radicalisation:

...a major strength of our approach is the close collaboration that has been established...because it provides unique opportunities to identify and intervene in relation to youth who may be at risk for radicalisation, just as the involvement of several local government agencies makes it possible to take a holistic approach to intervention. (p. 15)

The findings regarding the broader theme of **Communication and Engagement (Means & Gains)** also build particularly on results described by PR academics. The questionnaire respondents identify each of **cultural adaptation, micro & macro-level of interaction** and **outreach interaction** as some of the most recommended communication theories.

2. Media's Role (Reality & Expectation)

All interviewees either implicitly realised or explicitly noted the negative role media were playing in widening the gap between the Muslim community and others in society. Respondents, however, often emphasised the big picture. They explained how significant it became to build a media agenda to support social integration in the UK. The codes revealed how the media were addressing community cohesion, how NGOs were using media outlets and future expectations.

Use of social media: it was important for the researcher to collect data about the use of social media. Unfortunately, only three interviewees discussed the matter. In describing their work, Integrate UK stated:

...young people are active through social media using hashtags on Twitter, newspapers such as the Guardian, radio and magazines and TV appearances. That is to get the public to engage with the NGO agenda. The means for getting our messages are interactive calling the public to engage especially the youth.

According to Abdullah Quilliam Society, a successful NGO would ensure everyone in society knew what it offered. Data availability was essential:

We are planning to use our studio to broadcast our media material and a team who is responsible and employed to host people from society to have a debate. It is all about social media. [Getting people to know] the good examples of what each corner of the city [offers can] only bring people together and if I don't understand what other communities are doing for the whole society then how am I doing my bit.

Interviewee (A) also revealed using “a media team who advertise events on Facebook, Twitter as well as a WhatsApp group and own website”. It can be argued the dynamic nature of social cohesion implies an urgent need for constant communication and engagement between NGOs, political institutions and the public. The literature corroborates that highlighting how social media are significant for PR professionals. Pew explains: “[o]ne unique advantage of social media tools in public relations is their ability to engage many constituents in two-way communication, even when an organization has a limited funding structure” (as cited in Avery & Graham, 2013, p. 279). Therefore, Seo et al. (2009) find that “[o]rganizations with less capacity and tight budgets should make more extensive use of new media modes, which can be...efficient ways of promoting organizational image and raising funds” (p. 126). The analysis later shows that most case studies are small NGOs with a limited number of staff and funds. This means that social media are defining factor in their work.

Furthermore, code **Media bias & Negative journalism** described the current media approach. It is useful here to acknowledge the depth and evolution of the debate around the UK media treatment of Muslims. As indicated by British Future, one way of reaching out to the anxious middle, started when media outlets cultivated anxiety around matters related to social integration. By relating **Media bias & Negative journalism** to the poppy hijab campaign, Hooper (2014) reports that the ‘executive director of the Muslim Women's

Network UK' said: "[t]he fact that...[poppy hijab] is being promoted by the likes of the *Daily Mail*, part of the thinking is, 'Okay, you are a little bit British but not British enough. We will accept you, but on our terms'" (para. 16). As "[j]ournalism has always been as much about audience as about content" (Conboy & Steel, 2010, p. 503), British Future explained:

It is very significant for us to go into outlets like the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Telegraph*. Their audience is from that anxious middle where campaigns can make a difference and [help] changing their minds. It is necessary to reach the audience who do not agree with us on everything and connect to them.

In the context of the *Daily Mail* comes the need to briefly view and acknowledge the kind of British tabloid press. It has distinctive culture and tradition and is arguably very damaging for the nature of the British public sphere. What makes it significant to go quickly through UK tabloid culture is also how NGOs call and make efforts to change the tabloids' agenda into supporting community cohesion. Ornebring and Jonsson (2008), therefore, think tabloid journalism represents the following challenges:

...it allegedly panders to the lowest common denominator of public taste, it simplifies, it personalises, [and] it thrives on sensation and scandal...Or, even worse...[this type of] journalism may even actually be a threat to democracy, breeding cynicism and a lack of interest in politics, while ignoring the real political issues in favour of superficial political scandal. (p. 23)

That relates to the research focus of stimulating emotional appeals, such as fear and hatred. Ornebring and Jonsson (2008) believe what characterises tabloid press extends beyond paper layout to include a specific strategy of issues saliency and messages' presentation. This is associated, according to Hall, with tabloids' "significant role as a social educator" (as cited in Conboy, 2007, p. 258). It is where "its selectivity, emphasis, treatment and presentation, enables the tabloid press to itself interpret the process of social change as an active process of interpretation on behalf of a clearly articulated and nationally located readership" (Conboy, 2007, p. 258). Tabloid journalism "was criticised for sensationalism and emotionalism, for

over-simplification of complex issues...and sometimes for outright lies...But...[it] also managed to attract new publics, by speaking to them about issues previously ignored, in news, clearly understandable ways” (Ornebring & Jonsson, 2008, p. 28). Such a quote can immediately bring matters like the general governmental inaction to the surface. Ignoring Britons’ concerns make them increasingly anxious, and neglecting the Muslim community’s desire for more understanding from the government can also escalate the tension between the two. A situation like this only causes a communication and engagement chasm from which tabloids can fill and manipulate. The risk here is that tabloids such as ‘The Sun’ “employ their rhetoric to enhance the community of national readership and ensure that as this rhetoric crosses generations and news categories they create a longer narrative of nation in which their readership is invited to participate” (Conboy, 2007, p. 258). Additionally, British tabloids “have all developed a consensual approach to patriotic populism” (Conboy, 2007, p. 257). This may feed a readership’s sense of nativism and xenophobia in the age of Trump and Brexit. That type of patriotic populism is not the same kind of patriotism that Gordon Brown called for where everyone is respectful in the form of public engagement and partnership (Osler, 2009). Here, Littlejohn’s (2013) article ‘when did you last see a poppy on a burka’ is relevant and echoes the literature. The Daily Mail columnist says:

What always amuses me is the way in which so-called ‘liberal feminists’ contort themselves to defend the right of Muslim women to wear the burka. They try to pretend it’s somehow ‘racist’ or ‘anti-Islamic’ to ban the burka. Women who opt to hide their ‘modesty’ in these ridiculous sackcloth bin-liners are no less patriotic than the rest of us, they insist. Oh, yeah? When I see a bird in a burka wearing a poppy, I might just agree with them. (para. 28 - 31)

However, with the arrival of Geordie Greig as the new Daily Mail editor, the paper’s strategy may become more moderate or socially-oriented because his “appointment was part of a process of “detoxifying the Daily Mail” after Dacre’s editorship” (Waterson, 2018, para. 5). Through tracing constructing changes of British tabloids, Conboy and Steel (2010) note:

...the ability of the Sun to transform the language of populist appeal away from the Mirror's left-leaning progressive brand of politics to a new articulation of the sentiments and policies of the right which provided the Sun with its trump card, employing Walter Terry, former political editor of the right-wing Daily Mail, and Ronnie Spark to provide a demotic language to shape the editorial ambition for Murdoch/Lamb's shift to the right. (p. 503)

In line with the literature, Suzanne Moore (2018) writes an article titled 'Editors have normalised hate, from Rod Liddle to Katie Hopkins'. She elaborates that:

The publication of racist views is now permissible – and the print media is to blame...Liddle carried on...upping the ante in that now-familiar: "Will no one but brave little me talk about immigration?" tone. He moved such views right into the mainstream. Poison is what happens when you speak truth not to power, but to bait the powerless. (para. 1 - 6)

It is worth mentioning that Integrate UK publishes on or has access to the *Guardian*. As the Home Office supports this NGO, it can be suggested that agenda building and issues' saliency can be applied to such news outlet to support the agenda of social integration. British Future continued:

We can tell our message was successful if the media covered it. It is difficult when we approach media platforms because we need to provide them with stories that work for them. It has got to be a good story. When I phoned a journalist, he is going to say: all that sounds interesting or [does not].

Most of the PR practitioners who work in USA NGOs also believe "that the prestige of getting stories into the mainstream media is still very important, as publics do not always think of new media modes as being as reliable as well-known media programs" (Seo et al., 2009, p. 125). Therefore, how the media react to stories that enhance social integration is essential. Maybe we can start by making these stories interesting along with gaining gatekeepers' approval to publish on issues related to community cohesion. It is about making it a priority because "[i]f journalists become distant from other people's lives, they miss the

story, and people don't trust them" (Viner, 2018, para. 50). Abdullah Quilliam Society described the current media project in Britain:

The media and social media are playing a central role in disseminating good messages to communities but the media is in business to make money, and it is only negative publicity more than a positive one. Everything in the media about Islam is negative. The media have a duty to bring all the communities together. If the media tend to give more consideration to publicise the positive things that what the Muslim organisations or communities do, this will definitely alleviate and take away some of the negative barriers and the hate that people hold in their hearts.

The word 'interesting' is a keyword in many ways. It relates to the theme of **effective messages and strategies** as a cognitive and emotional factor. Interesting in the context of articles and columns means creating new frames for social integration, more revolutionary ones. It may also imply publishing more stories about communities' efforts in this regard and the importance of integration to the nation. This is particularly significant as Dhanesh (2017) believes the public can be interested as long as there is debate and communication, on matters that are cognitively and actively important to them.

To combat confusion and anxiety, New Routes Integration created a friendly atmosphere which made communication and engagement methods more useful: "creating an interesting climate and mixture rather than something we need to change...The UK is a new culture for them and not a challenge to overcome". This may indicate that persuading and putting pressure on newcomers can be unhelpful and stressful. The quantitative results show that persuasion is counterproductive. It is 'unethical' in PR (Hallahan, 2000) and represents 'symbolic violence' (Edwards, 2006). It can be noted that the NGOs are concentrating on a more interactive approach rather than relying on the very persuasive school of communication. British Future realised this fact too and approached the anxious middle strategically: "It is how we understand and speak to the anxious middle. So, we want to find out what messages and communications appeal to them". Accordingly, the findings focus on

the importance of audiences' emotional and psychological appeals when addressing extremism and social cohesion. This chimes with the literature which highlights the essentiality of framing emotional and strategic messages to counter-terrorism (Appleby, 2010; Asthana & Walker, 2016; Awan, 2012; Ćosić et al., 2018; Ferguson, 2016; Heath-Kelly, 2013; Paris, 2017; Peat, 2017; Ragazzi, 2017; Silverman & Thomas, 2012). PR practitioners prove they can frame emotionally and cognitively strategic messages and actions by triggering specific morals, beliefs and values (Aelst et. al., 2014; Butterick, 2011; Edwards, 2016; Kiouisis & Stromback, 2014; Molleda & Ferguson, 2004; Raj & Chandran, 2006; Sison, 2017; Trayner, 2017).

This analysis answered the research question: How do NGOs use different media platforms to engage with the public and young Muslims? Unfortunately, the data did not reveal a strategic approach in building media agenda. The analysis also showed a general underestimation of the role of media, journalism, advertising and digital platforms. There were attempts, and visions to use the media but also, no systematic and grand strategies. The literature addresses this by showing how PR can use social media outlets to engage with the public (Avery & Graham, 2013). Saffer et al. (in press) write that NGOs, as 'strategic communicators', can use the 'village approach' on Twitter to capture the public's attention and increase engagement.

The article explains that this model:

...considers how NGOs' connections to other NGOs and their publics create subgroups or "villages" within a network...[this sense of collaboration allows NGOs to tackle social and urgent issues and support society which indicates] that NGOs, as a village inside a larger network, can garner the public's attention on certain issues....[consequently, PR] [p]ractitioners must recognize the networks created over the course of public discussions about topics and consider how their village can work collectively to garner public engagement that in turn can help maintain the public's attention on the NGOs' issues. (pp. 2 - 17)

Furthermore, case studies encouraged politicians to use media outlets as mechanisms for change. As an independent NGO, British Future could not publish pro-integration and anti-prejudice stories unless journalists considered these interesting and at perfect timing:

Time is essential whenever we are aiming to make effective messages and campaigns, [we think] why would a journalist want to write about our campaign, for example. We [also think] whether the timing is right or not and we may choose to release a report when journalists do care about it. Just choose a big moment to release the message.

