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Seeking Voices: The role of grassroots youth work in Preventing / Countering Violent Extremism in the UK

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Abstract

This study analyses the role of youth work in efforts to Prevent/Counter Violent Extremism (P/CVE) in the UK, in order to shed light on the complex relationship between P/CVE policies and pre-existing youth work practices, traditions and knowledge. Most of the academic research on P/CVE and counter-terrorism in the UK has examined the effects of Prevent policy on front-line professional services such as youth work, education and health care, particularly focusing on the security-framed interventions disproportionately targeting ethnic and religious minorities. However, there has been less attention on P/CVE work that goes beyond Prevent policy. I address this gap in the literature by drawing from first-hand experiences of youth workers and practitioners belonging to organisations funded through different pathways – Prevent, hybrid and independent funding sources – to analyse their strategies and resources in navigating a polarised P/CVE field. Furthermore, the analytic focus of this study on security governance contributes to the literature on P/CVE, Governance and Policy studies that has expanded the understanding of Prevent policy implementation in the front-line beyond binary tensions between policy design (top-down) and front-line agency (bottom-up). This study therefore provides a detailed picture of P/CVE youth work, with a specific focus on the agency of youth workers/practitioners in their delivery of P/CVE policy, based on their wider expertise in supporting youth in their local communities.

Acknowledgements

Contents

Introduction

The origins of this thesis goes back to my research interest in the 'War on Terror' during my master's studies in Mexico City. In this work I analysed policy documents and political discourse from the G.W Bush administration and speeches from the Al Qaeda leadership to understand the narratives and geopolitical conditions that drove the 'War on Terror', through enhanced perceptions of a threat and 'othering' discursive mechanisms. I was particularly interested in drawing parallels between 'Orientalist' and 'othering' frameworks under the neoconservative 'Project for the New America Century', and its implication for justifying the war in Iraq and beyond. My personal motivation for this research was the impact of witnessing the 9/11 attacks in the USA. As I am sure is the case for many of my generation, this was the main historical event that drove my interests in the social and political whirlwind which followed. It was an interest I pursued firstly through a weekly column in a higher education supplement for a local newspaper ('Milenio Diario' – *Campus*).

At the time of my master's research in 2010, there were two predominant narratives I identified surrounding the 'war on terror'. One was the perceived weakened terrorist threat posed by Al Qaeda, whose operations had been substantially debilitated due to almost a decade of military interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan. The second narrative was the mainstreaming of questions revolving around the legitimacy of the 'War on Terror' (mainly the war in Iraq) and counter-terrorism strategies worldwide (such as the Guantanamo prison), as persistent hard security approaches have proven to disproportionately target Muslims at the expense of basic civil liberties.

Between my master's thesis and the start of my PhD, the increased focus on countering radicalisation due to the rise of ISIS-inspired home-grown terrorism shifted my interest on understanding how these policies justified mechanisms of civic surveillance and persistently threatened democratic rule and civil liberties of ethnic minorities, particularly Muslims. I grew interested in the case of the UK due to the home-grown 7/7 terrorism attacks, and I wanted to understand how its counter-terrorism strategies aimed to tackle domestic radicalisation. This led me to the Prevent Strategy, and a preliminary engagement with the existing literature spoke to me of a growing scholarly interest in engaging with the intricacies of counter-radicalisation strategies and civic liberties, particularly within the setting of the multicultural society in the UK.

Since its origins in 2003, the UK's counter-terrorism (CT) strategy, CONTEST, included the Prevent Strategy as an innovative response to the threat of domestic radicalisation. Unlike other CT policies worldwide, efforts to Prevent/Counter Violent Extremism (P/CVE) such as Prevent in the UK,

sought to identify and interrupt early stages of radicalisation as a pre-emptive model (Heath-Kelly, 2017; Martin, 2014) which relied on whole of society efforts to govern security threats (Froestad & Shearing, 2012; Webber et al. 2004). In each of Prevent's distinctive phases (2007 – 2011; 2011 – 2015; 2015 – Present), this policy has relied on local communities, public sector professionals and grassroots organisations in the private and public sectors to tackle signs of radicalisation (Thomas, 2020; Brown, 2019).

Although in P/CVE work 'preventing' and 'countering' are often used interchangeably in the literature, a distinction should be addressed, as the latter can be associated with security-led frames of intervention. A recent report by the UN Human Rights Council argues that: "Addressing 'pull factors' has broadly fallen into the domain of countering violent extremism. Interventions relevant to preventing violent extremism are most usefully defined as those that seek to address the structural drivers of violent extremism, or 'push factors'. Where preventing and countering violent extremism includes both security and development, there is a need to ensure a balanced approach that does not privilege the former over the latter" (UN 2020). This thesis follows the UN's guidance in giving equal value to efforts that deter pathways to violent extremism and efforts that tackle 'structural' drivers of radicalisation. However, throughout this thesis I will point to distinctions drawn in the field when state-funded P/CVE work, such as Prevent, focuses exclusively on risk factors as predictive tools to *counter* radicalisation processes, and independent P/CVE work seeks to incorporate *preventive* practices against violent extremism into wider complex social issues with intersecting root (structural) causes. Through the study of youth work[1], I discuss how holistic practices incorporate P/CVE work within wider safeguarding practices against gang violence, social stigmatisation and racism/Islamophobia, with the aim of developing youth empowerment.

Since its rollout in 2007 through the Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder Fund in 2006 (DCLG, 2007), Prevent came under public scrutiny due to its (unjustified) focus on ethnic and religious minorities (Kundani, 2009; Spalek et al., 2010; Pantazis & Pemberton, 2009; Birt, 2009), particularly Muslim youth (Thomas, 2016; McDonald, 2011), undermining community cohesion policies in the UK (Thomas, 2009). As a result, most P/CVE research in the UK has focused on the details of the Prevent policy and more recently its Statutory Duty, leaving unexplored the practices and contributions of independent P/CVE work. Thus, a Prevent policy-focused study of P/CVE work,

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[1] De St. Croux argues that youth work in the UK is: "…predominantly (but not only) in purpose-built youth clubs, community centres, village halls, religious buildings, parks, sports fields and on street corners…" (2016:4). The author also points out fundamental characteristics in youth work: "Its key features are that young people's perspectives are central to the process; young people become involved by choice rather than being compelled to attend; and there is an element of informal education, of learning through conversation, relationships and activities (Davies, 2015)" (De St. Croux, 2016: 4).

undertaken at the expense of the study of its practices, provides an incomplete picture of how P/CVE is delivered in the front-line, particularly through the practices, traditions and knowledge of youth workers. There is therefore an existing need to understand the role of youth workers and practitioners in P/CVE efforts in the UK from beyond the scope of Prevent policy. This research addresses this by integrating independent- and hybrid- funded youth work practices into existing understandings of Prevent-funded work, revealing the existing tension between policy design and policy outcome, and between state-funded and independent P/CVE work, and how these tensions are resolved in the front-line.

The existing literature has shown how Prevent and wider CT polices have contributed to social stigmatisation, Islamophobia and the reproduction of suspect communities due to their focus on ethnic and religious minorities in the UK (Abbas, 2018; Qureshi, 2017; Thomas, 2016; Heath-Kelley, 2013; Hickman et al., 2012; Spalek, 2011; Githens-Mazer & Lambert, 2010; Kundnani, 2009), particularly targeting Muslim youth (Coppock & MacGovern, 2014). However, the implication of these studies is that the Prevent policy is being cascaded down into the front-line without much contestation (Thomas 2017), as they argue that Prevent's framework has securitised the public sphere, with front-line workers and civil society being made responsible for identifying and referring anyone vulnerable to radicalisation (Pilkington & Acik, 2020; Mavelli, 2019; Abbas, 2018; Qureshi, 2017; Heath-Kelly, 2013).

Thus, less attention has been placed on how front-line, grassroots workers adapt, challenge or enact P/CVE policy led by Prevent. However, my work is situated within research which has analysed first-hand experiences from front-line workers and local communities in their engagement with the Prevent Strategy (Pilkington & Acik, 2020; Busher et al., 2019; Silverman, 2017; O'Toole et al., 2016). Such important work has detailed how governance through Prevent policy is not merely passively implemented from the top down by public service professional and community members, particularly in education and health settings. In addition, although there is important research problematizing youth work and Prevent policy (Thomas, 2018; McDonald, 2011; Iacopini et al., 2011), there is little data on how independent youth work intersects with P/CVE efforts beyond the Prevent policy (Cifuentes, 2013). Therefore, there is an existing need to fully characterise independent P/CVE youth work, especially within the context of the most recent iteration of Prevent policy, which is defined by the 2015 roll out of the Prevent Statutory Duty.

The conceptualisation of 'youth work' is contested and is not constrained to a specific discipline, occupation or activity (Smith, 2013; Banks, 2010: 4-5). However, Banks (2010) notes that common traits can be identified according to three main categories: informal/leisure work with

young people (youth work as an activity), informal education (youth work as an occupation), and formal education and counselling through formal referral processes (youth work as a discipline) (Ibidem). These categories are fluid though, as there is not a definition consented to in the literature depicting a clear intersection between the 'ideal-typical' youth work (structure) and 'youth work in reality' (agency) (Khan, 2013: 11; Banks, 2010: 7). To be better positioned in understanding these intersections, a historical/developmental analysis of youth work is appropriate, one which considers the changes in policy design, local versus state-led approaches, and the tension that arises between different multi-faith and multi-cultural approaches (Khan, 2013: 11,18; Banks 2010: 9).

In the case of the UK, Banks cites valuable attempts to professionalize youth work through "standards, principles and benchmarks" published by Lifelong Learning UK, the National Youth Agency and the Quality Assurance Agency. Such attempts to create a national standard of youth work practices converge with policy documents and academic literature in identifying key features/values – such as youth work's voluntary capacity, use of informal education, and the value placed on association, and on young people participating democratically – and ethical principles – such as respect for young people and their rights, the promotion of welfare and safety and the promotion of social justice for young people – of youth work (Banks, 2010: 10). However, on the ground, these values and ethical standards are often challenged and adapted by youth workers with fluid identities as they work to navigate social policy, social change and social needs of local youth. For example, Khan (2013) cites reports (DFES 202 and 2007) contrasting the performance of statutory and voluntary youth work, highlighting how the former has little "measurable social benefit" (18). As a guiding premise for this thesis, Banks cites Wittgenstein's (1972) compelling argument that the definition of youth work should not be constrained to a single set of attributes or features (which are consented to nationally and across different countries), but "rather there may be family resemblances and overlapping characteristics between different activities and practices we call 'youth work'" (Banks, 2010: 6).

With the aim of expanding our understanding of P/CVE grassroots efforts in the UK, my research highlights the role of youth workers and practitioners in the delivery of P/CVE programmes funded by Home Office/Prevent, hybrid approaches funded through both Home Office and private or charitable donations (in varying proportions), and independent programmes designed and developed through charitable and private funding pathways. Drawing on Bevir's (2016) notion of decentred security governance and the analysis of existing P/CVE literature that is mostly critical of Prevent's policy design and implementation, this research seeks to understand the tensions that arise between the pre-existing practices, traditions and knowledge of youth workers/practitioners

and P/CVE policies. A particular focus is placed on the understanding of how they navigate the politics of the P/CVE field, inquiring if their pre-existing work is affected (and in what ways) by issues such as pathways to funding, local networking and Prevent's Statutory Duty. Hence, the main research questions for this project are: What are the challenges faced by youth workers and practitioners when implementing P/CVE policies in the UK? What is their role in adapting, challenging and implementing state-led P/CVE policies, particularly those relying on front-line implementation, such as the Prevent Duty? The derived sub-questions seek to contribute to the gap in the existing literature in understanding the practices of youth workers and practitioners in the front line through the framework of decentred security governance:

- What is the characterisation of the P/CVE field at the grassroots level in the accounts of youth workers/practitioners? How do youth workers and practitioners perceive/understand the P/CVE agenda?

- Are there differences between P/CVE youth work that is funded by and aligned with Home Office, and that is funded hybrid and independent of government? If so, what are they?

- How is the Statutory Duty understood, enacted and reshaped at the grassroots level by youth workers and practitioners?

- Do youth workers/practitioners shape P/CVE policies to localised needs? If so, how?

This research is needed as it highlights decentred networks of collaborative work at the grassroots level, which are used to inquire to what extent youth workers interpret and adapt P/CVE policies to meet localised needs through their own holistic practices, traditions and knowledge. This research addresses the gap in the available literature to provide accounts of first-hand experiences in grassroots youth-oriented P/CVE efforts, funded through independent, hybrid and Home Office sources. So far, the existing literature has not fully engaged with independent and hybrid youth work, and this gap in the literature has promoted the assumption that all P/CVE work is initiated and funded by government. This thesis opens the space for considering a wider variety of alternative approaches to P/CVE work and how these overlap with government-driven initiatives. It also seeks to contribute to the development of a theoretical framework based on decentred security governance (Bevir, 2016) in relation to P/CVE policies in the UK.

The themes identified in this research show that youth workers and practitioners actively shape the P/CVE framework and practices that have been mainstreamed in front-line work by the Prevent policy through its Statutory Duty. Youth workers and practitioners firstly develop nuanced understandings of the polarised P/CVE field, due to contested understandings of Prevent. They then

demonstrate a nuanced understanding of politics in the P/CVE field centred on Prevent, with potential implications for the nature of their work, their funding pathways and the partnerships they develop locally. The research also shows that at the grassroots level there is ambiguity about the implications of the Prevent Duty for youth workers; however, an overall picture of compliance to the Duty is present in the data due to the overarching pre-existing safeguarding culture in youth work (rather than due to workers' direct compliance with the Duty). Another theme in the findings is how youth workers and practitioners have different interpretations of the risk and vulnerability framework around radicalisation, and that they are more likely to engage with youth under wider safeguarding premises. As a result, the data shows that youth workers and practitioners develop more holistic approaches, which integrate P/CVE efforts into wider social and structural issues identified at the local level.

Chapter 1: P/CVE and youth work: how did we arrive here?

This first chapter discusses the evolution of CT policies towards P/CVE work through the review of research and policy documents on P/CVE efforts in the UK. Specifically, the chapter explores the theoretical assumptions on the process of radicalisation in the literature and how these have shaped the preventive model of P/CVE work, such as the Prevent Strategy. Finally, the chapter shows how Prevent has persistently focused on youth, particularly Muslim youth, and as a result how it has identified youth work as a key ally on the front-line in the management of the risk of radicalisation in local communities.

Chapter 2: A review of the study of the Prevent Strategy

This chapter reviews the existing literature on P/CVE efforts under the Prevent policy in the UK, through what I have categorised as Prevent's three distinct phases: 2007-2011, 2011-2015; 2015-Present. It highlights how scholarly research has focused on understanding how front-line practitioners and grassroots workers engage with P/CVE work within the frame of Prevent. A key distinction drawn here is the characterisation of Prevent policy from two perspectives: one that understands policy implementation as a power struggle between top-down policy design and front-line agency, and another that understands the complexities of policy implementation through a wide range of practices including enactment, compliance, adaptation and contestation in front-line work. As a result, the chapter argues for the existing need to further understand the complexities of P/CVE work beyond Prevent and through the practices, traditions and knowledge of youth workers.

Chapter 3: Understanding P/CVE work through decentred security governance

This chapter proposes a theoretical framework based on decentred security governance (Bevir, 2016) as an analytical tool to expand our understanding of the wide range of responses to P/CVE policies in the front-line. The chapter reviews the contributions of governance and security governance literature in highlighting the diverse ways in which CT and P/CVE strategies have incorporated a 'whole of society' approach into the management of terrorism and radicalisation, through formal and informal, state and non-state, and civic and private networks of collaboration. However, the chapter argues that viewing youth work through a decentred framework can also assist in further understanding the management of 'wicked' problems such as radicalisation, which require the co-production and cooperation of front-line expertise through its heterogenous practices, traditions and knowledge.

Chapter 4: Methodology

This chapter provides the operationalisation of the decentred security governance framework for this study of youth work in P/CVE. It firstly reviews the epistemological assumptions, main research questions, sub-questions and aims of this study. It then presents the research design, the importance of building relationships in the P/CVE field and ethical considerations for this research.

Chapter 5: The P/CVE grassroots context in the UK: perspectives from youth work

This is the first of four results chapters where I discuss youth workers' and practitioners' characterisation of a politicised P/CVE field, centred around polarising understandings of the Prevent policy. It particularly discusses the practical implications of Prevent Priority Areas and the Statutory Duty on youth workers/practitioners working both under Prevent guidance and within independent and hybrid organisations.

Chapter 6: The dynamics of P/CVE efforts at grassroots level: Prevent, hybrid and independent approaches to P/CVE work

This chapter draws on the qualitative data to analyse the distinctive experiences of Prevent-funded, hybrid and independent P/CVE youth work taking place at the grassroots level. It provides a detailed account of these diverse approaches to P/CVE work, where youth workers incorporate Prevent policy and its politicised dimensions into their work to varying degrees while also presenting their own unique contributions to P/CVE work. I argue in this chapter that youth work is not only influenced by P/CVE policies, but that its practitioners also have active roles in the co-designing, shaping and adapting of P/CVE policies to local needs.

Chapter 7: Governing through youth work: pre-existing practices and P/CVE

This chapter expands the previous discussion around the tension that arises between Prevent policy and front-line pre-existing practices. It particularly focuses on how pre-existing safeguarding practices incorporate safeguarding for violent extremism under the frame of Prevent Statutory Duty. It highlights the tools available in the front-line to engage critically with Prevent policy while maintaining localised aims at the forefront of grassroots practices.

Chapter 8: Independent P/CVE youth work: safe spaces and holistic approaches to P/CVE

The final results chapter draws on the qualitative data to present a more complete account of independent and hybrid P/CVE efforts. Under the umbrella concepts of 'safe spaces' and 'holistic approaches', this chapter provides empirical data on how alternative practices, traditions and knowledge shape P/CVE efforts at the grassroots level. The data show that P/CVE work is incorporated into a much wider scope of work which focuses on safeguarding, upskilling and youth empowerment.

In sum, this thesis focuses on the first-hand experiences of youth workers and practitioners involved in P/CVE and wider youth work in the UK. It contributes to the existing literature by expanding the understanding of daily front-line practices in this field, highlighting the importance of heterogenous practices, diversity in the understanding of risk and vulnerability beyond the boundaries of Prevent policy, and a shared responsibility to safeguard youth from a wide range of social harms that includes but is not limited to radicalisation. The qualitative data also provide an understanding of P/CVE work beyond state-led programmes, thus filling a gap in the literature by showing the value in independent and hybrid work, their alternative knowledge in the delivery of P/CVE work, and the available mechanisms to incorporate P/CVE work into localised issues such as social stigmatisation, racism, Islamophobia.

The data in this thesis show the robust work carried out by youth workers/practitioners in navigating the politics around Prevent policy and polarised understandings of it, which has a direct effect on their organisational funding pathways and local networking. This thesis contributes to the recent academic scholarship that shows how Prevent policy is enacted, adapted and challenged in the front-line by specifically showing how youth workers and practitioners collaborate beyond the limits of the perceived division in the polarised P/CVE field. This occurs due to their shared interest in local community work and their pre-existing traditions and practices. As such, this thesis applies the framework of decentred security governance to display how heterogeneous, collaborative, multi-layered P/CVE practices are embedded in youth work.

Chapter 1: P/CVE and youth work: how did we arrive here?

Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss how UK youth workers have a prominent role in the delivery of counter-terrorism (CT) and Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) strategies. The aim of the first three chapters is to provide background on CT and P/CVE strategies in the UK, review the existing literature on this topic and discuss the theoretical framework for this research. In this first chapter, I provide the background to the existing relationship between P/CVE and youth work, traced back to counter-terrorism strategies and the contested understanding of radicalisation and its use as a tool to predict individual processes towards terrorism. In the second chapter, I review the existing literature on P/CVE work through what I discuss as three phases of Prevent – 2007-2011; 2011-2015; 2015-present – highlighting the main theoretical and practical challenges in each phase, and their unintended consequences on its targeted populations. The third chapter presents decentred security governance as the analytical framework employed in this research to expand understandings of the complexities that arise during P/CVE implementation, as revealed by the practices of youth workers in the UK working with Prevent and more importantly, with independent and hybrid-funded projects.

In reviewing the existing literature I point out how youth workers (along with other frontline workers) came to have a prominent role in CT and P/CVE efforts in the UK through Prevent policy, and what implications this role had on their practices, traditions and knowledge. Although some research has engaged with youth work during the first two phases of Prevent, there is a gap in the literature around Prevent's third iteration, marked by the 2015 Statutory Duty. This research thus contributes to previous scholarly work by engaging with more recent accounts of the relationship between Prevent and youth work, but also including independent and hybrid P/CVE efforts.

My overarching argument is that there is an existing need to study P/CVE work beyond Prevent, which is revealed through the practices, traditions and knowledge of independent and hybrid youth work. In sum, this chapter contributes to this argument through two aims. The first is to discuss the transition from the counter-terrorism strategies used to mitigate the external threat of international terrorism, to the strategies implemented to counter the threat of domestic radicalisation through P/CVE work. In this discussion I draw a distinction between individualised psychopathological models of intervention and context-based approaches in the P/CVE field, to highlight attempts to govern risks of radicalisation through networks of front-line cooperation, including youth work. The second aim is to discuss the consistent focus of P/CVE efforts on youth,

particularly Muslim youth, through Prevent, and the role of youth workers in delivering Prevent-funded work. Through the review of scholarly contributions focused on Prevent-funded youth work, I underline the value in understanding P/CVE policy through the analysis of youth workers' practices, as well as the gap in the literature in understanding P/CVE efforts beyond Prevent.

1.1 From countering terrorism to preventing radicalisation

The 9/11 (New York) terrorist attacks made Al Qaeda the main focus of counter-terrorism strategies around the globe in 2001 (Sageman, 2017; Lia, 2010). In the UK, the strategy focused on an imminent terrorist threat rooted in networks operating internationally (Sageman, 2017; Bobbitt, 2009; Hoffman, 2006; Leiken, 2005). In western countries this international threat soon shifted to a domestic threat carried out by home-grown and sometimes lone-wolf terrorists. In the UK, this national security shift was triggered following the 7/7 London bombings, carried out by home-grown British nationals.

Parallel to this, a decade of persistent attacks by western allies, led by the USA, on Al Qaeda's core operations in Iraq and Afghanistan (among other locations), and the legal, social and economic void left in Iraq after years of military occupation, led to the rise of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). By 2014, ISIS led online terror campaigns calling for decentralized attacks carried out by self-radicalised supporters in western countries, further justifying counter-terrorism strategies focused on the prevention of domestic radicalisation (Rosand et al., 2018; Hegemann & Kahl, 2018; Hegghammer & Nesser, 2015; Precht, 2007). The new threat of domestic terrorism inspired by ISIS was effective in recruiting foreign fighters and lone-wolf attackers from within western countries. The threat of terrorism, as a result, was situated at the core of local communities, triggering a need to develop a framework that explained how terrorists were being groomed on home soil, and the tools to "spot and disrupt" pathways to radicalisation (Hegemann & Kahl, 2018: 567-572).

In the UK, the identification of pathways to radicalisation was approached through an early intervention model developed within the overall CT strategy, CONTEST. It sought to interrupt radicalisation processes within communities through the Prevent Strategy (Kundnani & Hayes, 2018; Sageman, 2017; Rahimi, 2016; Elshimi, 2015; Heath-Kelly, 2013; Brighton, 2007) and subsequently within the practices of public service professionals, through the Prevent Duty (Heath-Kelly & Strausz, 2018; Thomas, 2018). At this point, it is important to understand distinctions between efforts to *counter* the threat of terrorism through hard approaches versus efforts to *prevent* radicalisation through soft approaches. Although these are distinct approaches—the former is managed through

security enforcement (border control, intelligence cooperation, police surveillance), and the latter, which this study is particularly concerned with, seeks to identify and disrupt the pathways that lead an individual into terrorism (Ragazzi, 2014)—counter-terrorism strategies often combine both hard and soft approaches, as is the case with de-radicalisation programmes (Rabasa et al., 2010).

However, as I will discuss in more detail later in this thesis, the CT strategy in the UK, CONTEST (Home Office, 2003, 2009 and 2018), has often failed to provide clear distinctions between counter-terrorism *hard* approaches and its P/CVE *soft* approaches (Ragazzi, 2014), and between non-violent and violent radicals (Bartlett & Miller, 2012; Christmann, 2012). These criticisms are rooted in Prevent's focus on ideological drivers of radicalisation, which paired security intervention with community engagement, leading to the policing of Muslim communities in the UK (Ragazzi, 2014; Kundnani,2009). The attempts at "making the unknown, known" within radicalisation processes, arguably became a "technique of governance…that operated through the frames of the risky and the unknown" (Heath-Kelly, 2013: 409). At the core of these politicised debates, concerns emerged over "the balance between state security and human rights, the compatibility between Islam and 'western values', and the legitimacy of Muslim citizenship in predominantly non-Muslim western states" (McDonald, 2011: 179).

The P/CVE field is usually divided in two main fields of intervention: behavioural and cognitive pathways of radicalisation (Neumann, 2013). To prevent home-nationals from being radicalised into terrorist networks, one of the first steps was to define the possible pathways into radicalisation. Some theories have emphasised the role of ideology in pathways to radicalisation (Neumann, 2013), focused on identifying the "factors contributing to the acquisition of a 'terrorist mindset'" (Coppock & McGovern 2014:246). A linear connection between the cognitive pathways (ideology) leading into terrorist behaviours, is also known as the 'conveyor-belt' theory of radicalisation (Bartlett & Miller, 2012). Coppock & McGovern (2014) argue that research in the CT and P/CVE fields thus developed models of risk assessment and 'psychological vulnerability' to identify "Patterns of belief and behaviour that correlate with 'terrorist risk' irrespective of whether they cause terrorism…[revealing] a shift from a focus on social order to social bonds and from injustice to individual psychological processes" (2014: 248). This framework of intervention, followed by the Prevent strategy, made generalized assumptions around the connection between terrorism and radicalisation, being viewed through ideological pathways based on research on convicted terrorists that were then applied to the general non-violent population that shared (broad) ideological traits (Powis et al., 2019).

A possible explanation for the overlap between hard CT strategies and soft P/CVE strategies is that the models used to define the risk factors involved in radicalisation processes are mostly rooted in the study of convicted terrorists and ex-terrorists (Christmann, 2012). The risks, such as the ones listed in the Extremist Risk Guidance +22 (Lloyd & Dean 2015), were included in the framework of the UK's Prevent programme, particularly as part of the training tools for front-line workers to identify and refer those who are vulnerable to radicalisation. These risk factors were obtained from convicted jihadist-inspired terrorists (including those who plotted, conspired or carried out an attack) (Powis et al., 2019). However, the ERG22+ tool has a limited generality because: "Only Islamist extremists were included in the analysis so it may not be possible to generalise the findings to those who support another group, cause or ideology" (Powis et al., 2019: 1). In sum, the ERG22+ aimed to measure the likelihood of extremist reoffending by 'convicted extremist offenders', who represent only a minuscule percentage of the overall population that shares some of the same 'religious extremist views' (Powis et al., 2019:11).

The ERG22+ frames the process of radicalisation through the concepts of *Engagement*, *Intent* and *Capacity*. The first part of the process, *Engagement*, is understood as: "…factors that may account for an individual's involvement and growing identification with an extremist group, cause and/or ideology" (Powis et al., 2019: 5). The *Engagement* phase of radicalisation coincides with one of the three objectives set by the Prevent strategy: "Tackle the causes of radicalisation and respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism" (HO, 2018: 31)[2]. A study that aims to understand the process of radicalisation would therefore benefit from comparing the data of those who have been convicted of terrorist offences (and therefore have proved to have *intent* and *capacity*, not only *engagement*) with non-violent individuals who only *engage* with similar ideological positions but do not endeavour into terrorist behaviour (do not show *intent* and *capacity*) (Sageman, 2017).

A systemic approach to the understanding of radicalisation is focused on the 'social' and 'moral ecologies' of extremism (Bouhana, 2019; Bouhana et al., 2018). Bouhana (2019), addresses the lack of consensus over definitions of extremism through a 'systemic framework' that can be used to understand moral contexts which enable 'unlawful' extremist behaviour. This framework addresses previous attempts to define pathways to radicalisation which aimed to create new jurisdictional frames of interventions (increasing the number of behaviours deemed illegal through broad understandings of extremism), or which were tied to an ideology, or even to models with a

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[2] The other two objectives are to: "safeguard and support those most at risk of radicalisation through early intervention, identifying them and offering support", and "enable those who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate" (HO 2018).

'tautological pitfall of containing both the description of the object and its explanation" (Ibid: 7). To tackle the complexity of the "wicked" social problem of extremism, Bouhana argues, "changing contexts rather than changing people, is the more effective strategy, because vulnerability is inherently context-dependent" (Ibid: 23). This is a persuasive distinction between P/CVE strategies focused on individuals and those aimed at understanding and intervening in violent extremist ecologies, which I now use to draw parallels between state-funded models of intervention through Prevent, and alternative approaches.

Sageman addresses the issue of an apparent lack of evidence-based CT policies from an original viewpoint in "*The Stagnation of Terrorism Research"* (2014), drawing attention to the methodological issues in CT research. The author highlights a gap between knowledge rooted in government confidential data sets and academic research. Sageman argues that the academic community has limited access to primary sources to carry out their research on terrorism. At best, researchers can conduct qualitative research on convicted terrorist offenders (such as the ERG22+), though they do not have access to the whole data sets which include non-violent suspected terrorists. In other words, these studies often lack control groups to validate their analysis of the data; their data sets only consider convicted terrorists to make claims about possible pathways into violent extremism, without taking into account the non-violent groups who share so-called risk factors with these convicted terrorists.

In reverse, the lack of academic rigour, Sageman (2014) argues, is present in government intelligence research carried out with primary data but lacking rigorous methods of analysis. As a result, he states, "we have a system of terrorism research in which intelligence analysts know everything but understand nothing, while academics understand everything but know nothing" (Sageman, 2014: 576). Further, many of the models developed to prevent individuals from radicalisation have not analysed the segment of the population who share backgrounds, beliefs and socio-economic situations but do not get involved in terrorism. Therefore, Sageman argues later in *Misunderstanding Terrorism* that there has been neglect of a key component in the understanding of terrorism: only a minuscule percentage of the baseline population actually become terrorists (2017: 60). Overall, the trend towards a misunderstanding of ideological risk factors may be a consequence of previous risk factor models such as the ERG22+, which narrowed the understanding of *engagement* as a process experienced in the analysis of individuals convicted of terror offences. Perhaps as a result of this issue, there is an increasing presence in the literature of research that

acknowledges 'mixed ideologies', indicative of a lack of clarity in the understanding of the role played by ideological factors in the pathway to radicalisation (CONTEST, 2018)[3].

1.2 Pathways to jihadist radicalisation: the Franco-Belgium case

Research on terrorism and radicalisation in France is also intriguing because, unlike the disconnect described by Sageman (2017) between academia and government research, academic researchers and journalists there have been given access to primary judicial and police sources related to terrorist investigations. This means that researchers such as Olivier Roy have been able to carry out qualitative studies on the profiles of Franco-Belgian terrorists with rich biographical data, including "videotapes, tweets, chats, Skypes, messages on WhatsApp and Facebook..." with friends and family, and interviews and statements (Roy, 2017: 20). Roy's analysis looks at the context of more than one hundred individuals involved in terrorism. This data availability has contributed to the P/CVE field by allowing for a focus on the social interactions and particularities of the context where individuals are groomed into terrorist networks.

For example, Roy (2017), when looking at the profiles of recent terrorists in France and Belgium, found that the religious factor is secondary to biographical and social factors across these these individuals, who are firstly radicalised by their contextual circumstances (racism, injustice, stigmatisation, victimhood) and later groomed by violent rhetoric (2017: 92-93). With this logic at hand, Roy argues that 'new order jihadism' has an intrinsic commitment to death and its propaganda targets youth in the West who are radicalised by marginalised positions in society, and who therefore can be manipulated into the pursuit of violent behaviour. Roy describes the social context in the following passage:

> *The crisis in disadvantaged neighbourhoods that are heavily populated by migrants is real*
> *indeed, but it is not a Salafi offensive that chased the Republic away; it is the Republic that*
> *withdrew...public services withdraw, school administration cling to an incantatory rhetoric*
> *about laicité [secularism] that is disconnected from social reality. The discontinuation of*
> *community policing and the dissolution of the investigations branch of the police...has left*

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[3] The Home Office's statistical bulletin, published in December 2018, argued that a new category was added to deal with the nature of referral dealt by Channel during the previous year. The document defines this category as "Mixed, Unstable, or Unclear Ideology", used in cases where "...the ideology the individual is presenting with cannot easily be described as one of the existing categories, such as Islamist or right wing extremism...the individual may present a wide range of risks and vulnerabilities but not limited to the risk of radicalisation...but may still pose a terrorism risk" (HO 2018: 7).

the police force blind and made anti-criminal brigades (BAC), whose specialty is not prevention but pursuit, the only real face of the police seen by young people (Roy, 2017: 96).

This context is relevant because it shifts the P/CVE focus from religion to the understanding of a specific "youth culture" (Roy, 2017: 27), cutting across a spectrum of extremism, including jihadist and right-wing violence. That is, it argues that Islam is only a script used by those who are already radicalised to legitimize the use of violence against their alleged enemies (Roy, 2017:6). When focusing on the youth's social interactions as the main category of radicalisation instead of religion, visible commonalities emerge between different forms of violence, such as extreme right-wing violence and terrorist jihadists (Roy, 2017: 68).

Further, according to Roy (2017), the focus on race worsens when religion is central to the explanations for radicalisation. Since religion is not necessarily the first radicalisation factor as is often thought, Roy argues that people who are already radicalised merely adopt the religious violent discourse—sometimes jihadist—to justify violent behaviour. The danger of focusing on religion as a main radicalisation factor is that scholars and politicians therefore fall into the trap of trying to distinguish between "moderate" Islam and "radical" Islam. This leads secular governments to favour a specific interpretation of Islam under the assumption that this approach would isolate terrorist rhetoric, which, however, emphasizes the wrong question of what the Quran really means (to be debated by secularists), rather than 'what do Muslims say or interpret about the Quran' (Roy, 2017: 56).

Rather than religion, Roy's study shows that militant youth share common themes in their biographies: frequent history of delinquency, consumption of alcohol and cigarettes, nightclub and women engagement, listening to rap music and nasheed (vocal music), combat sports engagement, and youth slang mixing local language with some Arabic (Roy, 2017: 29). Similar conclusions are shared by Bryson (2017) in *Exploring how British jihadis join global movements*, as the author argues that indoctrination begins in prisons through gang culture and that young people are particularly vulnerable as they seek to find meaning in their lives (2017: 28). Additionally, Urdal's (2006) *A clash of generations? Youth bulges and political violence* also concludes that socioeconomic factors such as unemployment become radicalisation risk factors, although this is not exclusive to radicalisation.

The only argument that is consented to across academia is that radicalisation is multifactorial, though how factors relate to one another is disputed. This uncertainty is reflected in the different understandings of the root causes of radicalisation in academia (such as psychological profiling, ideology focus, behavioural modification and context-base approaches). In France, such

differences are illustrated between Kepel and Roy. While Roy (2017) defends the need to examine biographical and contextual factors shared across youth, Kepel (2017) situates radical Islam as the root of the problem.

In *Terror in France: The Rise of Jihad in the West* (2017: 2), Kepel reinforced his longstanding position which places Salafi fundamentalism at the root of terrorism in France and beyond. Kepel's reasoning is mainly that there is a disconnect between new generations of Muslims in France exposed to fundamentalist materials online and the rise of French identity politics (Kepel, 2017: 98-116). In Roy's view, Kepel has a linear historicist approach to the process of radicalisation that favours the 'lack of integration' argument and views radical Islam as the main radicalisation factor. Roy writes:

> *But history should not be rewritten after the fact, as one scholar has been tempted to do, establishing a continuity between the Algerian War, the March of the Beurs in 1983, the bombings in 1995, the riots in 2005, support for Palestine, wearing the hijab, the rise in consumption of halal meat, even the demonstrations against the El Khomri labor law in June 2016, and contemporary terrorism, which is supposedly the outcome of a process of failed integration or a refusal to integrate.* (Roy, 2017: 33)

Roy believes that historical approaches suggest that terrorists are a consequence of marginalized and secluded populations. In contrast, Roy's study shows that these second-generation terrorists often come from west Paris or provinces in France rather than the often-cited Seine-Saint Denis area of northeast Paris usually considered the fertile ground for terrorist recruitment. Roy concludes that "No religion is an instrument of radicalization or deradicalization. Religion has its intrinsic dignity, it unfolds its own space, which is neither social nor territorial but spiritual. Religion is there, and instead of destroying it, secularisation has made it conspicuous" (Roy, 2017: 98). As discussed above, Islam being at the forefront of P/CVE policies in the UK has also been controversial, partly because those policies have not proven to successfully counter radicalisation threats and their practices have promoted social stigmatisation.

An accurate synthesis of this debate is presented by Klausen (2017: 169), who argues that it mimics similar debates in migration "over whether push factors, such as wars and natural disasters, or pull factors, such as economic opportunities, do more to explain why, when, and how people move…" In this debate on radicalisation, Kepel (2017) favours the analysis of pull factors such as Salafi fundamentalism, while Roy (2017) focuses on push factors of youth deviance due to socio-economic depravation; however, they both hold the French government responsible for its failed

attempts at inclusion of second-generation migrants (Klausen, 2017: 169). Complementing academic research cited above focused on moral ecologies (Bouhana, 2019), these academic contributions by Roy highlight the importance of knowing the context surrounding youth radicalisation. Roy'a Franco-Belgian studies show the importance of understanding youth radicalisation, though with the caution addressed above to avoid applying the insights learned from former radicals to the P/CVE framework as a means of obtaining radicalisation predicting factors. Instead, what these approaches suggest is the potential role there is to play for youth workers and social workers familiar with the complexities faced by youth in local communities. In the next section, this chapter examines the emphasis of P/CVE work on youth in the UK.

1.3 Youth and P/CVE policies in the UK

So far in this chapter I have pointed to the linkages between CT and P/CVE strategies, highlighting the main theoretical and practical challenges of implementation, and how this line of work has attempted to govern the risk of radicalisation through networks of partnership with front-line workers. The following section now shows how in practice P/CVE policies have focused on youth. I will review the existing government data on Prevent and Channel referrals and discuss the central role of youth in P/CVE policies, before concluding with a brief discussion around the role of youth workers in P/CVE work.

In the UK, the transition from CT to P/CVE can be analysed through the linkage of radicalisation and notions of 'Islamic terrorism', particularly in relation to Muslim youth (Coppock & McGovern, 2014). This focus of P/CVE on youth places public sector professionals and youth workers at the core of its strategy. One of the aims of this thesis is to contribute to the existing literature which has recently increased our understanding of P/CVE implementation in the front line under the frame of Prevent policy (Busher et al., 2019; Thomas 2019; O'Toole et al., 2016; McDonald, 2011; Iacopini et al., 2011), by analysing youth work under Prevent's current phase, as well as hybrid and independent P/CVE efforts. It is through the collection of first-hand experiences of youth workers and government practitioners that my research can contribute to existing theoretical and evidence-based discussions around challenges in the implementation of P/CVE programmes in the UK. One assumption based on the discussion outlined above is that there are contrasting approaches between state-led P/CVE work, which tends to follow an individualised risk assessment of vulnerability to radicalisation, and context-based P/CVE approaches, led by hybrid/independent youth work. In this sense, this study seeks to situate grassroots efforts to safeguard youth from

violent extremism within discussions around P/CVE implementation and its implications for wider youth work traditions.

The 2018 House of Commons briefing titled 'Terrorism in Great Britain: the statistics' provides an updated statistical review of terrorist activity since 2001 (Allen & Dempsey, 2018). According to the document, "Since 11 September 2001, there have been 3,840 terrorist related arrests… 52% of all arrests related to terrorism are of persons below the age of 30…", and this percentage (52%) holds for the number of people under the age of 30 convicted of terrorist offences (Allen & Dempsey, 2018: 15). This reveals that the majority of arrests for terrorist related causes were of young people under 30 years of age. Additionally, the revised Prevent strategy (2011) stated that the population most vulnerable to violent extremism is youth: "…the percentage of people who are prepared to support violent extremism in this country is very small. It is significantly greater amongst young people…In the Citizenship Survey, approval of violent extremism is higher amongst young people and for people from lower income and socio-economic groups" (Prevent Strategy, 2011: 5). The 'approval' here refers to the alignment to narratives such as 'attitudes against the West' (Prevent Strategy, 2011: 7), attributed to international terrorist organisations such as al Qaeda. It is important to consider, however, that some of these political grievances are also shared across non-violent extremist groups (Qureshi, 2016: 30).

The Home Office bulletin 'Individuals referred to and supported through Prevent programme, England and Wales, April 2018 to March 2019' states a total of 5,738 Prevent referrals. The distribution of referral sources is as follows: 33% education, 29% police, 11% local authority, 10% health, 9% other, 5% prison and probation services, 2% friends and family, and 2% community (HO, 2019). Out of the total referrals made, 28% required no further action, 49% were signposted to other sectors (28% education, 22% local authority, 18% health, 16% police, 6% prison and probation services, 6% other, 3% friends and family, and 1% community), and 23% were discussed by a Channel panel (HO, 2019: 6). What is relevant about these numbers is that there is a high percentage of individuals being referred to Prevent and Channel who were not proven to have any real ties to terrorist networks (28% required no further action and 49% were signposted to other services). Individuals below the age of 30 who were arrested for terrorist offences and were not convicted is also 52%. Further, the bulletin states that 47% of Prevent community projects were delivered in schools. This shows continuity, as the previous year most Channel referrals originated in education settings: "In 2017/18, 42% of those receiving support on Channel were as a result of referrals from the education sector…Of individuals supported by Channel in 2017/18, 66% were aged 20 years or under and 90% were male" (HO factsheet, 2019). Out of the total referrals in 2017/18, "42%

required no further action", "40% were signposted to alternative support", and "18% were discussed at Channel panels" (HO factsheet, 2019). Overall, the data show a significant percentage of referrals originated in education settings, and more than half of those do not reach Channel support, meaning there is a considerable percentage of people being detained/supported by police services who have no proven connection to terrorism. The implications of this data at the grassroots level are problematised in chapter seven.

With the available data, there is no way of knowing at this point if the strategy to deliver Prevent programmes and the Statutory Duty of front-line workers to refer anyone they judge vulnerable to violent extremism is successful in safeguarding individuals from radicalisation. However, considering the high number of people being detained/supported by police services due to Prevent referrals,[4] it is important to further analyse an approach aimed at the identification of individual risk/vulnerability assessment and its implications for front-line workers in education, health and the third sector with the responsibility of referring people to Prevent and Channel.