All times are perfect timings. If social integration becomes a national project, publishing stories about it can become an everyday task. Toledano and Mckie (2007) describe how the Israeli government was highly strategic in building its multicultural society using public relations. The media, therefore, targeted the public with social integration messages in the form of propaganda of integration (Toledano and Mckie, 2007). According to the article, the media provided explanations, journalism enhanced, and PR social responsibility framework used to promote inclusion and public trust. Here, Kouts writes what matters the most for the press was not freedom of expression, but to support the government agenda of social inclusion (as cited in Toledano & Mckie, 2007). If Britain has pro-integration policymakers and gatekeepers, building media agenda can become possible. It should be noted that Integrate UK is the only NGO using multimedia platforms. As a small charity, the positive impact this NGO made would still be limited. Consequently, the analysis reveals NGOs exploit in media platforms poorly. Participants realise social integration is necessary for Britain, but they do not plan for productive media relations. This finding supports the argument in the quantitative chapter, which calls for change in media orientation towards supporting social integration and pluralism. PR academics believe that negative press is un-strategic policy as well. The surrounding literature also explains this fact thoroughly.

3. Ineffective vs. Effective strategies/messages

By looking across the data, it became clear what were the effective and ineffective approaches. Interestingly, yet unsurprisingly, this theme came as expected. Yin (2018) wrote that high-quality analysis “should address the most significant aspect of your case study...you will have demonstrated your best analytic skills if the analysis focuses on the most important issue” (p. 199). Therefore, this theme answered one of the most significant points in this study. It concerned what approaches and strategies were going to work and what were not. As those interviewees diagnosed symptoms and provided remedies, the researcher identified two codes that replicated literally across cases. That was why it was necessary to apply Versus coding. According to Saldana (2016), versus codes “identify in dichotomous...terms the...processes [or] concepts...in direct conflict with each other... [and]...there is generally an asymmetrical power balance between them, a duality that manifests itself as an X VS. Y code” (p. 137). The first code was **Top-down VS. Bottom-up** where respondents thought any successful approaches needed to start from within communities. Interviewees praised bottom-up strategy as a powerful technique for fighting against extremism and promoting social inclusion, whereas the current top-down method was labelled ineffective and rather unrecommended. This echoes Gregory’s (2019) article: ‘UK Government Communication: The Cameron years and their ongoing legacy’. According to Rentoul (2015): “[f]or many years Government itself had been accused of living in a ‘Westminster bubble’...insulated and isolated from the reality of the lives lived by many Britons” (as cited in Gregory, 2019, p. 203). Gregory (2019) investigates transformation in government communication service from providing social benefits into serving the government’s political agenda. It means communication becomes a vehicle to sell and persuade the public of the government’s policies (Gregory, 2019). That may explain why

there is a real absence of communication and engagement between British people and their government. Consequently, Gregory (2019) determines:

It is clear that Government was disconnected from, even unaware of the public mood, especially outside London. At the heart of this was a failure to genuinely connect with citizenry: to listen to them, to engage on the issues that were of concern to them and to understand their lives. This can only be done through a genuine process of dialogue rather than a purely top down approach to promoting the Government agenda. Actions are now in place to redress this imbalance with both Government itself and Government communicators spending more time outside London and in more engagement activities. (p. 215)

From interviewee at Quba Trust in Luton, NGO's founder also discussed the top-down approach and how Muslim youth considered Prevent Strategy:

Prevent is a backward strategy, perceived as spying on Muslims. It needs to be improved. There should be an understanding of community and local issues. It should bring people together more. The base should be the community. I think there should be a review for this strategy towards a better one. The Muslim youth find it very toxic which spies over them, and that makes them cautious about it. They want to work alongside the government to make strategies work. The youth also recommend making more social strategies that understand the cultural backgrounds.

This is similar to Hill's (2017) report which argues that:

The government must engage more with voices that are constructive but critical of its counter-terrorism strategy, and that are perceived to be more representative of community perspectives. If the government does proceed with a review of existing strategies or bring forward new legislation, such as a Counter Extremism Bill, Muslim communities would greatly value the opportunity to be consulted and share insights. (p. 19)

The analysis showed that most of Islamic NGOs were more vocal about Prevent compared to other cases which could be related to these NGOs' direct engagement with the key publics. In a positive shift, Grierson and Dodd (2019) write about the security minister's decision to re-evaluate Prevent Strategy independently. The minister, however, "threw down the gauntlet to critics of the strategy to produce 'solid evidence of their allegations', accusing them of using 'distortion and spin'" (para. 3). According to the article, the minister also insists that statistics "clearly show that Prevent is not about singling out any particular group or ideology but is

similar to other forms of safeguarding carried out every day by social workers, teachers and police” (para. 9). It is important here to stress on the fact that “[t]he first step to solving a problem is to see it clearly” (Brown, 2019, para. 2). The minister’s comments may again shed light on official denial that social crisis exists. It may also highlight that there is a communication and engagement gap between the government and the Muslim community. This community’s concerns seem to be left behind. It is noteworthy that Grierson and Dodd (2019) report that “[a] new advertising campaign starts soon in cinemas, urging people to report any concerns” (para. 20). It can be a reminder of what the literature identifies as constructing a culture of fear in the public sphere (Mythen & Walklate, 2006; Orehek & Vazeou-Nieuwenhuis, 2014). Viewed in this light, it is also worth mentioning how British Future, non-Islamic NGO, considered the official appointment of Sara Khan in comparison to how the Muslim community negatively commented on this appointment (Hadj, 2018; Khan, 2018). Shafiq (2018), a media commentator and chief executive of Ramadhan Foundation, writes:

Sara Khan’s record of blind support for the Government’s Prevent programme is toxic within the Muslim community...Many in the Muslim community will view the appointment of Sara Khan as an indication that much will not change in how the Government addresses extremism. They have not learnt the lessons of years of mistrust and anger at the Government’s approach. (para. 6 - 7)

However, in a way this indicates how studying an audiences orientation matters. The Communication Manager from British Future, where the key publics are not Muslims, elaborated:

We wish to engage with the government and Sara Khan in campaigns and works in integration policies with her wide background in this regard. She has got a lot of knowledge, and ‘she knows what she is doing’, and it will be interesting to engage with her.

That may highlight how it is necessary to turn to the real message receiver to know what they think. It can make a huge difference to get those heard. From a stakeholder engagement perspective, and in the context of tackling ‘wicked problems’, public relations ensures:

...that the views of all stakeholders – regardless of their position, beliefs, or concerns about the problem at hand – are respected and heard. In doing so, a more comprehensive understanding of perceptions of the problem and possible ‘solutions’ can collectively be determined. (Roper & Hurst, in press, p. 7)

As a result, useful programmes and strategies can take place. The CEO of the Abdullah Quilliam Society noted that:

The government has always been trying to fight Islamophobia and extremism in recent years as much as they can do, but I think that the government has the money and they gave it to an agency to deliver programmes and, that is it. Although it is very keen and has resources, [it] is just not enough. The government doesn’t get to the grassroots level, and through my experience, organisations are doing a few things here and there, and then they are forgotten, and very little fruit comes out of that. The government needs to work with the community and faith leaders to be able to pass the message in a way that is not alienating us.

From Integrate UK, an outreach worker also added: “I think the government has taken a step forward through introducing Prevent. However, I think there is a lot more to do in this regard, and they could have taken a different approach from more grassroots organisations”. She continued: “this NGO staff cannot discuss Prevent openly. They only discuss why it is important and why the government made it. We don’t really say our views if we agree with it or not. We don’t go against it officially”. The following analysis demonstrated that the NGOs – from whom their key publics were Muslims and relied on a community-based level of engagement – were more aware of Muslims’ perspectives about Prevent. These Islamic NGOs were also not funded by any governmental bodies. Prevent Strategy addressed the Muslim community, who was the message receiver. Therefore, this audience’s feedback was highly significant. British Future added:

We haven't discussed Prevent. [While] it has a brand problem with sections of the society, it is doing good work as well. It has some issues I guess of how it is done that but, I mean, we haven't been very outspoken about Prevent.

Another interviewee from PEP said: “we don't talk about Prevent openly, but the government needs to do more to facilitate more talking between Muslims and non-Muslims”. He continued: “some questions raised from the Muslim youth may be around the fact that foreign policy leads to violent extremism”. In this sense, Muir (2017) also discusses how negative historical influences may affect British Muslims' relationship with the government. **Interaction & empowerment**, therefore, brings a different approach to tackle this problem. Empowering the other through communication and engagement may compensate the Muslim community and make them feel like partners. It can divert their attention from foreign policy and historical burden. Again and again, it is a struggle to win hearts and minds where provocative actions or words cannot help. Interacting and empowering brings balance to the relationship between the government and the Muslim community. According to Willis (2016), the effectiveness of community engagement programmes “depends [in some part] on community members feeling both enabled and empowered to voice their views and opinions authentically to [PR] practitioners who are both skilled and motivated to facilitate this process, with respect to social outcomes” (as cited in Johnston & Lane, in press, p. 2). Respondents believe recognition is critical because it indicates respect, and whenever someone is respected, they can cognitively and emotionally respond to messages. Public relations can facilitate it. Under the heading ‘Recognition leads to Reconciliation’, Stoker and Tusinski (2006) write:

...people must overcome differences while at the same time appreciating the differences in others. Society emerges and changes from this recognition and reconciliation. It is also possible that this is at the heart of relationships. The public relations practitioner recognizes the individuality of a particular public and then reconciles, not eliminates, those differences in building a relationship. (pp. 169 - 170)

The second code was **General & inclusive VS. Discriminative & exclusive**. Interviewees regularly discussed this pattern (literal replication). Whether campaigns and messages were governmental or nongovernmental, respondents thought it was significant to address everyone in society and not specific community: “Integration is about everyone in the society, not a particular community” (British Future). Consequently, interviewees identified the inclusive messages as useful while those targeting specific community considered discriminative.

Abdullah Quilliam Society explained:

I have been approached by many organisations in which they aim to run a course in extremism and radicalisation. If I was to publicise a poster says: brothers and sisters, please can you come to the course of extremism? Do you think that you will come! How would you feel? Would you not feel alienated? It almost reminds people to become radicalised! It also reminds people to become extremists! That doesn't help the situation. That is why we are running programmes where participants are not informed that this is a radicalisation course. The government uses a *direct way* which makes people angry, and it stops them from participating in programmes that alienate Muslims.

Integrate UK received PR support from the Home Office and it was the only NGO that used like-minded language when addressing youth. The NGO regarded this as strategic. According to the data, that helped to understand youth's mentality, improve their engagement, and keep them interested in programmes and events: “the language we use in our messages is similar and relatable to the youth's” (Integrate UK). This idea of employing language that corresponded to the receiver's mind (e.g. culture, identity, and life-priorities) and heart (e.g. fear, anxiety and confusion) replicated theoretically across the cases. The analysis gave evidence and inferences in this regard. Islamic NGOs, for instance, used it to address Muslim youth and deliver some of the Islamic clarifications about extremism and social cohesion, with many approving its effectiveness.

4. Dilemmas and Opportunities

The researcher enhanced the analysis' trustworthiness by attending "to all the evidence...[that] was available...and leave[ing] no loose ends" (Yin, 2018, p. 199). The theme **Dilemmas and Opportunities**, thus, included everything valuable left in the data to provide as much evidence and argument as possible. It also reflected some of the researcher's experiences concerning the evaluation of message (medium), public (message receiver), and how that affected the outcomes of these NGOs (sender). The researcher's experiences helped her to form some of these codes by looking into what meanings were still hidden in the data. These codes had their own stories to tell. They added to our understanding of the problems these NGOs encountered and future approaches to resolve them. Thus, large volumes of data were deconstructed to create holistic codes. The researcher applied this coding method, along with the standard generic technique of coding. Saldana (2016) defined holistic coding as "to "chunk" the text into broad topics as a preliminary step before more detailed analysis...[that is,] all data coded...would be collected for closer scrutiny" (pp. 166 - 167). This theme provided answers to some of the research questions and gave clarifications about related matters.

Four codes were selected. The first code was the **Muslims' lack of responsibility**. Islamic NGOs expressed how the Muslim community needed to introduce itself and build society. This code replicated literally across these cases. The holistic code here described a dilemma. Nevertheless, 'middle-order' codes were essential to analyse what kind of opportunities respondents hoped to achieve towards resolving this problem (Saldana, 2016). Interviewees believed that official recognition of the Muslim community as real partners and being self-motivated to promoting social integration could enhance the community's sense of responsibility:

We as Muslims lack in self-promotion and self-publicity, and we lack in passing the message to the wider audience...at the moment, the faith organisations [are] so segregated as [they only] talk at a high level maybe once in a blue moon but not on an everyday basis in terms of social cohesion...the Muslim community [also] lack professionalism in terms of media and PR. We do not have the capability, except for the MCB, of writing articles for publicity material and be able to engage with the mainstream newspaper or media companies. (Abdullah Quilliam Society)

Along the same line, PEP added: “Muslim communities are entitled to make more efforts [to address these concerns]”. Hence, interviewees discussed some ways (opportunities) from which the Muslim community could go forward. The researcher first identified **Islamic Teachings** as a code that replicated literally across all Islamic NGOs. Interviewees recognised it as a way to deliver the message of mutual understanding and social integration to the Muslim community and Muslim youth, in particular. According to respondent (A), the NGO understood what the public gained when they taught the real value of Islam: “by referring to the teachings of Prophet Mohammad [PBUH], we give others the correct view of Islam and how it comes to promote social integration, tolerance, and compassion”. PEP also added: “we promote for the fact that we have to co-exist together. We do that through providing [Islamic teachings such as] a fatwa that considers extremism and terrorism as [violent acts] against our religion”.

At this stage, an answer crystallised for the research question: How do NGOs’ messages and campaigns refer to the Muslim community? These cases demonstrate two approaches. Islamic and non-Islamic NGOs have different attempts to do so. The historical reference is one of them. Taking the anniversary of WW1 to convey the message that Muslims are part of British society can be helpful and creative. The idea behind this campaign can be more acceptable than the BBC’s educational film about immigration. These communication techniques have used history to illustrate their messages. However, the film fails to frame it right. The British public does not want somebody to describe their history that way. They are like anybody else - very proud of their identity. Therefore, to dictate how they should accept things in society,

as the film controversially does, is pointless. It is to establish indirect connections and implied relationships. Furthermore, British Future uses the WW1 anniversary to refer to one of the long-term components in society historically. The NGO also employs remembrance's poppy to land the message of social cohesion. Such campaigns can be helpful, but they are not powerful enough. As the analysis shows, staying general and approaching everyone in society is considered more effective than implying that someone is specifically and exclusively targeted. Addressing a particular community can negatively influence communication efforts taken.

NGOs also use religion to relate to the cultural background of the Muslim community. They employ it to counter extremists' narratives and enhance their public's sense of belonging. The analysis demonstrates that Islamic charities address the question of identity and national loyalty through the extensive explanation of relevant **Islamic Teachings**. Interviewees describe how terrorism, Prevent, and far-right populism make youth more aware of their religion. These three factors mark youths' willingness to learn more about Islam and what answers it offers. NGOs find it a useful way and motivational technique from which they can tackle social integration and radicalisation. Since this process of learning involves communication and engagement, each of faith classes, study circles and discussion groups are the means to get the message delivered. Another code highlighted the significance of the Muslim community to **Remaining Open** to others in society. All NGOs focused on how being open to others' attitudes might bring understanding and tolerance. Muslim NGOs (literal replication) also encouraged the Muslim community that remaining open to others in society could defy stereotypes and challenge media narratives. They revealed that **Remaining Open** was an ongoing process needed to be part of a long-term project toward fighting against extremism and promoting community cohesion. According to Abdullah Quilliam Society:

We should not segregate ourselves. We should go first to people to give da'wa [- to explain what Islam is and clarify misconceptions] and to talk to other people. We should be engaging in their activities without losing our identity, and unless we go forward, nobody will come to us...The Muslim community has a duty to invite and engage with society. They need to go from their bubble in the process of social cohesion. They [also] should play their part in introducing the right image of Islam to the society.

For this respondent, adding new facilities to the mosque meant more opportunities to interact:

We will be able to do more in the future [thanks to the new spaces!], and we will have a museum, social activities, and community classes that will allow us to invite more and therefore engage more with the public.

That seems promising and useful. However, it needs to be on a larger scale, so that every mosque should do. British Future noted that: “one of the problems pro-integration NGOs have had is that integration missions haven’t thought through how to bring together minorities and people who are worried about integration and minorities where we can celebrate important days and moments together”. Besides, **Marginalisation** was the third code that posed a dilemma against building social integration. Interviewees discussed how the government lacked the vision to proceed in a national plan for social cohesion and what opportunities there to seize. One of the **Marginalisation** consequences that repeated across cases (literal replication) was lack of governmental funds except for Integrate UK. According to British Future:

We need politicians who recognise how important integration is. I think there is a misconception at the top level of government and the PM in particular that the harder you are on immigration the more popular you will be which is not true. You have to get the communication right in order to engage the public but also to engage politicians, and make it happen. It is very significant for London to have a deputy mayor whose focus is integration. It is essential for London to do it because it is the most diverse city in Britain. It is also the city where integration doesn’t work badly and so in a way London could show the way for the rest of the country. Other cities [therefore] are going to be having reached other mayors successfully through using a broad collision of voices. So, it is really significant to have somebody who is a champion within the government who can drive that agenda through. We need this person because integration happens locally but, we need a national strategy.

An example can be drawn from the literature to elaborate the code **Marginalisation** further. Sabbagh (2018a) reports Johnson's Islamophobic remarks that refer to fully-veiled Muslim women as 'letterboxes and bank robbers'. He states that Warsi believes this politically incorrect language makes "hate crime more likely" (para. 1). Warsi also describes that Johnson's phrases support framing of otherness in society. Days later, a hate crime occurred in response to these comments where a bus driver in Bristol asked a Muslim mother to take off her niqab (Duell, 2018). The woman explained: "[h]e said I was scary and I was dangerous, and he kept talking about it during the journey. He was insinuating I was going to bomb the bus" (para. 11). This is not what Britain urgently needs. Enlightened and diplomatic political voices are what the future must bring, especially after Brexit. Likewise, Walker (2018) writes that: "Britain is hugely divided across cultural, age and education lines, a major study of national attitudes has concluded, warning of a potential rise in far-right and anti-Islam sentiments unless politicians tackle long-standing disaffections behind the Brexit vote" (para. 2).

The political role is crucial, whether for politicians to take the lead and set an example or for the government to establish national policy. It is also for political institutions to work side by side with different NGOs across the country. In line with the literature, politicians and government are criticised for their inaction to address social integration, tackle extremism of all kinds and prevent radicalisation (Al-azami, 2018; Appleby, 2010; Heath-Kelly, 2013; Klausen, 2009; Mythen & Walklate, 2006; Osborne & Sloan, 2017; Ragazzi, 2016; Vilcu, 2014). Proceeding for better results cannot happen without pro-integration decision and highly diplomatic politicians. A recent report, however, points out that "[t]he Conservatives are 'signalling Islamophobia is acceptable' by failing to act against anti-Muslim sentiment within the party" (Drury, 2019, para. 2). One of the latest examples is the Conservative's

candidate for London's 2020 mayoral election, Shaun Bailey. Sabbagh (2018) describes what the candidate wrote in 2005 regarding pluralism in Britain:

You bring your children to school and they learn far more about Diwali than Christmas. I speak to the people who are from Brent and they've been having Muslim and Hindi days off. What it does is rob Britain of its community. Without our community we slip into a crime-riddled cesspool...A section of Bailey's pamphlet headed "Multiculturalism" [also] sets out his arguments about religion in the UK, and suggests that without the sense of community that comes from shared Christian celebrations Britain had produced a nation of people who would not fight for the country. (para. 5 - 8)

Additionally, Walker (2019a) writes an article titled 'Tory MPs back youth group with apparent links to the US far right'. The article states that some politicians from Conservative party celebrated the views of Turning Point UK, a right-wing group, and use Twitter to support it: "'This could be huge,' said Steve Baker. Patel, a former international development secretary, said: 'A new generation standing up for political & economic freedoms & Conservative values & beliefs. Fantastic!' Another MP, Bernard Jenkin, said: 'This is the future'; while Rees-Mogg said: 'The left has no monopoly on the 'young'' (para. 11 - 12). The analysis revealed a fourth code which was very relevant to what **Marginalisation** implied. This study looked for "understanding the use of public relations in ethnic advocacy and activism [because it] could contribute to the field's knowledge of how public relations strengthens a democratic society, especially in multiethnic countries" (De Moya & Bravo, 2016, p. 244). Nevertheless, the code **Lack of PR support** repeatedly emerged (literal replication) to prove PR was not exploited for social integration purposes. Whether you are politician, governmental body or NGO, knowing exactly how to master words, actions and even inactions matters. As such, the literature describes how political public relations can help. Integrate UK, the only case study that outsources PR, corroborates the literature review as an outreach worker explained: "The PR team come to train Integrate UK staff and do press releases and campaigns". As a result, this NGO demonstrates a more dynamic approach

towards the research problem compared to others, especially concerning youth and message effectiveness.

In a very brief attempt to look into the essence of British public relations, Sir Stephen Tallents, British PR pioneer, considers PR “like all public administration — as an ongoing infinite process of social development...rather than serve[ing] short-term business objectives” (Anthony, 2012, p. 14). Through outsourcing public relations, Integrate UK, being supported by the Home Office, can serve long-term social and political objectives. Interestingly, this NGO frequently uses the word ‘educate’, which is PR mission: “preparatory public relations on planning should go beyond the normal task of explaining the department to the public, and aim at educating public opinion to the right form of reconstruction” (Anthony, 2012, p. 166). Thus, Integrate UK clarified:

We make films about youth experiences to explain radicalisation to young people. Integrate UK educates young people at schools also to teach them by showing them the films and videos. We educate them, and we believe that education in this sense is very crucial.

Employing experts is highly rewarding. Although British Future had no PR team, it admitted that: “it would be helpful to get another person who is a PR professional”. This NGOs’ communication manager of 20-year experience demonstrated a more effective approach in addressing the research problem than other NGOs. New Routes Integration, on the other hand, “doesn’t know how a public relations’ team could help”. Except for British Future and Integrate UK, the rest of cases’ staff were “all volunteers and trustees [who] act as public relations officers in that they speak and promote the work of our NGO wherever they are” (A). It is important, however, to highlight that “[a]ttracting and retaining volunteers is also not an easier job for NGOs only continuous and effective communication can help” (Bhati, 2013, p. 338). In short, the findings generally show a shallow understanding of public relations and how it can benefit these challenging environments. The results also confirm a

lack of funds to hire PR professionals. This PR shortage responds to one of the research questions: Do NGOs have a PR team? If yes, what PR strategies are used to communicate and engage with the Muslim community? The analysis reveals there is no specific PR team in all cases investigated. Perhaps outsourcing public relations by one NGO is a good indication that PR is useful to address community cohesion, radicalisation and extremism. Another positive sign is that this utilisation of PR strategies comes from the Home Office. Acknowledging the importance of PR in such issues from such significant political body can make us think that RICU, for example, is using public relations in countering terrorism and supporting social integration.