1.4 Youth work and Prevent

> *…the increasing interest in youth workers' abilities to connect can create a tension: between the need for trust and credibility with communities and young people fundamental to youth work, and the extent to which to engage with the often stigmatising policies and practices of state security. (*McDonald, 2011: 180)

This quote responds to the first phase of Prevent (2007-2011). It accurately shows how hard counter-terrorism (CT) strategies, such as 'stop and search' (under section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000), and soft preventive approaches through civic society, "systemically suspected, monitored and marginalised" British Muslims in the UK (McDonald, 2011: 180). Youth workers were instrumental during the first years of Prevent, as they enabled (along with local stake holders in communities) a "catch-all character" of the CT strategy, and were "equipped to deal with issues of violent

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[4] The House of Commons briefing does not specify the origin of the remaining 48% of terrorist related arrests since 2001 which were not carried out under sections 44 and 47 of the Terrorism Act 2000. However, the period between the time when the European Court of Human Rights challenge of the Act in 2007 and its repeal in 2010 coincides with the period known as the first phase of Prevent; when in 2007 it became the focus point (funding) in CONTEST strategy, and when it was revised in 2011. The data show that 52% of individuals below the age of 30 were processed by the police based on the suspicion of terrorist offences, including minors, who were never actually proven to have committed a crime under the Terrorism Act 2000.

extremism, allowing young people space to discuss their views or in some cases raise concerns about the behaviour of peers" (McDonald, 2011: 180).

When revisiting the 2011 revised Prevent strategy, the two categories of youth and criminality, joined-up in the data discussed so far, are present: "young people in the criminal justice system, or on the edge of it, are likely to be the most socially excluded and disadvantaged and can be vulnerable to a number of influences, including radicalisation" (Prevent Strategy, 2011: 90). A critical view of this statement does not necessarily focus on its veracity, but rather on its disregard for the processes involved in creating the precarious circumstances which increase the likelihood for youth to be subjected to the criminal system. This is particularly so if CT and P/CVE early interventions create a bridge between youth and the criminal justice systems, either through 'stop and search' or front-line referrals.

Are there measures in place to *counter* the possible effects of social stigmatisation for those who are wrongfully detained/supported by police and local authorities? The use of risk as a defining tool of policy design can stigmatize and label youth early on when problematic behaviours are no longer dealt with through the traditional safeguarding personnel based in schools, youth work, and social services, and are instead processed by security services alone or in cooperation between the two (de St Croix, 2016; Thomas, 2012, McDonald, 2011):

> *The scale of this engagement was particularly marked in the 'Prevent 1' phase of 2007–2011. National government boasted of engaging with almost 50,000 young Muslims in the initial year of 2007–2008 (DCLG, 2008) and community-based, youth-focused activities formed a very significant part of local Prevent programmes in the subsequent expansion (Iacopini, Stock, & Junge, 2011; Lowndes & Thorp, 2010; Vermeulen & Bovenkerk, 2012).* (Thomas 2016: 176)

Thomas further argues that Prevent and CT policies maintained a Muslim youth focus, carried over from the first phase of Prevent into its later phases (Thomas 2016: 176). This can be seen in the following report by the Muslim Council of Britain, published in 2016:

> *Whether this is by design or default is difficult to tell but the evidence strongly suggests that Prevent is creating and spreading fear within Muslim student communities and restricting their ability to engage in legitimate scholarship and democratic dissent and debate.* (The Muslim Council of Britain: 2016:37)

The focus on youth, particularly Muslim youth, has been persistent during all phases of the Prevent Strategy, which is why a focused understanding of its stigmatizing effects and youth work practices in this context need to be explored further in academia (Pilkington & Acik, 2019).

A focus on youth work can provide a nuanced understanding of Prevent policy, including how it is implemented in the front-line and how it intersects with grassroots practices. Although there are accounts of how Prevent policy has securitised and created stigmatisation of Muslim youth (Thomas, 2016; Coppock & MacGovern, 2014; Heath-Kelley, 2012), academic work has also highlighted the potential of youth work in challenging and negotiating "their own positions to resist top-down narratives" (McDonald, 2011: 178). This relationship between youth work and Prevent policy is further explained by Thomas (2018): "Youth work and youth workers have played a significant role in Britain's Prevent programme, particularly in its initial phase, and the problematic challenges faced by, and experiences of, youth workers have contributed to the highly controversial and contested public image of Prevent" (369). As Thomas argues here, youth work has been central in Prevent, which is why it is important, from research and policy perspectives, to continue to engage with its practices, as this thesis does. Such attention can help to improve the design of P/CVE policies, but also engage with the contested understandings of the Prevent Strategy.

A detailed report provided by Iacopini et al. on Prevent projects delivered in Tower Hamlets during the first phase of Prevent (2007-2011) problematised the outcome of youth work under P/CVE funding, highlighting how the success of such projects relied on "undertaking a youth-work model that focuses on addressing a range of young people's broader socio-economic needs…or diversionary activities", and the "added value" from Prevent funding which enabled "new/better relationships" and "widening collaboration/representation" at the grassroots level (Iacopini et al., 2011: 6). This report suggests that Prevent funding was being used for localised needs beyond P/CVE. Furthermore, other examples in the data showed that some groups were already "addressing some aspects of Prevent", and additional funding through Prevent simply allowed workers to implement activities that would increase youth retainment in their activities (Iacopini et al., 2011: 43). What is worth exploring further, hence the purpose of this thesis, is to understand how youth workers' practices, traditions and knowledge impact P/CVE work beyond Prevent policy.

Thomas (2012) also argues that P/CVE efforts can have positive effects on youth if the security strategies do not interfere with social cohesion and avoid targeting non-violent extremist ideologies. He cautions, "a triumph of that 'values-based' approach to the detriment of pragmatic, 'means-based' engagement with conservative Muslim communities who may hold arguably illiberal social 'values' but who have the ability to divert young Islamists away from the path towards violent

extremism" (Thomas, 2012: 140). Youth-led programmes, Thomas continues, can effectively integrate multi-faith/ethnic backgrounds towards cohesion. As an example of multi-ethnic leadership programmes[5], Thomas mentions the Youth Parliament and the Young Foundation with its 'Uprising' schemes. The objective of the schemes was to create meaningful engagement between young individuals from different backgrounds and to create spaces where they can "address issues of politics, identity and attractions of extremism…" (Thomas, 2012: 142). Thomas concludes that Prevent policies should focus more actively on education rather than on surveillance-based approaches (Thomas, 2012: 143).

Similarly, Silverman (2017) argues that effective community-based approaches are more likely to have long-term solutions against VE when decision-making is done from the bottom-up. When addressing the issue of foreign fighters in the UK, she encourages the idea that community engagement can assist in "reducing the number of vulnerable youth being violently radicalized and traveling to Syria, as well as future iterations of the same problem" (Silverman, 2017: 1101). The UK-based studies of both Thomas (2012) and Silverman (2017) point to the importance of P/CVE strategies being rooted in local communities, rather than using top-down approaches to counter radicalisation.

Both international and UK-specific P/CVE theories acknowledge the critical role grassroots and youth-led initiatives play in challenging violent extremism (Thomas, 2016; UN, 2015; Flowers, et al., 2014; HO, 2011: 70). Grassroots organisations represent a source of 'know how' information from the front-line, which can provide alternative understandings of pathways into radicalisation. Two examples arguing for the involvement of youth and youth workers in the design and implementation of P/CVE programmes are the United Nations' Plan of Action (PoA) to Prevent Violent Extremism (UN 2015), and a survey implemented by YouthCAN[6] titled *Guidance for international youth engagement in PVE and CVE* (2016), funded by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD)[7]. In 2015, the UN's PoA urged all member states to "Support and enhance young women's and young men's participation in activities aimed at preventing violent extremism by prioritizing meaningful engagement mechanisms at the national, regional and global levels" (UN 2015). Shortly after, YouthCAN produced a survey with the aim of providing feedback from youth activists, including youth workers, based on three primary themes "addressed by the UN's PoA: (1)

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[5] uprising.org.uk
[6] YouthCAN is an international global youth network with the aim of countering and preventing violent extremism through the optimization of youth grassroots efforts (Saltman & Kirt 2016).
[7] The Institute for Strategic Dialogue is a global think tank focused on countering extremism whilst "empowering new generations against hate and extremism" (https://www.isdglobal.org/).

local contexts and drivers of extremism, (2) methods for engaging communities and empowering youth, and (3) strategies for the communication and integration of the UN's PoA and Resolution 2250" (Saltman & Kirt, 2016). It also called for the inclusion of women in peacebuilding processes around areas of conflict.[8]

The survey was delivered electronically to more than 108 young activists from 43 countries, aged 16-33, who engaged with P/CVE from different perspectives. The survey revealed that youth activists involved in P/CVE work "identified poverty and inequality, a lack of education, unemployment and a lack of economic opportunities as the main factors leading youth to join violent extremist groups in their communities. There is also a strong belief that social exclusion and feelings of marginalisation are driving youth to embrace extremist ideologies" (Saltman & Kirt, 2016: 6). These findings resonate with the context-based approach followed by Roy's study, which found common themes in youth culture/isolation/criminality as precursors to radicalisation, as described above. In accordance with the UN's PoA, this YouthCAN report raised serious concerns about the lack of educational platforms that cultivate critical thinking, respect for human rights, digital literacy and global citizenship skills (Saltman & Kirt, 2016: 6). These values and skills "create resilience to violent extremist pathways", and 60% of the respondents stated that it is through community-based programmes that these skills are being developed (Saltman & Kirt, 2016: 7). This data highlights the possible contributions of local youth-focused grassroots organisations in P/CVE efforts, and the importance of integrating universal human rights education and political activism within models of raising resilience to radicalisation, as proposed by Davies (2008) in 'Educating Against Extremism'.

Further, the YouthCan survey asked international youth workers, "What sector should be involved in the National Communication Strategy?" The responses ranked Law Enforcement as the least productive or even counter-productive body involved in P/CVE (Saltman & Kirt, 2016:14). As will be discussed in the next chapter, one of the main criticisms of Prevent throughout all its phases, has been the question of police involvement in Prevent programmes; this has been seen to conflate *countering* radicalisation though a security focus with *prevention* approaches through human development. Overall, the YouthCan survey highlights the potential of collaborating with existing grassroots organisations in P/CVE efforts, and rather than reinventing the wheel, creating partnerships with existing "programmes and infrastructure to combat violent extremism" (Saltman & Kirt, 2016: 15).

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[8] "…resolution 2250 references the Women, Peace and Security agenda, which deals with the role of women in conflict, the impact of conflict on women's lives and security and women's participation in peacebuilding" UN's 'Security Council resolution 22502 (2015) in http://unoy.org/wp-content/uploads/2250-annotated-and-explained.pdf.

This chapter has shown the theoretical and practical assumptions behind early prevention work in CT and P/CVE strategies, problematising contrasting approaches of intervention and radicalisation models, and highlighting in particular differences between individualised risk/vulnerability assessments and context-based approaches. I have also showed the persistent focus of P/CVE policies on youth, and therefore the important role front-line and youth workers play in P/CVE efforts. This chapter went on to highlight key insights into P/CVE policy through a review of scholarly contributions surrounding the study of P/CVE youth work under Prevent. Furthermore, I highlighted examples from the existing literature which show the importance of integrating youth and grassroots experiences and expertise into the overall P/CVE efforts in the UK, as my research seeks to accomplish. As the experience of front-line practitioners and youth workers altogether provides alternative practices and knowledge in P/CVE implementation, localised knowledge can still be identified from youth workers who have recently engaged in P/CVE work both independently and in collaboration with Prevent.

In the following chapter I look in more detail at Prevent policy and its main theoretical and practical challenges pertaining to each of its three distinct phases (2007-2011; 2011-2015; 2015-Present). I will highlight the persistent reports of social stigmatisation and securitisation of communities based on ethnic, racial and religious characteristics that are present in the P/CVE literature. The aim is to provide evidence of an existing need to further understand P/CVE grassroots work beyond the frame of Prevent.

Chapter 2: A review of the study of the Prevent Strategy

This chapter discusses the conceptual framework of risk and vulnerability embedded in the CONTEST strategy, and how these concepts are operationalised within the framework of Prevent's three chronological phases. This chapter provides a literature review of the evolution of Prevent divided into three chronological phases of its existence: phase 1 (2007-2011) discusses the origins of Prevent as a pivotal section of the counter-terrorism strategy CONTEST, through a community-based approach; phase 2 (2011-2015) acknowledges a shift to a centralised administration of budgeting and evaluation and its increased focus on tackling non-violent extremism; and phase 3 (2015-present) discusses the consequences of the Prevent Duty on front-line workers, who now share the responsibility of referring anyone vulnerable/at risk of violent extremism (VE).

This chapter contributes to the overall claim that there is a need to study P/CVE work beyond Prevent policy, by showing how scholarly research has mainly focused on the study of P/CVE under the frame of the Prevent Strategy. Furthermore, it will sort the literature within two main epistemological approaches that appear within. The first and perhaps most common has characterised Prevent as a top-down policy that cascades into front-line implementation through public service professionals and grassroots work, hence limiting our understanding of front-line agency. This body of research has problematised how Prevent (and CONTEST) became a government tool for the securitisation of front-line spaces, and has documented its stigmatising effects on ethnic and religious minorities in the UK (Elshimi, 2015; Coppock & MacGovern, 2014; Muvalli, 2014 Heath-Kelly, 2013; Husband & Alam, 2011; Thomas, 2010; Kundnani, 2009). The second epistemological approach for the study of P/CVE work, and where this thesis is situated, is research focused on the tensions that arise between P/CVE policy design and front-line pre-existing practices. Such work shows the complexities behind P/CVE implementation, documenting the enactment, reinterpretation, adaptation, and even the contestation of P/CVE policy in the practices of workers in education, public health and grassroots organisations (Pilkington & Acik, 2020; Busher et al., 2019; Thomas, 2017; O'Toole et al., 2016; Iacopini et al. 2011; McDonald, 2011).

2.1 Prevent Phase 1 (2007-2011)

> *"To a central government that was responding to a new, and radical, escalation of their*
> *engagement with the 'War on Terror', Prevent represented an expression of due diligence on*
> *the part of a government that was already heavily involved in developing 'flexible'*

understandings of the domestic implications of human rights principles.….For Muslim communities, and for those with a continuing commitment to pursuing multicultural equity within a framework of human rights, this policy smacked of 'Big Brother' and over-reaction. It would be reasonable to say that from a range of perspectives, the Prevent agenda as it was delivered to local authorities from central government, was politically noxious. (Husband & Alam 2011: 195)

As this quote suggests, the UK's Prevent strategy introduced policies that involved working with communities at local levels, particularly Muslim communities. They represented a threat to human rights and preceding 'anti-discriminatory and anti-racist' policies and practices in British politics (Husband & Alam, 2011). This section will begin with the review of the background of the Prevent policy and its position within the overall counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST.

In the UK, the relationship between CT and P/CVE policies can be analysed through the government's Strategy for Counter Terrorism, otherwise known as CONTEST, first published in 2003 as a response to the 9/11 attacks in New York. Prevent is one of the four elements of CONTEST: Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare.[9] Though Prevent was always part of the CONTEST strategy from its origin, it only became central to the UK's policy funding and design in 2007, following the 7/7 London attacks in 2005 perpetrated by UK nationals following a jihadist ideology.

Two documents by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) are key to Prevent's central role in the UK's CT strategy: the 2006 *Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder Fund*, and the 2007 *Preventing violent extremism: Winning hearts and minds*. The 2006 'Pathfinder' pilot project funded 261 projects from 2007-2008 with an initial £6 million investment. The DCLG detailed that funding was focused on local authorities with "sizeable Muslim communities", meaning those areas with "populations of 5% or more" Muslims (DCLG, 2007b: 6), which became an area of contention. The 2007 'winning hearts and minds' preventive approach was a response to the 7/7 London bombings, as it identified Al Qaeda as "one of the most important challenges to Britain's security for many years to come" (DCLG, 2007: 4). The strategy had four "key approaches: promoting shared values, supporting local solutions, building civic capacity and leadership, and strengthening the role of faith institutions and leaders", with an aim to "work with Muslim organisations to tackle violent extremism" (DCLG, 2007). Thus the first phase of Prevent dates from 2007, and had a particular focus on Muslim communities.

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[9] "Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks; Prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism; Protect: to strengthen our protection against terrorist attacks, and Prepare: where an attack cannot be stopped, to mitigate its impact" (CONTEST, 2009).

Prevent's budget in sum between 2008-2011 totalled £186,760 million, dispersed through three departments: the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT), the DCLG and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (O'Toole et al., 2016: 162). Just through the DCLG, £85 million was used to reach over "44,000 people, almost all of them Muslim youths taking part in broad and unfocused activities…" (Thomas, 2010: 445). These first approaches linking community work to security frames of intervention were the bedrock of Prevent's first phase of implementation. However, this led to criticisms that a "monocultural focus has been a vehicle for surveillance and intelligence-gathering by police and security services, so antagonising the very communities that PVE is trying to win over…in stark contradiction to wider government priorities of community cohesion" (Thomas 2010: 445). This initial strategy was highly contested because of its focus on Islamic ideology (DCLG, 2008), and for its conflation of cohesion policies with security surveillance practices (Kundnani, 2009).

One example of how the DCLG engaged with Muslim communities early in the Prevent strategy is the Radical Middle Way project. In 2006, Communities Secretary Ruth Kelly argued that the DCLG had four points in "dealing with diversity": 1) that there should be a "localist" approach to Muslim communities, 2) "…that we continue to engage with the issue of faith by funding initiatives like the Radical Middle Way project which is bringing respectable scholars on Islam over to this country and enabling tens of thousands of young people to attend those road shows", 3) that they account for transparency and accountability in policy-making, and 4) that they respond to Muslim grievances (UK Parliament, 2007: EV27). Such tight partnership between the DCLG and Prevent during its first years evidences the controversial strategy involving community cohesion and security practices (Thomas, 2010; Kundnani, 2009).

In addition to its community focused approach, the revised CONTEST strategy of 2009 took a step forward in extending its focus on non-violent extremism:

> *"We will also continue to challenge views which fall short of supporting violence and are within the law, but which reject and undermine our shared values and jeopardise community cohesion. Some of these views can create a climate in which people may be drawn into violent activity".* CONTEST Strategy (HO 2009)

During this first period of Prevent, scholarly research understandably maintained a focus on Prevent policy and its effects on those communities funded to deliver P/CVE work. Some of the main criticism at the time argued that Prevent failed to meet its aims, as there was a lack of transparency and horizontal relationships with communities (Briggs, 2010: 976-979). Others argued that the conflation of community work with the element of security led to spying practices (Kundnani, 2009),

the erosion of trust and sparking of envy between communities (Birth, 2009), and tensions with community cohesion polices (Thomas, 2010).

In addition, these communities felt targeted by the Prevent Strategy due to its use of religious ideology to define the areas at risk of radicalisation, an individualised risk assessment model, as discussed in the previous chapter. For example, O'Toole et al. argue that Prevent's Muslim engagement had a "particular focus on theological, youth, women's and counter-radicalisation projects. Thus, the New Labour government set out to develop theologically based counter-narratives to al-Qaeda ideology" through the funding of the Radical Middle Way project and the Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board (MINAB) "…to create a UK-based system of mosque regulation" (O'Toole et al., 2016: 163).

Additionally, with the creation of the Young Muslims Advisory and National Muslim Women's Advisory Group (NMWAG), the government attempted to "bypass existing Muslim representative structures to enable the government to engage directly with Muslim women and youth" (O'Toole et al., 2016: 162). Grassroots P/CVE efforts during these early years of Prevent aimed to establish partnerships with youth and women to create 'local resilience' to violent extremism. Such efforts included funding through Prevent as part of the 'winning hearts and minds' initial strategy led by the DCLG (Brown, 2019).

P/CVE efforts that conflated the Prevent strategy with community cohesion created competition between grassroots organisations over funding (Birt, 2009), promoted self-governance of Muslims by drawing distinctive lines between good/bad and extremist/moderate Muslims (Alam and Husband, 2011), and began to shape what had been coined by Hillyard (1993) as 'suspect communities' (in Pantazis & Pemberton, 2009). Though government funding into deprived areas was welcomed to some extent, some groups expressed frustration about the funding from a security agenda (Kundnani, 2009: 20). Overall, these first attempts to incorporate the frameworks of risk and vulnerability into the everyday practice of P/CVE at the grassroots level were highly contested.

Academic and independent reports also raised concerns about the stigmatizing effects of Prevent due to its focus on Muslim communities. Kundnani's report 'Spooked' (2009) is highly cited in the P/CVE literature as it is one of the first to document grassroots responses to Prevent policy implementation. Kundnani argues that the Prevent programme had the purpose of "embedding" counter-terrorism policing through the gathering of "intelligence on Muslim communities", hence "undercutting professional norms of confidentiality and trust" in the practices of front-line and community workers (Kundnani, 2009: 28-34). Kundnani's report is valuable not only because it

contributes to the understanding of the stigmatizing effects of Prevent on Muslim communities, the use of Prevent and community cohesion to install surveillance on Muslim communities, and concerns over the "ambiguous" use of 'extremism' which can be used to marginalise political opposition, but because the report does so through first-hand data on the role of grassroots efforts in P/CVE efforts under the Prevent strategy.

Another such example is an independent report published by the An-Nisa Society (Khan 2009: 5), which highlighted the effects that Prevent strategy had on Muslim communities. Using ideology as a framework for the P/CVE strategy, the report argues, can lead to social stigmatisation of communities who have a previous history of socioeconomic exclusion in the UK: "Decades of Muslim socio-economic disadvantage was statistically hidden until the Census 2001…We believe that this social exclusion is a contributory factor to making a tiny minority vulnerable to violent extremism" (Khan 2009: 5). Prevent's focus on the 'tiny minority' of individuals labelled at risk of radicalisation unfortunately led to wider group stigmatisation, the report argued. This ideology driven model of community intervention can be corroborated in the 'Mapping of Project Activities 2007/2008 of the 'Pathfinder fund', which points to a "general population of Muslim communities…at risk of being groomed into violent extremist ideologies" as the focus of its funded activities (DCLG, 2008: 29).

Another point of contention is whether the Prevent Strategy intended, during its early stages, not only to counter radicalisation but also to empower the agency of local groups (Brown, 2019: 5). The 'Mapping of Project Activities 2007/2008' document argues that the strategy of funding local projects intended "that local communities are being given both a greater role and a greater responsibility for tackling today's social and economic issues together" (DCLG, 2008: 35). The premise was that funding a national counter-terrorism strategy through Prevent both reduces the risk of jihadist-inspired radicalisation by targeting Muslim communities and maintains a focus on improving community cohesion; however, Brown (2019) argues it was just a 'tick-boxing exercise'.

Members of the House of Commons in 2010 echoed these concerns in the aftermath of their analysis of the first 3 years of Prevent implementation:

We conclude that any programme which focuses solely on one section of a community is stigmatising, potentially alienating, and fails to address the fact that no section of a population exists in isolation from others… Our evidence suggests that differing interpretations of terminology relating to concepts such as 'intelligence gathering', 'spying'

and 'surveillance' are posing major challenges to the Prevent agenda. (House of Commons, 2010: 3)

This quote from the report directly alludes to the finding presented by Kundnani's 2009 study. The report goes on to argue that these 'stigmatising' effects of the Prevent Strategy may further contribute to pre-existing 'social exclusion' found in these communities.[10] Similarly, the An-Nisa Society report suggests that by focusing on ideology, the Prevent strategy focused on symptomatic factors rather than on greater structural factors that play into the vulnerability of individuals to violent extremism, such as socio-economic disparities (Khan, 2009). Kundnani offers two arguments behind the government's pairing of violent extremism and Islam: "terrorist radicalisation is rooted in religious-cultural rejection of western modernity" and "such rejection needs to be combatted by a government-led 'battle of ideas'" (Kundnani, 2009: 39).

Furthermore, the An-Nisa Society report called for the need to enact bottom-up engagement with local communities in P/CVE efforts,: "We believe that it will be more productive for the government to build trust and address the needs of the Muslim community in the interest of social justice rather than through the lens of anti-terrorism. This will be more constructive and helpful in the fight against violent extremism and will get Muslims on board as equal partners" (Khan, 2009: 5). This is not only an example of criticisms aimed at the implementation of the first phase of Prevent, but of Muslim communities voicing the need for targeting contextual issues, such as socioeconomic disparity, rather than chasing individualised risks to radicalisation.

Such conclusions by both the An-Nisa Society and Kundnani responding to the first phase of Prevent evidence early suggestions that the model of governing security issues such as radicalisation through front-line work limits much wider work embedded in grassroots practices. However, it also shows that these insights perceive the Prevent Strategy as a 'top-down' approach being imposed on the public sector, and therefore not fully acknowledging that in practice these front-line workers and practitioners were perhaps already contesting and adapting Prevent funded work to meet these broader aims, including countering the "securitisation" of their work. Such characterisations of the field in identifying front-line agency is unpacked by research elsewhere (Busher et al., 2019; Thomas, 2017; O'Toole et al., 2016) and remains a lingering gap in the literature specifically in relation to youth work that goes beyond Prevent-funded work, which this research attempts to address.

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[10] Dr Nafeez Ahmed is cited in the House of Commons report "Social exclusion is linked to institutional discrimination" (2010). Another survey found that 80% of British Muslims had experienced discrimination, up from 45% in the late 1990s. These findings are corroborated by a Minority Rights Group International study documenting deteriorating conditions in British Muslim 'access to education, employment and housing' along with a 'worrying rise in open hostility' from non-Muslim communities (House of Commons 2010: Ev 125).

Another example of P/CVE scholarly work that argues to expand the binary 'top-down versus bottom-up' characterisation of Prevent and CT work is Spalek et al.'s study on community policing (2011). The research is based on two case studies of the Muslim Contact Unit and Muslim Safety Forum, both government-funded CT initiatives (Spalek et al., 2011). Although it shows the stigmatising effects of CT and Prevent work through a small-scale study on community cooperation with the police in CT work, it also provides a nuanced framework for the study of 'community' approaches, which can be understood beyond a "simplistic binary that is often portrayed in research literature in relation to 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches to counter-terrorism" (Spalek et al., 2011: 13). Spalek et al.'s research underpinned the subtle but important distinction in community policing "between a 'community focused' and 'community targeted'" approach (2011: 12). This distinction is worth highlighting here, as the researchers argue that a community-focused approach is "characterised by community consent and participation in the governance of various strategies and approaches that are applied", while the community-targeted approach, such as the Muslim Contact Unit, lacks 'consent and participation' (Spalek et al. 2011: 13).

In another publication Spalek argues that the challenges brought on by 'new terrorism' have situated young Muslim men as a "'fifth column enemy within' by media, politicians, the security services and criminal justice agencies" (Spalek, 2011: 195), contributing to the literature on 'suspect communities' (Abbas, 2018; Hickman et al., 2012; Pantazis & Pemberton, 2009). Such research provides insights into P/CVE efforts through the study of front-line practices. However, in order to obtain a more complete scope of youth P/CVE grassroots efforts, it is also important to look at grassroots approaches to P/CVE.

STREET (Strategy to Reach, Empower and Educate Teenagers) was a grassroots project seeking youth empowerment in Brixton, documented in research carried out by O'Toole et al. (2016). Through the voice of Abdul Haqq Baker (STREET), this research captures an example of an organisation that rejected the guidelines of Prevent policy and believed in the strength of youth-led P/CVE initiatives. Baker explained, "STREET, I think, became a powerful tool to show the effective engagement and partnership, especially partnership, with government entities, whether they be local or central, and NGO institutions was possible. But the key area here was that it was negotiated on equal terms" (in O'Toole et al., 2016: 173).

In summary, early research on state-led P/CVE work began to theorise how approaches led by grassroots organisations could counter the stigmatising effects of the Prevent Strategy. Attempts to capture the reality of P/CVE efforts in the first phase of Prevent were found in the work of scholars like Spalek (2011,) Kundnani (2009) and Khan (2009), who emphasized the need to

empower youth by providing safe spaces for them to develop a political voice and a sense of belonging in order to build resilience to terrorist narratives (*Spooked,* 2009: 7; 19). The literature discussed so far at times characterised Prevent as a top-down policy implementation through local communities, raising issues about the securitisation of communities and the stigmatisation of ethnic minorities in the UK. This literature provides a picture of policy design and implementation during the first phase of Prevent. However, there is also data available which by no means contradicts these accounts, but complements them by showing instances of agency being used in the front-line during the implementation of Prevent at the grassroots level. Research such as O'Toole et al. (2016) and Brown (2019), cited above, present data-driven examples where the Prevent agenda was contested and reshaped by the traditions and knowledge of grassroots workers. Such a decentred understanding of security governance is still unexplored in more recent iterations of Prevent, and even more so in non-Prevent funded P/CVE work, which is the scope of this research study. The following section will carry on this discussion within the frame of the second phase of Prevent.

2.2 Prevent Phase 2 (2011-2015)

In 2011 a revised Prevent strategy was published in which the government reviewed the effects of the first phase of Prevent and acknowledged some of the issues mentioned above: "We recognise the risk that the criteria for entry to these programmes can be too broad. We have considered further allegations that the programmes have been used for spying" (HO 2011: 8). Here, the government responded to criticism of the first phase of Prevent by separating Prevent from previous partnerships with community cohesion policies and redirecting these resources towards new partnerships with front-line workers. In 2011, the Prevent Strategy no longer sought partnerships with the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), instead it strengthened its relationship with the Office of Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT) giving the Home Office centralized management of resources and funding (Prevent Strategy, 2011: 9). Its three main objectives maintained a focus on tackling 'ideology', 'supporting vulnerable people' and the 'working with key sectors' (Prevent Strategy, 2011: 7-9).

A shift in the way Prevent prioritised its working relationships at the grassroots level, this aimed to prioritize work based on "risks we face and not (as has been the case) on the basis of demographics" (Prevent Strategy, 2011: 9). As a result, it narrowed down the list of local authorities considered Prevent Priority Areas (PPAs) from 70 during its first phase, to 25 in 2011, further claiming that this later number of PPAs was expected "to change over time" (Prevent Strategy, 2011: 9). I will further problematize this issue in chapter five when I discuss the effects of PPAs on youth

work, though it should be stated here that there is consistency in the local authorities that remained PPAs throughout the three phases of Prevent. Up to 2019, the number of PPAs fluctuated considerably: from 30 in 2014 (44 including 'supported areas'), back to 25 in 2016, and finally to 50 in 2019; however, all throughout the different phases of Prevent almost the same 25 local authorities remained labelled a PPAs from 2007 to 2019 (Prevent Revised guidance 2019; Heath-Kelly 2017: 319; Mastroe 2016: 53; Prevent Strategy 2011: 98), meaning that there is little evidence to support the claim of an overall change in PPAs as stated in the revised 2011 Prevent strategy.

PPAs have been used to delineate communities with a higher risk of radicalisation. However, as Thomas (2017) argues, "Even the funded areas must apply directly to the OSCT for any programme of activity and such (inevitably short and limited) programmes must faithfully implement one of the OSCT's 'products'" (309). There were three areas identified for Prevent funding in 2011: local authority work in association with communities, policing, and work overseas, with funding for the first two areas centrally controlled by government (Prevent Strategy, 2011: 9). This funding process meant that even in PPAs, local authorities had to place bids to Home Office to ensure these programmes aligned Prevent's key aim "to stop people being drawn into terrorist-related activity" (Ibidem).

During its second phase, Prevent justified the focus of its resources on youth through partnerships with "schools, higher and further education", due to the data showing "most terrorist offences are committed by people under the age of 30" (Prevent Strategy, 2011: 64). Most of the Prevent-funded programmes did target Muslim youth organizations, which, as Thomas (2017) argues, favoured surveillance over youth education and corroded trust between youth and front-line workers (120). The focus on youth and Muslim communities thus serves as an example of continuity in the effects of Prevent practice between its first two phases.

Perhaps an explanation for the continued criticisms towards Prevent's practices during its second phase of targeting Muslim communities was fuelled by its approach of tackling not only Al Qaeda inspired violent extremism but also non-violent "ideas that are a part of a terrorist ideology" (Prevent Strategy, 2011: 6). The rationale behind efforts to tackle non-violent extremism is discussed in Sabir's *Blurred lines and false dichotomies: Integrating counterinsurgency into the UK's domestic 'war on terror'* (2017):

> *'Draining' this pool is what Prevent seeks to do in three ways: by disrupting individuals believed to propagate violent and non-violent extremism, by promoting a mainstream or 'moderate' form of Islam to act as a bulwark against 'extremist' Islam, and by challenging*

those individuals who have internalised, or are likely to internalise, extremist ideology via the Channel 'de-radicalisation' programme. (Sabir, 2017: 203)

These mechanisms used to tackle extremism, Sabir argues, are evidence that the Prevent Strategy operated under a counterinsurgency logic, "employing both violent and non-violent instruments of state power – civil, political, and military" (Sabir, 2017:204). In practice, Prevent's focus of non-violent ideology, created divides between British-Islam aligned to Fundamental British Values and extremist practices (Sabin, 2017).

I now turn to research which problematised the working relationships between grassroots and government funded programmes during the second phase of Prevent. Complementary to previous work by Spalek et al., 2011, Silverman (2017) highlighted that developing horizontal partnerships with local communities can provide a break from the ideology driven P/CVE strategy followed by Prevent. In her work with 'Faith Matters' in London, Silverman, documents how Prevent's centralised funding strategy, enhanced 'top-down' approaches with local communities; where "friends" were more likely to obtain funding and hence marginalising key local stakeholders (Silverman, 2017: 1100). Silverman further argues that grassroots-centred, bottom-up approaches would work more successfully at addressing broader issues, beyond P/CVE, through collaborative training: "so that frontline professionals across sectors understand what constitutes a "green" or "red" flag in their eyes" (Silverman, 2017: 1099).

Silverman, who provides a critical analysis of community approaches to counter the risk of UK foreign fighters, advocates for community approaches that respond to local needs (Silverman, 2017:1100). Her work cites several community-led projects whose members raise concerns about a top-down ideology-based approach, arguing it diminishes trust and communication between community leaders and local authorities. Such is the case, she argues, of Home Office's funding approach based on PPAs: "…at a national level this might be useful to target limited resources, it can also overblow the 'threat,' thus polarizing communities", such an approach is not sustainable, Silverman continues, as "…priorities may change and it is better to work across localities and with longevity than wait for matters to deteriorate and become 'reactive' to target resources, adding to a cycle of polarization" (Silverman 2017:1101).

Similarly, a rare example in the literature of independent P/CVE grassroots practices is provided by the *Think Project,* led by Cifuentes et al. (2013). The *Think Project,* developed by the Ethnic Youth Support Team (EYST) in Swansea, provides valuable data on the use of 'safe spaces' for young people to voice their opinions and concerns around topics like religion, race and migration.

The pilot project, published in 2013, went on to become a 3-year project (Cifuentes, 2015), allowing it to follow up on the effects of its training and engagement with participants. Cifuentes (2013) described the Think Project as semi-longitudinal with the aim of preventing far-right extremism through community cohesion; it was a pilot project that included the participation of two groups of 10 young people aged between 14-16 years. One of the purposes of the project was to provide evidence-based proven strategies that could be used by policymakers in the UK to counter violent extremism inspired by any ideology and therefore improve Prevent's practices (Cifuentes et al., 2013: 305).

The study focused on community cohesion due to the increase in ethnic diversity from non-European countries and jihadist-inspired attacks in the UK, parallel to the rise in far-right political parties and intensified xenophobia (anti-immigration) and Islamophobia in the UK and Europe (Cas 2007 in Cifuentes et al., 2013; Cantle & Thomas, 2014). Considering this context, Cifuentes argued, "ensuring community safety and cohesion can be seen as an important part of developing both community and individual resilience to extremism" (Cifuentes, 2015: 10).

A consideration during Cifuentes' research design was selecting the target population without reinforcing stigmatisation (a central consideration for this research as well). Therefore, "a broad commonsense concept of vulnerability was adopted, which included disengagement from education, involvement with youth offending services, or young people who were in receipt of targeted youth support" (Cifuentes 2013: 315). The authors collaborated with other institutions working with 'disenfranchised youth' as a guideline for their selection process (Ibidem). In Cifuentes' second report (2015), the participants were selected through "Rathbone Training, a training provider for NEET [Not in Education, Employment nor Training] young people" (Cifuentes 2015: 15). This reveals an emphasis on socio-economic rather than ideological factors in the project, another distinction from Prevent's approach. Coincidently, Thomas described the Think Project as an example of "anti-extremism education in a non-stigmatizing manner", which Prevent could seek to implement (Thomas, 2016: 182; Cantle & Thomas, 2014).

Overall, the *Think Project* reached 468 young individuals aged between 14-19 in Cardiff, Swansea, Newport, Aberdare and Merthyl Tydfil. Although a follow-up interview with participants three months after their participation in the *Think Project* showed that most had maintained more open views on topics about race, ethnicity and religion, it was still hard to assess if the results had long-term effects on individuals (Cifuentes, 2015: 30). The authors did identify that the learning experiences passed forward to partner organisations could have a long-term effects in the fight against radicalisation (Cifuentes, 2015: 34-35).

One criticism of Prevent's first phase of implementation was its exclusive focus on Muslims. Cifuentes cites a Community and Local Government Select Committee inquiry arguing that Prevent had "too strong a focus on Muslims and insufficient regard to other forms of extremism, such as that stemming from Far-Right politics" (Cifuentes, 2013: 306). This project highlights independently funding P/CVE work on right-right extremism, even though the second phase of Prevent included "extreme right-wing terrorism" as a terrorist threat (Prevent Strategy, 2011: 15). The Prevent Strategy did minimize the importance of tackling right-wing extremism as, unlike Al Qaeda inspired terrorism, right-wing extremism was so far perpetrated by individuals working "on their own" lacking "training, guidance" or an aspiration to carry out large scale operations (Ibidem).

Overall, as Silverman (2017) suggests, the implications of framing Prevent practice through security lenses, such as the emphasis on PPAs, can lead to local divisions and to obstructing pre-existing local efforts to counter violent extremism. Furthermore, as the Think Project showed, there is a great deal to be learned from independent P/CVE efforts, as they reduce the likelihood of local radicalisation while avoiding the stigmatisation of target populations that Prevent has shown to do. This is why this research aims to continue this task of learning from P/CVE beyond Prevent work.

2.3 Prevent Phase 3 (2015-Present)

The third phase of Prevent strategy established networks of front-line cooperation with the addition of the Prevent Statutory Duty in 2015, leading to the front-line shared responsibility of referring anyone vulnerable or at risk of radicalisation. As in the previous two phases, the youth-focus prevailed, as stated in the latest Counter-Terrorism strategy:

The education sector is engaged and understands the Prevent Duty as shown by the high level of engagement through education sector referrals. This is vital given the majority of those found to need support from Channel are under the age of 20. (CONTEST, 2018)

According to the Prevent Statutory Duty and Guidance published in 2015 (and updated in April 2019), local authorities are required to make sure front-line workers (such as those in public health and education) are fully trained to refer anyone they view as vulnerable to radicalisation (HO, 2019). The duty was to be implemented in "conjunction with other relevant safeguarding guidance" such as 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (Prevent Duty Guidance, 2015: 7). However, the Prevent Duty's increased focus on front-line workers for the risk management of radicalisation in communities due to renewed criticisms towards the state-led P/CVE strategy.

As I will expand later in this section, public concerns grew about the possible 'chilling effects' on freedom of speech, particularly in higher education (Scott-Baumann, 2017; Preventing Prevent-NUS, 2017; Rights Watch UK, 2016), and the use of Fundamental British Values (FBV) as a contrasting guideline for the identification of extremism (Fendwick 2019: 5; Scott-Baumann, 2017). Research has also collected the experiences of teachers who showed partial compliance towards the Duty, but only due to 'narratives of continuity', meaning that they were able to incorporate safeguarding for violent extremism into their pre-existing safeguarding practices (Busher et al. 2019). Furthermore, data collected from health professionals showed how the Prevent Duty compromised pre-existing confidentiality and caring practices (Heath-Kelly & Strausz 2019). Additionally, reports put into question the content of the online training used by Prevent to enable front-line workers the detection of sings of risk and vulnerability of radicalisation (Kundani & Hayes 2018), and the science used to justify these risk/vulnerability factors of radicalisation (Qureshi 2016).

Thus, a major sector of the literature maintains a critical view of Prevent and CT policies in the UK despite the changes in the policy over time. However, during this third phase of the Prevent Strategy, the literature also starts to present more nuanced views around the tensions that arise around Prevent policy and front-line agency (Busher et al., 2019; Thomas, 2017; O'Toole et al., 2016). These data-driven studies have focused on the analysis of P/CVE practices, and how those on the frontline enact, challenge and adapt Prevent polices to fit their pre-existing practices, traditions and knowledge. This emphasis on unpacking the complexities behind front-line implementation has become a research imperative due to the increased emphasis of state-led P/CVE work through 'whole of society' approaches.

The current Prevent Strategy continues to seek police cooperation to deal with potential radicalisation cases: "All referrals are carefully assessed by the police and (in some areas) the local authority to see if they are suitable for Channel or may require another intervention such as mental health support" (Revised Prevent Duty Guidance, 2019). Such a framework of implementation, and a continued disproportionate focus on Muslim communities and Muslim youth, has maintained the relevance of previous criticisms towards Prevent due to its role in reinforcing social stigmatisation and Islamophobia (Abbas, 2019; Qureshi, 2018; OSJI, 2016). Another persistent criticism to the Prevent Strategy is its focus on ideology, as explained by Kundnani & Hayes (2018): "Violent extremism in its many forms and manifestations is not the monopoly of any one ideology, and it is associated with the practices of groups that range the political spectrum from religious (of all the major monotheistic religious belief systems) to ethnic, to nationalistic of various hues and

sensibilities" (Kundnani & Hayes, 2018:2). In fact, this criticism prevails notwithstanding Prevent's increasing its target of right-wing inspired radicalisation (HO, 2018).

One group critical of Prevent policies in the UK is CAGE, an independent advocacy organisation founded to support those affected by the 'war on terror'. After the revised version of Prevent and the introduction of Statutory Duty in 2015, CAGE raised concerns about the lack of transparency and evidence-based research in defining the Extremist Risk Guidance 22+ (Dean & Lloyd, 2015), a guidance used to support a key training programme for front-line workers who were made responsible for identifying risk factors and referring individuals vulnerable to radicalisation (Qureshi, 2016). The implication, Qureshi argues, is that intervention is justified in a pre-crime scenario. He writes, "it is precisely in the intersection between the criminal justice system and this prevention work that a pseudo form of criminalisation takes place through civil law" (Qureshi, 2016: 43). If early intervention is applied by front-line workers then it is young individuals and their families who are being forced through a judicial process that directly affects their lives (Qureshi, 2016: 47). Although the Prevent Duty falls on institutions, not on individuals, it places the responsibility of these early interventions on the shoulders of front-line workers and seeks compliance with the Duty through "evidence of productive co-operation, in particular with local Prevent co-ordinators, the police and local authorities…" (Prevent Duty Guidance, 2015: 4).