Then the question is: why the government do not produce productive messages and policies? While this needs in-depth scrutiny into how RICU works, few clues can be astonishing. Some described RICU as covert government propaganda unit (Cobain, Ross, Evans, & Mahmood, 2016; Robinson, 2016; Travis, 2008). It uses communication in a deceptive way like the PR techniques used in the cold war (James, 2016; Robinson, 2016). The unit is also approaching the Muslim community (Prevent audience) secretly, and its function is an essential part of the Prevent strategy itself (Cobain, Ross, Evans, & Mahmood, 2016a). Hence, the type of campaigns here employed to fight against extremism and radicalisation, but privately and under-covered. According to Cobain, Ross, Evans, and Mahmood (2016b), Help for Syria was a campaign launched by the Unit to help Syrians who fled war. Nevertheless, it was used “as a counter-radicalisation scheme, targeting Britons who want to help fellow Muslims suffering in the war” (para. 4). University students targeted by this campaign did not know the truth, and one student explains: “It’s a big propaganda machine really and using people for government who aren’t necessarily aware that they are being used for government, it’s quite worrying” (Cobain et al., 2016b, para. 23). Surprisingly, “Riccu officials dislike the word propaganda...[and] prefer the term strategic communications...aims to effect behavioural and

attitudinal change” (Cobain et al., 2016, para. 5). However, Robinson (2016) writes the Unit is propagandist and warns that “[t]here are basic principles involved here, for deception and propaganda are at odds with accountability and democracy. They might sometimes be necessary and justified, but their use comes with great dangers and risks” (para. 10).

This study intends to redirect political PR and use it in positive social causes. The theory of change can start from here. The literature and quantitative results show that it is possible and promising. PR academics believe political institutions with agendas in radicalisation, extremism, terrorism and social integration can use political PR to tackle these crises. They also identify propaganda as counterproductive PR technique whereas each of dialogue, socio-cultural PR, relationship management, two-way symmetrical, community engagement, campaigns and framing are the best methods. Mistrust is the outcome of deception and propaganda. On the contrary, the literature reveals that the government is in critical need to sow trust, particularly with the Muslim community, in order to get better results in social cohesion and extremism (Appleby, 2010; Asthana & Walker, 2016; Awan, 2012; Ferguson, 2016; Klausen, 2009; Mythen & Walklate, 2006). Since these concerns are both political and social, the literature also explains how public relations can help apart from its traditional role in dark propaganda and manipulation (Coombs & Holladay, 2014; Gregory & Thurlow, 2017; Hallahan, 2000; Kiouisis & Stromback, 2011, 2014; L’Etang, 2015; Sison, 2017; Taylor, 2000a; Trayner, 2017). RICU defines its work as strategic communication. In the meantime, the literature reveals what strategic communication means in the context of de-radicalisation and extremism. Ćosić et al. (2018) identify strategic communication as that which uses soft power methods and emotionally-based messages. In counter-terrorism, Guler (2012) believes strategic communication should not be confused with propaganda or deception. Instead, it:

...should be based on listening to the audience, being reliable and coherence between “words and deeds.”...Strategic Communication is not a stringent process having a secret agenda which dictates what the target audience must think in order to change the existing perception of the target audience; on the contrary, Strategic Communication is a transparent and sustained persuasion process which, in order to shape the existing perception in a positive manner, shows the target audience what they can additionally think, offering alternatives. (p. 5)

The above clarification of strategic communication nearly echoes Toledano’s (2018) explanation of PR. Toledano finds “that ethical PR practice depends less on the form of communication, and more on transparency, honesty, openness, and respect in the way dialogue or strategic communication are conducted” (p. 131). Moreover, although the code **Lack of evaluation** was not derived from the data to answer a research question, it came as a negative consequence of the absence of PR practitioners. By doing this, the researcher made sure “sufficient information presented to justify confidence in findings and conclusions” (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006, p. 64). In the context of assessing social campaigns and messages, the code **Lack of evaluation** emerged. No evaluations were carried out across cases (literal replication). PEP, however, evaluated programmes based on simple feedback while New Routes Integration used ‘word of mouth’. This code was significant because it was related to message effectiveness. In the lively and continually changing contexts of social integration and radicalisation, messages and plans need to be modified and reframed regularly. This dilemma referred to as a result of insufficient funds. British Future believed:

It is very important to do an evaluation. I will always try to evaluate my message, but it is hard [to do so] because we do not have the money to measure the shifting attitude and do enough attitude evaluation. We know that the message works because we can test the message and see if it reaches the audience and persuades them.

Studying key publics is fundamental — how their attitudes, orientations, affiliations, emotions and concerns are affected is essential. It cannot be just words of mouth; it is not that simple, not at all. In public relations, Thurlow et al. (2017) describe how some practitioners

take a simplistic approach towards evaluation. However, it should be of higher significance to gain the best outcomes: “[s]imple public relations evaluation research against excellence theory is tricky because it may be ineffective in capturing the broader ecology in which the organization is situated” (p. 79). The impact of messages and campaigns can be a defining factor for social integration and extremism because it may change a whole strategy into a more beneficial one. That is a sophisticated and multi-layered process in public relations. Kiouisis et al. (2014) find “that the effectiveness of public relations should be measured not only by message outputs but also outcomes...In a political setting, policy making activities are suggested as an example of such outcome” (p. 617). The **Lack of evaluation** perhaps linked to the very fact that these cases have PR shortage. It is where sufficient funds and strategic plans can produce opportunities. According to Macnamara and Likely, “evaluation requires social science research methods, particularly at outcomes and impact levels” (as cited in Stoeckle, 2018, para. 11).

In what follows, case study design investigates the researcher’s use of theoretical propositions and rival explanations. These analytic strategies guide the researcher during the analysis, where she previously asked herself:

...what you think you might conclude from your case study, and then examining...data fairly to see how they might (or might not) support the conclusion. Any tentative relationship might suggest the kind of analysis that could reinforce the relationship further. (Yin, 2018, p. 168)

The researcher builds this study aims, questions and literature through relying on theoretical propositions. These define how the case study is carried out and analysed, and the type of participants that are the most appropriate sources of information (Yin, 2018). The analysis revolves around two propositions. The first one is: the top-down approach and the absence of real social communication and engagement policy have complicated the status quo of social

cohesion and extremism in Britain. The second is: there are increasingly social and academic calls to explore new communication techniques to tackle these issues and what does that say about the communication strategies used by political institutions and NGOs. The data is investigated in light of these propositions to gain better understandings, judgments and conclusions. Applying this technique means the researcher should examine the data for any plausible rival explanation. Challenging the original argument these propositions provide, if the data support it with evidence, may bring different results to what this study has already found (Patton, 1999).

The first rival explanation is: the observed outcomes were, in fact, the result of some other factors and not the nature of the communication and engagement strategies. The data does not offer sufficient evidence to support this claim. Otherwise, they provide evidence in favour of the opposite: the observed outcomes were, in fact, the result of the nature of communication and engagement strategies. There is a need, however, to differentiate between two major issues. If it concerns the type of strategies used by the government and politicians, then the data and literature support that fact. On the other hand, if it is about describing the methods implemented by NGOs, then there is much more to explain. The observed outcomes are the inability to make social integration work on a national level along with the growing levels of hate crimes and misunderstanding. Nevertheless, the case studies prove they are working to make things as achievable as possible. They are aware of the research problem and willing to exploit opportunities to make progress. Every case seems to stand tall, committed to its duties. However, that does not look enough. Several obstacles disrupt their efforts, some of which are related to insufficient funds and others can be matters such as lack of cooperation among NGOs. Another reason is also associated with the way communication and engagement activities are planned, managed and executed. The second plausible rival explanation is: the observed outcomes are the result of some factors which have intervened in the process of

carrying out strategies and plans. NGOs make no remarks that would contribute to this explanation. It is clear how these case studies implement their activities, and the observed effects are the ultimate results of this implementation. Interviewees discuss each action they take, whether it is a campaign, discussion group, dialogue or engagement and interaction activities. The question is: Did they do it right? Such inquiry may seem beyond the scope of this study, but it also gives clues to conclude that they are not doing their work as it should be. Consequently, there are no specific factors that have intervened in the process of carrying out plans. However, some external causes have negatively influenced their strategies, such as how British Future's attempt to approach the anxious middle through some news outlets has failed.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORK

As we need to come up with a logical deduction now, this thesis has stemmed from academic thrust to examine PR and political PR in non-traditional contexts. Willis (2016), for example, wants “PR to take a wider role in helping society tackle wicked problems” (as cited in Roper & Hurst, in press, p. 8). Given that “[a] more productive view of power [in PR] requires an understanding of the context in which public relations operates; that is, as a socially embedded profession” (Edwards, 2006, p. 229), the researcher responds to calls from which new techniques are required to support social integration. It happens in a time when there is an urgent need to resolve extremism, multiculturalism and social cohesion in Britain. This thesis meets such demands which are also globally challenging. In addition, the literature proves (Kaya 2018; Osler, 2009; Ragazzi, 2016; Turner, 2006) the current British approach to extremism and pluralism has failed. Consequently, it is to find real solutions by giving evidence to support the central premise that we can use political PR as a tool for social integration. By putting this assumption forward, any further consequences resulted from not following it can be avoided. Britain will practically benefit from pursuing that premise in the future. Mindful of this, the research considers a variety of PR strategies to redirect political PR into recognising its social and cultural responsibilities. It is to figure out how political PR can move from spinning and manipulation to perform as a mechanism for nation-building. The contribution of this study revolves around these objectives and answers these inquiries.

At such a difficult time, this thesis has shown how matters as sensitive as social integration and radicalisation need viewing in light of far-right populism, racism and framing of otherness. These topics are highly complex. Therefore, this study has addressed them strategically putting them in the realm of political PR techniques. This chapter briefly restates

the main concepts that this research project has highlighted, such as far-right populism and politically correct rhetoric of inclusion to better understand the research problem. In consideration of the research objectives, this study has approached the most appropriate respondents. The questionnaire explained how to redirect political PR, whereas semi-structured interviews investigated NGOs' policies to tackle radicalisation and social integration. This section highlights what messages those participants want to hear us in a way, and how their answers have added new knowledge to these areas of research. Despite research limitations, the low response rate being the major challenge here, it can be argued the results are valid and generalizable. The findings reveal that Britain is in a social and cultural journey to resolve long-standing issues of extremism and pluralism, bridge communication gaps, and integrate communities. Alongside some of the conclusions, this section also suggests a trajectory from which academics can pursue future research.

1. A new responsibility for political PR (RQ 1)

The answer to the central research question: 'can political public relations be used as a tool for social integration, with particular reference to the Muslim community in the UK?' is decided — political PR 'can' be redirected from spin doctoring into supporting community cohesion in Britain. Using the questionnaire statement 'I believe political PR can help to renovate the contemporary approach of political communication turning it into a more social and cultural-oriented one' as a point of departure, this thesis finds a very positive indication towards applying political PR in the domains of political communication, social integration and extremism. It implies that renovating political PR by diverting it from spin doctoring into supporting the nation's social texture is possible. Hiebert proposes a similar progressive function for PR by stating that "the only possible solution [for ensuring fair access to the public sphere] is public relations, not in terms of spin or propaganda but in terms of

developing real public relationships in the public sphere” (as cited in Edwards, 2016, pp. 64 - 65). Correspondingly, PR literature “is witnessing a ‘socio-cultural turn’...where alternative explorations of the profession have adopted a much broader conceptualization of PR and focused on the dimensions of power inherent in PR practice and theory” (Munshi & Edwards, 2011, p. 356). Kruckeberg and Starck (1988) also write that some of the PR functions “in restoring and maintaining a sense of community...[are to] help community members to overcome alienation, make organizations aware of their role in creating a sense of community...engage in self-fulfilling communication...and foster personal relationships” (as cited in Kim & Cho, 2019, p. 299). According to Heath, this result can be a declaration “for public relations to take the lead in creating a ‘fully functioning society’ characterized by robust and ethical debate” (as cited in Edwards, 2016, p. 64). The finding echoes the literature which explains PR experts should work as social and cultural agents (Benecke et al., 2017; Gregory & Thurlow, 2017; Sison, 2017). That takes us back to how PR pioneers used public relations’ tools in early-twentieth-century Britain, which can make refocusing political PR even easier. During the Great Depression, PR helped to develop public life in Britain:

Initially prompted by the slump, the wider ethos of British public relations in the interwar period would directly inform the creation of postwar organisations such as UNESCO...[and innovations that ranged]...[f]rom the documentary film movement to the establishment of Listener Research at the BBC and the staging of the Festival of Britain. (Anthony, 2012, pp. 1 - 2)