The analysis of Prevent Duty and its impact on the front line thus provides insights into the complexities behind P/CVE practices in the UK. For example, according to Jerome et al. (2019), the question of how the Prevent Duty has been received in education can vary based on who is being asked this question, depending on whether the study gathers data from front-line workers or students, in higher education or in schools and colleges, and from white or ethnic minority groups. The work of Jerome et al. (2019) provides perhaps the most balanced and nuanced analysis of the literature on the effects of the Prevent Duty on education in the UK. After an in-depth analysis of the available literature (categorized methodologically as small-scale quantitative, large-scale mixed methods, large-scale qualitative, and those that reanalysed older data) the authors conclude that:

> …white British teachers are more likely to focus their attention on Muslim students, and that
> Muslim students and staff feel this surveillance and suspicion… Locating the Prevent Duty
> within the safeguarding framework has undoubtedly enabled many schools and teachers to
> engage with the policy on familiar territory… the data shows that teachers can
> simultaneously be confident in their ability to safe-guard children from radicalisation without
> being confident that they understand the process of radicalisation… schools can implement

the Prevent duty satisfactorily (i.e. to pass an Ofsted inspection) without ensuring that young people actually learn about extremism and terrorism. (Jerome et al., 2019: 833-835)

As Jerome et al. argue, the Prevent Duty has the upside of providing a familiar engagement process between teachers and students (similar results were also identified in Busher et al. 2017); however, the downside is the absence of critical engagement with extremism, which otherwise would help build resilience in youth. However, there is still plenty of room to learn from the people on the ground, as Jerome et al. (2019) conclude: "…the ways in which 'safeguarding' functions as a pastoral system, a security surveillance system and a pre-criminal space for intervention is worthy of further research in this area" (834). This is a gap which is being addressed in this research project in chapter seven, though the analysis of safeguarding practices from the perspective of youth work.

The discussion around Prevent Duty in schools and higher education serves as an example of how research focused on policy outcome can provide insights for P/CVE design and implementation. As the literature discussed thus far has shown, most of the evidence-based research has surfaced problems with Prevent's strategy, evidencing how it promoted social stigmatisation of ethnic minorities in the UK. However, such analysis inadvertently suggests frontline compliance, as Thomas (2017) argues, "criticisms of Prevent risks both downplaying the complexity and contestation of Prevent within the broad 'state' and also implicitly characterising front-line education and welfare institutions as willing tools of state Islamophobia and surveillance" (306). Some research in the P/CVE literature has, however, begun to offer such a nuanced analysis of P/CVE implementation, bringing a much more complete picture of P/CVE efforts in the UK (Pilkington & Acik, 2020; Busher et al., 2019; Heath-Kelly & Strausz, 2018; O'Toole et al., 2016).

For example, Busher et al.'s (2019) data-driven research carried out 225 surveys, 70 interviews and some focus groups in schools and colleges, and highlighted instances of compliance and even "positive acceptance" of the Duty (Busher et al., 2019: 442). However, the reasons why Busher et al. found relative acceptance of Prevent duty in education provides new insights to the P/CVE field. The study showed that the acceptance of the Duty is not consistent with the responses of participants from BME backgrounds. Particularly, Busher et al. (2019) found that although staff agreed that the Duty did "address all forms of extremism", there were still general concerns among BME staff, that it "had the potential to exacerbate the stigmatisation of Muslim students" (445). Furthermore, the study makes a compelling claim that the reason behind policy compliance was partly due to 'narratives of continuity':

"A very large majority of survey respondents (86%) "agreed" or "agreed strongly" that "The Prevent duty in schools/colleges is a continuation of existing safeguarding responsibilities", and the interviews are peppered with examples of respondents drawing parallels between Prevent-related issues and what were already understood as "safeguarding issues". (Busher et al., 2019: 453)

That these findings point to an overlap between Prevent safeguarding duty and pre-existing safeguarding practices is an example that front-line engagement with P/CVE policies is more complex than binary analysis of Prevent and CONTEST policies and front-line agency, which can simplify the understandings of grassroots work and undermine their localized expertise (Thomas, 2017; Spalek et al., 2011).

Valuable analyses of the Prevent Duty focus on the use of Fundamental British Values (FBV), debating the possible 'chilling effects' of the Duty, and the persistent policy focus on Muslim youth. The issue around the use of FBV as a guideline for front-line workers to identify contrasting extremist values is based on both theoretical and practical premises. Theoretically, the literature points to the alienating effects on ethnic and religious minorities in the UK when using FBV, except when FBV are understood and integrated within general human values shared across countries, cultures and religions (Webber & Struthers 2019). In the cases where schools wanted to comply with the Prevent Duty by promoting FBV, for instance, Webber & Struthers (2019) showed discrepancies between what they considered to be FBV and how they were taught, and most schools actually favoured universal values and viewed FBV as possibly alienating for students and staff from "another heritage" (2019: 4).

In higher education, the literature also shows contrasting experiences in the possible 'chilling effects' of speech due to Prevent Duty. Fenwick (2019), for instance, looks at the judicial implications when applying the Prevent Duty while respecting free speech in higher education and concludes that "Prevent does not appear to have had a significant impact in inhibiting expression in Universities…", adding that the duty is "… capable of fostering pluralistic debate rather than allowing the expression unchallenged of narrow, racially, culturally or religiously supremacist views is, it could be argued, more likely to promote free speech values than undermine them" (Fenwick, 2019: 12).

However, an opposing view is provided in the literature by Scott-Baumann, who argues that the Prevent Guidance is actually not a legal duty for universities, though its "onerous-sounding 'Prevent duty obligation'" does promote the perception of a Duty (2017: 163). Scott-Baumann further argues that there is a 'chilling effect' of freedom of speech due to "Prevent's monitoring

framework" which provides vague definitions for "terrorism, non-violent extremism, radicalisation and fundamental British values" (2017: 163). The author concludes that universities should rely on the pre-existing legal framework of the "2010 Equalities legislation and the human rights legislation to safeguard students and staff", rather than the Prevent guidance which promotes surveillance of Muslims due to narratives of suspicion, a perceived and unfounded relationship between Islam, and terrorism, non-violent extremism and violent extremism (Scott-Baumann, 2017: 166-167). In other words, the legal framework to tackle violent extremism already exists, rather than creating a new frame of intervention with theorical loopholes (a similar claim is found in Bouhana, 2019).

An example of front-line critical engagement with Prevent is the report *Preventing Prevent* (Nadgee et al., 2017), which collected accounts of NUS members from campuses around the UK, exploring concerns around the 'chilling effects' on Muslims. Nadgee et al. (2017) argue there is a lack of clarity in what is understood as extremist thought and behaviour, causing 'self-policing' amongst Muslim students (42). Later, the report argues that the Prevent Duty has set procedures in place for the compliance with the risk assessments which require strict monitoring and "further layers of bureaucracy" that have in practice disrupted students' capacity to host events, particularly with Muslims speakers (ibid: 59-60).

Complementary to the NUS report on the Prevent Duty, Pilkington and Acik (2020) provide a grassroots-based study on the response of youth to Prevent policy in the UK. The data collected from interviews and participant observations of Muslim youth in the UK[11], builds upon the NUS report, as participants were selected through student-run Islamic societies, NUS, youth justice and community organisations, with the purpose of understanding how youth "respond to stigmatisation and marginalisation" (Pilkington & Acik, 2020: 6). This research captures Muslim student experiences that describe feelings of being under surveillance and afraid of being referred due to the Prevent Duty (Ibid: 9). The findings stand out in the field of P/CVE because it shows that Muslim youth increased their political and social activism as a response to the securitisation of their environments through P/CVE and Counter-Terrorism policies. That is, the study respondents saw in the 'misrepresentation' of their culture and religion a critical source of motivation for social activism (Pilkington & Acik, 2020: 10-11).

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[11] The project was funded by the H2020 PROMISE (a European funded youth-focused research project) which aimed to explore "…the social involvement of young people identified as facing conflict or being stigmatised or marginalised through negative representations…" (Pilkington & Acik 2020: 186). The data collected included young people ranging from 14-29 years of age across Europe. This particular UK-based project engaged with student-run Islamic Societies and higher educational institutions (ISOCs), the Students' Union and National Union of Students (NUS), local and national youth justice and/or advocacy organisations and community networks.

The intricacies of agency and identity are themes in the existing literature analysed through the relationship between Muslim youth and the Prevent Policy. These insights have been collected through first-hand accounts and provide a nuanced understanding of how youth are both a target and a responding force to P/CVE and CT policies in the UK. Brown and Saeed (2015), for example, use the narratives of Muslim female students (from Pakistani backgrounds) to exemplify their experiences of being securitised through discourses of radicalisation. Brown and Saeed argue that although the context of P/CVE and CT in the UK does limit student's activism, they develop complex identity processes that go beyond the binary of radical-moderate. Their identity as British Muslims and 'ordinary' students is limited by the securitized understanding of what it means to be 'radical' and their capacity to practice 'British liberal' values (Brown & Saeed, 2015: 1963). This research provides valuable insights through the recollection of first-hand experiences of youth speaking to the unintended consequences of Prevent, the Prevent Duty and Counter-Terrorism efforts. These projects evidence that state-led P/CVE work focused on youth has proven to deteriorate trust between Muslim youth and police services, increasing feelings of stigmatization (Thomas, 2017: 130), while also showing instances of resistance and adaptation to these policies.

In sum, research on higher education collects first-hand experiences of Muslim students being unjustifiably targeted by teachers for having radical yet non-violent views (Brown & Saeed 2015). In addition, reports from student organisations have described how an increase in procedures to meet Prevent Duty has resulted in self-censorship and limited the number of events on campus ('Students not Suspects' campaign by NUS Black Students, 2017). However, another perspective on Muslim youth and their response to Prevent and CT policies is available in the work of both Brown & Saeed (2015) and Pilkington & Acik (2020), who interviewed youth in colleges, higher education and the private sector to understand grassroots responses to P/CVE policies in the UK. Although they both found what in the existing literature has been characterized as the securitisation of Muslims as 'suspect communities', the authors highlighted how these policies have also ignited youth grassroots activism. That is, for some of the participants it partly means reclaiming concepts such as 'radical' (Brown & Saeed, 2015: 1956), but more importantly claiming agency in identity building:

> *The shared interpretive framework that provides the 'semantic bridge' (Honneth, 1995: 163)*
> *between personal experiences of 'disrespect' and the impersonal aspirations of social*
> *activism in this case, we argue, is the construction of Muslim communities as 'suspect'*
> *through the incursion of counter-terrorism policies and practice into everyday life.* (Pilkington
> & Acik, 2020: 194)

This work is valuable because it not only provides evidence-based accounts of social stigmatisation as a result of Prevent and wider CT practices in the UK, but it also captures a relationship between stigma and social activism. It suggests that social activism, in Muslim youth for example, is rooted in previous experiences of direct interaction with Prevent practice. This is perhaps one avenue to answering why some of the criticism of Prevent endures notwithstanding considerable reviews and changes to its policy design, but it also shows that there are more complex dynamics occurring during P/CVE implementation.

Conclusion

Overall, this chapter reviews the existing literature on P/CVE to present a detailed discussion of Prevent practices in the UK, with an emphasis on grassroots youth work and its practical implications for Muslims. The P/CVE literature illustrates the value of understanding and learning from first-hand experiences of how P/CVE programmes are enacted, interpreted and modified in the front line to satisfy the challenges and needs of their local communities.

It is only recently that, with the work of Pilkington & Acik (2020), Thomas (2019), Busher et al. (2019), Heath-Kelly & Strausz (2018), Silverman (2017) and O'Toole et al., (2016), research problematises the complexities of P/CVE practices at the grassroots level. These academic studies provide a nuanced account of the interactions between policy design and implementation on a daily basis. They have complemented research critical of Prevent and CT practices which portray policy outcomes in binary terms, as those who reject or endorse them. Furthermore, they highlight how complex practices on the ground are, at times, subordinated by the expertise and localised understandings of front-line workers. These authors agree that additional research focused on P/CVE practices will further provide insights on the relationship between policy design and implementation in the UK, which is where this thesis seeks to make its contributions.

The result of the analysis in the first two chapters logically leads to the discussion in Chapter 3 on how the complexities behind P/CVE work can be studied through the analytical framework of decentred security governance. It looks at the P/CVE literature within the frameworks of security governance, decentred security governance in front-line work and youth work in the UK (Bevir 2016; de St Croix 2016), establishing an overarching aim of this project in understanding how grassroots youth practices can help shape P/CVE design, improve the safeguarding of youth from violent extremism and counter social stigmatisation. The premise of this research is that the full

understanding of P/CVE work must include first-hand data on how grassroots workers enact,

challenge and adapt P/CVE policy and how independent youth work interacts with such policies.

Chapter 3: Understanding P/CVE work through Decentred Security Governance

Introduction

> *"By decentring governance and considering governing in situ at the micro-level, we can get beyond abstract accounts and adopt an empirical and methodological focus that emphasises human agency, subjective understanding and local narratives and practice. Methodologically, this requires embracing ethnographic methods, and getting beyond textual analysis alone."* (Bevir et. al, 2018: 9)

As discussed in the previous two chapters, there is still an existing need to provide detailed empirical accounts of P/CVE practices, including but not exclusively in relation to Prevent policy. These two chapters have reviewed the scholarly literature focused on the study of counter-terrorism (CT) and Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) strategies in the UK from theoretical and practical perspectives in existing research. Although these approaches have been valuable in highlighting how CT and P/CVE strategies apply security frameworks to grassroots, community and public sector professional work to counter the threat of radicalisation with the outcome of imposing policy frames that stigmatise ethnic/religious minorities in the UK, they do not fully provide the complete picture of front-line implementation. This is because there is a predominant characterisation of P/CVE policy implementation as cascading down into front-line practices, or based on a binary, top-down versus bottom-up perspective (Spalek et al., 2011; Durose, 2009: 47). My research is situated within less explored research which has focused on the tensions that arise between P/CVE policy, in Prevent, and front-line pre-existing practices, traditions and knowledge. This work therefore has the aim of "emphasising human agency" in policy outcome through the study of youth workers in the P/CVE field in the UK.

Grassroots P/CVE programmes such as the Think Project in South Wales (Independently funded) and STEETS (Prevent funded) in Brixton (discussed in O'Toole et al., 2016), provide examples of P/CVE work with communities aiming to build resilience to radicalisation. Such examples show insights gained from understanding P/CVE efforts that are co-led with government or that are independently delivered. Research that has documented and analysed front-line practices within the framework of Prevent policy, such as Acik & Pilkington (2020), Busher et al. (2019), Silverman (2017), O'Toole et al. (2016), Thomas (2017) Brown & Saeed (2015) and Spalek et al. (2011) display different forms of front-line agency and grassroots responses to Prevent. Such literature contributes to the P/CVE field by showing the complexities in P/CVE work, as a multi-faceted interaction between front-line practices and P/CVE policies.

This chapter starts by defining the governance and security governance analytical frameworks. It then reviews the application of security governance to CT and P/CVE strategies, demonstrating a predominant approach to the management of the threat of terrorism and radicalisation through networks of collaboration involving formal and informal, and private and public, sectors of society. I argue that such multi-layered approaches are a response to complex social issues, also known as 'wicked' problems (Rittel & Webber, 1973), which show no clear solution and are often interconnected to other complex societal issues. The following section looks at the framework of decentred security governance as a suitable approach to the understanding of co-dependent relationships between policymakers and front-line workers in tackling the complex nature of violent extremism. Finally, this chapter concludes by pointing to the need to focus on youth work as a central actor in P/CVE efforts in the UK.

3.1 Governance and security governance

Bell & Hindmoor's (2012) account of the governance literature provides a theoretical framework to explain the rationale behind the UK government's community-based approach during the first phase of Prevent, beyond the claim of an ideologically driven connection between radicalisation in Muslim communities and the terrorist threat of Al Qaeda. They argue that through community engagement, governments "engage more thoroughly with citizens in order to inform themselves of potential discontent, to enhance the legitimacy of decisions and ease implementation; to broaden the base of responsibility for policy and thus help shield government from blame; and to incorporate wider inputs or participation in government decision-making" (Bell & Hindmoor, 2012: 138). However, Bell & Hindmoor (2012) argue that such approaches do not necessarily translate into community empowerment, because the agency of communities is centrally controlled by government as it retains "the authority to revise governance rules and abandon engagement processes" (160). This perspective defines policy outcome through the binary relationship between state power and front-line agency, where "active power-sharing is unusual in such settings; it occurs under tightly prescribed conditions where the government has the whip hand" (Bell & Hindmoor, 2012: 138). It contributes to the governance literature showing state-led 'persuasive' approaches of community engagement to achieve policy legitimacy.

According to Prior & Barnes (2011), policy outcome is commonly approached either as a 'rational and goal-oriented' process where the distinct focus of analysis is the 'discrepancies' between policy design and its outcome, or as an "interpretivist approach which understands the discrepancy in policy design and outcome as the result of context specific interpretations and

negotiations shaped by agents' values…" (2011: 265). The study of policy therefore requires an analytical tool, found in the literature on governance, to understand the relationship between policy design and outcome through the "ongoing day-to-day delivery of services by specialist staff interacting directly with the users of services" (Prior & Barnes 2011: 265).

Lipsky's novel contribution to policy implementation in the 1980s showed the complexity in daily interactions between front-line workers and service users in *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the individual in public services* (1980). One of its main contributions to the field suggested that street-level bureaucrats such as "teachers, police officers, or welfare workers become, or add up to, agency policy and that their actions effectively become the public policies they carry out" (Lipsky 2010: 221). However, as Lipsky reflects, this is a narrow understanding of the original publication, as street-level bureaucrats do not 'make' policy in their actions alone. Lipsky goes on to clarify that although the everyday practice of policy implementation is influenced by front-line workers' discretionary input, they "…do not articulate core objectives or themselves develop mechanisms to achieve them. For any policy reform, we need to look into the entire policy environment in which street-level bureaucrats function" (Lipsky 2010:222). For this thesis, the policy environment is key to understanding the interaction between front-line practices, traditions and knowledge and P/CVE policy design and implementation, in the current context of Prevent and CONTEST in the UK.

Prior & Barnes (2011) also address the issue of limiting the understanding of contemporary social policy analysis to the assumption that policy outcomes flow from policy design. This is why, they argue, the concept of 'managerialism' came into the policy design scene, as a tool that provided "greater control of the activities of frontline workers (Clarke and Newman 1997), and the involvement of service users and citizens as active participants in policy development and delivery (Barnes et al. 2007)" (2011: 266). The understanding of actors who cooperate and contribute to the practice of social policy beyond street-level bureaucrats, such as "citizens, service consumers, managers and supervisors, elected officials, professionals in arm's length and non-governmental organizations, and regulators and auditors…" (Prior & Barnes 2011: 267), led to the introduction of 'governance' as an analytical tool for the study of policy outcomes. The role of front-line workers in policy enactment involves:

> *reconciling the objective factors that frame the work that they do (organizational norms and rules, professional values, operational strategies and technologies, policy prescriptions and priorities resource capacities) with their own personal, value-laden assessment of context-*

specific needs and problems and their evaluation of the consequences of different possible responses to those needs and problems. (Prior & Barnes 2011: 267)

The understanding of governance thus requires considering the context where policies are practiced, as Prior & Barnes argue. The governance literature expands the understanding of policy outcome beyond Lipsky's characterization of a balance between state agency and front-line power to a more nuanced understanding of co-dependent relationships between policy makers and front-line professionals. Context, as discussed in the first chapter, is relevant in CT and P/CVE work when trying to understand the moral ecologies (Bouhana, 2019) surrounding radicalisation, or the issues faced by a deviant youth, as Roy (2017) described in his analysis of jihadist radicals in France/Belgium. However, rather than problematizing around predicting factors of radicalisation, the governance literature provides the tools to problematize firstly, what is the relationship between state power and local agency (front-line workers, civic society, NGOs and the private sector); secondly, what mechanisms of resistance, contestation and compliance to state policy are available at local levels; and thirdly, what tools does the state have, if any, to maintain control of these decentralized agents through indirect structures and norms (narratives, expected behaviours). With the focus of policy outcome, this research seeks to expand the CT and P/CVE literature from a binary understanding of top-down versus bottom-up P/CVE approaches (Spalek et al., 2011) to a more co-dependent relationship in the field that is required to tackle racialisation and wider social harms.

It is through the framework of governance, which discusses the erosion of state sovereignty and the increased focus on the *in-situ* dynamics of policy implementation, that this research identifies the tools to study the grassroots implementation of P/CVE programmes with the aim of providing more clarity around the challenges of P/CVE implementation in the UK. Security governance literature is used in this thesis to explain how counter-terrorism policies and their security premises shifted from state-led to public, 'whole of society' cooperation. It also aims to show the dynamics of P/CVE practices at a grassroots level. In the words of Kooiman (2003), governance understands governing "in terms of interactions, in which societal diversity, dynamics and complexity are expressed…" (2003: 4).

The field of P/CVE, as much as CT, has implemented whole of society security strategies framed under the concepts of risk and vulnerability to *responsibilise* front-line professionals with the management of radicalisation (Spalek, 2013), as discussed in the previous chapters. For this reason, it is relevant to explore the role of multiple actors with distinctive practices and traditions in de-centralised forms of risk management. The relationship between security and governance is addressed by Webber et al. (2004) through their definition of governance, coinciding with Bevir et al.

(2018) and Kooiman (2003) in highlighting the relevance of contextual interactions between state policy and the wider civic society:

> *"…governance involves the coordinated management and regulation of issues by multiple and separate authorities, the interventions of both public and private actors (depending upon the issue), formal and informal arrangements, in turn structured by discourse and norms, and purposefully directed toward particular policy outcomes.* (Webber et al. 2004: 4)

Hence, governance is a useful tool in understanding the mechanisms employed by the state to implement security through formal and informal mechanisms, managed by public and private actors. Governance, Webber et al. argue, requires the use of institutions to "…entrench particular forms of behaviour among their participants by prescribing rules of entry, norms of interaction and constraints on behaviour" (Webber et al. 2004: 8). These norms, in practice, are interpreted as preferences in behaviour (which does not mean they cannot be contested by front-line actors) that are used to maintain specific forms of order through policy (and which do not require full acceptance from all actors). Security governance requires five elements, according to Webber et al. (2004):

> *"heterarchy; the interaction of a large number of actors, both public and private; institutionalisation that is both formal and informal; relations between actors that are ideational in character, structured by norms and understandings as much as by formal regulations; and, finally, collective purpose"*. (Webber et al. 2004: 9)

Similarly, Bevir argues that "Security governance refers to the agenda reforms, and practices associated with the application of joined-up governance to security policy" (Bevir 2016: 228). Both authors agree that the background of security governance has its origins in the end of the Cold War, when the focus of security shifted from international threats (military and political) to local and individualized forms of security threats (economical, environmental and social) (Bevir 2016; Webber et al. 2004: 8). A similar shift was discussed in Chapter 1, when reviewing the transition from counter-terrorism to P/CVE policies, when the threat shifted from an external agent (international terrorism) to domestic radicalisation (home-grown terrorism). This shift in governance resulted in an increasing implementation of "whole-of-government approaches [that] initially appeared in social welfare community policing and counterterrorism in states such as Australia, Britain and, after 9/11, the U.S.A" (Bevir 2016: 228). Tackling these threats meant new policy approaches "…associated with networks, joining-up and whole government agendas" (Ibid: 230). These new approaches required cooperation with local, voluntary, non-profit and private organisations, understood by Bevir as 'decentralised security networks'. Such decentralised approaches of governance are consistent with

the evolution of CT strategies which incorporated non-state actors in surveillance mechanisms (stop and search, financial governance, religious monitoring), to P/CVE policy such as the Prevent Statutory Duty, which required networks of front-line workers in the surveillance of early signs of radicalisation in local communities.

The following section reviews the CT and P/CVE existing literature under the frame of security governance. The aim is to show the existing need to further explore P/CVE practices from the perspective of security governance. The theoretical assumption is that the study of front-line practices can provide insights about how P/CVE polices are incorporated into front-line practices, traditions and knowledge. In sum, this framework opens the analytical avenue to discuss the tensions that arise between policy design and front-line implementation.

3.2 Security governance in counter-terrorism

As discussed throughout in the previous chapter, both CT and P/CVE (such as Prevent) strategies in the UK have come under scrutiny in the existing literature over the security focus on ethnic and religious minorities at the cost of human rights and civil liberties (Kundnani 2014; Sliwinski, 2012; Sloterdijk 2010; Eckert 2008; Douphinee & Masters Eds. 2007). This section will focus on critiques of counter-terrorism (CT) strategies through the framework of security governance.

One critique in CT strategies is the conflation of security with governance surveillance, embedded in what de Goede (2012) calls a "finance-security assemblage", defined as an "…exercise of power at multiple sites and through diverse elements that work in conjunction but may also encounter friction…It makes it possible to think about the practices of cultural representation historically constituted modes of calculation, and novel conjunctions of governmental, business, and technological actors at work" (de Goede 2012: 29). Goede's analysis of CT strategies under the frame security governance shows that efforts to monitor and secure 'terrorist' money has inevitably securitised the financial transactions of non-terrorist, Muslim organisations in the third sector. Furthermore, de Goede argues that "cost-effective regulatory actions" counter current effects of CT efforts that target specific communities and ultimately create "further financial exclusion" (de Goede 2012: 198). These criticisms, de Goede argues, should not be mistaken for arguments against the overall necessity for counter-terrorist financing controls, rather the necessity for policy adjustments to avoid such unintended consequences. This work of de Goede contributes to the existing literature showing how CT policies have been proven to stigmatise Muslim and ethnic minorities

internationally, while also problematizing the agency of mid-level bureaucrats in the delivery of such policies.

De Goede's work also contributes to the understanding of how security governance operates, as the author discusses how the implementation of the 'finance-security assemblage' is embedded in the responsibilities of mid-level bureaucrats. Mid-level bureaucrats, in de Goede's view, are forced to apply their judgement in everyday scenarios under the pressure of a preventive frame of speculative security: "...sovereignty has returned in the midst of governmentality: amid a burgeoning of rules, procedures, listing practices, and recordkeeping in the contemporary finance–security assemblage, it is never quite known when and how sovereign decisions are made by midlevel bureaucrats" (de Goede 2012: 188). In practice, de Goede argues, mid-level bureaucrats must develop a position between the policy design and the situations they encounter daily in their interactions with members of communities. The discourse framed around security and the threat of terrorism is enough pressure to push these workers into the direction of policy-made norms of 'suspicion' (de Goede 2012: 190). In other words, although it may seem as front and mid-level workers have agency as they use their own discretion in policy implementation, the security frame would serve policy makers to limit this discretion within the frame of pre-crime norms. However, these conclusions might respond to de Goede's claim that "it is never quite known when and how sovereign decisions are made by midlevel bureaucrats"; perhaps an in-depth study on the practices of these mid-level bureaucrats would also reveal practices that challenge and adapt such policies. Analysing this detail in the relationship between policy design and front-line practice is the aim of this thesis, with the focus on P/CVE youth work under a decentred security governance framework.

Further, De Goede (2012) intersects the framework of security finance with the understanding of preventive and pre-emptive politics as performative ways of shaping the future (195), using the theoretical distinction between prevention and pre-emption as described by Massumi (2007). Whereas prevention works under the epistemology of a known object and "assumes an ability to assess threats empirically and identify their causes", pre-emption "is an operative logic of power... one that combines an ontology with an epistemology in such a way as to trace itself out as a self-propelling tendency that is not in the way of any particular existing formation but sweeps across them all" (Massumi 2007, para: 5). This distinction between prevention and pre-emption is a useful tool for the analysis of how the future is anticipated within security governance: to what extent is the threat of an imminent attack or an individual on the verge of being radicalised a knowable object? To paraphrase Anderson (2010), pre-emption, along with 'precaution' and 'preparedness', seeks to disrupt and regulate a problematized future through anticipatory

action (2010: 791). This is the logic followed by the security-finance assemblage in its surveillance of monies, where religion or ethnicity are the triggers of these operational systems, also called "biopolitical governing" (de Goude 2012: 30).

Sliwinski (2012) situates this discussion of security and governance in the context of CT strategies in the UK. Drawing from the analysis of the CONTEST strategy in the UK, the author underpins the notions of social mobilisation and 'civilianisation' of security. Sliwinski (2012) divides CT strategies into judicial, political and security categories, and their practices into three levels: local, state and federal (289). CONTEST defines violence as a decentralized phenomenon that increasingly targets civic populations, bypassing traditional state security premises which relied on centralized military strategies to counter violence. [12] Therefore, Sliwinski argues, CT strategies operate under the need to include public/private participation in efforts to manage the threat of a potential terrorist attack. For example, in 2006, the London Metropolitan Police Authority (LMPA) explicitly stated the need to include civic participation within CT security strategies:

> *Keeping Londoners and others safe from terrorism is not a job solely for governments, security services or police. If we are to make London the safest major city in the world, we must mobilise...the active support of the millions of people who live and work in the capital. We must all work together...to deter people from within our own communities from becoming terrorists*". (LMPA 2006 cited in Sliwinski 2012: 291)

As stated in the previous chapter, the UK's CT strategy, CONTEST (2003), is made up of four elements: Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare. Sliwinski's article provides examples of how CONTEST combines security and governance in CT strategies through Protect, and in P/CVE, through Prevent. In the Protect strand of Contest, Sliwinski cites 3 elements that contribute to the 'civilianisation' of security: "(1) protecting key utilities, (2) making the public transport system safer and (3) protecting crowded places" (2012: 294-295). However, soon after the 7/7 bombings, in 2007 Prevent became the focus of the CT policy, encouraging civic participation in the shared responsibility of safeguarding those vulnerable to radicalisation. Prevent, according to Sliwinski, represented the perfect opportunity to engage with communities who previously had been key in countering "social problems such as crime, anti-social behaviour and unemployment" (Sliwinski

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[12] The author makes the argument that since the end of the Cold War, there has been a shift in international warfare, where military efforts were replaced by privatised security organisations that are better equipped to respond to "terrorists, guerrillas, bandits and robbers", who have increasingly targeted civic structures and populations. This decentralised nature of warfare (violence) has placed civic society inside political conflicts and therefore its participation in security is justified and necessary (Sliwinski 2012:290-291).

2012: 291). Pre-existing practices of governance to safeguard individuals from other social harms were then wrapped under P/CVE efforts.

According to Bevir, security governance requires policies that decentralize the responsibility of security premises through the establishment of networks of cooperation across private and public sectors through norms of behaviour (2016). Thus, it establishes formal and informal mechanisms of regulation (Webber, 2004). The informal mechanism of policy implementation relies on the notion that civic society retains (a perception of) agency in their delivery of in CT or P/CVE work. To this purpose, Sliwinski cited Garland's notion of 'responsibilisation', where the state's aim: "is not to command and control but rather to persuade and align, to organise other actors, property owners, retailers and individual citizens, to play their parts" (Sliwinski 2012: 298). However, this analysis suggests that policy somehow shapes front-line practices through persuasion, downplaying their agency in CT and P/CVE work. A critical engagement with front-line practices, as proposed in this research, thus can provide insights into the dynamics between the agency of workers in the front line and the state's use of formal and informal mechanisms to regulate policy implementation.

How does Sliwinski's (2012) understanding of 'civilianisation' integrate notions of security governance? In the concluding remarks, Sliwinski clarifies that 'civilianisation' [efforts] "are not entirely managed by the government but rather initiated and coordinated", meaning that the analysis addresses the shift from government-controlled security management to "non-official civilians in the private sphere... in the field of crime control" (2012: 301). Further, Sliwinski argues that "the paper did not aim at determining how far or to what extent the UK public mobilised themselves to tackle terrorist threats or even less so at attempting to measure it..." measuring the role of civilians in CT efforts would require "a qualitative approach", as the "only plausible and workable solution [to terrorism] will also be hard to measure...a strong social/community-based response appears to be the best way to address 'the menace of the twenty-first century" (Sliwinski, 2012: 301). Such qualitative approaches focused on the practices and expertise of front-line/grassroots work to further understand alternative/complementary solutions to radicalisation – considered the 'menace' of this century, or a 'wicked' problem (Davies, 2016) – is one of the aims of this thesis.

3.3 The wicked problem of radicalisation

The dynamics in policy design and implementation in CT discussed so far under the framework of security governance help to discuss the role of formal and informal networks of public

and private actors in the implementation of CT strategies (de Goude 2012; Sliwinski, 2004). Security governance is an approach which shows non-coercive mechanisms through which the government implements security through networks of non-state actors (Prior & Barnes, 2011; Webber et al. 2004). Furthermore, this section argues that non-state led P/CVE work, viewed through the lens of security governance, only tells part of the story about the role of front-line workers in P/CVE. It is through the lens of 'decentred security governance' (Bevir 2016) that this research can engage with an existing need to understand the relationship between policy makers and font line workers as a co-dependency with the aim to co-produce possible solutions to 'wicked problems' (Rittel & Webber, 1973), such as home-grown radicalization (Bouhana, 2019; Davies, 2016).

One defining characteristic of wicked problems is that any possible solution "has unintended consequences that are likely to spawn new problems" (Davies, 2016: 32). The essential characteristics of wicked problems, Davies argues, apply to violent extremism due to three issues: *definitions*—"a multiplicity of types of extremism" means there is not an agreed definition and therefore no clear target for CT and P/CVE strategies; *causes*—a search for "root causes of extremist behaviour" varies as it is not a "linear path" and "idiosyncratic combinations predispose individuals"; and *targets*—education focused on nurturing positive traits and moral virtues could also be found in the character of violent extremists (Davies, 2016: 33-34). However, Davies argues that "wicked problems cannot in fact be solved at all – all that is possible is that the problem space is loosened so that a wider range of options for action emerges" (Davies, 2016: 32). Bevir (2016) also argues that wicked problems are usually 'interrelated' with other wicked problems, meaning that "any response to a wicked problem has an impact on other wicked problems" (230). The literature reviewed in the previous two chapters provides evidence that tackling radicalization and terrorism has brought on additional issues around stigmatization and racism/islamophobia, which in youth can intersect and enhance other complex social issues such as gang grooming, domestic violence, and knife crime, to name a few. I argue here that this evidences the "interrelated" dimension of those social issues, perhaps some but not all of them holding 'wicked' dimensions of their own or in their collective relationships.

As discussed so far, CT and P/CVE strategies have approached the issues of terrorism and radicalisation through whole of society approaches. However, so far this does not explain the possible contributions from front-line workers in the management of these complex issues. As Sliwinski argued above, local communities, for example, have the experience of being instrumental in tackling complex social issues (2012: 291). The framework of decentred security governance

allows me to speculate around the active role of non-state actors in improving local responses to radicalisation.

Davies (2016) persuasively argues that instead of focusing on "identifying vulnerabilities in people", P/CVE should focus on "identifying the vulnerabilities in extremist systems", due to the elusive nature of radicalization (51). In this context, wicked problems are not amenable through bureaucratic expertise alone, so there is a need to develop partnerships and 'joined-up governance' with "voluntary and private sector organizations", such as front-line workers, to try to figure out the nature of the problem and also to harness their expertise to deliver "mutually beneficial" solutions to such problems (Bevir, 2016: 230).

The link to be made in the following section is between the literature in the security governance and P/CVE field, advocating that decentred security governance as proposed in Bevir (2016), is an ever more precise analytical tool to understand not only networked assembles of security management but also to understand the "processes of governance – specifically beliefs, competing traditions, and varied dilemmas that support and transform security politics and practices. The effects of these can be understood by examining the varied narratives, rationalities and resistances present in governance (Bevir, 2010)" (Brown, 2019).

3.4 P/CVE work and font line agency: the case for a framework of decentred security governance

Rather than the various theories simply informing practitioners, versions of models such as the 'Situational', the 'Supply and Demand' and 'Person in Environment' are used by practitioners to explain and illustrate their work, and – within the aforementioned politicized context – legitimize and position their expertise. This highlights the position of practitioners, who have the practical experience and knowledge, yet whose expertise and voice, and hence power to inform and influence debate, remain relatively unacknowledged. Spalek et al. 2011: 29)

At this point, it is worth considering how security is used within *decentralized security networks* to help shape the practices of front-line workers at a grassroots level. The caution here is what happens when these workers with pre-existing safeguarding roles have to then apply these securitized frames of practice that do not distinguish between a wide range of behaviours and ideas which could be (or not) indicative of radicalization threats? These vague borders between, for example, Fundamental British Values (FBV) and non-violent extremist thought, between risk of

radicalisation and risk of wider social harms (i.e. gang grooming, domestic violence, racism/Islamophobia), between stigmatisation and referring someone to Prevent, collapse into moments of judgement for front-line workers. The use of decentred security governance, however, helps situate the beliefs and experiences of youth workers and practitioners at a grassroots level, and to identify the shifts that occur from the policy design to implementation.

As discussed in the previous chapter, all three phases of Prevent triggered continued criticisms of practices that created 'suspect communities' (Abbas, 2018; Qureshi, 2017; Thomas, 2016; Elshimi, 2015 Heath-Kelley, 2013; Hickman et al., 2012; Spalek, 2011; Kundnani, 2009), or triggered 'chilling effects' in education (Kundnani & Hayes, 2018; Preventing Prevent-NUS, 2017; Scott-Baumann, 2017; Rights Watch UK, 2016; Qureshi, 2016; OSJI, 2016; Ali, 2014), or characterized youth under a dual 'risky and at risk' frame (Coppock & McGovern, 2014; Heath-Kelly, 2013). This risk frame, Heath-Kelly argues, shows how "the 'radicalisation' discourse deployed as a technique of governance, one that operates through frames of the risky and unknown, rather than a validity of the concept when tested against real transitions of violence" (Heath-Kelly, 2013: 396). Heath-Kelly argues that P/CVE and CT policies such as Prevent use risk/vulnerability as a self-referential frame to justify security-based interventions at community levels.

This body of literature focused on the Prevent Strategy has evidenced the securitisation and stigmatisation of Muslims in the UK, however suggesting that it is achieved not only through a policy that targets Muslim communities, particularly Muslim youth, but also through policy compliance at a grassroots level (Thomas 2017: 306). Furthermore, as O'Toole (2019) argues, "much of the literature on Prevent interprets its impact from a reading of its disciplinary intentions – without necessarily attending to how front-line professionals understand or interpret it" (5). As discussed above, some of the exceptions which show instances of policy compliance, adaptation, contestation can be found in Plikington & Acik (2019), Busher et al. (2019), Dudenhoefer (2018) and examples applying the frame of decentred security governance can be read in Brown (2018) and O'Toole (2019) and O'Toole et. al (2016). These authors contribute to the understanding of how policy practice goes through the interpretation and sometimes the adjustment of work on the front line. The analysis of their findings does not always singularly focus on the stigmatisation and securitisation of religious and ethnic minorities, but also on the contributions, challenges and practices of front-line workers. My research seeks to expand this body of work to incorporate independent P/CVE efforts and how they engage with government-led P/CVE projects.

O'Toole et al. (2016), in their evidence-based analysis of Prevent practices (during its first two phases) argued that although the literature has identified how CT and P/CVE policies combine

'hard' and 'soft' security measures to implement a "mode of disciplinary governance" (164), these governing measures have been contested by local Muslim organisations. Where it was expected that Muslim communities interiorize divisions between 'good/bad' or 'moderate/extremist' seeking the self-monitoring of Muslim communities, the authors argue that the "governance of Muslims through Prevent in practice has been less complete, and more contested…" (O'Toole et al., 2016: 165). The authors further explain what the possible gains are from going beyond the disciplinary analysis of Prevent:

> *… much of the 'disciplinary' analytic that has come to characterise analyses of Prevent does not do justice to this fuller agency-incorporating sociology of governance... practice-based approach to analysing state–citizen relations within governance spaces can reveal the possibilities for citizens to effect more autonomous agendas than those necessarily marked out for them by governors.* (O'Toole et al., 2016: 166)

Another example of research which analyses the nuances of front-line work under the Prevent duty is Busher et al.'s (2019) data-driven analysis of the education sector, which found continuity between pre-existing safeguarding duties and the Prevent Duty safeguarding responsibilities. Busher et al. (2019) further explain that the "integration of Prevent Duty into well-established institutional safeguarding systems and practices provided a basis for what they call 'narratives of continuity' – accounts of the duty that emphasise the extent to which it has been incorporated within or grafted onto existing ways of working" (Busher et. al 2019: 6). Furthermore, they argue that these narratives of continuity "were not just produced and transmitted top-down through official policy documentation and the work of national and local Prevent practitioners. Such policy understandings were also generated through institutional processes of policy interpretation and enactment" (Busher et. al, 2019: 455), evidencing the complexity in policy outcome beyond binary understandings of policy implementation engraved in power versus agency.

In the 2017, Thomas made a valuable contribution to the field by arguing that "…criticism of Prevent risks both downplaying the complexity and contestation of Prevent within the broad 'state' and also implicitly characterising front-line education and welfare institutions as willing tools of state Islamophobia and surveillance" (2017: 306). Some of the critical literature on CT and P/CVE, he continues, "fails to acknowledge engaged contestation by local authorities and front-line professionals as well as by Muslim community organisations throughout Prevent's history" (Thomas 2017: 306). There is, in his view, a valuable opportunity to go beyond the existing literature focused on critically analysing the implications of Prevent policy, in order to understand first-hand

experiences from the people on the ground delivering P/CVE programmes. This is why it is important to understand how P/CVE work, beyond Prevent, is interpreted and managed by front-line workers.

Two concepts of policy enactment and responsibilisation are thus applied by Thomas and brought into the context of the P/CVE literature, as concepts which have "shaped the changing nature of ground level contestation within Prevent" (2017: 307). Thomas defines enactment as a ground level response to policy, where institutions "modify problematic national policy structures", leading to outcomes distant from policy elites (Thomas, 2017: 317). To define responsibilisation, Thomas provides a summary of critical social policy literature to explain how over the last two decades there has been a consistent shift in how governments and civil society increasingly share the responsibilities of responding to social and economic change, through the use of conceptual frames such as 'communitarianist' and 'active citizenship'.

From Thomas' contribution, there are two claims which are most relevant to the discussion on decentred security governance and P/CVE practices: first, that policy enactment can be mediated at the institutional/supervisory level, such as in schools or in the hands of mid-level bureaucrats, before programmes reach the front line. In practice, this means that there are very complex processes of policy interpretation and negotiation before the policy 'enactment'. In the UK, this meant that throughout the evolution of Prevent, there have been different government, local authorities and front-line workers helping shape its policy design and implementation (Thomas 2017). Secondly, current social policy, particularly that which falls in the field of risk management and security (Beck 2002), cannot be fully understood without the analysis of front-line work. Thomas writes, that to understand "…a highly-contested national policy regime such as Prevent" we require "…drawing on ground-level empirical evidence about the ways in which it has actually been understood, practiced and contested" (Thomas 2017: 311).Without the empirical data, policy practices can easily be mistaken as being driven by front-line workers, combining policy design and ground-level expertise (judgement), as successful examples of security governance designed by policy elites. Or there is the opposite yet equally narrow interpretation of these same policies being challenged at the front-line as an example of a failed design from policy elites. Consequently, this thesis seeks to expand our understanding on how pre-existing practices in youth work incorporate P/CVE practices in the front line, exploring how "Subordinate actors can resist the intentions and policies of elites by consuming them in ways that draw on their local traditions and their local reasoning" (Bevir, 2016: 234).