Regarding the originality of the research question and under-researched nature of it, that conclusion is revolutionary to the industry. It allows political PR to develop from advocating political actors and a nation’s image into supporting social and public causes. This is while bearing in mind that in PR history:

Although evidence of advocacy was found in the studies examining religion and business, it predominated in the studies of the education, nonprofit, and reform sector and, to a lesser extent, the politics and government sector. Both sectors targeted public policy positions; the former, however, also advocated for social issues, while the latter tended to advocate for a person or nation. (Lamme & Russell, 2010, p. 340)

That means future research can investigate the implementation of political PR in political institutions which want better levels of grass-roots' engagement and advocate social matters in Britain. Furthermore, the thesis shows that the rise of right-wing populism (Valasik & Reid, 2018), consequent far-right political discourse of exclusion (Haynes, 2018), sense of cynicism political correctness generates (L. Jones, 2018; Sparrow, 2017), increasing levels of political incorrectness (Western, 2015), framing of otherness, and increasingly challenging matter of framing effective strategies for countering terrorism and enhancing social integration (Appleby, 2010; Ferguson, 2016; Trayner, 2017) can all indicate the importance of using political PR techniques. Viewed in this light, it is relevant to describe the difficulties which are now looming in the British political and social sphere:

Politics is raw in Britain today. Remainers rage against Brexiters and vice versa. Pensioners are set against millennials; nationalists against immigrants; populists against elites; rural traditionalists against city liberals. Party politics is characterised by contempt and dogma....On seemingly every fundamental issue, the country feels even more divided than it did in the turbulent 70s and 80s. There are furious battles over free speech, minority rights, the size of the state, the shape of the economy, social and cultural values, even the truth and selection of relevant political facts. In many other democracies, from the US to Italy to Australia, politics has become just as tribal, fragmented and apparently out of control. Opposing factions no longer seem able to talk to each other, or even to agree on what they might talk about. (Beckett, 2018, para. 2 - 3)

Scholars believe PR differs from spin doctoring. The former's role includes strategic education, planning and researching, building relationships, utilising media and setting goals and communication methods (Coombs & Holladay, 2014; Gjerazi, 2015; Goltz, 2012; L'Etange, 2013; Ribeiro, 2014). Spin doctoring is not related also to specific professions,

which means that someone is capable of communicating and acting skilfully with a particular set of attributes (Esser, 2008; Fall, 2008). In this sense, spin-doctors have just ‘outsourced’ PR tactics (Frenkel-Faran & Lehman-Wilzig, 2007). This is significant for two different reasons. It can again encourage political institutions with agendas in social integration and extremism to strategically invest in political PR. It may also trigger interest for academics to follow in the researcher’s footsteps and employ public relations in similar and game-changing contexts.

The researcher encourages PR scholars to apply positioning theory to extremism and social inclusion’s fields of study. To prepare the public for social integration plan, deep-rooted and dominant stereotypes and emotional appeals that are attributed to pluralism together with racist views need rethinking and repositioning. Positioning theory uses ‘speech act/action and storyline’ (James, 2014) to create a position of issue PR is keen to address. In the context of this study, it is to question the dominance of specific notions and emotions like fear, hatred and suspect community trying to ‘deliberatively’ declare there is an alternative pathway for moving forward (James, 2014). Hence, investigating what positioning theory can add to combating extremism and improving community cohesion is intriguing. Researching reconciliation in public relations would also add to our knowledge. This concept is still novel in PR (Stoker & Tusinski, 2006; Toledano, 2016). With the significance of social integration, radicalisation and extremism, PR scholars can investigate further how the industry reconciles relationships in multi-cultural societies.

2. Importance and usage of theoretical frameworks for creating and delivering the message of integration (RQ 2)

The literature investigates how political PR spin-related theories can be seen from a socially-constructive approach. Additionally, the data describes the most recommended

communication techniques and PR models, which provides an answer to the following question: ‘what PR approaches and communication theories can be employed to support social integration and counter extremism?’ from two different perspectives. Firstly, it sheds light on the current problematic approach that has caused social segregation and extremism. To remedy this, it secondly highlights the most relevant academic and pragmatic paradigms to tackle the research problem. A central conclusion, for example, identifies the top-down approach as a counterproductive political plan. As a result, Prevent Strategy is considered ineffective. This finding brings this study closer to the literature where similar outcome confirmed. Prevent is recognised as ‘toxic brand’ (Halliday & Dodd, 2015), ill-conceived and ‘flawed’ strategy (Awan, 2012; Hill, 2017; Osborne & Sloan, 2017; Thomas-Johnson, 2018), and counterproductive (Ragazzi, 2016). Others blame the top-down approach being the reason why multiculturalism and social integration have failed in Britain (Kaufmann & Harris, 2014). Instead, scholars encourage down-top strategy to establish ‘greater avenues’ for communication and discussion (Hill, 2017). This finding can trigger fundamental changes in current British top-down policy and inspire useful solutions if the government takes such evidence seriously. This is highly significant because Ben Wallace, minister of state for security, has decided to re-evaluate Prevent but “threw down the gauntlet to critics of the strategy to produce ‘solid evidence of their allegations’, accusing them of using ‘distortion and spin’” (Grierson & Dodd, 2019, para. 3).

On the other hand, communication and engagement are the most appropriate tools to enhance social integration. The findings take the concept of public engagement into a higher level of involvement. It calls the government to take actions on the ground. In line with this fact, the outcomes deem the asymmetrical model of communication resulted from the top-down approach as un-strategic. It has caused imbalanced relationships between those tasked with promoting social inclusion and the general population. Consequently, what is highlighted

here are listening and responding, socially and cultural-oriented type of politics, engaging and empowering, co-creating strategies, dialogue, relationship management, the two-way symmetrical model of communication, emotionally-based communication, framing and rhetoric, multi-levels kind of interaction, inter-community projects and cooperation. The literature reveals similar conclusions where “[m]ore detailed information from the Muslim community is an important future goal and could help build...trust” (Awan, 2012, p. 1177); “[t]he Muslim community needs to be part of the British government’s conversation concerning its strategy for confronting extremism in a more meaningful way” (Al-azami, 2018, para. 22); “greater platforms for young Muslims must be established to enable them to develop a sense of belonging and to answer questions of identity” (Hill, 2017, p. 10); “the government [needs] to adopt a “positive collaborative approach”...[because] integration should be a “two-way street” ” (Ibrahim, 2018, para. 2) and finally radicalisation in Britain “cannot be addressed without active community involvement....[which means a]...need to improve communication with Muslim communities, to find ways to marginalize the extremists and, ultimately, to promote social integration” (Klausen, 2009, pp. 408 - 410).

That makes implementing political PR to tackle the research problem more justifiable. Scholars demonstrate PR professionals are cultural and social intermediaries (Benecke et al., 2017; Erturk, 2015; Sison, 2017), change agents (Coombs & Holladay, 2014; L’Etang, 2015), activists and advocates (Saffer & Taylor, 2013; Smith & Ferguson, 2016). Those activists’ “major tools are listening, sharing experiences, empathy, [and] understanding and respect for the Other” (Toledano, 2016, p. 291). PR experts also act in favour of nation-building agendas (Anthony, 2015, 2012; Chaka, 2013; Kiouisis & Stromback, 2011, 2014; Park & Cho, 2009; Taylor, 2000a; Toledano & Mckie, 2007). They are known for “having the ability to set the agenda for political discussions; influencing the evolving discourse on how issues are discussed, both publicly and in elite circles; and being able to quiet undesirable issues”

(Lounasmeri, 2018, p. 386). According to Kruckeberg and Starck (1988), PR is ““an active attempt to restore and maintain [a] sense of community”” (as cited in Kim & Cho, 2019, p. 300). Similarly, Edwards (2012) thinks:

Public relations... involves the production of discourses that generate legitimacy for a particular point of view and sideline or negate alternative perspectives. It therefore contributes to the construction of social hierarchies by attaching particular symbolic values and interpretations to different positions, and producing tangible material effects as a consequence. As Bourdieu argues, ‘[U]tterances are not only...signs to be understood and deciphered; they are also signs of wealth, intended to be evaluated and appreciated, and signs of authority, intended to be believed and obeyed’. (pp. 441 - 442)

In short, one of the best practical applications for this result is to see the government and political institutions plan and act differently. This conclusion can also influence future investigations into what the Muslim community thinks of communication and engagement efforts, whether from NGOs or political organisations. This result connects to the research concepts of racism and Islamophobia, which can prevent the political establishment from using bottom-up strategy as well.

Social cohesion and extremism will feature as a political and academic interest for years to come. Employing political PR to address these concerns, therefore, means PR professionals will need more understanding of diversity and race in PR. This is particularly necessary as public relations’ scholarship shows:

...there is plenty of work to be done in developing a more robust approach to race in/and PR among PR scholars...[who]...need to be prepared to take risks with race...[as] [i]t is still of marginal interest in the field. (Munshi & Edwards, 2011, p. 362)

Meanwhile, Munshi and Edwards (2011) believe that “[a]udiences that matter, those that are difficult to reach, and those who have the authority to speak to them may be understood in terms of the racialized elite–racialized non-elite dialectic” (pp. 363 - 364). According to the authors, a hierarchical and racial relationship disengages both parties and raises questions like

“How can PR create connections between these groups that are based on authentic understanding rather than stereotypical identities?” (p. 364). This thesis reveals that British top-down policy does not treat the audience that matters as equal partners, which has caused the communication gap. It has also risked Prevent “being labeled too weak because its core focus of community cohesion and partnerships had been blurred by the many Prevent programs that did not directly influence policy decisions on tackling extremism” (Awan, 2012, p. 1164). This thesis has responded to Munshi and Edwards’ (2011) question above. Nevertheless, there is also a need for PR scholars:

To investigate race in the profession...to recognize the unique experiences that varied contexts produce....[It is because] theoretical discussions are weakened by the lack of empirical work that demonstrates the material reality of the theoretical arguments made about race as process in/and PR. This leads to a disconnect between theory (based on the rational and emotional experience of race as process) and practice (based on a rational understanding of race as category). (Munshi & Edwards, 2011, pp. 357 – 362)

3. Changing perceptions (RQ 3)

The questionnaire respondents contribute to answering the research question ‘how can political PR change the British public’s perception of fear of the other to encourage engagement with the Muslim community?’ Initially, the answers to the previous research questions provide relevant insights into the third one. By acknowledging that political PR can be employed as a mechanism for social integration, it implies the industry’s techniques are capable of making changes in the British public’s perceptions. According to the quantitative results, it is a matter of implementing political PR in political institutions with agendas in social integration, countering radicalisation, extremism, and terrorism. The findings highlight that the following approaches needed for this change to take place: dialogue, socio-cultural PR, relationship management, two-way symmetrical, community engagement, campaigns, framing, cultural adaptation, emotionally-based communication, terminology & rhetoric,

micro and macro-levels of interaction, outreach interaction and down-top model. This result is similar to how the literature explains that political PR techniques can change attitudes, stereotypes, frame emotional appeals and more. Johnston and Lane (in press), for example, describe that PR community engagement (CE) projects “help to address complex and sometimes ‘wicked’ problems involving diverse community groups and settings” (p. 1). The literature also recognises engagement in PR as a tool for reconciling relationships (Stromback & Kioussis, 2011), a mechanism for collaboration (Dhanesh, 2017), and a set of powerful actions and interactions (Ewen, 1996; Marston, 1963; Taylor & Kent, 2014). Besides, each of dialogic and two-way models of communication in political PR “are positively associated with citizen–political party POPR [political organization-public relations] states, attitudes, and supportive behaviors” (Painter, 2015, p. 802). Additionally, ‘PR’ization of politics’ means that PR “professionals fundamentally operate as frame strategists, who strive to determine how situations, attributes, choices, actions, issues and responsibility should be posed to achieve favourable objectives” (Frenkel-Faran & Lehman-Wilzig, 2007, p. 430). Similarly, Choy (2018) finds that “[i]f political public relations can get through the first layer candidate to public communication – of conveying the socio-cultural relevance of the candidate to online public – the scale, depth, and networked multi-layers of public-public canvassing can then be garnered” (p. 759). Furthermore, under the headline ‘the rhetorical features of the current British political discourse: constructing a culture of fear’, the literature reveals how PRPs employ some emotional appeals in political campaigns to trigger certain beliefs, and this is why they “build public knowledge by understanding which foundations to evoke” (Trayner, 2017, p. 128).

4. Using media platforms (RQ 4)

The media are central in the struggle to win the British public’s hearts and minds throughout the propaganda of integration. Accordingly, answering the research question: ‘how do NGOs

use different media platforms to engage with the public and young Muslims?' would help us understand how these organisations are employing the media to get their message heard. Unfortunately, the role of media outlets and the way they are exploited by these case studies are disappointing. A significant inference sheds light on the negative role of media outlets. They are instigating hate and fear instead of adopting a reasonable approach in addressing multiculturalism in Britain. The outcomes indicate the media need to be more aware of its social duties. The significance of this result can be through using public relations to impose some control over the media, seeking a more responsible way of broadcasting and publishing stories. It is also by prioritising news and columns which promote a sense of community cohesion and prevent radicalisation. The current un-strategic media approach can make exploiting PR techniques more necessary. The literature highlights public relations' strategic feature of employing media successfully.

PR professionals can redirect the way political PR uses media and journalists for spin purposes towards nation-building means and goals. Political public relations is known for packaging politics for media presentation (Esser, 2008; Fall, 2008; Franklin, 2004; Frenkel-Faran & Lehman-Wilzig, 2007; Gjerazi, 2015), directing media and journalism to build the nation (Toledano & Mckie, 2007) – bearing in mind that “British journalism is reluctant to communicate and engage with the public “from less well-off backgrounds. ‘Indeed,’...‘journalism has had a greater shift towards social exclusivity than any other profession’” (Viner, 2017, para. 47), and establishing “the salience of political priorities in media coverage, public opinion, and policymaking” (Kioussis et al., 2014, p. 516). The result encourages the government to apply political PR techniques when addressing the nation through media platforms, preparing it for social integration. With deep-rooted stereotypes and frames of hatred, such a mission seems challenging. However, public relations demonstrates how it can normalise what appears taboo and thorny topic. One of the most successful

examples is Bernays' *Torches of Freedom*. Apart from the negative connotation of propaganda, Bernays succeeded in normalising how women can and should smoke cigarettes (Christensen, 2012). That was in a time when smoking for women was taboo and would suggest some immoral meanings (Amosa & Haglund, 2000). In this sense, Bernays defines modern propaganda as "a consistent, enduring effort to create or shape events to influence the relations of the public to an enterprise, idea or group" (as cited in Christensen, 2012, para. 2). Therefore, the propaganda of integration (Toledano & Mckie, 2007) can be a progressive conception from which political PR can move forward. In PR, according to Kruckeberg and Starck (1988): "[c]ommunity-building scholars perceive both organizations and the public as components of communities and argue that public relations practitioners must build and maintain a community by seeking and facilitating discourse" (as cited in Kim & Cho, 2019, p. 299). In the context of social media, NGOs show an underestimation of the role of digital media in supporting community cohesion and countering radicalisation online. This echoes the literature where the turn in PR from using social media for marketing purposes to building relationships is rarely used (Smith, Smith, & Knighton, 2018). However, these platforms are engagement tools in political PR used to not only build candidates' image and communicate with the public about what concerns them the most "but also [political actors use cultural discourse on social media to] have place-based and relational relevance for the public" (Choy, 2018, p. 8). It is why "public relations practitioners should focus on reducing damage through strategic crisis communication [that is, framing effective online messages]" (Ip et al., 2018, p. 790). What is worth mentioning is that those NGOs who self-diagnose as having funding issues can benefit from social media. It can be argued, however, that the political landscape is being manipulated via social media, which means framing crisis is no longer a job for traditional media only, but something bloggers and online news media can also do (Ip et al., 2018). As long as radicalisation is concerned, the literature also considers it

very alarming that young people are relying on social media to gain information because of the regular dissemination of fake and manipulated content on social media (Ott, 2016). Political public relations, however, is aware of this vulnerability and can form publics' awareness as well as influence citizens' participation through different media platforms such as social media (Avery & Graham, 2013; Park & Cho, 2009; Sweetser, 2011; Toledano & Mckie, 2007). One of the useful implementations for this result is to make fundamental changes into how the government tackle radicalisation, extremism and social integration online.

5. Public relations' support (RQ 5)

The answer to the research question: Do NGOs have a PR team? If yes, what PR strategies are used to communicate and engage with the Muslim community? is obvious – all case studies do not have a professional PR team. One of these NGOs is getting PR support from the Home Office, however. While the answer to this research question is 'No', the fact that most of these organisations are carrying out their communication and engagement techniques without a PR team is highly indicative. It means the professional PR support that should be given to address some of the most challenging problems in our time is unavailable. As this is a matter of funding for most of these NGOs, British Future and Integrate UK – which showed some professionalism in their activities – are still not using PR as it should be employed in such very complex settings. This contradicts the literature where scholars believe PR is necessary for society – practitioners are social activists who “will preference employees' and external publics' discourse over that of management, will make the most humane decision in a particular situation, and will promote new ways of thinking and problem solving through dissensus and conflict” (Holtzhausen & Voto, 2002, p. 64); they work in culturally diverse environments whether in the context of nation-building (Anthony, 2012; Chaka, 2013; Kiouisis & Stromback, 2011, 2014; Park & Cho, 2009; Toledano & Mckie, 2007), or CSR

(Molleda & Ferguson, 2004; Ruiz-Mora, Lugo-Ocando, & Castillo-Esparcia, 2016; Saffer, Taylor, & Yang, 2013); and build relationships, soothe stress among minorities, create awareness about multiculturalism, and resolve cultural patterns (Taylor, 2000a). The literature also discusses how PR practitioners should be culturally knowledgeable – “*those communicators who possess the skills to combine communication skills and cultural knowledge within their work context...[are] ‘shining stars’*”. But it appears, sadly, that the ‘shining stars’ were a rare breed” (Clift, 2018, para. 6). Here comes the government’s responsibility to seek, perhaps train, and hire those ‘shining stars’. It can be concluded that professionalism is all that we need to address the research focus. Additionally, this conclusion would necessarily invite the government to learn from Britain’s PR pioneers who used the industry “in early twentieth-century Britain...as a kind of cultural Keynesianism” (Anthony, 2012, p. 1). Other key influencers like NGOs or anyone else who are addressing the research problem should also engage with political PR. The literature reveals political PR professionals are encouraged to use the relational approach and extend social capital to include others in the form of a coalition (Saffer et al., 2013). It can be suggested that political PR practitioners in Britain may create a coalition of political institutions with NGOs, community leaders, and youth activists to promote social cohesion and counter extremism. In this sense, future researchers may also apply citizens’ political PR (CPPR) to tackle social integration. Krishna, Connaughton, and Linabary (2020) define CPPR as :

...strategies and choices devised by organized, local citizens to enhance inter- and/or intra-group relations among conflicting groups.... Arguments for everyday citizens, in our case informally organized, enacting public relations, especially diplomacy, are not new; diplomacy manifesting as ‘citizen diplomacy,’ – individuals acting as ‘diplomats’...opens the doors for differentiated types of relationship connections being tapped as part of relational diplomacy...including between and among individuals, groups, and communities. (pp. 1 - 3)

6. *Relationship management (RQ 6)*

The case studies have explained ‘how do NGOs manage their relationships with the public effectively?’ They rely on the type of activities that involve engagement and interaction to strategically manage their relationships with their public. Open dialogue, exchanging views and engaging in actions are how relationships managed between the two. Here, each of intercommunity projects, cross-cultural dialogue, open dialogue, micro and macro Interaction (Interaction & empowerment, Engagement & understanding, Cooperation & deradicalization) and Social campaigns are the ways followed to deliver messages and manage relationships. These activities indicate engagement is significant for NGOs. In accordance with the literature, PR scholars believe in the importance of engagement as “many local governments in the United States have pursued direct public engagement to address local issues, generate support, and develop the community” (Kim & Cho, 2019, p. 297). Others also explain that PR CE projects “help to address complex and sometimes ‘wicked’ problems involving diverse community groups and settings” (Johnston & Lane, in press, p. 1). Talking about ‘relationship management’, however, the literature shows what this approach means in political PR. Stromback and Kiouisis (2011) describe political PR as:

...the management process by which an organization or individual actor for political purposes, through purposeful communication and action, seeks to influence and to establish, build, and maintain beneficial relationships with its key publics to help support its mission and achieve its goals. (p. 8)

This is what social integration needs – a more thought-through strategic approach into how governmental bodies and actors manage relationships with the key publics and the general population to support social integration in Britain. Specifically, a PR “approach to nation building focuses on relationships between governments and publics as well as the creation of

new relationships between previously unrelated publics” (Taylor, 2000a, pp. 183 - 184). Indeed, the process of enhancing community cohesion and fighting against extremism is very complicated and can be seen from a nation-building perspective. Whether the authorities are aware of that or not, this finding can only highlight the significance of political PR in the struggle to unite the nation in order to have better results in countering-radicalisation and terrorism, which is an original contribution to knowledge.

7. Cultural appropriateness (RQ 7)

Knowing exactly how to address the key publics is critical in PR – it is how the profession plans and wins its campaigns. Given the worrying status of social integration, multiculturalism and extremism in the UK, the answer to the research question ‘how do NGOs’ messages and campaigns refer to the Muslim community?’ is unsurprising – the way campaigns are referring to British Muslims is un-strategic enough. One NGO employed history to illustrate the message of community cohesion. British Future used the WW1 anniversary and remembrance’s poppy to refer to the Muslim community. The analysis shows that approaching everyone in society is considered more effective than implying that someone exclusively targeted, however. The other Islamic NGOs employed religion to counter extremists’ narratives and enhance their public’s sense of belonging. Nationally speaking, it can be concluded that such attempts to connect to British Muslims are unsuccessful. Instead, the literature review reveals that “the main goal of political PR is the use of media outlets to communicate specific political views, solutions, and interpretations of issues in the hope of garnering public support for political policies or campaigns” (Trammell, 2006, p. 402). The next step, therefore, is the utilisation of the industry’s strategic techniques, whether at the governmental and political level or in supporting NGOs’ efforts all over the country. This study’s final message is a warning to us all about considering these conclusions

as only academic while the researcher makes every possible effort to address the research problem and bring a more pragmatic solution.

Appendix



Ms Sarah Ahmad Mahmoud Okour
Fontessa House
51 – 57 Upper Northgate Street
Chester
CH1 4EF

22 January 2018

Dear Sarah,

Thank you for your response to the Faculty of Arts and Humanities Ethics Committee following your submission which was considered on 13 December 2017.

I can confirm your application has now been approved and you are therefore free to pursue the project in the knowledge that it has been approved by the University.

If you have any queries about this letter or your next steps please get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wayne Morris'.

Professor Wayne Morris
Chair of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities Research Ethics Committee

cc: Dr Simon Roberts

British Future (Face-to-face Interview)

We speak to everybody as part of our policy in this NGO, engaging views of all sections in British society. Integration is about everyone not about specific community the society .we are working with people who are already committed to anti-prejudice. One of the things that are particularly anti-prejudice often do from NGOs that they often work very well for people who are already committed to anti-prejudice in twitter campaigns about anti-prejudice those NGOs are not doing well as they do not reach people who need to be reached which is people who do not feel so confident about multicultural Britain they are not sure if it will work .we do a lot of research about public attitudes to immigration and national identity and we classified people based on our research into 3 main groups.