Furthermore, the understanding of policy enactment, interpretation and subversion relies on the analysis of context, the actors involved and their interactions. When evaluating the outcome

of a policy, the challenge is to determine to what extent the actions taken are the responsibility of the policy design in prescribed behaviour or if the "judgements about specific situations" of service providers and users alter the policy outcome and its practices (Prior & Barnes 2011: 270). Prior & Barnes (2011) identify 3 types of policy subversion: "modification of practices and revision of outcomes by workers; the development of alternative strategies and new outcomes by users; and the refusal by users to become engaged in service strategies and thereby triggering other kinds of outcome" (Prior & Barnes 2011: 270). As it has been discussed in the first chapter, the existing P/CVE literature provides some examples of these 3 types of policy subversion, respectively: for example, research on the implementation of Prevent Duty in education by Busher et al. (2019) reveals a combination of policy compliance and modification; the work of Pilkington & Acik (2019) on youth activism as a response to Prevent policy shows grassroots movements come alive as a response to social stigmatisation attributed to Prevent policy; and the *Preventing Prevent campaign* led by NUS is an example of the refusal of Prevent Duty coordinated across higher education.

Based on such examples, this research justifies the analysis of P/CVE practices at the grassroots level to understand how these practices intersect with the literature on decentred security governance. The analysis of Prevent policy from a two-dimensional position enables only a binary understanding of Prevent in terms of those who support it and those who oppose it, policy compliance versus contestation. Such a perception can be disrupted, however, by a nuanced understanding of P/CVE practices in the front-line (Pilkington & Acik 2019; Busher et al. 2019; Thomas 2017; Dudenhoefer, 2018; O'Toole et al., 2016). If Prevent is viewed as a policy being implemented as a top-down hierarchical practice, then the agency of front-line workers and the intricacies between all levels of government are omitted (Silverman 2017; Iacopini et al. 2011). In other words, "when social scientists neglect agency, they can give the impression that politics and policies arise only from the strategies and interactions of central and local elites" (Bevir, 2016: 234). Alternately, an approach that incorporates how policy is being implemented can contribute to the understanding of how policy is being interpreted, enacted and challenged in the front-line, as well as how policy outcome is affecting ethnic minorities in the UK, such as through social stigmatisation and Islamophobia.

In the UK, the implementation of P/CVE programmes rests on the shoulders of front-line workers: governments practitioners, youth workers, teachers, health professionals and community leaders. They balance their pre-existing responsibilities with those of surveillance and the Duty to refer anyone at risk of being radicalised, and to develop such judgment on the grounds of policy

compliance, local needs and their specialized 'know-how' experience. This research will problematize these issues in the front line through the study of youth work.

3.5 Youth and decentred security governance

This final section explores the relationship between security governance and P/CVE practices focused on youth in the UK. The aim is to understand to what extent front-line workers share the responsibility of tackling VE, and how this responsibility relates to their pre-existing safeguarding duties. A recurring theme of the Prevent Strategy throughout its three phases is the design of programmes targeting Muslim youth identified as at risk or vulnerable to radicalisation (Coppock & MacGovern, 2014). The expertise of front-line workers, such as teachers and youth workers, in safeguarding youth beyond the framework of P/CVE, provides them with alternative knowledge to tackle wicked problems, for example delivering P/CVE work while avoiding social stigmatisation. This research aims to understand these practices.

The latest 'Prevent and Channel Factsheet' (2019) shows that recent P/CVE strategies such as Prevent training are mostly aimed at frontline workers: "203 community-based projects were delivered in 2018/19 reaching over 142,000 participants. 47% of these projects were delivered in schools… Prevent training has been completed over 1.1 million times to enable frontline practitioners, including teachers, to recognise the signs of radicalisation" (HO 2019). Similarly, the policy calls for front-line workers to integrate pre-existing safeguarding practices with VE safeguarding practices: "Referring possible cases of early stage radicalisation works in a similar way to safeguarding processes designed to protect people from gang activity, drugs, and physical/sexual abuse" (HO, 2019). As a result, there are multi-agency networks public service professionals in place designed to prevent youth radicalisation. Their work is now also a part of P/CVE efforts. These practices involve training, signposting, and at times participating in discussions with local authorities and police during Prevent and Channel evaluation boards about individuals deemed at risk of radicalisation (HO, 2019).

In addition to the issues raised in the literature in relation to the links between security and community cohesion, another segment of the literature highlights the issue of using risk as a tool to frame youth policy. Staines (2016) and McAra & McVie (2007) argue that children whose behaviour is framed as "offending" and who have dealt with youth justice services early on have increased probability of being readmitted to the judicial system later in life. Such cautions that early engagement of youth with security bodies often has the opposite effect of social rehabilitation:

"…children are at greater risk of coming into contact with the youth justice system at an earlier age when 'challenging' behaviour is classified as 'offending' behaviour by carers, staff, the police or other legal professionals" (Staines,2016: 21). This suggests that an increase in referrals can trigger an increase the rate of youth engagement with security systems. In the UK context, Coppock & McGovern (2014) argue that the Muslim youth is characterised by Prevent, "As the object of the discursive construction not only of the 'Islamic terrorist other' but also of those supposedly susceptible to 'radicalisation'"; they are viewed as "'vulnerable' in politically powerful ways, as the 'would-be terrorist'" (242). As discussed in chapter one, this emphasis on Muslim youth translated to significant funding for Prevent programmes engaging with youth (Thomas, 2016).

Iacopini et al.'s (2011) research is an example in the P/CVE literature which shows how funding can be a tool in securitising grassroots work. This is a highly cited article in the literature as it provides an example of grassroots delivery of P/CVE work. It provides first-hand data on the implementation of the first phase of Prevent, as it shows how P/CVE funding was allocated in coordination with community cohesion projects under the assumption that the threat of radicalisation was located in the Muslim youth population (O'Toole et al., 2016; Thomas, 2016; Vermeulen, 2014). It discussed the alternative priorities from front-line perspectives: "Children's services felt that the underlying issue was youth engagement….for the Police, Prevent was about safety, however for the equalities team, PVE was more about cohesion" (Iacopini et al., 2011: 13). This quote shows how a respondent in P/CVE programmes can have two separate objectives of security (related to Prevent) and cohesion (related to their youth work), driven by policy and by localised needs, respectively.

Iacopini et al (2011) also displayed the voice of a youth worker arguing that the virtue of bottom-up approaches is that they not only seek 'individualised interventions', but also are "addressing wider concerns in the social context, such as community infrastructure and wider environmental factors" (20). This argument is reiterated in a study carried out by O'Toole et al., (2016), which concluded that governance through Prevent is a contested practice where grassroots work often adapts the available Prevent funding and guidance to meet localized needs.

Similarly, Kundnani (2009) argues that the participation of grassroots communities in the design of P/CVE strategies should include youth as key members in the decision-making process. He proposes that "solutions aimed at young people will be most effective and fair if…young people are empowered to engage politically and contribute to society…the impact of racism, Islamophobia, social exclusion and everyday violence on the well-being of young people is recognized…The police are kept separate from empowerment work with young people…" (Kundnani 2009: 7). The creation

of safe spaces where young people can express their ideas without fear of unilateral punishment, according to Kundnani, is what P/CVE should try to achieve in the UK.

Decentred approaches of governance highlight 'local knowledge' as a concept "identified in interpretive policy analysis" showing how the experiences of front-line workers shape policy outcome (Durose, 2009: 36). Durose discussed New Labour's (1997) 'networked community governance' to explain how "front-line workers are charged with responding to the inherent complexities and differing demands of working in contemporary local governance" (Durose, 2009: 42). Similar to the responsibility to respond to violent extremism under Prevent and CT policies, front-line workers studied by Durose, "are 'situated agents' who rely on their own readings' of the local situation and on an understanding of how to respond to varied demands using their own 'local knowledge'" (Durose, 2009: 47). Similarly, Spalek argues that grassroots workers understand the "push and pull factors facing young people within local contexts in the UK", because they have been personally "*affected by wider international events and potentially exploited by recruiters* (2011: 202). Here, Spalek argues there are possible benefits from expansion of grassroots participation in P/CVE efforts.

However, funding also becomes a question of political weight for front-line workers. Such is the example of Muslim private organisations who had the predicament of either taking the monies of government funded programmes, which had already been criticised for only targeting Muslim communities and co-opting them into surveillance practices (Thomas 2017: 121-126), or rejecting the funds to face austerity: "For both Muslim civil society organisations and Youth Work departments within local government, this Prevent funding came just as public spending was being cut, making involvement in Prevent hard to refuse (Ragazzi, 2014)" (Thomas 2018: 371). This thesis will discuss how youth work, Prevent and local authorities' interactions are affected by these narratives around funding and community work. Hence, a contribution of this thesis to the field of P/CVE is to expand on localised understandings of youth workers and practitioners as "subordinate actors [who] can resist the intentions and policies of elites by consuming them in ways that draw on their local traditions and their local reasoning" (Bevir 2016: 234). Overall, this can provide a better understanding of policy practice, enactment and contestation in the remit of youth workers and government practitioners.

Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the relationship between security governance and counter-terrorism and P/CVE policies in the UK. This review was done with one of the aims of this project in mind, which is to highlight the existing need to research front-line practices (Pilkington & Acik 2020; Busher et al. 2019; Thomas 2019; O'Toole et al., 2016), and to do so beyond Prevent policy. It is through the collection of first-hand experiences of youth workers and government practitioners that this research can contribute to existing theoretical and evidence-based discussions around the tensions that arise between P/CVE policies such as Prevent and front-line practices in the UK, such as youth work. In other words, this research seeks to situate grassroots efforts in safeguarding youth from violent extremism within the wider discussions around Prevent policy design and implementation, and its implications for youth services, front-line work and social stigmatisation of Muslims in the UK.

This chapter sought to acknowledge the role of grassroots workers in P/CVE efforts and the potential of learning from their expertise and alternative knowledge in tackling violent extremism and beyond, while discussing the need to research independent approaches to P/CVE work. It is through the analysis of the practices, traditions and knowledge of youth workers and front-line practitioners, who share the task of safeguarding youth from violent extremism, that this research aims to expand the understanding of tools available in supporting youth from violent extremism and other social harms. The decentred security governance framework provides the analytical tools to understand the complexities behind P/CVE work delivered through multiagency networks of cooperation in the front-line. This chapter thus reviewed the literature in security governance relevant to P/CVE and CT to draw the conceptual boundaries of the empirical chapters to come. The following chapter will present the methodological approach followed within this research study, with the purpose of operationalising decentred security governance within the study of youth work in the P/CVE field.

Chapter 4: Methodology

Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the theoretical framework of this research with methodological implications. I will first briefly recap why I argue that there is an existing need to capture the first-hand experiences, perceptions and practices of youth work in the P/CVE field, moving beyond a focus on Prevent policy. The previous chapters have shown so far that there has been an emphasis on Prevent-funded P/CVE work in the existing literature. Much of that literature focused on the effects of Prevent on its targeted populations; such as the stigmatizing effects on ethnic/religious minorities in the UK. This literature has tended to portray P/CVE work as the result of a top-down policy mechanism that streams down into front-line practices with little resistance (Heath-Kelly 2017; Qureshi 2016; OSFJI 2016; Ali 2014; Kundnani 2014). More recent research, however, has highlighted the nuances behind front-line practices as Prevent policy is challenged, enacted, adapted and at times also complied with by front-line workers in the health and education sectors (Heath-Kelly & Strausz, 2019; Busher et al., 2019; Thomas, 2017) and at a community level (O'Toole et al., 2016). Such valuable work however has focused "…on the enactment of government policy, which is most clearly experienced by youth workers employed, funded or directly regulated by the state or local government" (de St Croix, 2016: 197), this research therefore incorporates independent P/CVE work.

I have argued so far that there is still much to be learned about P/CVE implementation at the grassroots level, especially in the analysis of youth work P/CVE practices. An analysis which can expand our understanding of how front-line workers respond to Prevent policy (including the Prevent Duty) and how P/CVE work is incorporated into their youth work practices and traditions, and renew conversations around the challenges P/CVE policies bring to their practices (Thomas, 2018; Thomas, 2011). I have also argued in favour of using decentred security governance as an analytical tool to further understand the tensions that arise between P/CVE policy design and its multi-layered heterogeneous practices at grassroots level. This chapter now translates these theoretical arguments into an operationalised methodology, where the agency of youth workers and practitioners in the interpretation, adaptation and application of P/CVE policies can be highlighted through their decentred security practices.

There is a need to understand more about how P/CVE work is delivered at the grassroots level, and part of that picture can be provided by analysing youth workers' practices as they respond to P/CVE policies, particularly to the Prevent Duty. Their contributions to overall P/CVE efforts and their agency in P/CVE policy outcome are often over-shadowed by the politics surrounding the Prevent policy. P/CVE work in the UK has maintained a focus on youth through the Prevent policy (Thomas, 2020; Coppock & McGovern, 2014; Kundnani, 2009). The rollout of the Prevent Duty in 2015 made it a statutory duty for public sector professionals to refer anyone at risk/vulnerable to violent extremism and as a result, P/CVE work became focused on front-line workers as they were made responsible for safeguarding individuals from radicalisation. The persistent use of front-line workers and local communities in the management of a perceived risk of radicalisation is characterized in the literature as the 'responsibilisation' of civic participation in P/CVE work. Under the Prevent strategy, even before the Statutory Duty, Muslim communities and front-line workers have shares the responsibility of being "resilient against terrorism and violent extremism" (Spalek, 2013: 79). However, this concept is also used as a tool to analyse how Prevent policy has triggered the "changing types of contestation by communities, local authorities and professional practitioners at ground level" (Thomas, 2017: 306).

Although the existing literature has addressed the practical implications of the Prevent Duty on front-line staff, particularly in the health (Heath-Kelly & Strausz, 2019) and education sectors (Busher et al., 2019), there is still a need in the literature to understand how the Duty affects youth work, and P/CVE work that is independent of the Prevent funding. In order to address this gap in the literature, this research gathers primary data on the experiences of youth workers and practitioners in the delivery of P/CVE work from Prevent, hybrid and independently funded backgrounds; the hybrid category describes youth work with diverse funding pathways, including independent (social enterprise, private donations, crowd funding, charitable donations) and Home Office (Prevent, Building a Stronger Britain Together programme, for example) funded projects. Situated P/CVE practices reveal the tensions that arise between Home Office/Prevent-led and independent P/CVE work, particularly when problematised from a decentred security governance framework, exploring the diversity of practices that arise in the front line (Bevir, 2016). To address the gap in the literature, I designed the following two-part research question:

- What are the challenges faced by youth workers and practitioners when implementing P/CVE policies in the UK? What is their role in adapting, challenging and implementing state-

led P/CVE policies, particularly those relying on front-line implementation, such as the
Prevent Duty?

The sub-questions that stemmed from the above overarching research question include:

- What is the characterisation of the P/CVE field at the grassroots level in the accounts of youth workers/practitioners? How do youth workers and practitioners perceive/understand the P/CVE agenda?

- Are there differences between P/CVE youth work that is funded by and aligned with Home Office, and that is funded hybrid and independent of government? If so, what are they?

- How is the Statutory Duty understood, enacted and reshaped at the grassroots level by youth workers and practitioners?

- Do youth workers/practitioners shape P/CVE policies to localised needs? If so, how?

These questions were designed to operationalize the decentred security governance framework through the analysis of P/CVE youth work, focused on how youth workers/practitioners respond to P/CVE work in relation to their pre-existing practices, traditions and knowledge. The aim was to generate a 'multifaceted picture' which explores whether there are heterogenous practices through the work of individuals on the front-line, "how they understand the situation they are a part of, and whether there are conflicting interpretations" with P/CVE policies (Åm, 2019: 167).

The goal of this research is to make two main contributions to the existing literature. The first, as stated above, is to explore independent P/CVE youth work that has been overlooked due to an emphasis in the literature on state-led P/CVE approaches mainly funded through Home Office/Prevent, and to consider its implications on front-line work. The second is to further contribute to existing research that has revealed the wide range of responses to the Prevent policy through front-line agency, such as policy compliance, contestation, enactment and adaptation in the health, education sectors (Busher & Jerome, 2020; Busher et al, 2019; Heath-Kelly & Strausz, 2019) and at community levels (O'Toole et al., 2016), through the analysis of youth work at the grassroots level. Through the thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews, this research situates the analysis of P/CVE work within the practices, traditions and knowledge of youth workers and practitioners (Åm, 2019: 167), drawing out decentred approaches to security governance in the UK. It therefore highlights individual agency within contested understandings of state-led of P/CVE and CT policies

(O'Toole et al., 2016) from the perspectives of Prevent, hybrid and independently funded youth work.

4.2 Sampling

Gaining access to research participants was firstly approached through emailing organisations in the P/CVE field that met the required criteria set by the research questions: youth workers, practitioners, grassroots organisations across the P/CVE field, drawing on different funding sources. The search was therefore focused on individuals and organisations doing P/CVE youth work from diverse funding pathways, notwithstanding if their focus was on far-right, jihadist or any other form of violent extremism. This sampling strategy became refined to include state, hybrid and independently funded P/CVE organisations; a significant number of organisations had a diverse, or mixed, funding pathways. The aim of the fieldwork at this stage was to achieve a heterogenous sample of participants from grassroots organisations based on their funding and local partnerships, otherwise known as 'purposive sampling' (Flick, 2014).

This online search and recruitment strategy firstly permitted me to outline the landscape of P/CVE work in the UK by identifying that most organisations involved in P/CVE work focused on countering both jihadist and far-right forms of violent extremism. Some organisations showed a broader engagement with P/CVE work, which seemed to differ from Home Office aims of identifying, safeguarding and referring those who are vulnerable to or at risk of radicalising. I first decided to engage with this type of organisation (as well as those more closely aligned with Prevent) as I thought they could provide valuable data in how youth work at the grassroots level responds to P/CVE policies. Later in the fieldwork I came to understand that although P/CVE is not always an explicit aim of their work, they too identify their work as being instrumental in P/CVE work, as they aim to build resilience to all forms of grooming, including violent extremism, through youth empowerment.

The first round of participant recruitment emails sent were not successful in securing a significant uptake of research participants. It was only through follow-up emails that a few participants began to accept interview offers; in some cases, I was unable to receive a response from some organisations originally contacted, or I was told they did not have the time for research collaboration. The initial uptake for research participants, however, turned out to be instrumental for sampling, as these initial participants also served as gatekeepers (Arksey & Knight, 2007: 64) to other members of staff in their organisations or other organisations which were not originally identified during the online searches. Gaining access to these gatekeepers relied greatly on my

credibility as a researcher, positive participant experiences in the interview stage, the positive reputation of my thesis supervisors, and the assurance that the information being accessed had the strict purpose of pursuing unbiased academic research aims instead of government or private interests.

To assure participants about my research background, funding and aims, all of my initial communication provided a brief description of my research goals and my affiliation to the University of Bristol. Although my email never mentioned the Prevent policy, at times I was asked if my research project was *not* funded by Prevent as a pre-condition to participate in the research. Once an interview was scheduled, I sent participants copies of a Consent Form (Appendix 1) and a Project Information Sheet (Appendix 2), containing more background information of my research; where I highlighted my focus on "youth community-based perspectives" aimed at highlighting grassroots work that balances "in equal dimensions, C/PVE efforts…and local structures that support youth in everyday issues they face" (Appendix 2). These documents were also printed and handed to participants before each interview, at which point I asked if they had had time to read the documents and reviewed the documents with them. In most cases, I provided a verbal summary of the research aims at this point.

At the end of every interview, I asked if there was anyone else the participant could think of who might be interested in participating in my research and whose work aligned with the research aims. In more than one case, participants took the time to put me in communication with potential research participants. This process triggered a 'snowball' (Braun & Clarke, 2013) effect in the sampling where my research participants led me to further recruitment of participants through their personal contacts.

As a result, all referrals came from a diverse group of contacts affiliated to Home Office, independent and hybrid organisations. All my initial respondents were instrumental in gaining access to more research participants. Furthermore, this snowball procedure allowed me to recruit participants who shared the necessary sample attributes which were not always made available through online searches: youth workers working involved in P/CVE efforts with diverse funding sources. This strategy is aligned with 'purposive sampling', particularly in looking at *intensity* as the guiding principle in which the sample ensures that research participants share "features, processes, experiences" (Flick, 2014: 261).

It was useful that these gatekeepers belonged to different networks of P/CVE youth work, as it prevented the snowball sampling from being biased towards only one type of organisation (Arksey

& Knight, 2009: 70). Instead, I had cases of snowball sampling for Prevent-funded projects, hybrid and independent projects. What was more interesting and even insightful for the data analysis was the fact that these networks of P/CVE work at grassroots were fluid between Home Office and independent youth work. Meaning that the referrals I obtained from research participants were not necessarily aligned to one category, for example a Home Office contact referring a youth worker also doing Home Office funded work; of course, this also occurred, but that was to be expected. What was less intuitive was to receive referrals from participants belonging to different funding pathways, which was indicative of certain awareness about the work of other local organisations from different funding streams (as I will discuss in the empirical chapters).

The aim of engaging with P/CVE youth work beyond Prevent was met mostly through *hybrid* organisations that combined government and independent funding. These hybrid organisations, as I became aware during the interviews, funded their P/CVE work through diverse pathways including Home Office – either through Prevent or through the Building a Stronger Britain Together (BSBT) programme –, in addition to independent sources of funding. The BSBT is a part of Home Office's Countering Extremism Strategy launched in 2015 as a strategy to counter the threat of "all forms of extremism: violent and non-violent, Islamist and neo-Nazi" [13], representing a threat to UK's "fundamental values" (Home Office, 2015: 10). The BSBT programme was launched in 2016 to "create more resilient communities, stand up to extremism in all its forms and offer vulnerable individuals a positive alternative, regardless of background" (Home Office, 2019: 5). Its workstreams include funding grassroots work devoted to tackling extremism through local authorities, *Counter Extremism Community Coordinators* embedded in localities, network events and "local and national campaigns" (Ibidem).

Although BSBT is funded though the Countering Extremism Strategy (CE), rather than P/CVE work such as Prevent policy, I decided that this line of work is relevant to my research as there are existing *blurred lines* between CE and P/CVE.[14] As it will be discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters, the 2011 reviewed Prevent policy and the 2015 Prevent Duty Guidance both make explicit the inclusion of *non-violent extremism* to their efforts to tackle the root cause of radicalisation (Prevent Strategy, 2011: 6; Prevent Duty Guidance, 2019). In practice, since 2011, P/CVE work has also targeted non-violent extremism, such as "Individuals who propagate a 'terrorist ideology' and 'non-violent extremism' are claimed to act in a manner that reinforces and legitimises terrorism"

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[13] Extremism is defined as: "the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist." (Home Office, 2015: 9)

[14] Similar to the 'blurred lines' between counter-terrorism and P/CVE as identified by Sabir (2017).

(Sabir, 2017: 203). Furthermore, one research participant argued, off the record, that Countering Extremism is "a new line of work, not to replace Prevent, yes to shrug off the criticisms and bad name that is related to it but also the practical distinction that Prevent is more about countering the threat for people who are indeed vulnerable, and CE is more about earlier prevention work." In the view of this practitioner, a distinction between CE and Prevent in practice is that the former seeks earlier interventions to those vulnerable to radicalisation, however they also alluded that the strategy to deliver prevention work under CE is to detach this work from the public scrutiny endured by Prevent policy. This has created confusion between the CE and P/CVE, blurred lines, as they detail here:

> I think Prevent is somebody trying to I don't know if rationalize is a word but focus its efforts under more direct issues and interventions needed. So we talked about one of the prevention models in terms of primary, secondary and tertiary, Prevent would be sitting in that secondary level, counter extremism in that first level. That's the only way that I can see it... The state of our current government I think there's a sense of confusion. Practitioner, hybrid organisation.

There were a few more instances in the field where the distinction between CE and P/CVE were questioned by participants. Part of the arguments were focused on the lack of clarity in the distinction between countering violent extremism and countering non-violent extremism, but also concerns over funding opportunities based on the type of work they delivered. For example, doing work on Female Genital Mutilation would not have access to Prevent funding, but would have access to BSBT funding, but that same organisation could get funded by the CE to do work with far-right extremism.

4.3 Research Participants

Confidentiality was addressed in the email I sent all research participants, through the Consent Form and Project Information Sheet (Appendix 1 & 2). The Consent Form offered research participants two options, the first stated that "...this interview can be made public in full or in edited form with my name, role and general location", the second option stated that "... this interview can be made public only in part and without using my name to ensure that I cannot be identified personally", this second option also allowed participant to suggest how they would like to be identified in the research (Appendix 1). The Project Information Sheet also addressed the issue of confidentiality and particularly explaining why identifying research participants by name and/or the

organisation they work with was of value to this research: "it is important to disclose what tools each organisation have found useful in supporting youth and to what extent these can be implemented elsewhere" ([Appendix 2](#)). However, the formality of the documentation while abiding to institutional ethical protocols, does not provide the researcher and the research participants the complete ethical considerations for confidentiality, as it can hardly anticipate the changing nature of qualitative research once fieldwork begins (Marzano, 2014: 448).

For this reason, before every interview I discussed confidentiality addressing the importance of disclosing the identities of research participants and the organisations they collaborate or work with. The central argument for disclosing their identities was to be able to highlight the particularities of P/CVE work they deliver within their situated context. Before the interview I explained to research participants that I wanted to increase the overall awareness of P/CVE youth work being delivered at grassroots level and to collect their views on the state of the field, including their perceptions on P/CVE policies. De St Croix's work with voluntary and part-time youth workers reported sentiments of being "… disempowered in relation to some of the wider policy decisions that affect their work" (2016: 179). Naming youth workers/practitioners and their organisations aimed to provide a bridge between policy design and their situated practices, traditions, and knowledge, through their direct accounts. Not as background to the data that informed this research behind the scenes but rather as active agents shaping the data and possibly the P/CVE field. This approach is seen as a tool to empower research participants though their work and experiences, Skeggs (1994) argued that anonymity made researchers "upset" as it detached them from their claims (cited in Arksey & Knight, 2014: 132-133).

Furthermore, Reyes (2018) argues that naming research participants is a tool to achieve transparency and rigor. One reason for this is the claim that researchers cannot really guarantee anonymity as close acquaintances belonging to where the research was conducted can "identify individuals because of the details included in the published work" (Reyes, 2018: 210). Reyes goes on to set several ethical considerations however surrounding the possible 'unintended' consequences, some long term, brought to participants due to their identification in research. Some of these revolve around exposing them to more research scrutiny from researchers in the future, and possible contrasts and perhaps even contradictions in their accounts due to contextual changes, memory inconsistency due to the passing of time, or even a discrepancy in individual participant' ability to understand the possible consequences of being named in a research study.

However, as stated above, research design, including consent forms often fail to anticipate the changing nature of fieldwork, and the evolving relationships between researcher and

participants (Marzano, 2014: 448; de Laine, 2000: 24). To resolve this issue, I looked at the compelling argument made by Gormally & Coburn (2014), on the 'nexus' between researchers and youth workers. Five "alignments" are described by Gormally & Coburn bridging the practices between researchers and (educational) youth workers: "reflexibility; positionality and bias; insider cultural competence; rapport and trust; power relationships" (Ibidem). The identification of these intersections between both paradigms in youth work and research, they argued, provide avenues to further improve research practices and support work with youth (Gormally & Coburn, 2014: 883). Through the identification of research participants, this research intended to portray youth workers' innate "passion and resistance" to "everyday manifestations of policy" (de St Croix, 2016: 180), which intersect with the aim for the research design in exploring youth worker's possible agency in the P/CVE field. Further below in this chapter, I argue how a "relational approach" guided by "ethics of care" was practiced during the fieldwork and was followed by *Relationship Building* focused on the empowerment of participants and "considering potential benefits to them of the participation in research" (Marzano, 2014: 456).

At the time of the interviews, all participants signed off to being identified in the research, except for one case. There were a few instances during interviews in which some participants expressed they preferred that a particular statement should be "off the record"; most of these instances referred to Prevent policy, such as their opinions towards the Prevent training and funding. At the end of the interviews, I revisited the confidentiality agreement in case they wanted to make amendments. At a later stage of the research, during the write up phase, I emailed research participants copies of the transcripts of the interviews in rough, to allow them to expand, clarify and approve once again the content of the interviews. At this stage, one additional participant asked for their interview and their organisation to be fully anonymised in the data; as a result, I provided full anonymity to the organisation and all of its members that participated in this research.

The Table 1 shows in more detail the 26 participants in total who were recruited to participate in the research until data saturation was reached (Guest et al., 2006; Rubin & Rubin, 2012: 63), meaning that new data collected did not contribute new insights beyond the data previously collected (Saunders et al., 2019: 1896). The sample includes youth workers, government practitioners, project managers and directors of grassroots organisations. Throughout the thesis I will refer to 'youth workers' and 'practitioners', the latter category referring to individuals with director, manager, practitioner roles in the organisations included in the sample.

Organisation (s)	Participant	Funding	Organisational Target
Jawaab	Rizwan	Independent	Muslim youth empowerment
Jawaab	Javayria	Independent	Muslim youth empowerment
Mothers Against Violence	Hasaan	Independent	Jihadist violent extremism
MEND	Shahab	Independent	Muslim empowerment
MEND	Sahar	Independent	Muslim empowerment
NUS Black Students	Ilyas	Independent	Muslim empowerment
Arakan Creative Muslim Theatre	Conor	Independent	Theatre: One project on Jihadist and far-right grooming
Khidr Collective	Zain	Independent	Literature magazine and Muslim theatre: one edited volume on 'Preventing Prevent'
The Resilience Project	Azim	Independent	Jihadist and Far-right violent extremism
The Resilience Project	Gareth	Independent	Jihadist and Far-right violent extremism
Bristol Horn Youth Concern	Khalil	Hybrid	Jihadist violent extremism /gang violence
Hybrid Organisation	Research Participant 1 (RP1)	Hybrid	Jihadist and Far-right violent extremism
Hybrid Organisation	Research Participant 2 (RP2)	Hybrid	Jihadist and Far-right violent extremism
Hybrid Organisation	Research Participant 3 (RP3)	Hybrid	Jihadist and Far-right violent extremism/knife and gang violence
Future Proof (UK Youth)	Ruhena	Hybrid	Jihadist and Far-right violent extremism
Future Proof/MEND/Youth work (freelance)	Adam	Hybrid	Jihadist and Far-right violent extremism/youth work
Integrate UK	Lisa	Hybrid	Extremism, Violent extremism and youth empowerment
Integrate UK	Nawaaz	Hybrid	Extremism, Violent extremism and youth empowerment
Integrate UK	Nasra	Hybrid	Extremism, Violent extremism and youth empowerment
Odd Arts	Rebecca	Hybrid	Theatre with some projects on violent extremism

The Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Peace Foundation	Harriet	Hybrid	All forms of violent extremism
National Citizen Service	Akim	Home Office	Youth work
Counter Extremism Community Coordinator	Research Participant 4 (RP4)	Home Office	Extremism: all ideologies
KIKIT Pathways to Recovery CIC	Mohammed	Prevent/Hybrid	Jihadist and Far-right violent extremism/substance abuse
Prevent	Waqar	Home Office	All forms of Violent Extremism
Prevent	William	Home Office	All forms of Violent Extremism

Table 1: Research Sample

As Table 1 shows, ten organisations fell into this hybrid category. However, it is key to make the distinction that not all hybrid organisations worked with Prevent under the same capacity, as most of these organisations had a more distant relationship with local Prevent officials than the relationship between KIKIT and Prevent in Birmingham, as described by Mohammed. Therefore KIKIT, although a hybrid social enterprise with some diverse funding pathways, is categorised as a Prevent-funded project in this research, as it was defined as such by a Prevent Coordinator and by Mohammed himself as an example of a successful local Prevent project; particularly due to its project titled *KIKIT Pathwayz* which is a Prevent funded programme focused on interventions targeting crossing vulnerabilities such as substance abuse and radicalisation[15], discussed in more detail later in the thesis.

Table 1 also shows eleven organisations in the sample that maintained independent funding pathways. However, this category is also fluid, as some of these organisations were vocal about actively rejecting direct involvement with Prevent funding while others showed that they have not been *able* to secure Home Office funding. The remaining 5 research participants were either Prevent Coordinators or youth workers in close partnership with Prevent or who were funded by Home Office through the BSBT programme.

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[15] For more information visit their webinar section in their website: https://kikitproject.org/webinars/

All interviews were collected between June 2018 and April 2019. They were all one-on-one audio recorded interviews (except for the conversation with Integrate UK where I interviewed Lisa and Nawaaz simultaneously) lasting between 60 and 90 minutes. The interviews were carried out in 'natural settings' (Carpenter, 2018: 36) such as local coffee shops or within the facilities of the organisations. The semi-structured interviews consisted of 11 main questions, with 12 sub questions that were mostly variations to the original question or related follow-up questions (See Appendix 3). The interviews were designed to follow four of the areas of inquiry in alignment with the four sub-research questions cited above (Guest et al., 2006: 63):

- How they got involved into youth work and P/CVE work
- Descriptions of the work they do related to P/CVE
- Discussions around P/CVE policies, particularly the Prevent Duty
- Discussion around their understanding of safeguarding, risk and vulnerability

The structure and sequence of questions was never modified throughout the totality of the field work. However, the use of semi-structured interviewing allowed me to prompt other follow-up questions "inductively on key responses" (Guest et al., 2006: 63). This dynamic nature of semi-structured interviews made the process more conversation-like and encouraged participants to further describe thoughts, such as changes in their pre-existing practices as P/CVE work became more common in their field. This also prompted their reflexivity on related topics (Arksey & Knight, 2014: 86), for example, on their understanding of safeguarding for violent extremism or how the Prevent Duty had affected their work when they began youth work. At the same time, semi-structured interviewing limits the interviewer's possibility for guiding the questions and conversations towards a desired answer, and instead allows the researcher to follow-up only on related topics that emerge during the interview process (Roulston 2010: 14-15; Arksey & Knight 2009: 7). As a result, follow-up questions did not seek to guide participants, but instead provided them with the freedom to engage with such themes on an experience-based level, or to understand issues through their language and in *their terms* (Arksey & Knight 2009: 18).

4.5 Data Analysis

Once the interviews collected reached saturation, through the reiteration of themes from previous interviews (Guest et al., 2006; Rubin & Rubin, 2012: 63), I transcribed each interview in its

totality onto a word processing software. The transcription style aimed to maintain a 'suitable representation' of the research participants, featuring conversational speech such as "abbreviations, verbal tics, pauses and repetitions" (Arksey & Knight, 2014: 146). Only when such features, at times combined background noise, making responses unintelligible, did I decide to cut unnecessary text and add brackets to clarify the context or meaning of the quote. Due to the extended period of fieldwork (11 months), I began to transcribe the first interviews before the field work concluded. This enabled me to further confirm that saturation was reached towards the last interviews conducted (Saunders et al., 2019: 1896).

Methodological triangulation allows a researcher to gain insights through different methods of gathering data (Denzin, 1970). Small-scale qualitative research can benefit from 'strategies of triangulation' that allow the researcher to adapt and follow 'unexpected leads' in the data or to obtain more robust accounts through multiple research methods, leading them to uncover the "complexities and contradictions of the social setting" (Arksey & Knight, 2014: 27). In this section I breakdown the use of methodological triangulation, starting with the use of thematic analysis to code the qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews, and the review and analysis of policy documents that were conducted and also coded in the NVivo software as reference materials in this study (Bazeley & Jackson, 2014: 179).

4.5.1 Thematic data analysis

Two methods were employed for the collection of data: semi-structured interview transcripts and fieldwork notes and revision of P/CVE policy documents, academic research and reports. All of the data from interviews was coded in NVivo software. Once the data was coded and organised, relevant themes were identified (Nowell et al., 2017: 8). According to the thematic analysis followed by Nowell et al. (2017), I began to name and define the themes and produce a detailed analysis of each—explaining what they are and why they are of interest to the research— that explicitly marks its relation to the research questions (Nowell et al., 2017: 10). A final process is the review and refinement of the codes and themes with the aim of developing a coherent pattern which reflected the "meanings of the data set as a whole" (Ibidem). I now discuss these steps in more detail.

The first phase of coding was theory driven, as I searched for specific themes in the data based on theoretical assumptions from the existing literature on front-line agency in the outcome of P/CVE policy. In this phase I followed a realist approach in which the data was used to "theorise

motivations, experience and meaning in a straightforward way…unidirectional relationship is assumed between meaning and experience and language" (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 85). In other words, I aimed to draw out of the interviews the practices, traditions and knowledge of research participants based on their own words in order to situate them within the tensions identified in the literature between P/CVE policy design and outcome in front-line and grassroots practices.

Thematic analysis is a qualitative tool to highlight "similarities and differences across the data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 97), which was of particular importance to my research as I aimed to explore the data to ask if there were a range of P/CVE practices beyond those mandated by Prevent-funded work. This worked to highlight the complexity in grassroots interactions and relationships with Prevent and P/CVE work, based on the unique practices and understandings of youth workers. Following the first coding phase, thematic analysis thus followed a *constant comparison analysis* of the data (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007: 565). It involved both *deductively* looking for the overarching aims of the research such as: youth work practices/traditions/knowledge, its challenges in implementing P/CVE work, its funding pathways, and its interaction with Home Office funding, including the Prevent policy. From here, themes emerged from the data *inductively* drawing from similarities and differences in the accounts of the research participants (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 83). That is, instead of searching to confirm hypotheses, an inductive approach was used to build understandings from the bottom up pertaining to the wide range of P/CVE practices in youth work, and how these practices are influenced by funding pathways and local networks.

To refine and validate the preliminary themes emerging in my data through an external source of feedback (Guest et al., 2018: 88), I contacted Prof. Hilary Pilkington, a researcher in the field from the University of Manchester. Prof. Pilkington's insights were particularly relevant as she had published an academic paper commissioned by the Commission for Counter Extremism titled *Talking Our Way Out of Conflict: Critical reflections on 'mediated dialogue' as a tool for secondary level CVE* in collaboration with Harriet Vickers from the Tim Parry Jonathan Ball Peace Foundation, a participant in this research. Prof. Pilkington has also collaborated with P/CVE grassroots organisations in Manchester and beyond, and had participated in a conference organised by EYST titled "Building Resilience to Extremism and Exploitation" in November 2018, a conference I was also invited to speak at by the Resilience Project. During a few email exchanges, while trying to arrange our phone conversation, Prof. Pilkington suggested via email organisations that I could speak to in Manchester. After I carried out my interviews in the Manchester area, I was able to discuss over a

phone conversation with Prof. Pilkington some of the preliminary themes emerging from the interviews collected so far.

Another tool in thematic analysis is defining "prevalence" in the data in relation to the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 82). In this research, prevalence was used to identify themes measured by repetition within an individual interview and across the whole data and through the qualitative assessment on how respondents attached importance to a particular theme (Guest et al., 2012: 69). This process of coding enabled me to generate clusters around themes around 'safe spaces', 'countering stigmatisation/Islamophobia', 'developing a sense of belonging', 'developing critical thinking', as subthemes to the theme of 'holistic approaches'. This process shows how codes were integrated into subthemes and themes pertaining to these shared understandings of holistic-style practices as a result of coding and recoding, which at times required collapsing two codes into one category (Guest et al., 2012: 74-76; Braun & Clarke, 2006: 90). This was achievable due to the "branching tree system with categories, sub-categories and sub-subcategories" in the NVivo software (Bazeley & Jackson, 2014: 95-101).

Once the data analysis was concluded and before starting the write-up phase of the research, I began contacting research participants with the offer to evaluate the validity of my coding and themes. An aim of 'contact comparison analysis' is achieving 'descriptive validity' by returning to the field to ask participants "…if the themes, arguments, or assertions developed from the codes are accurately describing their statements" (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007: 565). With that aim in mind, I began to arrange one-to-one meetings where I could discuss my preliminary findings with research participants. In the fall of 2019, I was able to arrange a follow-up interview with Ruhena from Future Proof and with RP4, the Counter Extremism Community Coordinator, to discuss some of the main themes in my research findings. However, plans to further engage with research participants for in-person follow-up interviews were interrupted by the national lockdown measures due to the Covid-19 pandemic. As mentioned above, at this point I was only able to send research participants their interview transcripts in order to give them an opportunity to revisit, expand and/or clarify the content discussed during our conversations; an opportunity only taken up by one research participant.

4.6 Relationship building

"…accepting that the researcher's "moral biography" is not distinct from that of the subject and the fieldwork can and must be an occasion for moral and existential growth, a shared stage for the

"moral careers" of both the researcher and the observed, a chance for being human along with others." Manzano (2014: 454-455)

A series of unplanned, spontaneous fieldwork activities were made available to me such as participating in workshops or conferences delivered by research participants, and other planned activities (such as organising workshops with research participants post-fieldwork to promote youth work networking) contributed to relationship building with research participants. Such practices, some spontaneous and others planned, followed an "ethics of care" through which I sought to maintain responsibilities beyond the contractual agreements of consent forms (Manzano, 2014: 454). Participant observations and 'hanging out' activities, although traditionally regarded as research methods for collecting data, in this research these methods were not a part of the research design and therefore served as rich contextual interaction which expanded my understanding of youth work in P/CVE.

Playing an active role as a participant in research detaches the researcher from the 'observer status', and can help create rapport with research participants and provide more perspective on their practices (Arksey & Knight, 2014: 10). Three opportunities for this were made available to me during the fieldwork. The first was an invitation from a (independent) youth workers to assist in the delivery of the Future Proof programme (hybrid funded project). The second, was an invitation by another youth worker to participate on a workshop organised The Resilience Project in Cardiff. The third opportunity also came from the Resilience Project, as an invitation to participate in a conference organised by EYST titled "Young Person's Forum on Challenging Extremism". Through these opportunities I assisted the youth workers in facilitating discussions and debates with young participants around themes such as defining violent extremism, radicalisation and wider social issues such as racism and Islamophobia. These invitations were not scripted in the original research design, but were made to me after interviews with some research participants for me to see their work with youth first-hand.

Each of these sessions were registered in my fieldwork diary and were useful in providing context to my observations and the thematic analysis of the data. Participating in those events, was not part of the research methods, however it helped me understand their situated practices and to further build rapport with research participants (Kawulich, 2011: 65). Furthermore, it provided background information about the natural settings of youth work that was otherwise only visible to 'insiders', complementing my understanding of youth workers traditions, knowledge and practices. These experiences in combination with semi-structured interviews, Guest et al. (2013) argue,

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provides a "compelling blend of outsider objectivity and insider knowledge, exemplifying both insider and outsider perspectives" (79).

Although interviews in social research are often preceded by observation with the goal of first gaining familiarity with the environment and language of the community (Rubin & Rubin, 2012: 26), in this research project conducting interviews with youth workers first helped me to establish trust with them, which led to the opportunities to 'hang out' with them during their work. Rodgers (2004) describes four of benefits of 'hanging out' through his work with forced immigrants: 1) open channels for the participants' voices to be heard, 2) show acknowledgment of the complexity of their experience, 3) create a space for local issues to arise, and 4) achieve "humanism in research" (49).

Although 'hanging out' is often used as a methodological for collecting data, in this research it aimed to "form of purposeful and meaningful engagement… [Making] the researcher visible and help them establish a culturally appropriate identity that in turn erodes suspicion of them as researcher "Other"" (Browne & McBride 2015: 36).'Hanging out' was therefore helpful in gaining access and building rapport with research participants in politically sensitive research, as was the case in this research due to the contested understandings of Prevent at the grassroots level. With this purpose in mind, I was able to walk with youth workers around their natural settings (streets, parks, facilities), I was also able to engage in 'small talk' with other staff while waited for research participants in their offices, supported them as they *set up* their materials to deliver workshops, and finally, after the workshops I was also invited to stay at the end of their workshops as they shared food with the participants. The conversations I had with youth workers and practitioners outside of the data collection settings, including over emails, as we walked to coffee shops and, at times, during a shared meal, shaped my understanding of youth work and P/CVE grassroots work as it is practiced in the UK.