Primarily based on their attitude on immigration .25% roughly of the country who we call migration liberals who feel positive about the benefits immigration brought to Britain they think that multi-faced society works will they tend to be younger not all ethnic groups fall into this category actually.25% rejectionists they do not feel immigration is good for Britain they are very worried about the impact of it they closed the border and don't want migration into Britain who voted leave and from UKIP. And then in the middle we have got the group which we call the anxious middle which is actually most of Britain.50% are anxious and worried. Recognize immigrations brought benefits for the economy and society but they are worried about how it is managed. Those are worried if Britain feels like Britain anymore, why are many people speak different languages in the town. this group isn't racists they see pressures on benefits and we think that quit a lot of PR and communication doesn't speak to them ,it speaks to the 25% liberals who are already on side .it is how we understand and speak to the anxious middle .so we want to find out what they think we want to find out what messages and what communications actually appeal to them .we do research we think we need to understand the public before you talk to them .if you just work on your assumptions of what is likely to work then you may get it wrong.

So we do a lot of focus groups with the anxious middle and the cross section of the public we do a lot of opinion poll as well and segment that to really understand what is the anxious middle thinks we are just in a big project called the national conversation on immigration 120 meetings are being conducted in many areas in Britain asking people on particular what should Britain do about immigration after we leave the EU and when we talk whit them about immigration they mostly talk about integration actually whether that is integration of people from different faith backgrounds or integration of people who come to Britain from other countries .people want to talk about it and they don't actually close or shut down the conversation when integration is discussed. They just want someone to listen to them and they can sometimes have a tendency amongst liberal communicators to just shut down those conversations and say that person is racist am not having a conversation with them and actually yes when people are racists you do need to call them out and say that is not accepted and not the right language to be used. But to have anxieties about immigration and how we live together is very different and actually we need to have these conversations even if sometimes they are quiet difficult and taught people and find out what they think and that is our rethought really of how we do have a less them and us conversations and finding a way of talking about these issues which is important to the majority of people because if we already got 25 of liberals on side and then you can get those anxious middle then

you have got a majority and then it is much easier when you can know that you have got 60-70% of the public is behind you then politicians to say this is what we need to do and the

public would back you .because politicians want to do things that are popular . They do not want to take minority positions. we see it today with Sajid Javid .taking action on the afghan interpreters it was going to be hugely popular and it was crazy thee government hadn't done it before it was welcomed by the daily mail he did something positive to migrants to Britain and building and those collisions of support reaching out people who are not your most vocal supporters of immigration and finding messages that would appeal to them we think is really important particularly because we have got conservative government so we need to come up with things that it actually is going to do .it is good to campaign and to shout sometimes but having measures that actually reach across and untapped supporters .for us we want to find out how people think and do we talk to them in a way that engages them rather than shutting them out. The big thing for us is really is understanding people and open up conversations. we need politicians who recognize how important integration is.

And I think there is a misconception at the top level of government and the PM in particular that the harder you are on immigration the more popular you will be.. which is not true and also integration is not difficult topic and actually most people would agree on what we can do to make things better to make integration work then we will be able to speak the same language which is very important providing more English classes specially for people who are newly arrived is really important and even people who are quiet anxious about immigration recognize that and they want people to speak English and so promoting more contact between people .the real answer is when people actually mix and get to know each other you build bridges and you see this in a way that people approach new waves of immigration so for example we went to south Hampton few years ago when Bulgarians and Romanians got the right to work in the UK, people were anxious about how those would be like ,polish people however ,got a lot of polls living there said that was fine ,there was a good percentage of mixing there and parents got to know each other because of their children at schools and this is because people get to know each other's .and similarly with British ethnic minorities as well once people have got to know each other then they feel much more comfortable so they also they much more talking to the Asian person and the group as well I mean "I don't mean you when I'm talking about immigrants ,you lived here forever. We know you.

It is about the new people and it is the fear of the other so promoting more contact with people is the obvious ways to improve things .you have to get the communication right in order to engage the public but also to engage politicians and make it happen you need to have an integration strategy that is committed to bring people together and we have done a hole piece of research in the west midlands about attitudes of race and changing attitudes to race we were talking with people about how to make a difference and what everyone said regardless of their attitudes of immigration is its children mixing in schools that will make a difference .that kids growing up in a multipath classrooms and the kids do not know this which means that they form friendships with people from different backgrounds and then the parents get to know each other and that is how integration happen. Cannot just rely on schools but you can get adults to talk to each other as well and I think one of the problems is pro-integration missions

have not thought through how to bring together minorities and people who are worried about integration and minorities so you have a sort of multicultural festival .celebrating important days and moments together .for Britain it is something that feels very present with the anxious middle and but to have minorities and new arrivals in Britain taking part in this

would offer huge amount of reassurance them and bring contact between people who are worried about integration and the people who do not think they should be worried about it.

We have contact with youth .we are working with an organization called new horizons in British Islam and with them we run a network of young Muslims voices who want to make a difference on integration and social cohesion so through them we have some contact with Muslim youth and we have also been doing a big project ,history is very important in the British sense of identity so we used the anniversary of the ww1 to highlight how Muslims were part 1 and half millions of Indian soldiers were part of the British army back then and we did a research and found out that many people do not know this .400 thousand of them were Muslims. these campaigns are trying to make knowledge more widely known. Poppy hijab was controversial but the point of it was to find a way that really project to a wide audience particularly to this anxious middle audience. We have got a long history together and it is a shared history and it was a message that reaches across and says we have got a lot in common than you think. And I think it succeeded in doing that and we worked closely with made a big efforts to do that.

My background is in communications mainly for NGOs and charities in media, no PR practitioners, there is a former journalist as well but working with agencies can be quite difficult .you would do it alone if you have a good and sophisticated theory of change getting an agency to get a heads around that and to have a long relationship with them.so we do everything in house .it would be helpful to get another person who is PR professional .if you want to reach abroad audience a London think tank is not always the best place to do it .so we want to form partnerships with other organizations and we have worked really hard on usual partnerships . Those organizations who have reached this anxious middle audience and bringing them together with organizations with ethnic minorities and faith minorities. is really important because you can reach much more broadly to people.

That is harder in agency again to be nice if we are a bigger team but we are really small. Even the team is small the theory of change that we have is good . and it is because well researched that we have done the work talking to people so we know our messages worked because we tested it and I think it would be good if more NGOs did that. There is budget reasons because its expensive to do message testing , if you use an agency it costs 5 thousand pounds to run the focus groups. That is really expensive and opinion polls also .No, totally independent. Our founding comes from trusting foundations.

We haven't really particularly discuss prevent in our discussion groups. In that we are often so policy focused I suppose .we have not discuss prevent. It has a brand problem. With the section of society. It is doing a good work as well. And the principle of trying to connect to people before they seduced of extremism is a good one . it had some issues of how it is done that but I mean we have not very outspoken about prevent.

He believes that asking a question of how do you think prevent should be considered .is it helpful to maintain a down-top approach in this regard? He answered that he thinks that this question is a policy question rather than a communication question.

We have a main and more focus on integration rather than extremism .we do an anti-prejudice project at the moment with Facebook. We wish to engage with the government and Sara khan in campaigns and works in integration policies with her background she has got a lot of knowledge and she knows what she is doing and it will be interesting to engage with

her .and I think she started off by taking the right approach. Which is looking of all forms of extremism. And saying that this is not Muslim problem this is about far-right extremism as well .just as much and we need to tackle all forms of extremism . I think the government has shifted its language quite a lot. Finsbury park for example was immediately condemned by the home secretary unlike trump in such cases for example which a sign that how Britain is different from the US that we haven't got the majority people in Britain have not got any time for extremism .of any form they do not think it's the right and we are moderate country basically. We need to do a lot more .all extremists are very much in a minority who have just become much more vocal .and I think some people think that the referendum give them some kind of a license to speak against people in the streets . The majority of people in Britain have not got just any tie for those views and racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia . So u need to isolate the minority by speaking to the majority.

The impact of our campaigns: it is hard to evaluate because we do not have the money to measure the shifting attitude and do enough attitude evaluation to see wither campaigns shift public's attitudes. We know that the message works because we can test the message and see if it reach the audience and persuade them .and we can tell if it was successful if media covered it.it is very important goes into outlets like the daily mail and the daily telegraph because we need to reach the anxious middle and that is the most important thing to do . in which campaigns can make a difference. And change their minds .we target the media platforms that can help reach those. Sometimes we do talk to media and newspapers, but now it is much more interesting to reach the audience who do not necessarily agree with us on everything and connect to them it is difficult when we approach media platforms because we need to provide them with stories that work for them is got to be a good story. When I phoned a journalist and they going to say all that day. One of the ways we do that is that we think a head a lot and plan along way ahead and look for what is because timing is a critical factor and it is everything in PR. the Windrush scandal is a brilliant example of this that migrant and NGOs have been working on this Windrush cases for years and nobody has been listening to them and for two years a lot of this and then for the last months you got journalists begging for cases and journalists that u do not normally hear from. Certainly when the timing is right everybody wants to hear your story .and if you get the timing to get our message heard! i.e. if there is some kind of historical backgrounds or memories that you can shed from.

Time is very important whenever we are aiming to make effective messages and campaigns. Why would a journalist want to write about our campaign for example .and I think it is a big mistake that PR professionals sometimes make the mistake of releasing a report because you finished it while the important thing is whether the timing is right or not .so you may choose to release a report when journalists are much more care about it.

Just choose a big moment to release the message .we did a report on attitudes to race called many rivers crossed which comes at a perfect timing.

Our communication is much more pro-active which means that we do not seize any far right slogans and trying to make a rapid-rebuttal. no. we well do reactive stories and react to things in the news. I think you have to make a judgment, are you giving them more of a platform! When you use this strategy in this sense then you are giving them a platform. Sometimes it is good to take this strategy on board and sometimes not. i.e. sometimes you do not have to let things pass when they should not have to pass.

We are not interested on him, tommy Robinson or the people he is talking to, we are more interested in reaching the 75% who we think they we can persuade ,tommy does not really speak to the anxious middle I think they recognize that he is an extremist so he speaks to the 25% who are already feel hostile about immigration so we do not invest a lot of our very limited resources on this ,there is only four of us .

I will always try to evaluate my message but our team is small. while it is very important to do evaluation .highlight our shared with Muslims.

How can we make integration works? It is very important for London to have a deputy mayor who is his focus is integration and we thought it is important for London to do it is because London is the most diversity city in Britain , it is also in the city where in integration doesn't work badly and so in a way London could show the way for the rest of the country ,this is how you can do this and we know that other cities are going to be having reach other mayor successfully through using a broad collision of voices so it is really important to have somebody who is a champion within the government through , who can drive that agenda though, we need this person because integration happen locally but you need a national strategy .the green paper is the consultation starting to set out .no strategies about social integration has been made on a national level. I think the approach it isn't seen as a strategy for ethnic and faith minorities in Casey's review, consider that the integration is about Muslims while integration is about the whole society .it has to work for everybody .both sides, all Muslims and non-Muslims have to mix. Which an important foundational point you have to get a local implementation of such strategies.

Abdullah Quilliam Mosque (Phone Interview)

Feeding poor people in the society and encourage making Muslim good citizens in the society we are overcoming lots of barriers through social programs, interactive programs to bring not Muslims friends and neighbours into the mosque and telling them what we do. We hold a number of national days like visit my mosque day and national heritage day which a British national heritage day and we open our masjid to the normal public. Openly we say come and set in the mosque and talk to us and find out what Islam is now 99.9% of the people have visited the mosque have aid wow this is not what we see on the television. It is nothing like what we see in the tally. So people when they visit they have a lot of tolerance respect and understanding about Islam. We are inviting people through these national initiatives but we will be able to do more in the future as the mosque now is under construction and we will have a museum and more things that will allow us to invite more therefore engage more with the public.

Abdullah Quilliam used to face an Islamophobia which is nothing like these days .he was a prolific writer and wrote hundreds of books and many of these were not allowed to be printed because he was a Muslim. So that did not stop him from making his own printing press and he printed hid own books. So when we are done whit this expansion of the mosque more school visits and university visits will take place the local community can come and that would be one way of promoting social integration and understanding a faith.as Islam is growing there should be more dialogue between the non-Muslim communities and the Muslim community to make people understanding this faith in order to create a harmonious relationship so that we can live in a one city and non-Muslim activities some of the mainstream activities we need to play a part in the local politics and we need to take part in local organizations we need to take a part civic ceremonies. It is a matter of much more than a dialogue because it only happens and stops and stops when it stops and when you are engaging with community programs say for example we are partners in supporting food banks where many vulnerable families are set to be supported in the north of Liverpool which is something very much in Islam this way we bring community together.