In addition to unplanned activities during the fieldwork, a second phase of relationship building was further developed into the write-up phase of my research through the planning and delivery of events with research participants. This was a tool to further expand my understanding of their work, to follow through with the relationships developed during fieldwork, and as a form of 'giving back' to research participants for their time invested in my research. For this purpose, I planned and obtained funding to host a series of workshops where youth workers and practitioners could showcase their work among peers, and these events were also used as an opportunity to share my preliminary findings and get feedback from them.

The first workshop I hosted at the University of Bristol (Public Engagement funding under the frame of a series of events organised by the Thinking Futures 2019 and the ESRC Festival), was with local youth groups in Bristol (Integrate UK and BHYC). The success of the event positioned me to being offered another funding opportunity by the same Public Engagement department; however, plans to bring together youth workers from different localities under the same networking frame were cancelled due to the national Covid-19 lockdown occurring in March 2020, as were any additional plans to arrange further follow-up conversations with research participants. This is something I will continue to pursue, however, once lockdown measures are lifted.

4.7 Ethical considerations and methodological issues

As discussed above, I was an 'outsider' to the social group being studied (Miller & Glassner 2011: 34). Building initial trust came about through my supervisors' reputations, then through the rapport I created in interviews. Further, once access to the group's social setting was granted, it was important to keep in mind throughout all interactions and interviews that some collected data might contain sensitive information (Arksey & Knight 2007: 109). As I entered the field, I was aware that issues around unemployment, social stigmatisation, grievances, Islamophobia and even accounts of violence were likely to be raised at any point during the fieldwork. Lee and Renzetti (1990) describe three factors pertinent to 'sensitive subject matter': 1) feeling threatened by or threatening to the people being studied; 2) evaluating the costs brought by opening experiences of guilt, shame or embarrassment; and 3) compromising the safety of individuals (in Arksey and Knight, 2007: 109).

Another consideration in this research was the fact that some grassroots organisations may have grown weary of researchers and become sceptical of the potential benefits brought to their local communities through their participation in research studies (Spalek, 2011: 198). Spalek (2011) argues that some organisations are aware of the amount of funding (sometimes provided by the government) that goes into research focused on communities located in deprived areas, although research reports are sometimes used to help design policies that actually have negative effects on their communities (198). This is why building trust with participants requires addressing the issues raised by youth organisations, and helping to give them a platform to contribute to policy design through academic research (Spalek, 2011: 204).

In consideration of this and as part of my commitment to relationship building beyond the interview settings (Marzano, 2014: 454), during my field work I accepted all invitations to participate in and support events hosted by organisations participating in my research. For example, I first

attended a conference organised by EYST. Later, during my interview with Khalil from the Bristol Horn Youth Concern (BHYC) in Bristol, he argued that he had been unsuccessful in establishing links with the University of Bristol, a partnership he thought would increase his youth network's interest in higher education. As a result, I was able to connect Khalil with the University of Bristol's outreach team to organise a visit for his youth. Following my fieldwork, I also designed workshops to be led by the research participants as platforms for them to showcase their work and increase their local networks; which was another avenue of linking youth from the BHYC with the University of Bristol. After hosting one such event and securing funding for a second, larger one, however, my efforts were interrupted by the national lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Considering that the exchange of sensitive information requires an emotional and time investment from the participants, a 'good practice' in social research that involves sensitive information should follow specific procedures, which I adhered to by: 1) offering confidentiality and anonymity to the participants and their organisation if they required it due to concerns over possible backlash over politicised topics; 2) being mindful during interviews of topics which could create distress, and offering participants pauses or opportunities to withdraw from engaging with a specific topic or experience; 3) providing transparency by disclosing all background information on the research as well its aims; and 4) informing participants that the project does not provide on-going support, but offering support contacts if required (included for wellbeing, mental health, and counselling) (Arksey & Knight 2007: 113). I also ensured to all participants that all data was to be stored securely on university-owned password protected devices.

Confidentiality, as Arksey & Knight argue (2014), is not only about identifying the research participants, but also requires considering if the published data can allow them to be identified and associated to the organisation they work with (2014: 132). As a result, identifying the research participants and the organisations included in the research was thoroughly considered during the coding and write up phase of the research, though I had permission to do so. Such considerations included: What does the research gain from naming participants and organisations interviewed? What is the possible backlash (if any) that participants might be exposed to (that they would not have otherwise) due to the use of direct quotes in the research? What are the possible analytical costs when providing anonymity to research participants? Finally, and perhaps most importantly, how can I protect the confidentiality of research participants while still recording the impact of their contributions to the P/CVE field? For these reasons I was concerned about the possible backlash participants could be exposed to when their voices were included in discussions around politicised topics in the dissertation, such as the Prevent policy.

Although I obtained full permission to disclose the participants' identities in all but two cases, once the data was transcribed and analysed, I revisited the costs and benefits of disclosing their identities in my research during the write-up phase. This is an approach to consent as an "ongoing negotiation agreement before and during fieldwork", due to the developing relationships between researcher and participants and the unplanned themes which may come up during semi-structured interviews (de Laine 2000: 23-26). As discussed above, the decision to identify research participants was based on the aim of highlighting the practices, traditions and knowledge of grassroots workers and its relationship with P/CVE policies.

At five stages of the research, I maintained considerations about confidentiality: during the interview process, during the transcription of interviews, during the coding of the data, during the write-up phase and I will further engage with this issue during the dissemination of the results. First, as discussed above, all documentation and clarification were offered before and after interviews. After, during the transcriptions, there were times I freshly heard some hesitation from participants over politicised topics being discussed. Although they did not explicitly express that they wanted anonymity and at no point in the interview did they ever wish to stop or asked me to change their confidentiality agreement once the interview concluded, I made a note to consider anonymising the identity of the participants during that part of the discussion. Then, during the coding of the data I weighted the possible risks of backlash due to the identifications of participants versus the real analytical contribution from identifying them. The fourth stage was sending research participants their full transcripts to confirm if they wanted to maintain the original contract of confidentiality and if the wanted to expand or change any of their accounts; at this stage one organisation, including three research participants opted for full anonymity. The final stage will preclude the dissemination of my results, at this point I intend to share my reports/journal articles/book chapter with research participants being cited in these documents. This five-step process of confidentiality aimed to protect research participants through personal, professional and social changes during the different stages of research.

In addition, some of the interviewees remain my contacts in places such as Twitter, we sometimes exchange messages, and as I discussed above, we have collaborated on a local workshop I hosted for the purpose of increasing their networks. However, having that added dimension of engagement with them on social media has reminded me how, at times, some of these individuals are exposed to debates about Prevent policy; I have seen how in that context words are picked apart and decontextualised for political gain.

The way I ultimately resolved this issue was to anonymise participants only in certain sections of the study. That is, I chose to anonymise participants, who were fully identified in most other sections of the research, in sections where I thought there was a possibility of backlash for them due to their views on the Prevent policy. The challenge of this strategy was protecting the interests of the research participants, though partial anonymity, without diminishing the "specificity and detail of the analysis" (Barnes, 1979 in Arksey & Knight, 2014: 134). In other words, in these situations, a youth worker previously identified by name was simply cited as "youth worker" or "practitioner" without providing other possible identifiers such as the organisation they work with or locality. In order to maintain analytical value in such cases, the categories of Prevent, hybrid and independently funded organisations/youth workers were useful, as they still provide analytical importance – providing context, funding pathways and differences in youth work practices – to the data without having to identify the specific youth worker being cited.

This issue of confidentiality further explains my decision to provide context and clarity each time data was directly cited in this research study. This means that direct quotations from participants are used quite often and several are rather lengthy, as I wanted to make sure that the words and ideas of participants were clear and could resist outside critics who might take aim at less contextualized speech and ideas around such a politicised topic. I also wanted to make sure the full meaning and views of each participant were reflected in the research as they intended them. As stated above, I also intend to consult with research participants during the dissemination of my research findings.

4.8 Reflexivity

Within the context of the P/CVE field, where legitimate claims about the 'responsiblilisation' of civic society on building resilience to non-violent and violent extremism, and the Duty to refer anyone vulnerable to radicalisation (Spalek, 2013; Thomas, 2017), I was very conscious during my fieldwork that my research could also reinforce these narratives in youth work. As a researcher inquiring about P/CVE work within the settings of youth work, at times seemed to reinforce the importance of P/CVE work, above other areas of youth work. This was particularly so when engaging with youth workers and practitioners with wider youth work interests beyond P/CVE, most of them independent and hybrid organisations.

In most cases, this was not an issue as research participants self-identified as doing P/CVE work exclusively, particularly those who, at the time of the interview, were delivering a Prevent-

funded project. Others, however, identified with a wider scope of youth work, where P/CVE was seen as an additional safeguarding issue within their wider work (focused on youth empowerment, or countering racism and Islamophobia or gang violence, for example). For these participants, my presence and research topic reinforced the theme of P/CVE in their work. The discussions we had that inevitably incorporated themes relevant to P/CVE work had a double effect of, firstly, providing them with a platform to critically engage with P/CVE policies in relation their work, and secondly, of reinforcing what they already perceived as the mainstreaming of P/CVE work (for example through the Prevent Duty) in their youth work (and front-line work, in general).

For example, in one of my participant observation sessions, a youth worker admitted to having chosen to deliver a P/CVE-themed session that day out of a range of other topics he actually preferred delivering such as critical thinking, due to my expected presence in the session. As my research was focused on P/CVE work, he thought that my analysis would benefit even more if that one session (out several he was going to deliver in subsequent weeks) covered issues around radicalisation and violent extremism. This experience reinforces the need to develop "self-reflexivity around power dynamics" and to "theorize that power sharing is a major factor in building effective academic-community collaborations" (Muhammed et al., 2015: 1041).

To address such issues stemming from my positionality as an academic P/CVE researcher, the co-production of data was pursued through the stance I took in which participants were viewed and "valued as collaborators" due to their expertise in the field (Carpenter, 2018: 36). Further, as mentioned previously, the post-interview sessions with some of the participants was not only sought as a validation tool for my themes, but also to provide feedback based on my preliminary data (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007: 565). In preparation for fieldwork, I had to be reflective on how my research position can influence relationships in the field, between myself and research participants, which might come to an end as I distance myself form the field (Toy-Cronin, 2018: 457). This included, for example, the realisation that the analysis of semi-structured interviews will bring in personal interpretations and significations into the analysis (Nowell et al., 2017: 2); including the relationships building with research participants.

The duality of the 'insider/outsider' positionality can be split between acknowledging the potential bias I can develop from gaining insider access to the field by the research participants, versus the potential of maintaining neutrality as an outsider however not fully understanding the internal dynamics of the field (Muhammad et al., 2014: 1048). As an overseas researcher, without a clear position within the polarised P/CVE field or the wider socio-political British context, I held an outsider position in relation to participants. On paper I was an outsider, being a non-British, non-

Muslim, and non-white researcher within a politicised P/CVE context (Browne & McBride, 2015: 36; Hawkins, 2010). This in part could have been a positive factor when discussing politicised issues identified by research participants such as the Prevent policy. That is, from the viewpoint of Prevent and government practitioners interviewed I did not present pre-conceived biases towards the Home Office, counter-terrorism policies or more specifically to Prevent. From the view of youth workers interviewed, I did not explicitly represent the interests of Home Office or any private/political group. Therefore, during discussions around social stigmatisation, P/CVE funding and their views on Prevent policy, I most often was never seen to represent the interests of the Home Office or organisations such as Quilliam or CAGE which are often portrayed as representing opposing sides in the P/CVE field. Nonetheless, a few times I was still asked by some participants to clarify if I was funded by Prevent or not. These participants may have felt more comfortable speaking about Prevent with me as I am visibly non-white and an ethnic minority, being a Mexican foreign researcher (Toy-Cronin, 2018; Karnieli-Miller et al., 2009: 280).

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the key questions in the research design, and how I planned to operationalise the decentred security governance theoretical framework to the study of grassroots youth work. I have made evident the main argument of the research – there is an existing need to understand how youth workers and practitioners resolve emerging tension between P/CVE policies and their practices, traditions and knowledge in the field, by exploring their possible agency in policy outcome – and acknowledged how I came to the decision that semi-structured interviews and the secondary analysis of policy documents and independent reports were the best methodological tools available to carry out my research. As a result, the voices of youth workers and practitioners interviewed for this study provide more nuanced perspectives on grassroots P/CVE work beyond Prevent funded work. Showing the complexity and diversity in P/CVE practices implemented through decentred, multi-layered networks adapting available funding for localised needs.

In the following four chapters I will analyse in detail the main themes and subthemes emerging from the data, their implications to the existing literature and most importantly how they can help shape our understanding of P/CVE grassroots work and policy outcome.

Chapter 5: The P/CVE grassroots context in UK youth work: perspectives from youth work

Introduction

The semi-structured interviews carried out for this research with youth workers/practitioners in the field of Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) in the UK revealed a wide range of perceptions and interpretations of Prevent policy leading to heterogeneous practices, as well as independent approaches to P/CVE work. This chapter presents findings derived from the qualitative data that draw out the politicised dimension of the P/CVE field, and how access to funding and resources shaped by Prevent policy influences the structure of local networking and P/CVE delivery. Contributing to the overarching aim of the thesis which seeks to expand our understanding of youth work P/CVE practices, this chapter revolves around the sub-question: What is the characterisation of the P/CVE field at the grassroots level in the accounts of youth workers/practitioners? How do youth workers and practitioners perceive/understand the P/CVE agenda? In other words, this chapter firstly establishes the context of youth work and how it is affected by P/CVE policies, mainly Prevent. The following chapters Six, Seven and Eight will analyse how youth workers interpret and adapt Prevent policies to fit their pre-existing practices, highlighting tensions between safeguarding models and how grassroots P/CVE youth work practices seek holistic approaches that incorporate P/CVE goals into wider contextualised practices of support for their local communities.

This chapter contributes to the existing literature on P/CVE work by providing primary data on the delivery of P/CVE programmes in the UK, highlighting independent P/CVE efforts and how these efforts compare and contrast with government-funded P/CVE approaches. I discuss grassroots perceptions and practices of Prevent design and implementation from semi-structured interviews with youth workers/practitioners who lead P/CVE efforts on a daily basis. Two recurring themes in the interviews include their management of a perceived divide between Prevent funded work and independent P/CVE work, tending to be more critical of Prevent policy. A second theme is the influence of Prevent Priority Areas (PPAs) in pathways to funding and access to local networking. These themes show participants' perception of the contested understandings of Prevent policy within their field of work and how criticisms towards Prevent contribute to generalized perceptions of P/CVE work, and how PPAs help shape funding and networking opportunities for grassroots P/CVE work.

This data contributes to the field by presenting a more nuanced understanding of grassroots P/CVE practices, particularly in the analysis of Prevent policy which is often characterised in critical

studies (Heath-Kelly, 2017; Qureshi, 2016; OSJI, 2016; Ali, 2014; Kundnani, 2014) as a top-down government policy that cascades into the front line and is operated in a mechanical way, an approach which "overlooked the significant shifts, developments and hence the complexity within such policy approaches" (Thomas, 2017: 302). These characterisations of Prevent, although valuable in providing evidence-based issues with P/CVE policy design and implementation such as the securitisation and stigmatisation of ethnic minorities, can be reductionist readings of the policy discourse, as they do not pay enough attention to the practices of P/CVE implementation (as seen in Busher et al., 2019; Thomas 2017; O'Toole et al., 2016). This research addresses the need for a more nuanced understanding of the wide range of responses to P/CVE policies in youth work.

The chapter firstly analyses the practical implications for grassroots work in navigating a highly polarised P/CVE field. It focuses on the contentious understanding of Prevent within their field of work, and how it has created generalised assumptions of P/CVE work which youth workers must incorporate into their agenda when building trust and networks with local stakeholders. Subsequently, this chapter focuses on how Prevent Priority Areas (PPAs) influence the nature of funding pathways and local networking for grassroots organisations. This last section sets the basis for the next chapter, which provides an in-depth characterization of the three positions of P/CVE youth work organisations proposed by this research: a) Home Office funded, including organisations/youth workers whose work is mainly funded by Prevent and other government streams; b) Hybrid, including organisations partly funded Home Office and by private/charitable funding, which therefore might align some of their programmes to Prevent but also incorporate programmes tackling wider social harms; and c) Independent, including organisations and youth workers who rely solely on private and/or charitable donations such as community crowd funding, and therefore create their own networks with local stakeholders to define the needs young people in their communities. These positions further illustrate the complexity in the responses of grassroots organisations to the polarised P/CVE field and how they respond to the pathways and networking challenges presented by the centrally controlled allocation of P/CVE funding through PPAs.

5.1 Managing the polarised P/CVE field

This section will analyse how youth workers and practitioners manage the polarised P/CVE field in which they work, with a particular focus on the contentious understanding of Prevent at grassroots level. The qualitative data collected across England and Wales provides rich first-hand accounts on the understanding of recurring critiques to Prevent policy and their implications for

P/CVE youth work. The data shows that generalised perceptions of P/CVE work and wider youth work are affected by the Prevent's focus on community work during its first phase (2007-2011), affecting the nature of local networks and partnerships. As a result, youth workers and practitioners (including Prevent Coordinators) (re)define their relationship with Prevent practices in their local networks in attempts to reconcile trust with local stakeholders. These practices, aimed at (re)building local trust, present different challenges for Home Office-funded programmes, hybrid and independent organisations; for the latter it may mean distancing their work and funding pathways from Prevent, while for Prevent-funded programmes it may mean engaging with criticism towards Prevent to convey change in their practices with local communities. These accounts reveal elements of both compliance and subversion, contributing to the existing literature as they illustrate the unexplored complexities of P/CVE policy implementation through the daily experiences of youth work.

Youth workers and practitioners identify a polarised P/CVE field characterised by a contested Prevent policy. In their view, politicised divides are displayed between Home Office-funded P/CVE work (mainly Prevent and CT work) and its critics. Despite such divides, the data shows that in practice these narratives are most often overridden at the grassroots level through collaboration. For instance, there is evidence in the data of collaboration in the P/CVE field between youth workers and organisations that are independent, hybrid and Home Office funded, and just as the literature shows, grassroots P/CVE practices include instances of contention, enactment and even compliance towards Prevent (Busher et al., 2019; Heath-Kelly & Strausz, 2019; Thomas, 2017; O'Toole et al., 2016). In other words, being critical of Prevent in youth work does not necessarily equate to being *anti*-Prevent, though participants in this study maintain a perception of a polarised P/CVE field where being vocal about Prevent's shortcomings can have practical implications for their funding pathways and networking opportunities. This next section will further explore how youth workers and practitioners navigate the politicised nature of Prevent, and how it has practical implications to the P/CVE field at local levels.

5.1.1 The narratives of a divide in the P/CVE field

This section looks at how youth workers and government practitioners engage with the polarised P/CVE field which is in part shaped by the politicized nature of Prevent policy. The qualitative data of this study shows that youth workers and practitioners identify tensions that characterise the politicised P/CVE field, such as being critical of Prevent policy. In the interviews, some participants mention possible backlash if they are vocal about Prevent's shortcomings or even

if they show support for organisations/thinktanks known to be critical of Prevent, such as MEND[16]. Grassroots workers tend to characterise the pro/anti-Prevent divide as a Quilliam[17] versus MEND/CAGE[18] divide. However, the data also shows that in practice youth workers/practitioners from different positions in this politicised spectrum often share knowledge and collaborate in P/CVE programmes. One example of this came from RP1, a member of one of the hybrid organisations included in the data:

> *I've always stuck up for CAGE and ironically, that's caused me problems because if you are lumped in that group by Home Office, then they are not going to touch you. I know people well in Quilliam as well and I think they all have a role to play, in shifting you know, you shift to centre from the margins, and I wish they would engage more effectively with each other, but hey, they don't.* RP1, Hybrid Organisation.

The relationship between funding and political affiliations for Hybrid Organisation, as expressed by RP1, is an example of how even though there is a perception of a divide "that's caused [them] problems", there is also evidence that RP1 has working relationships with people from the apparent opposite side of the political spectrum such as CAGE and Quilliam, as shown across several organisations and youth workers in my sample. In part this is due to this organisation's hybrid funding strategy, which gives them political freedom to associate and develop P/CVE programmes with a wider range of partners. Another practitioner (who I will anonymise in this section) from a different hybrid organisation has a similar account about the importance of managing the local politics when doing P/CVE work:

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[16] Muslim Engagement and Development (MEND) is an NGO which has been a vocal critic of Prevent for its stigmatising effects on Muslims in the UK, as it intersects with its wider approach of tackling Islamophobia in the UK. Some of the participants in this study are or were members of MEND, and as will be discussed further in this thesis, although they acknowledge that their main goal is to tackle Islamophobia through political, media and civic participation, they also argue that their grassroots work also contributes, indirectly, to P/CVE work as part of wider efforts to empower and upskill young Muslims. Their grassroots work building political literacy, social and civic participation, they argue, results in building resilience in youth to several social harms, including Islamophobia and grooming such as radicalisation.

[17] Quilliam is a counter extremism think tank based in the UK, with a particular focus on jihadist inspired extremism. It has been funded by Home Office between 2008-2012 (HO 2014). Some critics argue that Quilliam has played a role in the emphasis of Counter-terrorism strategies on Muslim populations in the UK, and therefore in downplaying the importance of also tackling far-right movements (Griffin 2016 at: https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/opendemocracyuk/problem-with-quilliam-foundation/).

[18] CAGE is an independent organisation focused on supporting the "survivors of the war on terror" based in the UK. Controversy around their work comes into play as they have actively published reports which are highly critical of Prevent and CONTEST policy (Qureshi 2015), while they have also been accused by some members of government of being "apologists for terrorism" (McMicking 2015 at https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-31657333). Recently, the UK newspaper *The Times* had to pay CAGE for alleging they have links to Khairi Saadallah, who stabbed 3 people to death in Reading in June 2020 (https://www.bbc.com/news/amp/uk-england-berkshire-55193595?__twitter_impression=true).

this is one of our strengths and one of our weaknesses as well because we are sitting in [not a PPA locality], going into local authorities that are not where we exist, we are not embedded in a way in the communities we're working with. So in a way we are often seen as being parachuted in, which is actually sometimes a useful place to start because it creates the ground to build a relationship, a positive relationship. It is also strength in that we are not embroiled in that kind of localness, we are not biased in a way, to which organisations we can or cannot work with because we blacklisted them in a way. So you spoke of MEND, some people would not engage with MEND and I cannot speak for MEND but I'm sure they would not necessarily engage with other groups, they probably say they would but they won't or in some way exclude a little bit, you know what I mean?... So we are coming in as a purposely neutral organisation, some people don't think we're neutral obviously, but in a sense that we are not necessarily prejudice to the local politics and the local relationship and networks. Practitioner, a hybrid organisation.

In their view, there is a perception of a divide and groups being 'blacklisted' in the field, and they agree that MEND would sit in one side of the politicised spectrum, for example. They also discussed the value in being seen as neutral or unbiased in the eyes of the communities they work with. In a public interview, Prevent Coordinator William showed evidence of a government practitioner discussing a divide in the P/CVE field and recognizing a possible backlash to being critical of the CONTEST strategy:

I was involved in some early conversation about the use of that phrase, Fundamental British Values [FBV], and as practitioners and--this might get me into trouble I'm sure if the wrong people listen to this--but as practitioners we push back on it. We said, you are talking about values that are core to a lot of people and a lot of countries, around democracy, around the rule of law, a common law that is equitable across the spectrum no matter your race, colour or creed. Individual liberty essentially lining itself with the Equalities Act. William Baldet in interview on the Terror Podcast, aired 9th of May 2019.

William makes a perhaps half-serious reference to "getting in trouble" for sharing his (and his colleagues') experiences with the use of FBV as a guideline in the Prevent Duty. In this particular case, William aligns with wider critiques of the Prevent policy, even though he is in other instances positioned as the target of some of the criticisms towards Prevent. In the interview he often draws from his practical experience and expertise in the field to address criticisms of Prevent, but also to advocate for the valuable work Prevent has done in communities.

The data collected in this study shows narratives that aligning with criticisms towards Prevent in the P/CVE field can result in being marginalised from funding pathways and local networking opportunities, and being labelled 'ideological' (Sutton 2016). One example of the perception of a polarised P/CVE divide is provided in this research by Prevent Coordinator William Baldet, who argued that a sector of Prevent's critics can be characterised as part of an "anti-Prevent industry", an industry which at times aligns with extremists' narratives (Baldet, 2020).[19] Such polarised perceptions of Prevent are found often in the collected data and characterise a politicised context centred around Prevent and its critics. These narratives identified in the data show that at a grassroots level there is a perception that being labelled as 'anti-Prevent', will have consequences for funding opportunities and local networking opportunities, although as will be discussed, in practice it does not stifle collaboration between those allegedly on opposing sides of the debate.

Who may benefit from this divide is a question worth exploring in further research. Perhaps what enhances the perception of a divide in the P/CVE field is rooted in Prevent's approach during its second phase to tackle not only violent extremism, but a wider 'extremist' ideology:

> *First, we will respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat from those who promote it. In doing so, we must be clear: the ideology of extremism and terrorism is the problem; legitimate religious belief emphatically is not. But we will not work with extremist organisations that oppose our values of universal human rights, equality before the law, democracy and full participation in our society. If organisations do not accept these fundamental values, we will not work with them and we will not fund them.* Prevent Strategy, 2011.

This quote supports the PR 1's previous account signalling to the possibility of being marginalized by Home Office if you are associated with any 'extremist organisations' who do not share wider social values, which includes being critical of Home Office and the Prevent programme. Even in Prevent's current phase, my data suggests that the coordination of community work is at times limited by an

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[19] An online publication by William Baldet, 'Why have we let Islamist agitators dominate the counter-terrorism discourse?' is an example of how a Prevent coordinator identifies a sector of the critiques of Prevent as being ideological and 'anti-Prevent'. This is done through citing academic work (Guest et al. 2020; Busher et al. 2017), think tank reports (Clements et al. 2020) and Home Office surveys (Prevent: public knowledge and interactions 2020), to create a counter narrative to critical research on Prevent (Baldet 2020). These documents provide evidence of partial compliance of Prevent in the front-line, however they also show contested Prevent practices (as does the wider academic literature). In the text by William, the main focus is on the data showing compliance, which antagonises and reinforces the perception of an 'anti-Prevent' movement in the field.

existing confusion at the local level on which groups should be considered close allies, and which are labelled as 'extremist', as Waqar describes below:

> *People form new relationships with different people, then you get a community saying we don't work with this group because they are Barelvi…Then you get these new people coming thinking, wait actually most of the terrorists that we dealt with come from Sufis background… then you get the issue in Pakistan and the sectarianism, suddenly the government is like, oh hold on a second, we are supporting you but now you're extreme.*
> Waqar, Prevent Coordinator

As reflected in this quote, a lack of consistency and clarity in who is labelled an 'extremist' group at the community level limits local cooperation. Husband & Alam's 2011 analysis on Prevent's (first phase) work with local communities provides background on Home Office's attempts to draw divisions between Muslim organisations considered 'extremist' and others deemed safe partners in P/CVE work. Their work captured how local authorities shared anxiety around the partnerships they established with local Muslim groups due to Home Office's 'mapping' (Ali, 2014) of those community members deemed 'unsafe' to work with (Husband & Alam, 2011). The following quote shows Husband & Alam highlighting issues during the first phase of Prevent around local cooperation:

> *…even as the situation on the ground changed over time, the generic concern about security, and the specific political and CTU concern about identifying and excluding Muslims regarded as a risk to public safety, resulted in a rational anxiety within the local authority staff about who were 'safe' and 'unsafe' partners. The moral risk of issuing contracts and facilitating partnerships with particular individuals and organisations had clearly changed the terms under which the local authority staff operated.* Husband & Alam (2011: 192)

Local cooperation was compromised not only due to the conflation of Cohesion and Prevent strategies, but also because it enhanced a perception of division between violent and non-violent groups, and British and opposing values (see Spalek & Lambert 2011 on the "divide and rule" approach which juxtaposed non-violent and violent extremists).

Such findings provided by Husband & Alam (2011) and Spalek & Lambert (2011) support my data, such as the accounts of two practitioners from different hybrid organisations cited above, who's experience in the P/CVE field depicted a Quilliam/MEND-CAGE divide. I argue here that, such perceptions of binary divides are rooted in the first phase of Prevent, where divides were drawn between 'extremist' and 'safe' partners in P/CVE efforts (Ragazzi, 2014). As a result, the perception of being critical of Prevent is measured by some youth workers/practitioners interviewed for this

study at a cost of funding opportunities. In this context, youth work is more likely to gravitate towards P/CVE oriented work when wider funding opportunities decreased due to austerity (Thomas, 2018; Ragazzi, 2014). Hence, enabling whole of society approaches to P/CVE, where decentred security practices are delivered across a wide range of front-line services (Bevir, 2016).

Another example of the perception of a polarised P/CVE field in the data collected comes from Hasaan, a youth worker from Mothers Against Violence who has been very vocal about the securitizing effects of Prevent in higher education. He supported a 'Preventing Prevent' campaign on his campus as a show of solidarity to his peers who he saw being taken away from exams because of their political views. In the following quote, however, he depicts how a politicized P/CVE field framed around 'extremist' and 'safe' partners can create grassroots divides even between groups or individuals who share similar criticism towards Prevent:

> *In terms of organisations, I haven't really engaged with them but there are quite a few out there, like there's MEND and CAGE, but a lot of them have been accused of such things as extremism. It is quite difficult because someone vulnerable turns to them--you don't want to turn to the wrong person [while] already in a heightened sense of 'I'm being watched every move I do.' I need to make sure that I'm not going to get into more trouble by talking s*** about someone else, by talking with these people essentially.* Hasaan, Mothers Against Violence.

Through the perception of a polarised field, some independent youth workers such as Hasaan prefer to self-censor due to a lingering sentiment of "being watched", which coincides with what RP1 from Hybrid Organisation and William, a Prevent Coordinator, also referred to above. The data suggest this is a shared sentiment which leads them to shape their local networks based on perceptions of this divide and hence avoid engagement/collaboration with organisations perceived to be on the opposite side of Prevent or at fault with Home office, such as CAGE and MEND. However, at times, the perception of a possible pro/anti-Prevent divide, as illustrated by the Quilliam/MEND-CAGE issue, might even dissuade such associations.

Indeed, the data shows that trust was compromised at community levels during the first phase of Prevent and beyond. Lived experiences of some of the participants note that even today Muslim communities base their perceptions of Prevent on their experiences of social stigmatisation within earlier and current Prevent and CONTEST practices. Husband & Alam (2011) described such personal perspectives in a way that still resonates in today's context: "there is dissonance between the non-Muslim audience and the Muslim audience on what they interpret as 'reasonable' action in

CT and P/CVE policies based on whether they identify as a target of the policies or as part of those 'who determine the policies'" (194). However, they go on to clarify that many non-Muslims and Muslims do share most aspects of Prevent aims, and parts of its implementation, such as the concern over concepts like radicalisation or extremism (Husband & Alam, 2011). In the following section I discuss how government practitioners and youth workers manage these criticisms in their work to (re)build trust at the local level.

5.1.2 Legitimizing Prevent practice in the front-line: (re)building trust

This section looks at grassroots strategies to (re)establish trust with local communities and justify the need to deliver P/CVE programmes. There are different strategies in (re)building trust locally for Home Office, hybrid and independently funded organisations and youth workers. For those organisations and youth workers in collaboration with Prevent, it requires distancing themselves from previous phases of Prevent and highlighting attempts by CONTEST and Prevent policies to establish local trust. For independent P/CVE workers, it might require active attempts to highlight distinctions between the aims of their work and Prevent work. Establishing trust locally for grassroots workers requires addressing criticisms among the public towards Prevent, which also permeate independent P/CVE work and wider community work.

In practice, interviewees showed that (re)building trust contributes to legitimizing P/CVE and Prevent community work as a whole (for community engagement as a legitimizing tool for government see Bell & Hindmoor, 2016). In other words, there is an interdependence between the need to establish local trust and to manage the politicised nature of Prevent in the everyday experiences of P/CVE workers. For example, transparency in the source of funding and showcasing organisations doing Prevent work is a strategy present in the narratives of government practitioners. This has been, in the words of Prevent coordinator Waqar, who is based in Birmingham, one way of (re)building confidence in the Prevent 'brand':

> *What helps is that it cultivates a sense of 'we are not the only ones doing Prevent, so we don't have to be afraid of people saying sell-outs because there's a group of organisations there doing this and we stand up for one, we stand up for each other, period'. I think that helps build confidence in grassroots practitioners without them feeling nervous. But it also helps them to be open and upfront. Because if you're the only one doing Prevent and then everyone says 'no, don't work with that organisation because all they do is spy on you'. But if*

they got examples of the groups that they're working with and all of those are credible

themselves within their communities, that helps. Waqar, Prevent Coordinator

Showcasing the success of Prevent work through grassroots compliance is thus a tool to encourage grassroots collaboration, including for example the use of 'community safeguarding panels', as I will discuss later in the chapter. The quote above shows attempts to counter existing positions at the grassroots level of communities and organisations who do not want to touch Prevent funding. As Rizwan, from Jawaab (an independent organisation), discussed: "We get questioned if we [Jawaab] were connected to Prevent, if we were taking Prevent money, in any type of community event we would be questioned first and foremost about it…". Nevertheless, Rizwan continues: "We are critical of Prevent because we see how it impacts Muslims on a day-to-day level and it feeds into Islamophobia" (Rizwan, 2018).

A similar strategy was cited by William, Prevent Coordinator, when he approached local youth in Leicester was explain Prevent, by telling them: "This is what we do and what we see. Let's open our doors too and you ask us any questions you may have about it". The aim, William argues, was to be transparent and engage with some of the criticisms of Prevent, and the outcome was reducing some local resistance to Prevent. As he stated, "some of them changed their views [about Prevent], some of them didn't" (William, 2018). These examples evidence the type of work current government practitioners devote to changing perceptions of Prevent at the grassroots level, showing that talking openly about Prevent is a useful tool for (re)building trust.

Another useful tool for legitimizing the need for P/CVE work is by encouraging the input of local communities into the implementation of programmes. In such settings, the legitimacy of P/CVE work can also be achieved through "the application of joined-up governance to security policy" (Bevir 2016: 228). For example, further into the conversation with Waqar, I came to understand that a key approach in the management of Prevent's perceptions in Birmingham is to encourage the partnership of local stakeholders as 'co-designers' of the P/CVE programmes and interventions:

So all of our projects in Birmingham will talk about Prevent openly because we co-design

them with them. So where there are people that are anti-Prevent programme that we've

engaged with, I've had a lot of anti-people [actually] come over and engage around the

Prevent agenda. I spoke with them and asked them 'what would you do'? And what they talk

about, what they would do I say, 'well that's not different, why don't you do it then'? Waqar,

Prevent Coordinator

As Waqar described, a joined-up approach is not only a tool which facilitates the decentralised delivery of P/CVE efforts through the involvement of civic society, NGOs and the voluntary sector (Bevir 2016: 231), but also a tool to challenge critics of Prevent, of whom Waqar labels here as 'anti-Prevent'. Although, it can be argued that this 'joined-up' collaboration with communities is still controlled by government who "choose when to engage… and what to engage them about" (Bell & Hindmoor, 2012: 160), the data in this research shows front-line agency and co-dependency in the delivery of Prevent policy; as documented in the existing literature, focused on the analysis of Prevent Duty in education settings (Elwick, 2020, Lewis, 2020; Busher et al. 2019).

Further research included in 'The Prevent Duty in Education', edited by Busher & Jerome (2020), argues that in secondary schools, "…educators are able to exercise agency to shape Prevent work in their own institutional contexts" (Lewis 2020: 119), which coincides my data showing youth workers also exercise their own agency to shape Prevent. A key contribution by Lewis (2020) is expanding previous work by Busher et al. (2019) in capturing the agency of front-line staff in education in the shaping of P/CVE practices. Lewis argues that rather than the Prevent Duty 'securitising' education, it is actually the other way round: "a 'therapeutic culture' in education that has long treated students as 'vulnerable' has shaped security policy" (119). Coinciding with Bevir's take on decentred security governance, the Prevent Duty is incorporated by front-line staff into their pre-existing practices. Similarly, youth workers in this study showed that tackling violent extremism requires the incorporation of P/CVE safeguarding into their pre-existing practices of safeguarding youth from wider social harms (which will be further discussed in chapter seven), as Lewis states: "Most educators… understood radicalisation to be the latest in a long line of problems that they had been asked to tackle under the logic of 'safeguarding'" (Lewis 2020: 119).

The incorporation of P/CVE work into safeguarding practices is expressed, for example, by Ruhena, project manager of the Future Proof programme (UK Youth,) a hybrid project funded by Prevent and the Monday Trust. Learning from prevailing sentiment among youth workers about the polarizing nature of the Prevent programme, she describes in the quote below how her hybrid programme is offered to youth workers as a safeguarding programme that can contribute to their professional development. She is careful not to 'sell' their programme as a Prevent programme:

> *Because yes, we are funded by the HO [but] we don't serve as a Prevent programme, there are preventative measures in place, we don't sell it as a Prevent programme, it's safeguarding. Yes we do have these conversations but we wouldn't say you are coming into a Prevent programme, that just scares youth workers away and they are like; "oh, it's not worth the time". Even though we don't have numbers and statistics, youth workers are*

always willing to go to any training that will benefit them in the work they do with young

people, also our training is free. Ruhena, Future Proof

Ruhena has a vast experience delivering not only P/CVE programmes funded by Prevent, but also independent programmes. Her contribution here is valuable as she collaborates with youth workers across England who are in charge of delivering the programmes she co-designs, so she is familiar with those who have been 'turned off' by Prevent; however, as the quote shows, youth workers still participate because they see a benefit as a professional development opportunity and as a way to provide support to their local youth (as it will be discussed in the next chapter). An example of a youth worker showing existing concerns about Prevent's conceptual framework can be seen in the following quote by Adam, who delivered the Future Proof programme:

When you look at your policy and your document, what kind of language are you using? So
the reason why the Muslims aren't comfortable is because they don't like you using the term
Islamism or Islamist. So, like, Prevent needs to go back to the drawing board and take more
consultation before it creates a methodology. The government needs to go and consult more
people about the terms they are using, and the terms they are allowing to be used, on both
sides. [For example] as a response to Islamophobia we're going to call all this white people
stuff far-right extremism, and that demonises a lot of people. Adam, youth worker.

Youth workers such as Adam, show that concerns with delivering Prevent go beyond the acknowledgement of previous issues with Prevent's implementation. In his view, which was shared across other research participants, there are issues with Prevent that have still not been addressed related to its conceptual framework.

These issues about the framework of Prevent policy are not fully addressed in the conversations with Prevent Coordinators, however they do focus on opening dialogue and changing how their programmes are viewed and delivered at the local level:

One of the hardest things for Prevent is engaging with communities that don't trust you.
That think you are there to spy on them, that think you are there to label them, and that's
quite difficult to break. That's the problem most local authorities are facing because they
were not open right from the start... Rather than saying to them, 'oh you know what? Could
you do this Cohesion project?' and in the back you are doing Prevent and then if you are
funded by Prevent and they ask you and 6 months later they realize you are a Prevent
project. They are going to say, 'there you go, you carried out a Prevent project with us and

you [didn't tell] us about it.' That is far more dangerous because of trust and confidence.
Waqar, Prevent Coordinator

Waqar's experience reflects how previous iterations of Prevent have left prevailing perceptions of mistrust at the grassroots level, due to the linkage between Prevent policy and surveillance work by police. The backlash from the 'tainted' Prevent brand (Thomas, 2017; Qureshi, 2016) have persisted due to its documented practices that conflate security with community cohesion (Acik & Pilkington, 2018; Abbas, 2018, Qureshi, 2017, Hickman et al., 2012; Kundnani, 2009). It is a challenge for Home Office funded P/CVE projects but also for independent P/CVE projects that get associated with Prevent by local communities. To this day, youth workers, local communities and government practitioners must address these perceptions of P/CVE work that are rooted in previous experiences with Prevent that aligned security surveillance with community cohesion work. For example, Mohammed, director of KIKIT, shows in the following quote how he engages with criticisms towards Prevent from local communities:

> *I think at the beginning the policy of Prevent, it felt for communities that it was basically targeting Muslims and I absolutely understand why they felt like that in terms of what's going on with war in different countries and then suddenly this comes up, so I understand that. After a while, once the policy started to work, people started to realise that actually it was not just targeting the Muslim Communities, [but was] also addressing far right extremism as well and it's evolved and changed.* Mohammed, KIKIT.

Mohammed from KIKIT has a healthy working relationship with Waqar from Prevent, and as these quotes show, they coincide in the way they are trying to draw a distinction between the previous phases of Prevent (although they do not refer to them as phases) and the current approach. This evidences that previous criticism to Prevent is still lingering in the narratives of local communities they engage with, and therefore youth workers often take on the responsibility of challenging these narratives through their community work.

This relationship between Prevent and KIKIT also evidences success in (re)building trust by Prevent practitioners, as Waqar described how Prevent's relationship with KIKIT began: "they initially thought I was a spy, they thought I worked for MI5 because they thought Prevent was security services and they were reluctant to engage." However, their relationship changed through a situation which required collaboration between them: "But they had two service users who were caught, they were going to attack a EDL rally up north and they were caught in the M1 or the M6. Routine insurance check but then they had weapons and were arrested later", argued Waqar. This

situation prompted further conversations between the two, where Waqar explained to Mohammed the potential benefits of merging P/CVE with KIKIT's pre-existing work:

> *It was almost like saying look: you have interaction with young people on a daily basis, young people with problems in the city. These young people have got not just gang member trying to recruit them, not just groomers trying to get young girls, drug dealers, but also potentially radicalizers.* Waqar, Prevent Coordinator.

Additionally, Waqar argued that continuity is a challenge once they have a set working culture in their locality, as coordinators face a high turnaround of personnel in government, local authorities and the front-line. Since P/CVE work depends greatly on the strength of the networks and working relationships at a grassroots level, personal relationships are pivotal in this line of work, as they establish trust. Ruhena from UK Youth provides another direct account of how the third sector is affected by the fluctuations of staff and funding opportunities:

> *It's really interesting when you speak with the people in the local council or you speak with the Prevent Coordinators and they're just like 'my project has been cut so I don't have a lot of money to carry on with', or they have been deprioritized and they do not have any money at all. So people who we've been talking to previously, that wanted to do the program [Future Proof], when we contact them again they are like 'we don't have Prevent money this year'.* Ruhena, Future Proof project manager.

Maintaining stable relationships with local communities can be compromised by changes in civil servants who share the role of supervising funded P/CVE programmes such as Prevent. Prevent Coordinators interviewed confirmed these concerns about a lack of continuity, as they have to work around a "regular turn of civil servants", meaning that "those relationships with communities then go full stop", as Waqar argued.

The data shows a characterisation of the P/CVE field as polarised and driven by perceived divides around Prevent. Engaging with organisations and individuals who remain contestant of the Prevent agenda is therefore a task inherited from one practitioner to the next. Gaining trust locally requires managing criticisms and distrust towards Prevent which still linger at the grassroots level (Thomas, 2017) and making strong connections within the constant changes of government and local authorities' personnel. The proven strategies in (re)building trust, according to the Prevent Coordinators cited in this section has been joined-up collaborative work with local stakeholders,

which has the effect of decentring security as youth workers and practitioners integrate P/CVE into their pre-existing practices.

5.2 Navigating the resources: Prevent Priority Areas, local networking and bidding for funding

As discussed so far, the politicised nature of Prevent has created perceptions of a polarised P/CVE field at the grassroots level. The data has shown that such a politicised context helps shape the P/CVE landscape as criticisms of Prevent are managed by youth workers and government practitioners working to (re)build trust with local communities. As a result, being critical of Prevent is at times presented as a binary option for youth workers and practitioners – either be independent of Prevent or take its funding opportunities – that can impact their access to both funding pathways and networking opportunities. A key contribution of this research to the P/CVE field is providing data-driven analysis of grassroots P/CVE work beyond Prevent-funded work, including hybrid and independent organisations as well. Such analysis provides a detailed account of the complexities of grassroots P/CVE work in youth workers' everyday practices, allowing me to engage with the second part of the question being addressed in this chapter: Do the politics revolving Prevent policy affect frontline youth work? If so, how?

As I now turn to discuss how government-funded, hybrid and independent P/CVE organisations navigate local resources, it is first important to discuss Home Office's continued approach to 'map out' P/CVE efforts in terms of funding through the designation of Prevent Priority Areas (PPAs) (Ali, 2014). One recurring theme in the qualitative data is the relationship between P/CVE work in the third sector and funding pathways, and how this relationship is influenced by Prevent policy and Home Office's centralised funding allocation through PPAs within the overall counter-terrorism strategy. This next section takes a closer look at how pathways to funding and local networking influence the nature of P/CVE work at the grassroots level, and the role of PPAs and non-PPA localities in this interaction.

5.2.1 Prevent Priority and non-Priority Areas

With the revision of Prevent in 2011, Home Office shifted to a centralized control of resources and monitoring of Prevent-funded programmes. Later, the incorporation of the 2015 the Statutory Duty stated: "The Home Office currently oversees Prevent activity in local areas which have been identified as priorities for this programme, and will provide central monitoring for the

new duty" (Revised Prevent Duty Guidance, 2015), further increasing central monitoring of funding opportunities based on areas that represent a high risk of radicalisation.

During the first phase of Prevent (2007-2011) local collaboration meant "working closely with government Offices which provide co-ordination at the regional level, local authorities in priority areas (identified on the basis of the size of the Muslim population) are already funding a wide range of community-led projects aimed at tackling violent extremism" (Prevent Strategy, 2008: 46). A shift came about with the second phase of Prevent (2011-2015) which instead determined PPAs based on the "threat of extremism faced within that local authority" (Mastroe, 2016: 53), beyond 'violent extremism'. The number of PPAs has varied throughout the different phases of Prevent, and although the data is not easily accessible, some research papers and government documents disclose that the first phase of Prevent (2007-2011) covered 70 PPAs (Heath-Kelly 2017: 319; DCLG, 2007). This number was then reduced to 25 in 2011 (Prevent Strategy, 2011: 97), then increased up to 44 in 2014 (Mastroe 2016: 53). It finally went back to 25 during the third phase of Prevent (2015 – present). As recently as 2019 it has expanded to 50 PPAs (Mastroe 2016: 53; Prevent Strategy 2011: 97). It should also be noted that the 50 most recent PPA local authorities are not disclosed in the latest Prevent Duty Guidance (2019). This lack of information on the specifics of PPAs and how they are determined and modifies limits making an informed assessment of the success or failure of a P/CVE model based on PPAs.

The table in Appendix 4 presents a list of the local authorities considered PPAs during each of these phases. When comparing the original 70 Prevent PPAs from 2007 to the 25 PPAs from 2016 (the latest data available for PPAs to include the names of the local authorities), it is clear that the majority of local authorities labelled as PPAs up to 2016 (third phase of Prevent) have always been the focus of the Prevent agenda since its origin. The main shift in PPAs is after Prevent's revision in 2011, when 50 localities were deprioritized, meaning that one-third of the original local authorities labelled PPAs have continued to be the main focus to Prevent, and there is not enough data to speculate as to why, notwithstanding changes in the strategy. What the data in this study does show is how P/CVE practitioners at the grassroots level have been affected by the overall PPA model. For example, Ruhena, Project manager for UK Youth leading the Future Proof programme, provides some insight into how funding, determined by PPA allocations, affects her P/CVE work:

> *We are waiting to find out [about funding], we don't really know, it takes a long time. So we've put a bid in just before Christmas, we went out to regional events with all the Prevent Coordinators, we made a pitch about our programme. We've been speaking to other Prevent Coordinators, [but] what is really disheartening is that the government is kind of cutting*

costs in the youth sector, 'sorry can't really invest in certain things', just because they don't have the budget to do so. I guess we will find out shortly if we will get that money, but we are not holding our breath because we have spoken to the coordinators and they are like 'my project has been cut.' Certain areas are getting deprioritized, so they have to be in the Priority Area to bid for this sort of money, to do that work in the areas. So if they've been de-prioritized they don't get that pot of money. Ruhena, Future Proof (UK Youth*).*

Ruhena reveals here that allocating funding based on PPAs affects P/CVE project's ability to deliver their work in local authorities with existing partnerships. Although the youth workers interviewed showed little knowledge behind the process of determining PPAs, the literature suggests it follows an assessment carried out by intelligence services (Heath-Kelly & Strausz, 2019: 101; Dresser, 2019; Mastroe, 2016: 53). Most of these intelligence assessments were carried out by the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT), while more recently they have been made on the basis of the "nature of local risk indicators through the identification of intelligence-driven 'hotspots' and counter-terrorism local profiles (CTLP)" (Dresser, 2019: 609). For information about how the intelligence data is collected and who is involved in these decisions, my interview with Prevent Coordinator William insightful:

Now, it's a really out back process of prioritising where our threat is. Sat around the table in that room, we sat all day, we had all the algorithms done already, you had the police, the department of education, the local government, ministry of defence, everybody, Home Office, everyone around that table. You had people who monitor hate crime sat in that table. We only looked at Syria travellers--people who tried to travel and were frustrated and still here, [also] anti-Muslim hate crime, far-right extremism, Channel referrals, the quality of the referrals, how many of that area's referrals are adopted because there's a genuine problem there around Prevent, not other safeguarding issues. All of that data is pulled together and the hierarchy of where the biggest risk lies is produced. It's a really comprehensive, complex process now. William, Prevent Coordinator

According to William, the process of determining PPAs involves all levels of state and civil society in analysing the data available, including the evaluation of referrals. In this excerpt William did not disclose to how the budget is distributed to each PPA and its possible implications on funding opportunities. However, as stated above, the 25 PPAs in 2016 were included in the original 70 PPAs of 2007, which were determined by the 'size of Muslim population'. William confirmed this information later in our conversation:

It almost exactly overlaps the last process we don't like where they just said, 'you got loads of Muslims, here is some money.' There are some anomalies there further as you get kind of like Yorkshire away, the split between Islamism extremism and right-wing extremism is a bit more pronounced, and the right-wing can be equal sometimes. In East London, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, it still firstly mirrors the old process. William, Prevent Coordinator

Indeed Leeds, Birmingham, Manchester and localities in London have been PPAs since the start of Prevent and at least until 2016 ([Appendix 4](#)). How has this robust intelligence-led process not generated significant changes to the determination of PPAs during the three phases of Prevent? Since this is the case, it seems that similar conclusions about threat levels are reached whether PPAs are determined through densely Muslim populated areas (as in the first phase of Prevent) or through 'algorithms' involving all sectors of government (as it is currently done), even with the inclusion of far-right extremism as a rising P/CVE concern. These PPAs continue to contain populations at a high risk of radicalisation according to Home Office metrics over time, notwithstanding consistent PPA funding to these local authorities. As will be discussed further in the next chapter, according to youth workers interviewed in this study, these maps of vulnerability to radicalisation overlap what they see in their communities as maps of deprivation due to cuts in local funding, which bring about vulnerability to wider social harms.

The designation of PPAs ensures that the Prevent programme is funded in localities identified by government to be at high risk. A Home Office employee interviewed in Mastroe (2016) argued that the logic behind this strategy of allocating funding based on PPAs is to "protect this area of focus from being cut with the intense budget cuts in local authorities in the past 5 years, and it brings a degree of conformity to Prevent" (2016: 55). Achieving such 'conformity' requires that the available funds should always be spent in these 'hotspots' identified by intelligence, which requires compliance from the organisations funded by Prevent to deliver P/CVE programmes exclusively in these allocated areas, and perhaps incentivising other organisations (hybrid) suffering from scarce funding from the same local authorities (PPAs) to incorporate P/CVE into their line of work in order to have access to Home Office funding.

The persistent allocation of funding to a local authority under the framework of PPAs may achieve conformity, however it may also reinforce negative perceptions about these communities. Such conclusions were drawn from the backlash to a Muslim-only project during the first phase of Prevent (Thomas, 2016). Drawing from previous work by Hewitt (2005) on 'white backlash' due to "ethnically targeted strategies" to counter racism, Thomas cautions on the creation of Muslim 'youth resentment' as a result of "the large scale Prevent engagement with young Muslims", and

policies pointing to an "essentialized community having problematic features" (2016: 176). Further critiques in the literature and in communities claim that there is an unjustified focus of P/CVE efforts on Muslim and ethnic minorities due to PPAs, which reinforces a path-dependent logic to radicalisation (Cappock & McGovern, 2014).

In one of the interviews in this study, Mohammed from KIKIT (Birmingham) provided a grassroots perspective of how there is a parallel between the Home Office PPAs and the generalised perception in those local authorities of a possible (imminent) terrorist threat. This perspective, to Mohammed, translates into more opportunities for KIKIT to deliver their P/CVE programme in those local authorities:

> *So what we do is we go there and we pitch to them and say to them 'we think that youth benefits from our project...' Sometimes local authorities know we're a good service but because they've had cuts with money sometimes they use the money on projects that they want to do locally...Birmingham or Manchester and Leeds they see the true value of a project like KIKIT... because like Manchester has had terror attacks, Birmingham is very concerned at the moment about the likelihood of having an attack... local authorities fully understand that having Prevent, particularly Prevent funding for local authorities to have projects like us, it's a massive benefit for them.* Mohammed director of KIKIT.

In this part of the interview, Mohammed argued that his team does 'pitch' their work in local authorities beyond Birmingham (where KIKIT is located). He mentioned Coventry in London as an example, however he argued that these other localities usually turn them down due to budget cuts, even when they find that the P/CVE programme KIKIT offers could be useful in their locality. The only local authorities that seem to maintain a budget for such programs are the ones considered PPAs by Home Office. How a local group like KIKIT determines where to pitch their project or in what locality to deliver their work is still dependent on coordinated work with counter-terrorism and Prevent personnel:

> *We work with a local counter terrorism team, we work with a Prevent team as well and we'll look at areas of concern; areas with high deprivation, areas where there's issues of extremism not just from the Muslim community, from the far-right as well.* Mohammed, KIKIT director.

This is a practical account which illustrates how PPAs might enhance the perception of a threat for practitioners in those local authorities, as well as how Prevent-funded projects are coordinated by government practitioners to secure that funds are allocated to specific communities of concern

within PPAs. While Mohammed's interview did not provide information about how the PPAs and the specific 'areas of concern' are allocated, there is clarity in how the Prevent Coordinator's role is to ensure that grassroots workers are allocating their resources to the communities identified as 'at risk' by Home Office. Furthermore, it highlights that even if a local authority identifies a P/CVE need, if it is a non-PPA, it is unlikely to obtain Prevent funds.

In terms of security governance, PPAs serve as a policy tool to create patterns of behaviour in localities with a recurring Prevent fund and an allocated Prevent Coordinator. Securing funding in these localities, considered 'hotspots', encourages the incorporation of P/CVE practices within front-line work. As research has proven, this has the effect of increasing the responsibility of P/CVE safeguarding at the grassroots level across public sector professionals (Heath-Kelly & Strausz, 2019), and in non-PPAs it also increases the collaboration between different frontline agencies and Prevent officials located in local police (Dresser, 2019).

There were thirty PPA in 2014, fourteen of them named "supported" areas (Mastroe, 2016: 53); a Prevent Coordinator is only allocated to PPAs, not in 'supported' areas or non-PPAs. As RP4 from a city council located in a non-PPA argued, in non-PPA localities, the Prevent worker is embedded in the Police, which makes it more challenging for Prevent to establish trust with local stakeholders (RP4, 2018). According to Mastroe (2016), there are two kinds of Prevent Coordinators: one who is the link between Home Office and local authorities, and another who is the link with higher education (Mastroe, 2016: 53). In summary, one of the main tasks for Prevent Coordinators is their oversight of the management of funding in PPAs, though as discussed previously in this chapter, they also support the development of P/CVE partnerships with local stakeholders. In the case of non-PPAs, Prevent officers who are embedded in local Police reinforce current critiques that link Prevent work with surveillance mechanisms (Dresser, 2019).

An added issue in the field is where to draw the line between P/CVE work, like Prevent, and Counter Extremism efforts, like the Building a Stronger Britain Together—BSBT programme:

> *So there is basically Prevent then there is the current counter extremism pot of money called "building a stronger Britain together" BSBT…. we have funding from both to do quite similar but slightly different focus targeted work. Then there's a Commission for Countering Extremism headed by Sara Khan she's a commissioner. I don't know how the commission for countering extremism will fit in with extremism. I don't know the Home Secretary could describe to you because it's so confusing.* Youth worker/Practitioner

Both programmes fund local early intervention P/CVE work and counter extremism work, but BSBT also focuses on intervention work countering extremist narratives and cultural practices. It funds "organisations that share these aims to bid for in-kind support for specific programmes that deliver goals set out in the Counter Extremism Strategy" (Home office 2016). Tensions can thus arise locally, argued RP4, in non-PPA areas between Prevent and BSBT workers as they compete for Home Office funding and for partnerships with local stakeholders. Integrate UK, a hybrid organisation included in this study, has received support from BSBT:

> *We also have some government funding from Building a Stronger Britain Together*
> *(BSBT) which is very new. I just got the official confirmation yesterday. We've had some*
> *before but it's been over a year, and that's to do with right-wing film. We have money from*
> *grant givers, so we've got the lottery funding which is for the Cohesion work and other grant-*
> *giving bodies, well we have a small amount of money over 2 years and you just have to keep*
> *reapplying. We are a very small organisation*. Lisa, Integrate UK

In a recent online publication, Nasra from Integrate UK (who is also a participant in this study) is cited in a discussion about Home Office's possible "overhaul" of its counter extremism strategy (Staton & Warrel, 2020). Nasra, representing Integrate UK, which as Lisa discussed is a recipient of BSBT funding, did criticise this move, as one of Integrate UK's remits is challenging extremist cultural practices such as FGM (which is not included in Prevent); practices which Lisa argued should be included in P/CVE strategies. Integrate UK thus resides in the middle of P/CVE and counter-extremism work, as it tackles radicalisation grooming, which falls under Prevent, and FGM, which resides in the counter-extremism remit. This case exemplifies the implications of funding pathways for a hybrid organisation in a non-PPA locality.

5.2.2 Local networking and pathways to funding

The sample collected in this research includes Home Office/Prevent, hybrid and independently funded organisations that do P/CVE and wider grassroots work. Some of these independent organisations are small organisations like Arakan Creative and Bristol Horn Youth Concern that are located in non-PPAs and therefore have little access to Prevent funding. The sample also includes larger organisations such as KIKIT, which relies heavily on Prevent funding and its networks, hybrid organisations such as Integrate UK, which is funded in part by BSBT and private donations, and independent charitable organisations such as The Resilience Project, which is funded by Big Lottery. Other hybrid organisations such as Odd Arts, Hybrid Organisation and the Tim Parry Johnathan Ball

Peace Foundation (Peace Foundation in short), have received funding from both the government (Prevent and other funds) and also rely on private funding either through donations or the services they provide. Other independent organisations included rely on private donations, such as Jawaab, or on crowdfunding through their local community, such as MEND and the Khidr Collective.

In my interview with a research participant from a hybrid organisation (who I anonymise only in this section), they discussed how the organisation's pathways to funding from Home Office have changed with adjustments to Prevent Strategy[20], and the key role of local authorities in assessing the localised needs:

> *So there's been a bit of a shift, a change, in that when we first began to be commissioned to do work by or under the Prevent agenda--I mean to be fair this dates back to 2007/2008, the beginning of Prevent. I know, I understand that there's a lot of challenge about that--We kind of began work in that space during those years but the current evolution of it under the Prevent Duty in particular, it began with local authorities commissioning us, then it seemed to change to central government giving grants to a set of organisations that they verified in a way, but then there was a call from local authorities who, for all intents and purposes, know their communities, know their local threat, they know the context of their own communities. So I believe [Home Office has] gone, 'we need to be in control of this more, we need more of a say in how and who and what we do', in a way.* Practitioner, hybrid organisation.

This account further shows the shift from the first phase of Prevent (2007-2011) to the following phases (2011-2015 and 2015-present), from a local to a central management. Further, they mentioned here that in their view local communities are better prepared to inform Home Office about the needs in their communities. As a result, although Home Office centrally manages the funding, local authorities maintained a role in setting the agenda for these grants in PPAs. Ruhena, the project manager of Future Proof (UK Youth), a hybrid funded programme, also provided an account of how Home Office uses regional Prevent Coordinators as account managers as a means of supervising the programmes being funded:

> *So with the Home Office they have account managers for every region, so they manage the people involved in their particular region and they manage all of the Prevent Coordinators. So he [account manager] is the Prevent coordinator but he manages the other Prevent*

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[20] At this point of the interview they asked for confidentiality. Although the information about funding and their partnerships with Home Office, she argued is transparent and "is out there". They said she preferred it remained confidential. For this reason I anonymised the identify of the research participant.

Coordinators in the region to ensure that the money is being spent well, that the funds are being delivered and the sort of impact and quality of the stuff that's being delivered in that region for the Home Office funding. Ruhena, Future Proof project manager.

Although the supervision of Prevent-funded programmes at local levels does promote a centralized framework for Prevent resources, in practice it also encourages decentralised local cooperation between frontline practitioners (Prevent Coordinators), local authorities (who sometimes bid Home Office on behalf of organisations), youth workers (for example, those who are recruited to deliver a programme funded by Prevent), and local communities. This comprises a network of cooperation and joined-up policy making within P/CVE grassroots efforts.

For example, when interviewed, KIKIT was receiving funding and guidance from Home Office to develop a specific toolkit that can be used to evaluate P/CVE work, similar to the one KIKIT originally used to evaluate substance abuse intervention:

We wanted to develop something exactly the same using the same process for someone who has been radicalised. Identify the needs, identify the thinking, what is driving this person? What is the vulnerability? So, the vulnerability is drug addiction, right? So maybe the vulnerability here is a passion or something that this person feels they need to give back to the world because they've done such bad things in, and they want to repent. What is the pull? What is the ideology? And then from there we evaluate it, we develop the toolkit with the Home Office psychology, they sat with us, they understood how we work, they knew what we wanted to do, and we developed it together, the questions and also the actual design of it... Mohammed, KIKIT.

The work being done by KIKIT is focused on measuring the behaviour change in individuals to determine the success of their interventions. This is a collaborative model that, according to Mohammed, Prevent wants to implement across their funded projects. However, KIKIT might be in a better position to gain Home Office funding because of these collaborative relationship with Prevent, than other organisations, as Ruhena details here:

People like KIKIT they do great work they are really known in Prevent, they would probably most likely get more money than say us just because we've been doing this work only for 2 years. So when it comes to Home Office funding we are competing with people like KIKIT, we're competing with Odd Arts, St. Guiles... Ruhena, Future Proof

In addition to government funding, another common source of revenue shared across these organisations is created by local stakeholders and their need of evaluating P/CVE referrals and beyond. To achieve trust from local stakeholders, some of the organisations in this data set even occasionally offer free consultation and support to local stakeholders (schools or local authorities, for example). The aim of organisations such as Odd Arts or The Resilience Project is to become valued for their P/CVE expertise (and beyond) by local stakeholders:

> *We still work for free and make a loss because we know we have to be people's friends before they work with us and they have to trust us so that is probably, it wasn't a business strategy it was just something we used to do out of necessity really, I suppose. It is a strategy, because people won't trust you with these themes unless they've seen you or their best mate has seen you.* Rebecca, Odd Arts director.

> *They came to us then, the parents, for advice and we were able to be like an intermediate and talk to Prevent officials, and x, y and z, because they trusted us as a non-government body along with a reputation for working with youth groups*. Azim, The Resilience Project

Working for free and supporting teachers assess referrals are central strategies for grassroots organisations to network and built trust locally. Another attribute of grassroots organisations (mainly independent ones), as Azim suggest above, is their ability to give advice from a neutral non-governmental position, particularly when supporting front-line workers assessing potential radicalisation referrals. That is, the more an organisation is able to maintain an independent source of income, the more likely it is able to position itself as a neutral ally in working with the government, local communities and front-line workers in youth engagement, which is particularly valuable considering the contested understanding of Prevent at the community level.

However, within the theme of local networking, the data again shows the influence of a perceived polarised P/CVE field. Here is another example provided by Hybrid Organisation, explained by RP1:

> *The reason we are an independent organisation is because we wanted to keep independent offers. I used to take that personally 'cause I thought like, you know my track work and a lot of people know me, so that's harsh. But […] there is a bigger picture [and] it doesn't bother me, and I am not interested in that anymore. I am not interested in Quilliam versus CAGE.*
> RP1, Hybrid Organisation

This quote shows the required management of perceptions of a divide at the grassroots level. As RP1 argues, an organisation in the P/CVE field can come under scrutiny due to speculations around their funding pathways, such as receiving Home Office funding, even if they have diverse funding streams (hybrid). RP1 showed in the interview how this politicised context can be stressful and complicated to navigate, even for a hybrid organisation which has remained neutral and open to collaborate with partners with a wide range of political views.

To be considered a key stakeholder in these local networks of cooperation, youth workers and organisations in the third sector, as in the case of RP 1, must carefully position themselves to move fluidly within the political spectrum, beyond the perceived pro/anti-Prevent divide. While the perceptions of a divide do help shape the nature of the interactions between local stakeholders and wider perceptions about P/CVE work, in practice, the data shows that local stakeholders do reach out and try to collaborate with each other. As a youth worker (who I will anonymise in this section), discusses this in the following excerpt:

> *"A: So the Prevent Coordinator is born and raised in this area, his name is...*
> *F: Yeah I had a brief conversation over the phone with him but he's not here... at the*
> *moment, he comes back on Monday.*
> *A: Do me a favour, let him know that I mentioned you... because the MEND guys wanted you*
> *to meet them, because [MEND coordinator] says [that] as much as we critique their policy,*
> *we are open to trying to look for a common ground."* Youth worker.

This quote shows that political differences in the perceived divide between Prevent and MEND are actually overridden by the nature of the networks in that locality. For example, in this case, local stakeholders such as the youth workers interviewed, the Prevent Coordinator, and the MEND regional director grew up or have close family who grew up in the area, enabling close ties despite their professional/political affiliations. A MEND coordinator, likewise discussed in the interview how he perceives their relationship with Prevent:

> *"We are critical of Prevent so we can't engage, but at the same time personally I'm very*
> *subjective, I know that there have been amazing projects from Prevent, from Prevent funding*
> *some organizations have done amazing projects. Because we are critical of Prevent it makes*
> *engaging and collaboration with those organisations very difficult. Morally it would be*
> *wrong, wouldn't it? If you're critical but then you're engaging at the same time, engaging is*
> *fine but collaborating, we can collaborate with the organisations, engaging is absolutely fine,*
> *I'm happy to speak with people who will take Prevent money."* MEND regional manager.

In this excerpt the participant provides insights into how the apparent the polarised P/CVE field at times does present challenges for local groups to collaborate, due to a 'moral' dilemma. For them, a key distinction is collaborating or engaging with Prevent, as they argue, MEND does not have issues engaging and even recognising good work being done locally by groups funded by Prevent, though they are critical of the framework of Prevent and its consistent focus on Muslims in his community which is not justified by empirical data. Further on this topic, Rizwan from Jawaab, provides perhaps a less optimistic scenario of cooperation in the field:

> *But this space is broken. The organizations working on Islamophobia are not talking to each other, they are not engaging with each other, because of ideological and political differences… I would say there is an ideological and political difference. I think in one camp you have organisations that might be toeing the government line on 'we need more Prevent, we need more counter-terrorism policies', I have heard from those organisations that Islamophobia is just Muslims having a victim mentality...* Rizwan, Jawaab director.

Although Jawaab is not a recipient of Prevent funding, as an independent organisation targeting youth empowerment and countering Islamophobia, they too are aware of the political divides in the field and how they affect funding pathways. At times, he argues that the polarised field creates divides between Muslim grassroots organisations. However, the data also shows that hybrid organisations included in this sample benefited from maintaining good working relations with local stakeholders, such as Prevent practitioners and local councils, when placing bids for Home Office funding. As detailed in the following statement by Ruhena, from Future Proof:

> *Working with the Home Office is really different than how we work with other funders. So in order to put the bid in we have to get the Prevent Coordinator on board to bid for our program. So a couple of years ago I had spoken with [Prevent Coordinator] and then the Home Office gave me contact details to speak with the Prevent Coordinators to basically sell our program, and [Prevent Coordinator] was one of the first people I talked to and they included us in their bid and we got the money….* Ruhena, Future Proof project manager

Ruhena details how she had to maintain contact with and support from Prevent Coordinators before she could bid for funding. If an organisation is looking to place bids for Home Office funding, it is more likely to align its aims and position within the political spectrum in the P/CVE field. The success of a bid for Prevent funding from Home Office will be evaluated by P/CVE aims, and by the ability to evidence (in the form of local networking) that an organisation can reach and impact local communities located in PPAs. Similarly, Harriet from the Peace Foundation stated to have been

commissioned to work "10-11" Prevent Coordinator during a "3 year" span, in localities from "Leeds to Stoke basically, that's… as far as we go. Then Manchester, Liverpool, Blackburn, Bradford…" (Harriet, 2018).

The importance of PPAs and a centralised control of resources by Home Office are thus necessary considerations for grassroots organisations in the third sector for their funding pathways. Having to prove potential impact in local communities requires time and resources for organisations in the third sector. The data suggest (and a larger data set may confirm) that organisations with a long trajectory, full-time personnel, and similar aims as the Prevent policy would be most likely to place successful bids for Home Office resources.

Organisations that do not have a wide networking base at a local level face a greater challenge in trying to attain Home Office funding for P/CVE even if the project/product they have to offer is directly related to the needs of P/CVE efforts. This is exemplified in the case of Conor, the director of Arakan, one of the few independent Muslim theatre companies in the UK. A few years ago he was able to put on a theatrical play about jihadist and far-right forms of radicalisation through funding from a local council, and was then able to create a DVD of the play with the purpose of its distribution around schools, thanks to a small grant awarded by local police. At first, the police had turned down Conor's bid, but they later re-budgeted as some funds they had allocated to mitigate the expected damages of an English Defence League (EDL) rally scheduled for that year; when the damages turned out to be minimum, part of those funds was freed up to support Conor's project. However, once Conor was able to release the filmed version of the play, no schools or local organisations would purchase the DVD and the local authorities did not fund its distribution, despite the fact that the film, entitled "Sliding Doors", received international awards for its presentation of a 'what if…' scenario for both far-right and jihadist grooming. Conor discussed his frustration over this:

> The other day a higher-ranking officer said we [as a country] underestimate the threat of the far-right. [So] you would think that education establishments would bite my hands off if I came to say "hi, I got a DVD [for you]". But it is not easy getting into schools, unless you are in partnership with an established organisation, or if you have a history working with them, because they are so busy, their curriculum is so packed. It is not easy, so I get that. Conor, Arakan.

Conor shows awareness of the importance of maintaining a 'working history' with local stakeholders such as schools and local authorities. He speculates that if he had such networks, his product would have been purchased and used in P/CVE efforts. He further argued in the interview that his resource

is useful as it is cheap to distribute and show across the UK. In contrast, Mohammed, director of KIKIT in Birmingham, expressed the requirements for establishing a partnership with Prevent funding. In our conversation he stated that in his experience obtaining Home Office funding requires providing an estimate of the people they seek to reach or 'mentor', among other factors: "we have to bid and we have to let them know how many mentoring hours we're going to do, how many staff are going to work on this project, a breakdown of the costs—there is a proper due diligence process" (Mohammed, KIKIT). Contrasting to Conor's experience, Mohammed's account shows the process towards a successful bid once the local networks are in place. Even when organisations have obtained such funding, they also then have to pitch their project to specific local councils.

There are several pathways, according to this account, for organisations to get 'commissioned' to do Prevent work, including direct bidding to Home Office, bids through local authorities and through partnerships with local Prevent teams. Overall, who is considered to be a key stakeholder varies between youth workers and organisations in the third sector. As this section has identified, some youth workers and organisations limit their local networking to community members and front-line workers in schools, for example. However, others consider local authorities, police or Prevent Coordinators as part of a wider approach to networking with key stakeholders, as they are instrumental in the odds of attaining Home Office funding.

Organisations delivering Prevent-funded programmes (usually larger in personnel and trajectory) are more likely to network with Prevent Coordinators, police and local authorities to provide more targeted P/CVE-specific interventions. However, the analysis of these organisations should not be interpreted as an attempt to box in their work within an already polarised P/CVE field. Rather, it expands our understanding on the complexities of P/CVE youth work. Adding to this contribution to the field, the next chapter will discuss case study examples of how Prevent-funded, hybrid and independent organisations deliver P/CVE work and establish local networks and funding pathways during the delivery of P/CVE programmes.

Conclusions

This chapter contributes to the existing literature by providing primary data on how youth workers and practitioners characterise the politics of the P/CVE field, mainly driven by polarised understandings of Prevent policy and its practices. Furthermore, it discussed how pathways to funding and local networking are determined, in part, by the allocation of PPAs by Home Office. It

provides empirical data on the complexities behind the delivery of P/CVE work through the perspectives of youth workers and government practitioners.

This chapter shows that, notwithstanding the political aspects of P/CVE work, youth workers and government practitioners comply with the overall need to collaborate in P/CVE efforts. This is an aim that they share, beyond policy compliance, as a societal need to tackle these issues that they see permeating everyday life in their communities. They often achieve this through (re)building trust with local communities. The data also shows that the demarcation of PPAs and allocated Prevent Coordinators are key in ensuring that the delivery of funding specifically targets 'at risk' populations; a process which highly depends on the local networks of government practitioners and youth workers. This evidences practical implications for the P/CVE field brought on by Prevent, such as the key role of Prevent officials in enabling local networks in PPAs for Prevent-funded work, but it also evidences that valuable P/CVE work being done in non-PPAs struggles to gain access to public funding to maintain their safeguarding roles in local communities.

The perspectives provided go beyond some existing characterisations of P/CVE (youth) work that are mainly focused on Prevent-funded work and suggest that policy design cascades down into frontline practices without much contestation (Thomas, 2017). Current views provided by research participants are consistent with the scholarly work which has highlighted evidence-based accounts of social stigmatisation, and the securitisation of front-line work due to Prevent. However, these accounts make up only part of the story of P/CVE work. My data contributes to some of the existing literature (Pilkington & Acik 2019; Busher et al. 2019; Thomas 2018; O'Toole et al., 2016) that reveals how front-line workers (in the case of this study youth workers and practitioners) anticipate issues with Prevent policy and are able to adapt, reinterpret and even challenge such policies to fit their pre-existing cultures and accommodate localised needs. Evidencing that there are insights to be learned from alternative knowledge and practices in P/CVE youth work, which will be further explored in the following chapters. The following chapter provides a more detailed look at P/CVE youth work implementation, through three examples identified in the data of Prevent, hybrid and independently funded P/CVE work.

Chapter 6: The dynamics of P/CVE efforts at the grassroots level: Prevent-guided, independent and hybrid approaches to P/CVE work

The previous chapter showed how youth workers/practitioners manage the politics of the P/CVE field, surrounding Prevent funding and collaboration, for example through the use of Prevent Priority Areas (PPAs) for the mapping risk areas in the UK. It has shown both instances of tensions that arise from perceptions of a divide in the field, but also how these perceptions are overridden by local collaboration. This chapter draws from the data collected in this research three different funding/networking strategies which characterise the P/CVE field at grassroots: organisations reliant on Home Office (mainly Prevent) funding and its networks, hybrid organisations that diversify funding pathways across government and private/charitable sectors, and independent organisations, which rely on mostly on private/charitable funding and community crowdfunding. However, this is not an attempt to 'box-in' or typify grassroots youth work within an already politicised P/CVE field. In contrast, this analysis contributes to the field by diversifying our understanding of how P/CVE work gets done and how youth workers and practitioners navigate the polarised P/CVE field in a fluid manner. Carefully balancing their views on Prevent policy and their approach of P/CVE work, with their pre-existing work culture.

This chapter then contributes to the overall research aim by asking: Are there differences between P/CVE youth work that is funded by and aligned with Home Office, and that is funded hybrid and independent of government? If so, what are they? Documenting these three approaches to P/CVE work provides a nuanced understanding of the complexity of P/CVE youth work beyond Prevent funded work, through examples of how the polarised P/CVE field, mainly driven by contested understandings of Prevent, influences the daily practices of youth workers and practitioners.

For this analysis, I rely on Bevir's understanding of security governance and decentred security governance (2016). The former "refers to the agenda reforms, and practices associated with the application of joined-up governance to security policy…fostering networks and partnerships among public, voluntary and private sector organisations" (Bevir, 2016: 228), the latter allows us to explore "the diverse ways in which situated agents change the boundaries of state and civil society as their beliefs change leading them constantly to remake practices" (Bevir, 2016: 232). Thus, I will analyse tensions between Prevent policy and youth work by focusing on how although the Prevent Duty does encourage the inclusion of security policies in youth work through *whole of society* collaboration (security governance), particularly in Prevent Priority Areas (PPAs), youth workers and

practitioners retain agency by orienting P/CVE work towards holistic approaches such as youth empowerment, 'upskilling' youth and countering social stigmatisation.

A complementary analytical frame relevant to this chapter, is Prior & Barnes' (2011) understanding of policy subversion:[21] the idea that an original policy design can be subverted by the judgements and interpretations made within specific situations, provides three possibilities for policy subversion:

> *The modification of practices and revision of outcomes by workers; the development of alternative strategies and new outcomes by users; and the refusal by users to become engaged in service strategies and thereby triggering other kinds of outcome.* Prior & Barnes (2011: 270)

For example, during the delivery of a Prevent-funded programme, a youth worker or organisation might have to comply with certain parameters of behaviour, such as collaborating with specific stakeholders in an allocated Prevent Priority Area (PPA). However, they might modify the practices to fit youth work models of intervention which have proven success in their interventions supporting individuals with issues such as substance abuse. In contrast, independent and hybrid P/CVE programmes might retain more freedom in the structure of their operations when selecting what stakeholders to network within their communities. Albeit the data also shows that all youth workers and practitioners in Prevent, hybrid and independently funded programmes, retain certain individual agency, particularly in the methods and content used for the delivery of P/CVE programmes. In sum, this chapter provides a detailed account on P/CVE practices at grassroots, highlighting the complex relationship between P/CVE police and front-line practices.

6.1 Prevent-led programmes and community safeguarding panels

There are many projects funded by Prevent with different models of tackling violent extremism in the UK. These include: raising awareness about violent extremism grooming mechanisms, testimonials from ex-extremists from far-right and religious extremism backgrounds, seeking interfaith community work, raising resilience to violent extremism, or some combination of these methods, among others, depending on resources and funding organisations obtain. This section focuses on KIKIT Pathways to Recovery CIC in Birmingham (referred in this chapter as KIKIT),

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[21] The authors previously clarify that policy subversion or resistance do not necessarily equate to an emancipatory act, as these actions are not always goal-driven, but rather a result of negotiations that lead to a notion of what is appropriate for a specific setting (*Prior & Barnes, 2011: 269).*

although it is hybrid social enterprise, the data shows that KIKIT is an example of a Prevent-funded organisation, working in close partnership with Prevent and sharing affinity with the Prevent safeguarding and referral models. In my conversations with Mohammed, director of KIKIT, there were several examples of a close collaboration with Prevent: support in referrals to the Channel programme, the creation of community safeguarding panels, outreach work in communities about the importance of P/CVE work, being vocal about their partnership with Prevent to counter feelings of doubt and mistrust towards Prevent from other grassroots organisations, and the KIKIT Pathways to Recovery programme co-designed with Prevent focused on tackling crossing vulnerabilities. This section will focus on KIKIT's role in community panels.

KIKIT began by safeguarding community members against wider social harms such as substance abuse. However, over the last few years they have collaborated with Prevent practitioners to develop toolkits for interventions focused on behaviour change and on the development of community panels for potential radicalisation referrals. Due to their experience supporting people with substance abuse issues and now P/CVE efforts, they have developed working relationships with police, local authorities, Home Office and Prevent Coordinators while maintaining trust with local communities.

The qualitative data obtained reflects shared aims and 'joined-up' practices, between KIKIT and Prevent Coordinators interviewed in their need to develop close partnerships with local stakeholders who function as gateways into local communities for the delivery of P/CVE work. For example, a recurring theme in the conversations with Mohamed (KIKIT director) and Waqar (Prevent Coordinator in Birmingham) was the development of community panels that mimic Channel panels (see Appendix 5 for a diagram of the Channel referral process) in the assessment of individuals at risk of radicalisation. As Waqar described, one of the reasons behind these community-led approaches was to implement P/CVE safeguarding practices across existing networks of support in the front line:

> *So rather than you trying to create the same, or duplicate what [another group] are doing, create a system in which you referred to each other... [we say, to a local women's group] if you don't have a referral process, go and talk to KIKIT, KIKIT will then support you. [And,] by engaging with them, [KIKIT] will come across women who have drug issues, substance abuse issues and radicalisation issues.* Waqar, Prevent Coordinator

This idea of creating collaborative, local, community-based panels for the assessment of possible cases of radicalisation would in practice situate P/CVE within existing community safeguarding

mechanisms to wider social harms. Mohammed later in the interview argued that these panels should be coordinated within communities, saying they should have, "similar functions as Channel but it's run from the community…not statutory". The potential outcome here is creating the infrastructure for P/CVE referrals, combining statutory compliance due to the Prevent Duty (for public sector professionals) and a safeguarding culture (from the voluntary sector). As Waqar mentioned above, the goal is to 'join-up' (Bevir 2016) the different areas of expertise in the front-line and their direct (trusted) links with community members with the radicalisation safeguarding responsibilities across all the public sectors. Mohammed details this idea in the following passage:

> *So why [did] we set up the community safeguarding panel? It's for all the practitioners to come together and basically take referrals from the community, assess every case ourselves and then provide the right interventions for that case collectively, together. We do that as part of the Prevent Project and then sometimes if that individual or that family need Channel help we will work with Channel together. The community safeguarding panel and the Channel panel will work together. Statutory and voluntary.* Mohammed, KIKIT

The description of how these Channel and community panels could collaborate under the frame of Prevent policy, suggests a "whole of society" approach that "favours polycentric or nodal approach to security governance" (Froestad & Shearing, 2012: 2). Drawing from decentred security governance analytical tools, this research highlights how security practices, under the Prevent Duty, are integrated in grassroots youth work, through efforts to encourage local 'joined-up' networks between government, local authorities, private and voluntary sectors (Bevir, 2016). The working arrangements between Prevent and local organisations, as illustrated by Waqar and Mohammed, shows an example of Prevent practitioners using their partnerships with grassroots workers (funded by Prevent) to expand referral, safeguarding and the statutory duty practices within the wider community through local P/CVE networks such as these community panels.

Similar processes have been identified in the existing literature, such as the 'responsibilisation' of grassroots work for P/CVE duties (Thomas 2017; Abbas 2016; Spalek 2013), as well as further co-opting of pre-existing safeguarding practices for P/CVE safeguarding in the health sector (Heath-Kelly & Strausz 2019). This shows how P/CVE policy, through the Prevent Duty, has focused on the front-line public and voluntary sectors. This is further highlighted by Mohammed, as he explained: "we might have somebody, a mental health specialist, a school teacher specialist, someone who is a community police officer, a drugs worker, someone who works in youth services, collectively that is our Channel panel". The close ties and trustworthy relationships between such community members and youth workers, when funded by Prevent, have the possible outcome of

normalizing security practices in the third sector, blurring the lines between P/CVE referrals and safeguarding for and wider social harms. However, the integration of P/CVE practices into youth work, is not necessarily applied uncontested. Looking into how Mohammed envisioned the application of community panels in more detail, suggests that they are also an opportunity for private and voluntary sectors to capitalise on available funding through their particular expertise and practices.

Although in interviews it was not clear if these community panels would be funded by Prevent or local authorities or elsewhere, Mohammed did argue that these community panels could increase funding opportunities for some of their members. For example, if there was a need for an intervention from a panel member, that practitioner or youth worker would have to be paid extra for their services. Furthermore, the panels would also create the opportunity for other Prevent-funded projects to work together to tackle radicalisation in that region, though each organisation has their own approach and resources for safeguarding individuals from radicalisation. Which is indicative of decentralised security practices, as this suggest that P/CVE work is adapted to fit the expertise of grassroots workers, in this case through the community panels. For example, some might use sport activities at a local leisure centre to provide youth activities, and another might bring in former extremists to raise awareness about the outcomes of radicalisation. Despite differences in approaches to P/CVE work, Mohammed wants these panels to also serve as bridges of collaboration between grassroots P/CVE groups and public sector professionals:

> *So they have the application form to become a community safeguarding panel member, they fill in the criteria, their specialism, what they're actually good at, and we recruit that person based on their skills where the gaps we might have are…it benefits all of us because they're already getting paid to do the jobs and the good thing about it is, if it is something additional that new skills are required and they have a specialism, then what we do is get a small pot of money that we can buy-in their time. To say 'right, we need your specialism to work with this individual for 3 hours or for a couple of hours in a week, we would like to pay you to work with this individual on your time', because it is outside of their restriction, you know what I mean, outside of the role.* Mohammed, KIKIT

What Mohammed suggests here is a model that would increase cooperation and networking between members of the third and voluntary sectors and government practitioners. For Mohammed, collaboration would increase the number of referrals (evidencing the need for P/CVE work) and improve the outcome of their interventions, leading to better odds when placing bids for Home office funding in the future. In practice, the data shows instances where youth workers

contribute to the implementation of P/CVE approaches based on their pre-existing cultures, suggesting a decentralised network of security influenced from by heterogeneous and localised practices (Bevir, 2016). The following two chapters will provide more detail on how P/CVE work is integrated/adapted to more holistic approaches in youth work culture. This linkage between P/CVE work and wider youth work practices in this example are then encouraged by Prevent Coordinators and practitioners such as Mohammed, due to funding opportunities for P/CVE work in a PPA, such as Birmingham.