The other things is when you have supporting a British heart or cancer organizations this part of the UK parcel so we need to take more active part in some of the initiatives that go around the city like when they have a festival we need to attend that necessarily we do not need to lose our identity. I should respect everyone in the society and others should also respect me in return as that is does not have to stop us from having a common goal of enjoying our daily life.

With the new additions in Abdullah Quilliam we will have rooms to do for example community classes we are going to have social activities there are not only for the Muslims they are for the non-Muslim where all are invited because the days of segregation needs to be history because in the past language was the biggest barrier which is not the same thing now, therefore, we should not segregate ourselves we should go first to the people to give da'wa and to talk to other people, we should be engaging in their activities without losing our identity and unless we go forward nobody will come to you. what we are

trying to do is to arrange visits to the synagogue and the cathedral and we have English programmes. This is one way that you make people understand other faith and what does it mean to be able to engage whit other faith communities so these are the initials that we are doing.

We have iftar part in Ramadan with non- Muslim friends who come and talk and ask about Islam. This is an important way from where hate can be undermined .the Muslim community has a duty to invite and engage with the society to change the stereotype. The Muslim community needs to go from their bubble in the process of social cohesion they should play their part in introducing the right image of Islam to the society.

To counter extremism, the mosque it is our foremost duty to protect the UK from any form of attack we are the British citizens and we are living in this country.to prevent our Muslim youth from being radicalized we are working with counter-terrorism department here in Liverpool and taking advice from them. Through our social activities and prayers we are passing the message that becoming radicalized is not the solution the solution is to integrate and change the mindset of the people who are thinking negative and people who do not have respect or understanding of Islam talk to them and have tolerance gain proper knowledge of Islam and you will know that terrorism is not the way forward, radicalization is not the way forward so whenever we see anybody is talking in a different language to terrorism we do not welcome them. We did not see something like that but if I see something I would intervene and we take action.

We use our mosque to lead the youth and prevent them from being radicalized and educating them who are involved in our activities. We also conduct annual festival in which everyone is invited to talk and engage. Their feedback is really impressive where tend to say that they do not realize that you are so inclusive and hospitable. Working with the homeless people also though the year.

The media and social media are playing a major part in disseminating information good messages to communities but the media is in business to make money and only negative publicity itself more than a positive one. Everything in the media about Islam is negative. The media have a duty to bring all the communities together. If the media tend to give more consideration to publicize the positive and good things that what Muslim organization or communities do that will alleviate and take away some of the negative barriers and the hate that people hold in their heart. For us we need to do as a mosque we need to do more community activities with our non-Muslim neighbours and we need to post those in the social media. We as Muslims lack in self-promotion and self-publicity and we lack in passing the message to the wider audience.

We are planning to use our own studio to broadcast our media material and a team who are responsible and employed to host people from the society to have a debate. It is all about social media is about what you doing for the mass of good ,what you are doing as people need to know the good examples of what each corner of the city make only then bring people together and If I do not know what other communities are doing for the whole society then how am I doing my bit. “at the moment the faith organizations is so segregated as talking at a high level maybe once in a blue moon but not on everyday basis in terms of social cohesion”.

I think that the government is keen to address social cohesion and extremism, however “I think the government has always been trying to fight Islamophobia and extremism in recent years as much as they can do but I think personally thinking that the government has the money and they gave it on an agency to deliverer programs and that is it. although the government is very keen and has resources but it is not enough it doesn’t get to the grassroot level and through my experience organization are doing few things here and there and there and then they are forgotten after that and very little fruit comes out of that so the government

is doing what it can what it needs to do is to work with the grassroots level with the community leaders with the faith leaders with the faith leaders in the community to be able to pass the message in a way that is not alienated” “I have been approached by many organizations in which aim to run a course in extremism and radicalization, if I was to publicize a poster says a poster says brothers and sisters please can you come to the course of extremism? Do you think that you will come?” how would you feel? Would you not feel alienated? It almost reminds people to become radicalized it also reminds people to become extremists. This does not help the situation. This is why we are running programs where participants are not informed that this is a radicalization course. so it is through social engagement and activity that you address those very important facts you must not become radicalized and you must not become an extremist.

The government calling it a direct way which makes people angrier and it stops people participating in the programs which alienate the Muslim people. Instead what we need to do is to work with community leaders in different programs. A more bottom-up approach for the problem. “if I am from an Asian or Arabic culture I understand that culture and I am better to address it but if I was trying to address an English culture being an Asian person, how stupid am I going to look? When they talk about radicalization and extremism outside organizations people from different faiths cannot deliver the program and it will be people from the same faith who understand the sensitivity and need to think clearly how they will address it without the people knowing that they are addressing and it is about valuing people respecting people, putting responsibility on people. In the mosque we always say you are responsible for protecting your own religion.

English people are becoming radicalized as well toward hatred to the Muslim community.

No PR practitioners. The Muslim community lack professionalism in terms of media and PR. we do not have the capability, except for the MCB, of writing articles for publicity material and be able to engage with the mainstream newspaper or media company .

“I do not want the world to think in the future generation I do not want our children to think that I am a Muslim therefore I am different from you, I am a Muslim therefore I need to stay away from you, I am a Muslim therefore I do not belong to you, at Abdullah Quilliam we are working to embed that. There is no such thing as you are one and I am the other we are all as one who work to bring tolerance and understanding to the society. We embrace the British culture values not necessarily forsake our fathers or forsake our religion.

British Muslims need to create skilful people to help to pass messages social integration in religion.

New Routes Integration (Phone Interview)

How do you manage to enhance social cohesion in the society? one of the main is by working with the people from so many different communities and bring them together into discussing cultures discussing cultures and learn skills together and create cross- culture understanding which I believe is the key to community cohesion. How you make this effective? We see things from a global context so rather than just teaching things about the UK, so UK's culture is our culture we can see the global trying to bring culture together.

Creating an interesting climate and mixture rather than something we need to change what we try to do is to help people understanding that there are many ways to integrate .we teach people that the UK is a new culture for them and not a challenge to overcome .how do you encourage people to engage with you expressing their hopes and fears? We have a large mentoring project where people meet 1 to 1 so anyone who is struggling with anything can be referred to speak 1 to 1 create close relationships really where they explore quit personal aspects of life. We engage in dialogue and discussions especially the women's group is very violence and what does it mean to different cultures. We provided support to everyone from different communities. We do not use feedback from them to promote our programmers it is mostly word of mouth. People meet one another. What kind of skills you develop in minorities to enable them to integrate successfully? Language skills, IT skills as everything is online now. We provide computers and volunteers work with ethnic minorities to teach them about how to get their information online. And computer courses to help them apply for housing for example, benefits and so on.. we empower them to rely on themselves and become part of the society. It is important to bring safe environment where dialogue can be reached safely in order for people to feel welcome and not strange there are no PR team or practitioner's .it is a very small organization. They do not now know how PR could possibly help them! There are trainings to promote cultural awareness.

Integrate UK (Phone Interview)

Young people and every young person says what he thinks and hopes for, encourage them to talk about radicalization, and make films about the youth experience to explain this to young people. Providing comfortable places to talk and discuss extremism and social inclusion. This is how integrate ask them to get involve. Music videos and the lyrics involved together with the staff in NGO. Integrate educate young people at schools also to teach them showing them the films and videos. They are also active through social media using hash tags in twitter for example and newspapers such as the guardian. This is to get the public engage with the NGO agenda. The means for getting our messages are interactive calling the public to engage especially young people.

The language we use in our message is similar and relatable to the youth's. They have TV appearances radio and magazines also to get their message heard. Hold meetings with the young people and members of their families trying to get everything to get everyone involved in all aspects of the projects we do.

The youth are interested to discuss the governmental initiatives and strategies and regarding social integration and extremism. Prevent for example we encourage them to take the prevent training, and holding an informed discussion, educate everyone and training to them and those youth in schools. This is to explain what radicalization is and why we train them. We educate them and believe that education in this sense is very important. Empowering them and giving them the confidence as the youth they tend to be very shy and quiet. They become activists when they trained and involved .NGO staff cannot discuss prevent openly they only discuss why prevent is important and why the government made this strategy and the reasons for it through conversations. This NGO is funded by the home office. We don't really say our views if we agree with it or not. We don't go against it officially, we only discuss it. The government has taken a step forward through introducing prevent, however I think there is a lot more to do in this regard. And they could have taken a different approach from a more grassroots organizations.

Outreach worker are trained to go out to school and teach others, a paid role school or hospital. I am also responsible for collecting data. We are listening to the youth and provide training. We actually outsource PR support and a government organization. The charity is a small one that is why PR team come to train integrate staff and doing press release campaigns.

Quba Trust (Phone Interview)

What kind of campaigns you do at Quba Trust? Social campaigns such as not in my name social and communal campaigns and work. All in the Muslim community only.

How do you approach Muslims? Social activities at the mosque .events and activities with kids and youth.

How do you manage to promote Social integration? Dialogue ,conversations, and discussion groups.

Prevent, I think is a backward strategy, perceived as being spying on Muslim in the communities. It needs to be improved .there should be an understanding of community .he think there should be a review for this strategy for a better strategy .

Prevent for the youth :they find it very toxic, spying over them ,which make them cautions about it .they want to work alongside to make strategies work .the youth recommend also to make more social strategies that understand the cultural backgrounds.

A (Phone Interview)

1. How do you manage engaging people in an open conversation discussing their fears and hopes over social inclusion and extremism in Britain?

In the events, conferences, study circles and events in general that we hold, we promote the moderate path which the teachings of Islam calls towards. We openly denounce all sorts of extremism, and by the promotion of the correct understanding of Islam we try to educate the Muslim community as well at the wider society. This is mainly done by projects which are practical, such as the Imam Hussain blood donation campaign which has been running for over 10 years , where we encourage the communities to come forward and donate blood to save lives.

2. Do you usually conduct discussion groups with the youth? How do they see the future of social integration in Britain? What are their suggestions in this regard?

We do surveys time to time to understand what sort of topics and themes they want the events to cover. Mental is a big one now which many youth would like to discuss and understand further. Other topics such as spirituality is another recurring theme which comes up when we do these surveys from the communities.

3. Do the Muslim youth mention how do they think of the government's initiatives and strategies for enhancing social integration and countering extremism? Not specifically about the government's initiative, however we always encourage and get involved in initiatives which would help to counter extremism.

4. How do they consider prevent? This is not a topic which as far as I am aware the team has discussed.

5. By taking prevent into consideration, do you find it important for the government to start making a change into how social integration and extremism are being tackled in Britain? What do you suggest in this respect?

I definitely think that to tackle extremism, we all, as one community need to hold hands and try to combat this disease of extremism which holds different shapes and forms. Different faith groups and charities should join and promote any initiatives which are striving towards a safer world.

6. What kind of campaigns and events you particularly make to counter extremism and enhance social integration in the society?

Given our charity status, we don't engage in any political activity however as a faith based charity, by teaching and promoting the correct understanding and teaching of Islam, we try to show the beauty and reality of the teachings of Islam which in effect side-lines and weakens the extremist view. Through this we show that Islam is not what is seen on the TV and a very small minority of people do in the name of Islam, but in reality they have nothing to do with Islam. The beautiful teaching of Islam categorically condemns and denounces any violence and extremism.

7. What makes your message of integration and tolerance effective?

Referring to the teachings of the progeny of Prophet Mohammad gives humanity that correct view and social integration, tolerance, compassionate, merciful characteristics which Islam promotes.

8. How do you promote on different media platforms?

We have a media team who advertise our events on Facebook, twitter as well as our own website. Additionally we have a WhatsApp group broadcast which is split by region. Peak times are chosen for the release of the events to get maximum traction from the public.

9. Do you have a PR team?

We don't have a specific team but all volunteers and trustees act as a public relation officer in that they speak and promote the work of where they are.

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