Whether or not their funding probabilities increase, a central question is: can a network of P/CVE local workers or even across localities improve the results of Prevent-funded programmes? Looking back at the Table on reviewing the distribution of PPAs (Appendix 4), it is hard to argue that the allocation of funding has mitigated the risk of radicalisation in each locality, as the totality of the 25 PPAs included in the 2016 list were consistently labelled as PPAs since the original 2007 list of 70 PPAs. Although the number of PPAs was vastly reduced from 70 to 25 PPAs in that timeframe, it is unclear if the de-prioritisation of PPAs is due to a success in those areas, a change in the counter-terrorism strategy (a reduction in terrorist attacks in the UK—remembering that 2017 was a year of increased attacks and that the latest data on PPAs increased from 25 in 2015, to 50 in 2019), or to the shift in the centralised management of Prevent by Home Office in the second phase of Prevent (2011-2015).

Creating pathways to cooperation between different organisations and youth workers was also supported by Prevent Coordinator Waqar:

> *What we do [in Birmingham] is all of our programmes know each other. We encourage all of our programmes to work together, even though they may be in different areas. Look, if you're doing diversionary activity work with this program that does intervention activity because you may not be good at intervention, but they are, but they don't engage with the people, you engage with me.* Waqar, Prevent Coordinator

Although Waqar is referring to Prevent-funded programmes here, this strategy seeks to include in the P/CVE referral process other groups (like the women's groups Waqar mentioned) which are focused on other social harms. The outcome could install P/CVE frames of intervention in the front-line, as was identified in the health sector by Heath-Kelly & Strausz (2019), however also produces heterogeneity in how P/CVE safeguarding practices are delivered as they are integrated into wider safeguarding practices at the grassroots level. In order to explore this further I now look at examples of independent and hybrid models of P/CVE practices in my data.

Future Proof is a project developed by UK Youth, funded in part by Prevent and by the Monday Charitable Trust. The overall aim of Future Proof is building resilience to violent extremism in communities within the nationwide networks of UK Youth. To meet this aim and gain Prevent's funding, part of the project was delivered by local youth workers in PPAs allocated by Home Office. This organisation is particularly insightful as an example, because the data shows a multi-layered perspectives of P/CVE work, including the experiences of an independent youth worker delivering the Future Proof programme, a practitioner who is the project manager of Future Proof programme in charge of designing and coordinating the programme, and a local Prevent Coordinator.

This case study provides examples of the intersection of grassroots P/CVE work, wider youth work in the third sector and Prevent policy. It contributes to the field as a more "practice-based approach to analysing state-citizen relations within governance spaces" with the aim of outlining a "multi-layered delivery of Prevent" (O'Toole et al., 2016: 166). The intersection of independent youth work and a Prevent-funded programme characterises a *hybrid* approach to P/CVE work, which requires collaboration in the co-production and co-delivery of a P/CVE programme. The decentred security governance frame shows that the collaboration between several stakeholders at a grassroots level plays a role in "reinterpreting, appropriating, contesting or resisting" (O'Toole et al., 2016: 166) the premises of Home Office's strategy to tackle the threat of radicalisation in the UK.

The data is drawn from semi-structured interviews to provide first-hand accounts around access to funding and local networking under a partially Prevent-funded project, under hybrid arrangement; including the processes behind the bidding, designing, training and delivery of a nationwide P/CVE programme. The insights produced were possible thanks to the generosity and willingness of the Future Proof project manager Ruhena (design and management of the programme), and youth worker Adam (delivery of the programme), who conversed with me prior to the delivery of a session and allowed me to observe/participate in one of the sessions he delivered.[22]

Additionally, the data collected through the Future Proof programme is an example of how members of organisations perceived as incompatible in the pro/anti-Prevent political divide actually work together in practice, such as MEND on one side and Prevent-funded programmes on the other.

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[22] It should be clarified that access to Adam in this research was not facilitated by Ruhena, but rather through his other affiliations to youth work. He was a recommendation given by a local regional director for MEND.

The example is potent in disrupting a reductive understanding of the P/CVE field to binary division between Prevent-led work and its critics. Instead, it shows that youth workers developed complex and fluid positions in their understandings of the politicised P/CVE field, driven by their overarching aim of supporting youth at local levels.

For the people involved in Future Proof, their working relationship with Prevent, its funding and networks, does not stifle their founded criticisms towards the policy or its collaboration with groups labelled by government officials as part of the 'anti-Prevent industry', such as MEND. The seeming contradiction of their affiliation to organisations with opposing political views is outweighed by their common interest in supporting local youth, countering radicalisation, building local networks and securing funding for their work. This means that in practice, it is common to come across various individuals with contrasting political views working under the same funding stream and programme to collaboratively support a group of young people. This is a contrasting case study to the example cited in the previous chapter where a youth worker, Hasaan, distanced himself from MEND and CAGE because he perceived them being labelled by Home office as 'extremist' and therefore feared possible backlash; even though when he campaigned against Prevent in higher education settings, he shared very similar criticisms voiced my MEND participants in this study. Both scenarios, where politicised tensions around Prevent are overridden by local collaboration and where these tensions dissuade such partnerships, are supported by the data in this research.

When first interviewed for this study, Ruhena, the project manager of Future Proof, was networking across the UK and finalising the design of the programme. Working for UK Youth, Ruhena designed Future Proof with the aim of providing safe spaces for youth who are "disadvantaged" or "vulnerable to extremism or radicalisation" (UK Youth, 2018).[23] The pilot was first funded by the Monday Charitable Trust, followed by a successful bid for Prevent funding.

This research followed the delivery of the Prevent-funded side of Future Proof. For the second year of the programme's delivery, under Home Office funding, Ruhena was supported by Prevent Coordinators to recruit youth workers situated in PPAs who would then have the responsibility to recruit youth from their local communities (PPAs) to participate in the programme. To do so, she communicated with Prevent Coordinators and local councils to arrange the training of youth workers (located in PPAs) who would deliver the Future Proof programme:

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[23] UK Youth program website: https://www.ukyouth.org/2018/03/26/safeguarding-training-futureproof/

We had targets for each region set by the Home Office. So the target for Leeds was 7 youth workers, Bradford was 7 youth workers, and Manchester was 14. But in Leeds we had 11 and in Manchester we had 15 and Bradford we had seven, so we had exceeded all of them. I guess we were dependent on the Prevent Coordinators to give us that contact, that access to those organizations. Ruhena, Future Proof programme manager.

So, the bridge between this Prevent-funded programme and local youth workers in PPAs follows this procedure: UK Youth independently designs a P/CVE (pilot) programme, bids for Prevent funding, networks with Prevent Coordinators and local authorities in PPAs, trains local youth workers for the delivery of the programme, and finally the youth workers use their networks (developed through building trust locally in the delivery of other projects) to recruit youth in their communities. For the non-Prevent part of the programme, Ruhena was able to use UK Youth's networks without having a particular concern over meeting the PPA requirement.

It was Ruhena's task to recruit and train the youth workers who have the responsibility of content delivery to local youth. The recruitment work depends highly on who she talks to and how stable local networks are developed by Prevent Coordinators:

So what I've learnt this year is that the majority of the organisations that I talked with, they weren't aware of who the Prevent Coordinator is in their region. They weren't aware of the process of referral, they were like 'oh yeah, I can refer this to the safeguarding lead,' but they weren't aware of what happens next… In Manchester, actually, a lot of people in the room didn't know that they had a Prevent Coordinator in the local authority and they didn't know the name of that person, didn't know how to contact them… In Leeds everybody knows … the Prevent Coordinator, he's very active, he makes them know who he is, he has great relationships with all the local organizations. Ruhena, Future Proof project manager.

As the quotes suggests, there are mixed experiences in the quality of the partnerships and local networks established between Prevent Coordinators and local communities. This has an impact not only on the localised awareness of Prevent's referral processes, but also on the work of the third sector in trying to engage with the communities conscribed to Home Office's PPAs. As stated earlier in the chapter, there are still communities that do not fully trust Prevent-funded work, and therefore it is key for the delivery of these programmes that the local Prevent Coordinator maintains work (re)building trust with these communities.

The following excerpt shows the reiteration in the 2015 Prevent Duty Guidance document of Home Office's centrally controlled funding and use of Prevent Coordinators as key stakeholders in the delivery of P/CVE projects, which further supports Ruhena's experiences:

The Home Office will continue to identify Priority Areas for Prevent-related activity. Priority Areas will, as now, be funded to employ a local Prevent co-ordinator to give additional support and expertise and additional Home Office grant funding is available for Prevent projects and activities. The Home Office will continue to have oversight of local Prevent co-ordinators and the funding, evaluation and monitoring of these projects. (Home Office, 2015: 7)

PPAs and Prevent Coordinators working in these areas are therefore used to allocate funding and link project recipients with local authorities, youth workers and community leaders with their targeted populations. Understandably, the emergence of P/CVE funding through the Prevent Strategy has contributed to shifting the remit of youth work from these emerging localised needs, co-opting grassroots work towards P/CVE efforts. As a result, youth workers and practitioners more often adapt localised needs to fit the aims of the P/CVE agenda to support youth, and vice versa. Although this evidences security governance practices as the voluntary and private sectors share the responsibility of safeguarding individuals from radicalisation. The Future Proof programme was designed by Ruhena to enable youth worker's agency in deciding what elements of the project to deliver beyond P/CVE, and looking at Adam's delivery of the programme. It becomes evident that they are both adjusting the P/CVE premises to their wider knowledge and culture around supporting youth through wider social harms. In sum, P/CVE is decentred at grassroots, as Ruhena and Adam both seek more holistic interventions which counter social stigmatisation and upskill youth in their communities, after all "…the way the Prevent strategy characterises and approaches the attitudes and beliefs of young people is… fundamentally at odds with the approach and beliefs of youth work" (Thomas, 2018: 379).

In the particular case of Future Proof, Ruhena was in close communication with Prevent Coordinators even before UK Youth placed a bid for Home Office funding, because the bid is informed by the cooperation between practitioners in the third sector and government practitioners through local authorities. For this to occur, the local authority had to be situated in a PPA, otherwise there would not have been a Prevent Coordinator for Ruhena to work with. In another interview with a Countering Extremism Community Coordinator, the lack of a Prevent Coordinator in an area was an issue because instead of working independently as in PPAs, the Prevent lead for a non-PPA

will be embedded in the police, making it more complicated to reach out for local projects (RP4, 2018). In the case of Future Proof, Ruhena was able to work with a Prevent Coordinator more easily:

> "the money comes directly from the Home Office but because he is a Prevent Coordinator we've had a lot of communications with him [about] the right organisations, what his aims are for the area, what he wants us to develop. So he had a lot of say in who we got individually [what youth workers to contact] and what organisations were delivering the programme. So we worked very closely with [the Prevent Coordinator]." Ruhena, Future Proof project manager.

In this case, the local Prevent Coordinator was a close acquaintance of Ruhena and Adam, a youth worker delivering Future Proof, due to previous collaborations. Adam was also a youth worker for other local organisations (Penny Appeal, MEND), and was already working with Ruhena through UK Youth. This explanation highlights that the cooperation between Ruhena (project manager) and Adam (youth worker) in delivering the Future Proof programme within the local community was largely determined by the mapping of PPAs and the allocation of a Prevent Coordinator to their area to supervise Home Office funded projects. That is, a bid for Prevent funds is more likely for to be successful if the project can provide evidence of direct working relationships with key stakeholders in the Prevent Priority Area, including local communities, youth workers and Prevent Coordinators. Likewise, as Adam described in the interview, it is more likely for a Prevent-funded programme to reach its targeted audience if it is delivered through an intermediary party, in this case by UK Youth through the Future Proof programme:

> A: Well Prevent wants to rebrand themselves, [and] the government doesn't want MEND to take the lead, so when you have A and B, you create C. Because C is supposed to be neutral.
>
> F: C is Future Proof? Or who would be C?
>
> A: Arguably, C would be Future Proof. It is not a government body of people, it is an independent body of people, training, funded by Home Office, training the trainers.

Adam further argued that most of the youth workers who attended the Future Proof programme were "Asian youth workers", but could only speculate as to whether this was a consequence of the Prevent Coordinator's networks and the organisations he trusted, or because Prevent wanted to target an 'Asian community'. In the case of the Future Proof programme, Ruhena argued that the youth workers recruited from PPAs were selected due to their working relationship with the local Prevent Coordinator. Weather the networks and background of an individual are key in being

selected by Home Office for P/CVE work, for Prevent Coordinators and youth workers, for example due to their close ties with BAME communities in a specific PPA, is a matter of further speculation requiring detailed data on the appointment processes, including the risk/intelligence assessment in each PPA.

In terms of the delivery of content, Adam argued that issues with funding and available resources encourage youth workers engaging with their local youth to deliver content framed around violent extremism instead of other topics such as critical thinking. This is evident from the training youth workers receive. For example, in Future Proof they had up to 9 topics to deliver to young participants. However, during training, they mostly received resources about how to deliver the topic of countering violent extremism:

> *I did not want to do the module on countering extremism, I just felt like I prefer some of the others, I prefer critical thinking, but it seemed like from the training that because they'd already given all the resources for it that it would be quite easy to do with limited time and capacity. I knew people like you were interested it in, so I thought I might as well. But if I had an opportunity or I was in a different situation, I would not.* Adam, youth worker.

For Adam, there were three main factors driving his youth work towards violent extremism: funding availability, my presence doing research on P/CVE and being given a more robust set of resources on the topic of violent extremism during his training, which reduced the time youth workers like himself have to spend preparing their sessions. In other words, the funding pathways ensure grassroots compliance with the PPAs goals and the training seeks further compliance with the delivery of content on violent extremism. Additionally, external factors highlighting the importance of P/CVE, such as my presence as a research focused on P/CVE work, can reinforce a youth worker's focus on the delivery in violent extremism.

However, despite the fact that Adam felt pressure to deliver the first session following the theme of violent extremism, the data shows youth workers' agency in the reinterpretation and appropriation of these funds to meet localised demands. For example, even when Adam decided to deliver the extremism content, he made sure that the overarching goal of the programme was to give young participants access to further personal development, upskilling them and increase their likelihood of employment in the future by enrolling them to the UK Youth programme.

Although the first session he delivered did start with discussions around what the participants understand about violent extremism and radicalisation (defining extremism, violent and non-violent), the activities in the session sought to create critical thinking through discussions and

debate around wider issues in the interest of the participants. Youth in these sessions talked about issues around homophobia, transphobia, racism and identity (for example discussing free speech versus hate speech and the difference between physical and psychological harms). At all times, Adam guided them to carryout work to impact their communities through social media (YouTube video, a social media campaign, of host a radio programme as Adam had access from a local station in the building where the session was hosted). The sessions were guided by holistic goals, such as empowering and upskilling the participants.

This is an example of a youth worker navigating the resources available for the benefit of his local community. Looking specifically at the experience of Adam, it is clear that when delivering the Future Proof programme he is in the position of complying with the policy objectives of such as raising awareness against radicalisation and violent extremist in a PPA. However, as he further details below, this is a carefully assessed decision, where he balances funding pathways, the flexibility of the programme and this overarching aims as a youth worker of youth development:

> *So I'm thinking, [in relation to the Future Proof programme], yes it is 9 modules, yes it's about engaging with young people, but clearly they put countering extremism in the training as a workshop, the Prevent Coordinator helped to organize the training, the only way we could get this going is by tapping into those big funds that are being unused because lots of people are anti-Prevent. Knowing that is a bit 'eeeeeeee', but at the same time I do have the freedom to teach what I want to teach and I don't have to technically mention or note down any of the conversations I am having with young people, except for the safeguarding issue.*
> Adam, youth worker.

Adam is comfortable with the relationship between his work in the community and this particular project (Future Proof) funded by Prevent because it is designed in a way that gives him the agency to meet the goals of the programme while also engaging with the participants in ways he views as important beyond P/CVE work.

In the book chapter titled *The Challenges for British Youth Workers in Government Strategies to 'Prevent Terrorism'*, Paul Thomas (2018) provides a brief background to youth work in the UK and its role in delivering "state targets" during the "Labour government's (1997-2010) social exclusion policy agenda" (2018:370). Since the 1980's, Thomas argues youth workers played a role in state-funded training and education due to their "established networks and proven skills of relationship building with socially marginalised young people" (2018: 371). Youth work, he argues, became a "prime candidates to lead local implementation of Prevent Strategy" (Thomas, 2018: 371), however

he outlines 4 main challenges youth workers are faced with the delivery of Prevent: operational, conceptual, securitisation and pedagogical. Youth workers were faced with the ethical dilemmas of taking Home Office funding Prevent work which 'securitised' youth work through "over involvement of police/security personnel and their demands on youth workers and other professionals to spot and report supposed 'radicalisation' amongst youth" (Thomas, 2018: 372). As a result, youth workers hesitated to take Prevent funds as they feared it contradicted "community cohesion multiculturalist policy approaches" they supported (Thomas, 2018: 380), just as Adam argued above.

The example of Adam's delivery of the Future Proof programme poses the opportunity to discuss the tensions between the securitisation of youth work and the agency of youth workers in the adaptation of such funds to carry on with their engagement with local youth. This example shows that hybrid youth workers and organisations incorporate the delivery P/CVE programmes to meet their pre-existing practices due to funding availability, hence supporting Thomas' discussion of how Prevent strategy securitised youth work practices, as it 'responsibilised' individual youth workers (and teachers) in "monitoring the conduct and disposition of Muslim young people" (Thomas, 2018: 377). However, the data collected in this research also shows that Adam successfully integrates P/CVE content to his wider youth work; seeking to upskill and develop youth. Similarly, as Ruhena argues below, although Future Proof is partly funded by Prevent, the programme gives youth workers the freedom to engage with wider societal issues beyond P/CVE as an attempt to avoid social stigmatisation. Suggesting that rather than the securitisation of youth work, perhaps youth work is incorporating P/CVE its practices, in a similar way to what Lewis described how teachers were shaping security policy into their 'therapeutic culture', and not the other way round (2020: 119). Delivered through Future Proof, P/CVE is therefore a decentred by networks of youth workers and practitioners, leading to heterogeneity in the localised practices of security policy (Bevir, 2016).

Adam's experience exemplifies that the agency and responsibility for policy implementation is therefore shared by the multi-layered collaboration between the Prevent Coordinator, programme director and youth worker and their local networks within the community. This example of Future Proof clarifies that although the funding and role of Prevent Coordinators guarantee that the work is delivered in PPAs, during the design and delivery of the programme the content is adaptable to youth work. As Ruhena describes in the following excerpt, the design of the Future Proof programme seeks to avoid stigmatisation by providing youth workers' the agency to select what elements of the programme they find most fitting to the specific audience they will engage with:

We do have a model around radicalisation and extremism that they can deliver to the young people but we left it open for the youth workers to kind of pick what they want to deliver. If we said you had to do this, then it puts them in a position and the young people to feel like 'oh I'm at risk' of being radicalised [or] 'you think I'm being radicalised'. So we found other ways to get our objectives and make sure that young people are meeting those outcomes by upskilling them in different ways. Ruhena, Future Proof project manager.

The objective of building resilience in youth towards violent extremism (as also stated in Prevent) is thus present within the Future Proof programme, though the design of the programme allows flexibility in the delivery that is adaptable to localised needs. This programme is just one in a wider offering by UK Youth, an NGO focused on the goal of 'upskilling' youth. Therefore, although the design of Prevent has shown to continue to target British Muslim youth framed as 'suspect communities', this example shows that in fact youth workers and practitioners "collectively take an ethical stand to question both the referral systems and their underlying logic" (Thomas 2018). Youth workers and young participants who complete one of their programmes, including Future Proof, are enrolled into the UK Youth network, which offers wider opportunities for development, framed under a 5-tier system called the 'UK Youth Achievement Award' through which young participants can continue to develop.

Although Ruhena and Adam are not challenging the Prevent programme, by rejecting its funding and its push for exclusive delivery in PPAs, they do show individual agency while working within it through the design and delivery of the Future Proof programme. Which as discussed at the start of the chapter, is an example of 'policy subversion' (Priori & Barnes, 2011). The subversion of policy through the "modification of practises and revision of outcomes" seems to be the case of the Future Proof programme (Prior & Barnes 2011: 270). The programme does respond to the policy goals drawn within Prevent policy. Ruhena, the programme manager, and her team designed it to meet Prevent's policy goal of 'tackling the causes of radicalisation' through partnerships with 'civil society groups' who deliver programmes raising resilience to terrorist narratives at a community level (CONTEST, 2018: 33). However, there are also examples in the literature and in this research of organisations that would oppose any engagement with Prevent.

As the security governance framework suggest, there are several instances of front-line agency being enacted in the re-design and adaptation of policy. In this example, Future Proof's bid for Prevent funds was strengthened by its existing networks with stakeholders in PPAs; in security governance this step alludes to the transition from policy design in Prevent policy towards a grassroots 'joined-up policy making' design in Future Proof and its networks. This is achieved not

only with the shared aims in the proposed Future Proof programme, but also in showing (a prior) organisational endorsement from Prevent Coordinators, local authorities and youth workers in the Priority Areas allocated by Home Office. The concept of 'joined-up policy making' in security governance, as Bevir (2016) argues, aims to "simplify the delivery of services to citizens by improving coordination among different agencies" (231). This is achieved in the example of Future Proof, as youth workers, Prevent Coordinators and practitioners collaborate in different stages of the programme.

The data suggests that decentred security governance mechanisms do work to ensure that PPAs are reached by Prevent funding and further locates youth work engagement under the framework of P/CVE work. However, it is also true that grassroots workers maintain agency to expand P/CVE policy aims to meet their own wider and more localized aims, such as 'upskilling youth' and countering stigmatisation, further on this topic in the next two chapters. The final section of this chapter will now turn to look at independently-funded P/CVE efforts, starting with the independent dimension of Future Proof.

6.3 Independent P/CVE focus: upskilling youth through P/CVE work

At the grassroots level, independent P/CVE efforts are not always about identifying an individual who is at risk or vulnerable, but rather using the available resources to access and build resilience in community members to a wide range of social harms, including radicalisation. Youth workers involved in independent P/CVE efforts seek to enable networks of trust, develop critical thinking and provide pathways towards employment and social agency (empowerment) within their local communities. This last section is based on qualitative data focuses on independent grassroots P/CVE youth work. I will start by building upon the experiences of Adam and Ruhena with the independent aspect of the Future Proof programme, highlighting their focus on youth worker's agency and upskilling youth in their P/CVE work. I will then review two examples of independent P/CVE youth work included in the research sample.

Although Prevent's overall goal of building resilience to radicalisation in communities is shared at all stages of a programme such as Future Proof, as discussed in the previous section, other key aims also emerge from practitioners and youth workers at the grassroots level. This is partially achieved through the design of a programme that invites the youth worker's judgement and agency during its implementation phase. As Prior & Barnes (2011) argue, contemporary social policy contexts go beyond Lispky's (1969) formulation of the agency of *street-level* bureaucrats, as the

"introduction of the new 'governance' processes of management, regulation and participation has led to a proliferation of different kinds of actors involved in the delivery of social policies…These new policy subjects include active citizens, service consumers, managers and supervisors, elected officials, professionals in arm's length and non-governmental organizations, and regulators and auditors" (267). Such actors add their personal values and practical experience into policy implementation.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Adam did comply with delivering the P/CVE content of the programme, but the 'impact' of the policy from his perspective is focused on supporting the participants' vocational aspirations. In the following quote he discussed how the opportunity of delivering the Future Proof programme, partially funded by Prevent, can become an important asset for youth if its outcomes are framed within a wider goal to 'upskill' them, as the UK Youth organisation promotes:

> It's just about getting [youth] to be self-responsive because a lot of them are saying to me 'we've done the GCSE, they're not great'…but we've [got] like an ASDAN exam board; it's our vocational exam but it is well known for helping young people get through these kinds of little leadership courses [such as Future Proof], and so if they can say 'hey, I've actually got an accredited qualification award … I've got something that shows I've been self-developing.' That work colleague or boss will say, 'ok, I want somebody who doesn't have to be smart but somebody who gets the work done, I want somebody who can be active, someone who can prove to me that they're able to take on the task.' Adam, youth worker.

This example shows how youth workers navigate the resources beyond the P/CVE agenda to meet the needs of youth in Adam's community. In addition to P/CVE work, the Future Proof programme (UK Youth) offers young participants and youth workers the UK Youth membership, as a platform for further developmental opportunities through the ASDAN qualification scheme. In this case, the Future Proof programme, which originally intended to build resilience against violent extremism, can be used as a springboard into UK Youth's other youth services. Ruhena explains further in the following excerpt:

> When they signed up to the Future Proof programme they become a member of UK Youth. What that means is that they are part of the UK Youth network. What that means is that they get our membership letters, other funding opportunities, so they have access to all our other programs. For example, at the moment we have the financial capability programme, we have a new kind of digital programme that we are working on that will be coming out

soon, we have a social action programme working with young women and girls. So we have different avenues that they could reach [for] how to get funding to continue working with these young people. Ruhena, Future Proof project manager.

As Ruhena continued, funding availability can affect the possibility of achieving a sustained engagement with youth beyond the Future Proof programme. If this funds are no longer offered by Home Office, youth workers need to independently search for other opportunities at UK Youth:

What we had hoped is that we would get further funding from Home Office, continue to work around the prevention of radicalisation and extremism and get those young people to become leaders in their communities. So as part of the programme we do a bronze award UK youth achievement, so what we had hoped is that they then further develop and become leaders and they kind of upskill the young people, their peers, and mentor them as well. But unfortunately, we did not receive that funding so we can't do that further work. But Adam and other organizations are part of our network, now we know who they are, they know who we are, so our programs are now accessible to them to kind of come out and further the relationships with those young people. Ruhena, Future Proof project manager.

Enabling such cooperation across different organisations in the UK was perhaps an unintended consequence of Prevent's funding opportunities. Youth workers, practitioners in the third sector and Prevent Coordinators learn about and share the funding processes/requirements and the work procedures through Home Office (if they choose to pursue this avenue). Perhaps more importantly, they also learn about other funding bodies in the third sector from such networks, leaving doors open for collaboration in future work beyond the Prevent programme.

In Bristol, I had conversations with youth workers and practitioners around their experience delivering independently funded P/CVE work. The Bristol Horn Youth Concern (BHYC) and Integrate UK are two of the most visible independent/hybrid grassroots organisations in Bristol, a non-PPA locality, at the time of the research. I conducted interviews with them throughout my research to identify the strategies implemented to build resilience against violent extremism on a local level.

Since its origin in 2012, The Bristol Horn Youth Concern has supported more than 3,000 youth, mainly of Somali descent. It works actively to build trust, local networks and employability with young people, some as young as 10 years old, through meaningful daily interactions. Khalil Abdi, the director of BHYC, has gained trust from Bristol police, faith leaders and the local council due to his long trajectory of local work with asylum seekers and as a neighbourhood warden. He

now dedicates several hours weekly to conversations with local youth around one of Bristol's city centre neighbourhoods.

As Khalil explains: "We go to the Galleries, to Castle Park…we are visible. Sometimes we go there so we know what's going on…we just say hello and then walk past…we don't want to invade the privacy." By 'hanging around' in popular public places, he makes himself known and visible to young people in the local area, as it takes time and patience to develop trusting relationships. Time spent with youth then transitions from the streets to organised BHYC events with local partners, such as visits to the Bristol City Football Team.[24]

BHYC's aim is for youth to develop bonds with the city and a sense of belonging in society, as Khalil explains: "it is very important that young people don't feel isolated…give [them the] opportunity and show them that they are part of society. We work with them and say, 'you know that the Bristol City Council and the police and other organisations contribute to our activities?'"

Once Khalil builds familiarity and trust with local youth, he is able to expand conversations, moving from everyday topics to more complex issues such as extremism, sexuality, race, religion, gang grooming, and more. The outcome of such interactions is an increased likelihood of employability for young people due to their participation in BHYC social projects, and the disruption of lingering narratives of distrust towards police and a sense of exclusion from society (Khalil, 2018).

Integrate UK is another Bristol-based organisation, registered in 2007. It is a hybrid organisation as it has taken funding from Building a Stronger Britain Together programme (BSBT), under the Countering Extremism Strategy (CE). However, most of its P/CVE and Counter Extremism work has been achieved as an independent organisation through private funding. Since its origins tackling Female Genital Mutilation, Integrate UK has sought to develop critical thinking, leadership and professional skills through its workshops and volunteer opportunities for youth. Their remit has changed as they continuously learn from the needs that arise in the schools they visit; although they also began working with Somali children, since then they adapted to tackling gang grooming and violent extremism with school audiences, and more recently have taken on far-right extremism.

Most members of the organisation have been recruited to join during school visits. Integrate UK's success can in part be attributed to its highly original, creative and emotive messages made by young people.[25] As Nawaaz Hussein, a former organisation trustee for 12 years, put it, "the tagline

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[24]See https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-50574428
[25] See their FGM campaign on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fq6v-kIcG_Y

here is that we are a youth-led charity run by the youth." The youth start off as volunteers with the organisation, then become young trustees and eventually trustees (most of them paid positions or on a freelance basis). The young volunteers, from different backgrounds and ethnicities, participate in all areas of the organisation, while Lisa Zimmermann, the director, secures funding and takes care of any safeguarding issues. Integrate UK is mainly funded through private donations, however they had recently received some Home Office funding from CE to do work countering far-right extremism.

Lisa explained the current project of Integrate UK, "We are now starting work on right-wing extremism, so bringing together kids from BAME Muslim backgrounds with kids from white working-class backgrounds in schools…". She explains further how their own youth workers had direct experiences with a lack of familiarity with ethnic minorities in schools with students from a white working class background:

> *"Each year we are going to be working with at least two schools from opposite ends of Bristol…[We're] working gradually towards that, because every school we've been into that has been completely white, just in one day the difference is extraordinary…Like in one school Nawaaz went into recently, they were literally touching his beard. You know they've never met a Muslim".* Lisa, Integrate UK director.

However, Lisa also explained in the interview that at times resources are a limiting factor as they are invited to more schools than they have the capacity to visit, some of them it's an invitation to return to the same school (Lisa 2018). Nasra, a member of Integrate UK, was awarded The Diana Award, a prestigious humanitarian prize for youth in the UK. However, when interviewed, she described her younger self as having "confidence issues", limiting her from being "vocal" about issues she was very passionate about. She explained that Integrate UK provided her the platform to develop her confidence through public speaking. Although working in the front line and having conversations about grooming, extremism, religion and radicalisation can be exhausting, Nasra finds further motivation in the results of her daily work: "When it comes from people's lives being changed, to people's opinions being changed, being able to engage in these conversations, I think more needs to be done and that is happening, so that keeps me going when I'm like, 'oh, I can't do this anymore'". The positive changes she sees on other youth are her motivation.

When Integrate UK first started work with P/CVE, it was due to a local case of a young 15-year-old girl who flew to Istanbul to join ISIS by becoming a 'jihadi bride' in 2014 (Morris, 2014). However, their organisation since its origins has been working on countering extremist practices related to FGM and gender violence. Bristol city however was deprioritised from the PPAs list in the

transition to the second phase of Prevent in 2011. At first, Lisa was hesitant to move their remit into P/CVE work, as their core was working on FGM and gender violence, but her young volunteers convinced her that P/CVE was an issue not so far away from such work:

> *But they [young volunteers and trustees] persuaded me and they said if a 15 year old is going to Syria to be a jihadi bride, its child sexual exploitation because if that guy was in France it would be CSE, if he was in Italy it would be CSE, if he was in Turkey it is CSE but the moment you step across the border it becomes radicalization and she is terrorist. That is rubbish. It made sense.* Lisa, integrate UK

Their approach to P/CVE was different to Prevent funded programmes. It was not necessarily about identifying the risk and processes of radicalisation. Instead, they wanted to critically discuss the difference between being a jihadi bride and other forms of radicalisation, or how grooming for radicalisation follows similar paths as grooming for gang violence, and how these differences shape how the former can be seen as a threat and the later as a victim. They made two video resources and took them to local schools to make young people reflect on these issues.

Both organisations, Integrate UK and the BHYC, rely on strong, trusting relationships developed daily through face-to-face interactions, either on the streets or inside learning settings. These models are inclusive and open to local needs, and do not seek to predict vulnerability or risk. As a result, they build trust through local networking, develop critical thinking around recurring themes such as race, religion, politics and violence, and seek youth empowerment. Through such methods, they turn young people away from pathways to radicalisation and wider social harms, while developing life skills. Proving that in non-PPAs, such as Bristol, there is uptake in P/CVE work however funding is harder to come by.

Limited funding opportunities is not the only issue these independent groups face, as most of the attention of grassroots work is centred on Prevent funded work. Focusing on Prevent, the UK government's counter-radicalisation policy, situates P/CVE efforts within a highly politicised discussion, characterized by critiques of its policy design (Qureshi 2018) and implementation (Heath-Kelly 2017; Pantazis & Pemberton 2009), or the government's claims of media 'distortion and spin' (Warrell, 2019). As a result, there is a dominant narrative which suggests P/CVE work is firmly divided between Prevent and its critics.

However, reducing P/CVE work to politicised debates around Prevent obscures what actually takes place at the grassroots level. For instance, my research highlights valuable independent P/CVE work being done, and most often with collaboration between youth workers, local council, and

government practitioners despite their individual stances on or funding relationships to Prevent. In our conversation, Lisa also discussed how most of the times its Integrate UK's volunteers doing all the traveling (around Bristol and even to some events across Europe), as she argued, if she attends an event is due to safeguarding issues (as some volunteers are minors) or because they are invited to share how their model works so other charities can replicate it. Furthermore, the data supports other research showing how front-line workers reinterpret and adapt P/CVE policies to best fit their pre-existing working cultures and local needs (Busher et al. eds 2020; Thomas 2017; O'Toole et al., 2016).

Conclusions

This chapter addresses the gap in the P/CVE literature by engaging with perspectives beyond Prevent, through independent and hybrid P/CVE efforts in the UK. The data characterizes three dynamic models of operation at grassroots level – Prevent-led, hybrid and independent – determined in part by the nature of their funding pathways and local networking. The chapter also addresses the tensions that arises due the expansion of P/CVE efforts into grassroots work, and how youth workers retain agency by adapting P/CVE work into their pre-existing practices. Showing that there are important differences and commonalities found in the practices of P/CVE work which are attributed to the funding pathways. While they might deliver P/CVE content, for instance, due to easy access to resources during their training, overall, they justify taking Prevent funds as a means to achieve their wider aim of 'up-skilling' youth in their communities.

Furthermore, the contrast between the three models of P/CVE work shows that there is valuable P/CVE work being delivered in non-PPA localities as well, which can contribute to alternative knowledge in the P/CVE field. It also revealed that independent efforts have also transitioned from tackling jihadist to far-right grooming, as did Prevent strategy in its current iteration (2015-Present), but their model highlights P/CVE work that upskills youth and avoids social stigmatisation as well. In contrast, Prevent-led models continue to struggle with stigmatisation, as the use of PPAs reiterates securitised delivery of Prevent from previous years in the minds of youth workers and the public.

The participants in this study provide a wide range of tools to support youth in developing personal skills, community engagement and resilience against several vulnerabilities. Although the remit of the study focused on P/CVE work, grassroots workers share the view that violent extremism is just one of many concerns in the lives of young people exposed to other social harms, such as

Islamophobia, racism, hate crime, and domestic violence. Most of the participants share an understanding of these issues at a local level and as a result share holistic approaches to P/CVE work, beyond a perceived politicised pro/anti-Prevent divide. In the next chapter, I will discuss how P/CVE youth work incorporates the Statutory Duty and P/CVE safeguarding into their pre-existing practices.

Chapter 7: Governing though youth work: pre-existing practices and P/CVE

Introduction

Workers and volunteers can be seen as resisting when they refuse to accept directives to work with the police, criticise target-driven work, avoid collecting young people's details on the streets, value love and care over profit, and set up alternative organisations. Understandably, they are not resisting all the time; sometimes they challenge the status quo and at other times they work inside it. When it takes place, their resistance is often fluid, diverse and creative. Inevitably it can also be isolated, dispersed, risky and inconsistent, often taking place at a small scale on a local level, and not necessarily leading to change. de St Croix (2016: 182).

Since the newer iterations of Prevent strategy, empirical research has brought to light the complexity of Prevent policy practices, showing how it is enacted, reinterpreted and even contested in the front line (Busher et al., 2019; Heath-Kelly & Strausz, 2019; Thomas, 2017). In some cases, data-driven research showed how grassroots Muslim organisations contested Prevent strategy during its first two phases of delivery (O'Toole et al., 2016). These valuable contributions to the field show continuity in criticisms of Prevent throughout its three iterations, based on the experiences of public sector professionals. A wide range of results from these studies show front-line workers, like health care professionals, who find that the Prevent Duty compromises pre-existing safeguarding duties (Heath-Kelly & Strausz, 2019). Alternatively, they show how workers in education do not oppose the Prevent Duty but rather "comprise the outcome of multi-level processes of policy narration, enactment and adaptation" (Busher et al., 2019). Overall, this literature has highlighted the "fluid" nature of the relationship between front-line work and Prevent policy, not as a policy being delivered mechanically in the front line, but rather unveiling the complexities of its implementation as it is met with norms, beliefs and traditions in the front line (Bevir 2016).

This chapter critically engages with the research sub question: How is the Statutory Duty understood, enacted and reshaped at the grassroots level by youth workers and practitioners? Through the framework of is decentred security governance (Bevir, 2016) this chapter problematises this question by analysing the tensions that arise between P/CVE policy and pre-existing youth work practices beyond the Prevent policy. This chapter therefore contributes to the existing literature by expanding the knowledge of P/CVE practices, beyond Prevent work.

The chapter first looks at how the Prevent Duty was rolled out into whole of society networks including public service professionals, the private and voluntary sectors, and the response of youth workers as they critically evaluate its implications on their practices. This leads to a discussion around how safeguarding youth from violent extremism has been embedded in pre-existing youth work practices, through the mainstreaming of the Prevent Statutory Duty. At this point, I highlight the different ways youth workers challenge safeguarding practices under the frame of Prevent through their wider understanding of vulnerability and their trustworthy relationships with local communities. The final section looks at holistic understandings of vulnerabilities based on the experiences of youth workers and practitioners. This chapter concludes with accounts of how P/CVE grassroots work incorporates efforts to tackle social stigmatisation of Muslim communities as they continue to be disproportionately targeted by CT and P/CVE strategies in the UK.

7.1 The integration of Statutory Duty to youth work: a duty to report

This section looks at the shared understandings of vulnerability through safeguarding duties at the grassroots level. The thematic analysis of qualitative data is used to identify how youth work practices incorporate P/CVE work under the framework of Prevent's Statutory Duty. This discussion contributes to the existing P/CVE literature by providing grassroots approaches to theories of vulnerability and radicalisation (Thornton & Bouhana, 2019; Sarma, 2017; Elshimi, 2015; HM Government, 2012; Bartlett & Miller, 2011; Kundnani, 2009).

The second (2011-2015) and third (2015-present) phases of Prevent changed how P/CVE work was managed at local levels. With the start of the second phase of Prevent, Home Office centrally controlled all funding opportunities under the Prevent agenda. Next, with the third phase of Prevent, front-line workers became a central element in the referral process of anyone vulnerable to radicalisation through the introduction of the Prevent Duty. An approach reiterated in the 2018 CONTEST strategy, which states that the Duty "requires local authorities, schools, colleges, higher education institutions, health bodies, prisons and probation, and the police to consider the need to safeguard people from being drawn into terrorism", and "sits alongside long-established duties on professionals to safeguard vulnerable people from exploitation from a range of other harms such as drugs, gangs and physical and sexual exploitation" (CONTEST, 2018: 35). As such, this section sheds light on how the Duty to refer anyone vulnerable to radicalisation is integrated across public sector professionals including the voluntary sector.

The first objective of the 2018 CONTEST strategy, "Tackling the causes of radicalisation", argues that "the cornerstone of Prevent is our local work with communities and civil society

organisations…We support these groups to develop bespoke projects, best suited to tackle the threat from radicalisation in local communities, based on our collective analysis of the local threat picture in priority areas" (2018: 33-34). The key stakeholders such as community leaders and public sector professionals, become central in linking the Prevent programme to local communities at a high vulnerability/risk to radicalisation, also known as Prevent Priority Areas (PPAs). Central to the strategy is the aim to establish partnerships between civil society with Prevent practitioners and local authorities in these PPAs, as detailed by CONTEST:

> *Prevent Duty requires local authorities to establish or make use of existing multi-agency groups to assess the local picture, coordinate activity and to put in place arrangements to monitor the impact of safeguarding work. In priority areas where the risk of radicalisation is assessed as being highest, Prevent Coordinators employed by local authorities build partnerships in communities, oversee the delivery of local action plans to respond to the risk of radicalisation, and work with partners to embed safeguarding activity in statutory services including social care, health and education.* (2018: 36)

The Statutory Duty falls in "social care, health and education" as the strategy seeks to 'embed' safeguarding for violent extremism "within common safeguarding procedures" (CONTEST, 2018: 36). The result, accounts from youth workers will show, is the spread of responsibility to refer and safeguard from violent extremism in wider grassroots practices. Hence, the Prevent Duty is folded into pre-existing safeguarding practices at a grassroots level: PPAs that map geographies of vulnerability/risk through the funding of local organisations and P/CVE projects in the private and voluntary sector monitored by Prevent Coordinators. However, I will argue that these practices are contested and modified by grassroots workers as they integrate P/CVE work into their pre-existing practices.

Bevir's (2016) conceptualisation of decentred security governance as "agenda, reforms, and practices associated with the application of joined-up governance to security policy" (228), provides the tools to analyse the interaction between Prevent's Statutory Duty and policy outcome at the grassroots level. The data collected shows that through PPAs, funding and Prevent Coordinators, Prevent creates patterns of behaviours and multi-agency cooperation within grassroots organisations (O'Toole et al., 2016: 166) to meet the security requirements of tackling radicalisation in the front line. Accordingly, this section discusses how youth workers and practitioners collaborate with front-line workers and government practitioners in distinguishing between P/CVE and wider safeguarding concerns at grassroots. Showing how these practices relate to youth workers'

understanding of vulnerability to wider social harms, as they are placed at the junction of deciding how/if to follow the intervention/referral process prescribed by Prevent's Statutory Duty.

7.1.1 The Prevent Duty at the grassroots level

To demonstrate effective compliance with the duty, specified authorities must demonstrate evidence of productive co-operation, in particular with local Prevent co-ordinators, the police and local authorities, and co-ordination through existing multi-agency forums, for example Community Safety Partnerships. Prevent Duty Guidance, 2015.

The introduction of the Statutory Duty in 2015 expanded pre-existing safeguarding responsibilities of public sector professionals with the responsibility to identify and report anyone vulnerable to radicalisation (Prevent Duty, 2015). Research has documented a wide range of front-line responses to the Prevent Duty, from partial compliance to enactment (Busher et al., 2019), to contested practices (Open Justice Initiative 2016; NUS black students 2017). Although the existing literature has analysed the effects of Prevent policy on youth work during its first two phases (Thomas, 2017; Lowndes & Thorp, 2010; Kundnani, 2009), this chapter further expands these discussions by focusing on the implication of the Statutory Duty and safeguarding practices on the voluntary and private sectors, through youth work during Prevent's current third phase.

Ensuring "effective compliance" towards the Prevent Duty and the delivery of Prevent-funded P/CVE work in PPAs increases the likelihood that referrals are being processed in these local authorities by public sector professionals, and the wider community if there is a widespread duty/culture to refer possible cases radicalisation. [26] The Statutory Duty for youth workers interviewed in this study requires balancing the safeguarding duty to refer anyone vulnerable to radicalisation, while also maintaining community trust. This requires the inclusion of P/CVE safeguarding into their pre-existing safeguarding duties. In terms of security governance, the Statutory Duty helps create whole of society approaches to security through "nodal assemblages of auspices and providers based on hybrid arrangements that involve state, private and civil society sector entities (Froestad & Shearing, 2012: 3). Which has reshaped youth work to include such security premised practices, partly due to the changes in government policies and funding cuts (de St

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[26] This research found in the experiences of youth workers the challenge of evaluating P/CVE work is due to limited resources but also due to the nature of 'prevention' work, as measuring success depends on a "what if" scenarios. Measuring behaviour and attitudinal change would require additional funding over an extended period. This is also acknowledged in the Prevent Strategy of 2011: "Evaluating preventative programmes is inherently challenging. Success is often reflected in changing attitudes as much as behaviours" (Prevent Strategy 2011: 36).

Croix 2016: 2-3)[27], however also because youth work has a distinctive trait of being able to adapt to the changing nature of social problems, making their practices flexible in countering emerging risks at grassroots (McDonald, 2011: 179).

Although there are pertinent discussions around the 'Marketisation' of youth work (de St Croix, 2016) and how P/CVE and CT policies encourage security focused practices (Thomas, 2018; McDonald, 2011), it is equally important to shed light on youth worker's contributions to policy outcome, through "skilled, experienced and reflective youth workers who ally themselves with the young people they work with, and think critically about what they are asked to do" (de St Croix, 2016: 3). The emphasis being made in this thesis is youth workers' agency in the outcome of policy through their practices "negotiating, contesting and resisting … policy changes that they experience as damaging…". Furthermore, the data collected in this thesis coincides with the claims that "…grassroots youth work practice is, quite rightly underpinned by a critical approach to both practice and policy" (de St Croix, 2016: 176)

As discussed in the previous chapter, how grassroots networks are developed in each local authority may be influenced by funding pathways. For example, in the context of PPAs, local partners such as KIKIT delivering Prevent-funded projects can be a useful link between Prevent and local stakeholders, including members of local communities. In the following text, Mohammed illustrates how youth workers do 'outreach' work for KIKIT in local communities in the setting of a mosque:

> Imam has already announced in the speaker that "we have today a charity outside [KIKIT] that helps vulnerable people". We're not talking about extremism at the moment, we're just talking about vulnerable people, and if you have anybody around vulnerability or you have any safeguarding concerns please go outside and speak to the practitioner, they're specialists on drugs, they are specialists on mental health, they know about radicalisation and extremism. They talk about it in different contexts, they're not here solely just about radicalisation, [but for] a range of things'. Mohammed, KIKIT.

Mohammed shows in this quote, how in practice P/CVE safeguarding is rolled into wider safeguarding practices. In a way, their wider safeguarding work in the community enables their ability to integrate P/CVE safeguarding. A greater incentive for KIKIT is being able to prove that they have working partnerships with communities located in PPAs. In this context, whole-society

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[27] The author summarises five main challenges faced by youth workers triggered by neoliberal policies in England: Managerialism, Marketisation, Performativity, Surveillance and Precarity (de St Croix, 2016: 175).

approaches to P/CVE involve: a) targeting vulnerable individuals in PPAs through funding availability, b) multi-agency cooperation, based on networks of cooperation between youth workers, front-line workers, local council, police and Prevent officers, and c) the efficacy of interventions, which measures how many of the people being referred actually need P/CVE support.

In practice, the efficacy of the referral process is indicative of how many people being referred through the public sector (and wider community) to Prevent are proven to be vulnerable to radicalisation and therefore reach Channel support panels.[28] The diagram in Appendix 5 shows the Prevent referral process, detailing the steps taken into consideration for a referral to reach a Channel panel. Although, as the diagram suggest, once a concern about radicalisation is identified, it should be referred "to the police or through their local authority hub", it then becomes a 'Prevent Case Management' which has several filters in place to determine if in fact the referral is appropriate for Channel support (CONTEST 2018: 26). However, as it has been noted in the literature, the involvement of the police in Prevent referrals troubles front-line staff who are making these judgements (Dresser, 2019; Heath-Kelly, 2017; OSJI, 2016; Kundnani, 2009). The data collected sheds light on front-line agency at this stage, where front-line workers such as teachers consult with youth workers for support in evaluating possible safeguarding cases before triggering Prevent's referral process. Such practices show that some front-line staff do not feel confidence in evaluating the vulnerabilities to radicalisation, and that prefer to consult with local partners with experience in P/CVE, such as youth workers.

7.1.2 Referring through local networks

During the first decade in the turn of the century, youth work safeguarding practices in the UK played a key role during the 1997-2010 Labour government's 'social exclusion' policy agenda... "including the drive to reduce teenage pregnancies, efforts to educationally re-engage so called NEETs' (Not in Educational, Employment or Training), and roles within formal education doing preventive work with individuals at risk of educational disaffection and school expulsion..." (Thomas, 2018: 371). Furthermore, Durose (2009) in her study in Salford found that the New Labour 'network community governance' approach relied on decentred networks of front-line workers, including youth workers, for policy delivery. The Durose's findings showed that "front-line workers were able

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[28] Channel panels are only reached if a referral to Prevent is confirmed to be a case of possible radicalisation. If the referral is not considered a real vulnerability to violent extremism, then the case is referred to other public services.

to act to reconcile policy demands – around public health – with community priorities – about tackling financial exclusion – through their understanding of the micro context of the neighbourhood they worked within" (Doruse, 2009: 47). These are examples of decentred frames of intervention, where government relied on front-line workers and communities to co-design and co-implement potential solutions to complex , 'wicked', social problems (Bevir 2016: 230; Rittel & Webber, 1973), similar to the current approach to tackle radicalisation (Davies, 2016).

Similarly, youth workers included in this study show complex ways of integrating P/CVE work within localised needs. The data collected shows youth work practices focused on supporting youth with educational attainment and vocational preparation, are integrated to safeguarding practices from gang/knife violence and domestic violence. Youth workers/practitioners also pointed out that they have increasingly incorporated P/CVE work into these pre-existing safeguarding practices. Therefore, as discussed in the previous chapter, they have played an important role in not only delivering Prevent-funded, hybrid and independent P/CVE programmes, but also in supporting public sector professionals in the evaluation of possible cases of P/CVE referrals in their localities.

For example, the data shows instances of public sector professionals relying on youth worker's advice before moving forward with a Prevent referral. The following account by Azim, a youth worker, illustrates how youth workers' expertise can become instrumental in supporting public sector professionals in their fulfilment of the Statutory Duty:

> *So for a young person who is Muslim, if they become religious, quite often a teacher will refer them because they simply don't know the difference between radicalisation and religious conservatism. There's a big difference; not everyone has the training embedded in them. So, in that case we may talk with the teacher and try and help them understand what is it that concerns them and whether or not that's something that should concern them.* Azim, The Resilience Project

As Azim explains, youth workers' experience in safeguarding youth (and their knowledge about Islam in some cases) has equipped them to be in a position of support to public sector professionals in evaluating cases of possible radicalisation grooming. His colleague, Gareth, acknowledged that part of the value in youth work is in helping the public sector evaluate possible Prevent referrals by supporting them in distinguishing between signs of radicalisation versus youth 'rebelling' (Gareth, 2018). As a result, youth workers often end up collaborating with local authorities, Prevent officials and front-line workers, where they play a key role in drawing distinctions between extremism, conservatism, and violent extremism in cases of possible radicalisation. This was evidenced by Azim's

experience in Cardiff, which was a PPA during the second phase of Prevent (2011-2015), (see Appendix 4):

> *In terms of our relationship with Prevent, we will of course refer, if we get a case where it is extremely clear that this is a kid that is on the path to violence and needs to be referred on to Prevent, we will refer them on. Very often it's not, because of the fact that we are looking at different factors. Someone who's been referred to Prevent needs deradicalization, someone who has been referred to us, even the most severe cases where we're talking about building resilience, that is not an overlap in that kind of scenario.* Azim, Resilience Project

Azim makes an important claim here about the role of youth workers and the third sector in supporting front-line staff in the evaluation of vulnerability to violent extremism. Youth workers, such as Gareth and Azim, are working with front-line professionals in the evaluation of possible referrals, perhaps decreasing the amount of possible over-reporting in that locality.

According to Thomas (2018), added safeguarding duties for P/CVE represents "operational, conceptual, securitisation and pedagogical challenges" for youth workers as well, as Prevent urges them to make "binary characterisation of young people, so denying the fluid, contingent and performative nature of youth identities and attitudes" (380). Further, empirical research carried out by Busher et al. (2017) on education settings argues that the Prevent Duty is manageable as long as the new safeguarding guidelines for VE can be included in the pre-existing safeguarding practices; however, their data further supports Thomas' claim that the Statutory Duty can lead to securitisation and stigmatisation of ethnic minorities (Busher et al., 2017: 7).

In sum, my data supports these previous accounts in the literature that safeguarding individuals from violent extremism in practice has indeed been largely folded into the pre-existing safeguarding culture, which has the problematic consequence of securitising such fields (Bucher et al., 2019; Heath-Kelly & Strausz, 2018). However, as discussed above, the data suggest that although due to the Statutory Duty and Prevent funding in PPAs has increased the involvement of youth work in P/CVE, it also shows that they critically engage with such policies, and therefore retain agency in how such practices are incorporated in their youth work culture. For example, in supporting other public service professional in the evaluation of possible referrals. Such practices work as decentred networks of grassroots workers supporting each other in evaluating the nature of a referral, as measures that "arise from the beliefs that individuals adopt against the background of traditions and in response of dilemmas (Bevir, 2016: 232). In this case, taking a holistic approach which includes P/CVE safeguarding, social stigmatisation into wider safeguarding practices.

7.1.3 Whose duty is it anyway?

When discussing the implications of Prevent Duty with youth workers and practitioners, a recurring theme in this study's data is the lack of clarity about what the Prevent Duty entails. Matters around the efficacy of referrals were only the surface of a deeper misunderstanding over who is liable to the duty, and questions like: does the responsibility of safeguarding duty fall evenly across all members of the public sector? and, what does the referral process entail? For example, a survey on the "public knowledge, attitudes and behaviours around Prevent" carried out on the general public and public sector professionals, commissioned by the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT), showed that only 43% of teachers and 24% of health care professionals understood the Prevent Duty (HO, 2020: 21)[29]. However, the same survey showed that both teachers and health professionals consider referrals to be part of their safeguarding duties: "both teachers and healthcare professionals were more liable to see the act of making a referral as part of their professional safeguarding responsibility (70% and 88% respectively), illustrating how Prevent is embedded in existing safeguarding practices" (HO, 2020: 26).

Accounts by youth workers in this study support this contradiction: they acknowledged concerns about the implications of the Statutory Duty in their field and over the content of Prevent training (Adam, 2018) but acknowledged it is a part of their practices. However, William (Prevent Coordinator) explained that neither the duty nor the public scrutiny should have fallen solely on teachers:

> *The teacher's responsibility—duty – under the law is to follow the schools' safeguarding process. The teacher does not have the legal Duty to tell Prevent anything, the Duty is on the school, not the people inside there, not the teachers. That is also missed. The Prevent Duty does not extend to individual teachers…So, the institution has the Duty to refer if they think there is a concern around prevention. There is only one social harm where the individual member of staff has a legal responsibility to refer and tell the police and that is female genital mutilation. That's the only legal responsibility of a teacher, all the others follow the safeguarding policy.* William, Prevent coordinator

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[29] The document argues that one of the possible explanations for these percentages is that Prevent training is targeted at safeguarding leads, and to the fact the 85% of the health care professionals interviewed "are not bound by the Prevent Duty" as they work in primary care (HO 2020: 21).

According to William, individual teachers are not legally liable to the Duty but the institution is, as is also stated in the Statutory Duty Guidance (2019). In some cases, the understanding is that compliance with the referral process is not attributed to the Statutory Duty, but rather that it is an extension of youth workers' safeguarding culture in general:

> *We are not government funded. I am not sure if we have the legal responsibility to report. I mean I think it'd be very easy to say that we'd be negligent if we didn't report a case to Prevent that should've gone to Prevent, I think that's obvious. But you are right, I think we don't have a legal responsibility. I've never really consciously acknowledged that fact but yeah.* Azim, The Resilience Project

This shows that the meaning behind the Statutory Duty for youth workers has not been clearly established at a grassroots level. However, the general awareness of a duty to refer is widespread in the front line, supporting data in the survey carried out by the OSCT cited above, even in those areas where the duty is not statutory. An account which shows how in non-PPAs the police tries to get organisations in the third sector to comply with P/CVE work, is provided in a paper by James Alexander, a former youth worker and now Senior Lecturer in Criminology: "The reluctance of organisations with no Statutory Duty to engage has caused the police to resort to applying pressure on organisations to supply them with information on potential radicals" (Alexander, 2019: 211). Alexander further argues that he was surprised by the call of a local police officer, as "there was no sign of radicalisation of any of the 150+ young people he and the other workers support each week" (Alexander, 2019: 212).

The qualitative data in this research, however, shows youth workers' general compliance with referral processes and with Prevent training. Just as Azim above, as Narsa from Integrate UK claims here that they comply with training even when they are not bounded by the Statutory Duty: "We all had Prevent training. Because it's mandatory isn't it? To have the Prevent training, but I'm not too sure." Although participants in this research showed awareness of Prevent training, some had reservations about its content. RP1 from Hybrid Organisation summarized the issue in the following excerpt:

> *Yes, they [front-line workers] have to understand the politicization of the subject matter, they have to understand the recent history, and historically [it] has been really horrible for all sorts of communities but especially for Muslim communities, and they have to know that. The problem is that the training from the government, first of all, by definition, it has to be pretty*

generic and superficial because they are trying to give it to everybody, so it's not going to be thinking about context. RP 1, Hybrid Organisation.

RP 1's depiction of the Prevent training echoes the sentiments of several participants, as will be discussed shortly. Above, RP1 also alludes to the complementary role their organisation plays to fill in the gap in the field left by Prevent training, as they support public sector professionals to understand social stigmatisation suffered by ethnic minorities due to widespread conversations around extremism and vulnerability targeting their communities. In support of the Statutory Duty, in 2015 government rolled out training to support public sector professionals called, the Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP), reaching about 400,000 front-line workers during its first year (Busher et al., 2017: 14). Most of the participants in this study stated to have completed Prevent training. However, as RP1 states above, they also argued that the training seemed too generic or feared it had stigmatizing effects on ethnic minorities. As another interviewee who preferred maintaining anonymity when speaking about the Prevent training, details here:

> *I have been in Prevent training and I have been told by the facilitator of Prevent: 'where did ISIS come from?' My response has been, ISIS comes from the incarceration of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis in Camp Bucca, and they tell me that no, that they came from a mosque in Syria. This is a facilitator from Prevent saying it to me, and I was told I am wrong. This is problematic when you are having facilitators who are basically pushing propaganda, it is wrong.* Practitioner.

Such accounts by youth workers in this study support concerns over the content of Prevent training, which has been documented in the existing literature (OSJI, 2016). Furthermore, another recurring theme in the data are the concerns youth worker have over the impact the Statutory Duty on their relationships with youth. Azim from the Resilience Project addressed this issue as he described his experience talking with teachers after the implementation of Prevent's Statutory Duty:

> *If a young person says: "I'm planning to stab a bunch of Muslims", he [the teacher] knows he has to report that. If a young person says: "oh, I'm gonna bomb those…", then he knows he has to report that, but otherwise he just has that conversation in a safe place. Prevent guidelines essentially have said, 'have these conversations and report it if it's extreme', [they] have effectively broken that trust. So even though they haven't changed the practice, they've made it less likely for those conversations to happen because kids are like 'oh I don't know if I can trust my teacher anymore, because he is working as a spy now because he has to report*

onwards'. I think it's [about] what counts as a referral and what doesn't, what counts like a sign and what doesn't. Azim, Resilience Project.

This is a further example of how decentred security governance has meant the extension of safeguarding practices within the pre-existing safeguarding culture, and Azim notes how having to adapt safeguarding practices to the Statutory Duty can compromise trust in relationships. Adam, working in the North of England, shares Azim's concerns around trust here:

> *That trust is key and when you've got a statutory responsibility, which is more safeguarding for yourself, you can't say to a young person: 'whatever is said here is not going to leave this room'... Playing Devil's Advocate, yes it's better to be safe than sorry. But on the other side, that young person with turn around and say, "oh yeah, my mum got a call and stuff and that's not even what I said, I trusted you, f.. off". Sometimes they don't even give you the courtesy of explaining how they feel, they will just stop talking.* Adam, youth worker.

Safeguarding duty can compromise a youth worker's relationships with youth, as Adam explains, particularly if there are issues with the referral process. This account by Adam speaks to research focused on education settings, which notes a "sharp increase in Prevent reporting and referrals…a product of widespread anxiety about missing a case that should have been referred and, perhaps ironically, of the 'if in doubt speak to someone' culture and trust in the referral systems that helped to underpin staff confidence" (Busher et al., 2017: 6).

As discussed so far, the Statutory Duty is a prevalent consideration for grassroots work, incorporated into their work culture, although at times this duty is approached as a moral, voluntary responsibility rather than a Statutory Duty, as is the case with other public sector professionals in education and health settings. An exception is Prevent-funded projects and youth workers, who are in close communication with Prevent officials due to their funding commitments, as Mohammed from KIKIT illustrates here: "We also get referrals from the police. We get regular referrals from the CTU team [Counter Terrorism Unit], regular referrals from Channel, we refer to Channel as well." In such cases, the duty to refer individuals vulnerable to radicalisation is embedded in the funding pathways, as discussed in previous chapters.

Overall, the data collected provides evidence that rather than having a policy-based understanding of the Statutory Duty, detailing who is accountable and what is the procedure to follow, grassroots workers share widespread responsibility to safeguard youth from issues which include radicalisation but are not always informed by Prevent. They share the duty to refer as 'the right thing to do' as part of their pre-existing safeguarding responsibilities, and as a result, a referral

is often precluded by consultation with peers and colleagues. The main goal of such collaborations is to critically be inclusive of P/CVE vulnerabilities within their wider safeguarding roles.

7.2 Mainstreaming the Statutory Duty through safeguarding

> *But we do keep in touch with the local council, some Prevent leads. We will always know who the Prevent leads are in schools because it is such, it's such a big part of the state sector at the moment. Prevent is unavoidable, it's massive, it's huge, and we're always in its shadow, to be completely honest. In that sense the relationship is one where we operate in a different way.* Azim, Resilience Project.

This quote further supports the perception that Prevent is prevalent in the field, particularly in PPAs. As Azim states here, partial compliance with referral processes is rooted in Prevent's 'huge' presence in his locality. As a result, identifying who are the local Prevent bodies is a useful tool for this independent grassroots organisation. This section focuses on the experiences of youth workers integrating P/CVE safeguarding into their practices, due in part to the perceived mainstreaming of Prevent and its safeguarding duties. Contributing to the understanding of the complexities of P/CVE practices within the overall youth work culture.

Since the widespread implementation of the Statutory Duty during the third phase of Prevent (2015-present), safeguarding in the front-line has become a debated topic. The implication of collapsing the Duty to refer possible cases of radicalisation into pre-existing safeguarding practices reinstates critiques of Prevent that argue there is a 'pre-crime' nature to Prevent and P/CVE policies, which have securitized religious and ethnic minorities in the UK and beyond (Jerome et al., 2019; Mythen & Walklate, 2016; Qureshi, 2016; OJSI, 2016; Bartlett & Miller, 2012). Research on the implementation of the Statutory Duty has documented accounts of the referrals of individuals not engaging in violent extremism (Ramsay, 2017 in Dudenhoefera, 2018).

In the UK, research by Heath-Kelly & Strausz (2019) has recorded how pre-existing safeguarding practices in the public health system have been colonised by counter-terrorism through Prevent's safeguarding practices (2019: 90). They argue that this as an attempt to use safeguarding to portray Prevent as a strategy aimed at protecting the vulnerable from radicalisation. However, Heath-Kelly & Strausz concluded that the Statutory Duty in reality has placed a premium on safeguarding reporting, which goes against traditional safeguarding practices in health and educational settings. Their study showed that the Statutory Duty undermined patient confidentiality,

as concerns over the wellbeing of a patient are overridden by security concerns over possible radicalisation (Ibid: 93).

The thematic analysis of qualitative data in this study shows that safeguarding is often associated with Prevent at a grassroots level. A practitioner from a hybrid organisation (who I will anonymise for this quote) discussed how 'safeguarding' is a concept with dual meanings, one associated with Prevent and the other with pre-existing youth work practices:

> *What I have learned in the last year is, Prevent is safeguarding, they have attached this name Prevent in 2007, they attached this name to what is safeguarding. Youth workers are already doing this, there is just [now] a particular focus on radicalisation and extremism. In any kind of safeguarding you are preventing young people who are at risk, you are preventing something. So with any kind of safeguarding you use the word 'prevent', but they associated Prevent with radicalisation and extremism, and that is what youth workers are pushing back on and [are] rejecting that idea. So we sell our programme as a safeguarding programme with its benefits, but we also talk about radicalisation and extremism, and this is where external consultants come in, which is obviously beneficial for the youth workers. I think that I learnt from speaking with youth workers that as soon as you say the word 'Prevent programme', they don't want to touch it.* Practitioner from a hybrid organisation.

This excerpt further explains how the association between safeguarding for violent extremism is contested by youth workers. A hybrid project such as the one cited above is then designed around the delivery of a wide range of themes, beyond P/CVE, as a strategy to incorporate the interests and skill sets of youth workers and to avoid pushback from youth workers who are reluctant to deliver Prevent programmes. The practitioner argued further, what is at stake for youth workers is the framing of their work under Prevent policy. This is why they designed the P/CVE programme in a way to include work on violent extremism (since part of it was funded by Prevent), but including wider issues which youth workers feel more comfortable delivering.

Although there is a shared responsibility to safeguard youth from violent extremism due to the Prevent Duty and its funding of grassroots projects (as discussed above), there is still certain agency retained in the design and delivery of such programmes. In terms of decentred security governance, this hybrid project involved multi-agency cooperation for the management of a security-framed problem such as radicalization. Where youth workers and practitioners maintain agency in the outcome of the P/CVE policy through their practices. As Bevir & Hall (2014) argue: "States increasingly engage other stakeholders in the processes of formulating policies, setting rules

and regulating activities. The result was governance that was hybrid and multi–jurisdictional, linking plural stakeholders in complex networks" (77). A complex/wicked issue such as radicalisation that is incorporated within other vulnerabilities, but not prioritised, as youth workers critically evaluate the responsibility to referrer against their wider safeguarding responsibilities.

A research participant from the Southwest region, Sahar, provides an example of how youth workers critically engage with the possible implications of the expansion of the Prevent Duty into safeguarding culture. She is vocal about her concern over the security focus of counter-radicalisation measures, particularly when they target Muslim communities, because it enhances the association of concepts such as 'vulnerability' and 'safeguarding' within religious and ethnic categories:

> *You don't go to school to watch children to see if they're going to be rapists in the future, there's no such thing, right? Yet for the Muslim community, you watch them to see how they might be extremist terrorists in the future. So there is no science behind it at all. That causes so much problems, even if they're saying it's under 'safeguarding', of course the national security of Britain is very important and we have to protect our country, but there is MI5 and MI6 who do this job, and there are so many laws that are already there to protect us, but to give it this fluffy name 'safeguarding', to deny the structural problems and the absence of science behind it, is quite problematic.* Sahar, MEND regional manager.

Here, Sahar addresses the issues of using safeguarding to frame interventions which should be otherwise managed by existing security and intelligence agencies. This account further contributes to claims about the use of safeguarding by Prevent to justify securitised interventions in public services (Health-Kelly & Strausz 2018). Although Prevent strategy has been a contested policy since its origins in 2007, arguably it was further mainstreamed when in 2015 it incorporated the Statutory Duty through the work of public sector professionals. At this point it became an even larger topic across all sectors of the public, as RP 1 from Hybrid Organisation pointed out:

> *Prevent's been mainstreamed in a way into safeguarding, rightly or wrongly. I would make a differentiation between them, but it has been put with other kinds of safeguarding...I mean, there has been terrible things done into the Prevent policy over the years. But it has changed and developed and switched, and now it is so mainstream whether you like it or not. It's happening in the schools and hospitals, it is now mainstream safeguarding and it is not going to go away.* RP 1, Hybrid Organisation.

This practitioner, argues that a key moment in the transition from traditional safeguarding into an enhanced violent extremism safeguarding practice came with the introduction of Prevent Statutory

Duty. The Statutory Duty not only placed front-line work into the spotlight of public opinion, but the safeguarding culture was cornered to incorporate the shared responsibility of P/CVE efforts across the public sector professionals and even in the voluntary sector. An example is provided by KIKIT in Birmingham, as Mohammed unpacked what is understood by 'safeguarding' duties in their daily practice:

> *So we said [to community leaders] we'll offer you training, we'll make sure your staff are more vigilant and aware, we will help you with your policy in the mosque around safeguarding, so any Imams that you employ that come from international, from Pakistan or Saudi Arabia or whatever, you do the due diligence checking. So you basically understand what is that Imam teaching, have you done the background check on them, have you done the check for criminality, police checks, check what values that Imam holds, what sort of Islam is that person teaching. So these are the things on safeguarding that we will look at.* Mohammed, KIKIT director.

This is an example of an organisation with strong collaborative links to Prevent due to funding reshaping the understanding of safeguarding to fit it for P/CVE. In my conversation with local Prevent Coordinator, Waqar, he described his first interactions with KIKIT (cited in Chapter 5), in which he said that although at first KIKIT was suspicious of Prevent being linked to MI5, however the case of two service users of KIKIT being radicalised created an avenue of collaboration between them. The following quote follows this part of the conversation, it offers a practical example of how the collaboration between Prevent and KIKIT included actively linking the nature of their safeguarding work:

> *Two of those individuals had gone through their substance misuse charity. So they then came to speak to me around this and said what can we do. Because they were safeguarding already people from gangs, people being drawn into drug, it wasn't that difficult... they are all coming from the same backgrounds, from the same areas, and actually what you are doing safeguarding young people against them, the principle of that is not different to what you would do to safeguard them against radicalisation. They were a little bit surprised, thinking we thought it was very different. Its not different you just have to understand what is it that makes young people influence by one set of views as compared to another set of views.* Waqar, Prevent Coordinator.

This quote shows the work of a Prevent practitioners linking P/CVE safeguarding work to wider safeguarding work at grassroots. It also evidences the background to what later on KIKIT called

'crossing vulnerabilities' between substance abuse and radicalisation, through a programme they co-developed with Prevent called *KIKIT Pathways*. As this approach suggests, the strategy promotes securitized forms of supervision over Muslim practices at the grassroots level, as observed by Heath-Kelly & Strausz in the health sector (2018). Monitoring members of a community is a thin line to balance on, as there is a risk of reinforcing continued criticisms of Prevent (phase 1) about the conflation of security and community cohesion or advocating for 'British' practices of Islam (Husband & Alam, 2011: 194). For Mohammed, such safeguarding practices are welcomed by community members though, as he shows to maintain good relations with them. Evidencing mechanisms of policy legitimacy through community work, as stated here by Bell & Hindmoor: "Policies that have been endorsed by key stakeholders are more likely to be regarded as legitimate by the media and public. In return, governments must concede to these actors at least some measure of influence in the policy process" (Bell & Hindmoor, 2012: 11). In other words, Prevent is accepted within communities when delivered by a trusted community member such as Mohammed from KIKIT.

Such examples provided by KIKIT highlights small differences between practices of Prevent funded, hybrid and independent P/CVE work. In both cases of hybrid and Prevent-funded (KIKIT) projects, the former has shown greater role in shaping policy design, while the later case shows more compliance in the role required of them from Prevent as gatekeepers to local communities. KIKIT in this example shows a less critical position towards the implications of integrating P/CVE policies within their wider safeguarding practices in communities, in contrast, critical positions shared by Azim or Sahar who follow hybrid and independent models of youth work.

In the following section, I will discuss how youth workers provide a different understanding the Prevent framework of risk and vulnerability, as the accounts of government practitioner and youth workers reiterate distinctions between the referral responsibility framed under Prevent and holistic approaches to youth work.

7.3 Crossed Vulnerabilities: alternative understandings of vulnerability

This section contributes to the existing literature by discussing grassroots holistic understandings of vulnerability. It draws from qualitative data to identify instances where youth workers and practitioners go beyond the prescribed P/CVE practices framed under Prevent's Statutory Duty to safeguard youth from a wide range of social harms, including but not limited to radicalisation. This highlights a shared responsibility to support vulnerable individuals that goes beyond a duty to refer only those at risk of radicalisation. As youth workers and practitioners show that although they have

incorporated the Duty to refer into their practices, they have learned from their experience that youth vulnerable to violent extremism are exposed to a wider range of factors characterised as crossed vulnerabilities. This discussion provides practice-based accounts on how youth work decentres P/CVE understandings of vulnerability into its wider safeguarding culture, while highlighting examples of similarities and differences between independent, hybrid and Prevent guided work, as discussed by grassroots youth workers.

This discussion expands on findings published by Thomas (2018) in *The Sage Handbook of Youth Work Practice*, which states: "youth workers perceived that they were being asked to report on the basis of a much wider and vague concept of 'risk'... youth workers also recounted being quizzed by police about their own political and religious views if they demonstrated a reluctance to share information" (2018: 375). This quote reflects how youth workers critically evaluate the framework supported by Prevent policy, especially when it compromises their 'professional norms of confidentiality" (Ibidem). This final section goes even further to argue that youth workers often reconceptualise their safeguarding practices through the reinterpretation of risk and vulnerability. Such claims are supported by "…decentred theory suggests that security governance arises from the bottom up as conflicting beliefs, competing traditions, and varied dilemmas results in diverse practices" (Bevir 2016: 232).

The participants in this study narrated a dynamic process of assimilation between vulnerability to radicalisation and to wider social harms, or what Mohammed, the director of KIKIT, calls 'crossed vulnerabilities':

> *What we do is, how we educate people on radicalisation and extremism is we make them understand the crossed vulnerabilities; nobody is just born an extremist, no one puts their hand up and says: "I want to be an extremist" or "please come and radicalise me". It isn't that way. Basically, these are vulnerable individuals that are targeted by groomers--these are people who have an agenda, and they look for the type of people that they know are easy to manipulate and move around. So we will look at it. Our job as practitioners is to safeguard them and protect them, that's Prevent, simple.* Mohammed, KIKIT director.

Mohammed's view highlights a necessity to safeguard individuals who show 'vulnerabilities' beyond VE, rooted in other social, economic and psychological factors. It also shows how an organisation such as KIKIT, which has experience with substance abuse work at local levels, incorporates Prevent's conceptual framework such as 'safeguard' and 'vulnerable individuals' to describe their practices.

Similarly, in the following quote, Harriet from the Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Peace Foundation (Peace Foundation) discusses the use of the concept 'vulnerable' as a tool to comply with the field's jargon versus its use in her work:

> *I think when we perhaps are thinking through projects at initiation we might use words such as 'vulnerable' in order to tick boxes, but I think it is probably semiconscious not using those words [vulnerability and risk] all the time. It limits in a way, and I'm not overly precious about words and labels and stuff like that. I think it's more useful to speak of things in the round instead of identifying someone as vulnerable and kind of singling them out because of that. I think that people in general are vulnerable to lots of things but recognising their inherent skills and strengths is more useful.* Harriet, Peace Foundation programme development lead.

In addition to caution in the use of 'vulnerability' as a label that could further stigmatise youth, Harriet's work at the Peace Foundation carefully selects the language they use to frame the nature of their work with youth. These examples show how grassroots organisations consider the language used during youth work, and carefully curate it to avoid stigmatisation and to empower individuals.

Context-specific practices for youth workers and practitioners require adapting P/CVE programmes to tackle wider needs of youth beyond vulnerability to radicalisation. An example is provided by Azim in Cardiff, a youth worker at the time of the interview for the Resilience Project, a successful pilot delivered in the south of Wales targeting far-right violent extremism.[30] He argued that there is a fundamental difference in the approach taken by Prevent and independent P/CVE efforts, as the former looks for symptoms of radicalisation and the latter looks to build 'resilience' and human development:

> *I think that the difference between us and Prevent and government programmes, is that Prevent and government-led programmes are very much looking at the pathological model of criminality, or what they sometimes call pre-criminality, whereas we are not engaging with that question at all, we are engaging with the question: how can we help this person become healthier, more supported and more well-rounded as an individual and a human being?* Azim, Resilience Project

Balancing P/CVE work with this central question posed by Azim about how youth work can contribute to the development of 'well-rounded' individuals who are 'healthier', underpins the main

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[30]This project focused on far-right extremism was originally called The Think Project, launched in 2011. It then expanded its work to other forms of radicalisation, such as religious-inspired violent extremism, as the current Resilience Project.

objectives of grassroots youth work as described by the participants in this study. This account supports the distinction between countering pull factors through security strategies versus preventing push factors through human development, argued in the introduction of this thesis (UN, 2016).

Another hybrid organisation included in this study, which has collaborated with Prevent and Channel, has a longer track record in the field of countering violent extremism predating Prevent. I interviewed one of their practitioners (which I anonymise in this specific section), who highlighted how the methods they developed to achieve long lasting impact in youth work differs from the Home Office approach. For example, they contrasted the Channel strategy offering one-to-one support and mentoring with their peer support through group sessions:

> *...that is probably why we have not gone to Channel, in a way, because we feel that group work provides much more for individuals than 1-to-1. I'm not saying that there's no value in that, but we feel that those interactions between groups and that socialisation is really important to cement some of the learning...so we asked for a mixed group in order to build those positive relationships with people they would otherwise not mix with. That predominantly holds for our work with young people. We found that that's particularly useful because a group of young people who are already sharing initiative around leadership--you know, they're involved in potentially School Councils, Youth councils. Working with them in isolation, is not going to get to the root of the challenge with those two.* Practitioner, hybrid organisation.

The participant clarifies that there is merit and positive outcomes from one-to-one interventions such as those provided by Channel. However, their model which encourages dynamic interactions between peers of different social and cultural backgrounds, based on a conflict theory/resolution model and the Onion Model for conflict theory[31]. They have learned from their work that isolating individuals and providing tailored one-to-one support is less likely to get to the root of the problem. By working with youth amongst their peers in settings they are more likely to be exposed to in everyday life such as a classroom, they are more likely to develop leadership and peer-to-peer mentoring skills.

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[31] Applied in conflict resolution is a theory which suggest that conflict is layered in: "positions (what we really want), interests (what we really want) and needs (what we must have)" (Imam et al. 2020: 29). The model seek to create understandings between conflicting groups by getting to the core, to what each group really needs but is reluctant to disclose.

Even delivering Prevent funded work in a PPA, KIKIT also takes a context-focused approach to P/CVE, by looking at wider social harms that are often intertwined with violent extremism. The following case discussed by Mohammed provides another example of the practical implications of using 'crossed vulnerabilities' to define their work:

> *Two service users, they were on drugs, they were basically arrested for countering extremism offences in Birmingham and we were really concerned about this because we knew that they've been targeted due to their vulnerability to drugs. They were coming off drugs, they were trying to find religion and they fell into the wrong hands during that time of vulnerability. So, they have problems with mental health, they have problems with drugs, common [to] people trying to get away from drugs they turned to the religion to become better Muslims and they bumped into the wrong people who started to use that vulnerability--and that time they were going through a lot in their lives--and started to groom them and radicalise [them].* Mohammed, KIKIT.

This grassroots account of crossed vulnerabilities shows how factors such as drug abuse and mental health can converge in radicalisation; similar to Roy's work on youth deviance cited in chapter one. Similarly, Harriet discussed how her experience at the Peace Foundation has shown that the pathways into violent extremism are similar to those in other forms of vulnerabilities:

> *I don't know if this is the right word but less susceptibility to engaging in or being at the kind of drop-off stage of engaging in violence. And that can be related to joining extremist groups or it could be knife crime, it could be gang violence, could be anything, it kind of sits at the bottom of the paths that lead to extremism, or knife crime or whatever. We feel that they are very similar.* Harriet, Peace Foundation

These accounts present apparent symmetry between all forms of vulnerabilities seen by youth workers and practitioners on the ground, including violent extremism. Shared practices at the grassroots level by youth workers suggest that supporting individuals vulnerable to violent extremism exclusively would not address the various structural issues behind wider vulnerabilities that often lead to it and to other social harms.

So far, important distinctions between grassroots P/CVE work in relation to Prevent policy have highlighted efforts to identify the underlying contextual issues that characterise the vulnerabilities faced by youth workers and practitioners. As discussed so far, the framework of interventions based on the Statutory Duty to refer those who are vulnerable to violent extremism can undermine work safeguarding those same individuals from wider vulnerabilities. The concern

among grassroots workers is that the Statutory Duty focused on radicalisation can replace holistic interventions (based on contextual and structural drivers towards violence and wider social harms) with a referral processes (targeting violent extremism exclusively), which can also undermine trustworthy relationships at the grassroots level. The next section looks at how some of the organisations, mostly independent, respond to the Statutory Duty when it disproportionately targets Muslim communities.

7.3.1 Contested practices: Questioning the safeguarding framework of risk and vulnerability

The thematic analysis of interviews with youth workers and practitioners shows a shared approach at a grassroots level focused on understanding contextual factors to support youth with a wide range of issues, including violent extremism. One of the contextual factors most consistently cited in interviews is the social stigmatisation suffered by ethnic minorities due to CT and P/CVE policies, such as Prevent. When looking at independent youth work, however, this context-based approach draws a distinction between their work, which seeks to unveil structural barriers for youth, and Prevent guided interventions, which are perceived as symptom-focused. Rizwan, director of the independent grassroots organisation Jawaab, describes its differences in relation to Home Office's P/CVE approach in the following quote:

> *We see Prevent, as Preventing Violent Extremism…basically the whole counter terrorism and counter extremism policies as being very problematic and not being effective. There is this argument that Prevent has prevented something from going wrong, but our take is that: are we really looking at the causes or are we just treating the symptoms? I think that a lot of these policies are treating the symptoms and are not looking at the causes. Specifically, what we are trying to look at are the causes and how we can make systemic changes around this, and this is where we are different.* Rizwan, Jawaab director*.

This statement by Rizwan highlights critiques to the Prevent framework, to convey their practical implications based on his experiences in the field. Rizwan reveals that his main concern, is to improve the conditions for (mostly) young Muslims by advancing systemic changes. This requires tackling the systemic root causes, not only of vulnerability to violent extremism, but also of pre-existing systemic challenges faced by ethnic and religious minorities, including Islamophobia, social exclusion and stigmatisation. In the eyes of Rizwan, these challenges have intensified due to presence of violent extremist narratives in the UK, but also due to Prevent' strategy in communities.

Azim a project manager and youth worker from Cardiff further explained his concerns about P/CVE approaches lacking a 'social benefit':

> *If they [government] think on the level, oh we just don't want them to commit an act of Islamist or Islamic or far-right extremism, but we don't care if they commit another act of criminality, that's just pointless because it has no social benefit. The intersection between people who have been involved in crime, knife crime, and violence in other contexts is very, very large, there's a big overlap.* Azim, Resilience Project.

If vulnerability to violent extremism is symptomatic of wider social harms, as the experiences of youth workers suggest, then Prevent referrals could undermine holistic attempts to tackle the root of these vulnerabilities. The concern of grassroots workers, as argued earlier in this chapter, is that the Prevent strategy triggers a shift in public sector professionals' focus from these wider social issues to a focus on vulnerability to radicalisation, through funding and the Statutory Duty. However, the next chapter extends this section's discussion on how this shift promoted by Prevent is often contested through grassroots practices. Another example of how P/CVE safeguarding Duty is challenged through concerns that strategy focused on referrals could undermine traditional youth work focused on context-specific and meaningful interventions, as Javayria discussed:

> *I think that for whatever the youth worker engages in, they need to understand the context of the people they are working with and they need to be in a mindset that they are not there to liberate, or free, or civilize, but actually to build a human connection and to install self-esteem and the tools to navigate this world. You are not there to fix and sort people out, I think that is something that I really dislike, I have seen it for many, many years while I was working in NCS and other places and at the university.* Javayria, Jawaab

Javayria, a former worker for the NCS national youth project under the leadership of David Cameron,[32] acknowledges the importance of knowing the context of youth in working with them and building 'self-esteem' in those individuals seen as vulnerable.

Concepts such as vulnerability, risk and safeguarding are recognised as part of the jargon in the P/CVE remit, however there are important distinctions about how they are used within different settings. Participants reflected that this shared jargon is mostly employed as terminology to

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[32] The NCS, since its origin, continued to gain national coverage due to increasing access to HO funds (up to £634 million). Not only does Javayria point to criticisms about this, but journalistic reports also document that the NCS has been audited for the lack of accountability in its use of funds. For more on this topic, see Walker (2018) in 'Cameron's £1.5b 'Bid Society' youth scheme reaching few teenagers' in The Guardian.

communicate the aims, resources, and findings of organisations to peers within the P/CVE context. For some, this translates to the use of the concepts mostly in conferences and public debates. For others, they are key in communicating their aims when applying for funding or establishing local networks and partnerships.

In the following quote, Javayria from Jawaab (an organisation focused on youth empowerment and countering Islamophobia) provides a critical view in the conceptual framework of P/CVE. She discussed how some youth workers in P/CVE cluster the concepts of vulnerability, risk and safeguarding along with 'integration', 'counter-terrorism' or 'counter-radicalisation' as "buzz words" to communicate the nature of their work to possible funders and partners:

> *You can completely commodify and turn what you are doing into a product, into a really shiny [thing] and use all the correct buzz words. If Riz [Rizwan, director of Jawaab] wanted to get all the attention he could say we have a product for youth, you should fund us and it is going to help young people integrate…You can use all the buzz words around and that I feel would be like selling out. It would be like a high degree of selling out. But in terms of how you could do that ethically? Well, maybe ok you break what you are doing down, you give it a name, but you do not use these buzz words around the integration anti-terrorism discourse, you just use the language you want to use. But ultimately, the funders, they need to understand what you are saying. There is that tension, but I think there is a way of dealing with that tension that is appropriate, and we can discern what that is.* Javayria, Jawaab Volunteer.

A key contribution here by Javayria is in highlighting the importance of the conceptual framework in relation to funding pathways in the P/CVE field. As she argues, an organisation such as Jawaab that focuses on Muslim youth empowerment could increase its platform and funding opportunities if it strategically uses the "buzz words" in the field. However, the ethical considerations posed by Javayria were a recurring theme for youth workers and practitioners throughout this research; similar findings disclosed challenges at grassroots organisations faced with the decision of accepting Prevent funding within the context of austerity in local authorities (Husband and Alam, 2011; Thomas, 2011).

Another area where the conceptual framework of Prevent was a contested theme in the data is in higher education, where the use of vulnerability and safeguarding under the frame of the Statutory Duty was seen as having failed or stigmatised Muslim students. Ilyas, a NUS officer at the time, explained:

Yeah, the language of vulnerability and all of that is what we're hit with all the time, for the reality is we have thousands of young people telling us, 'that's not the case and that's not [what] we feel would prevent'…they don't feel protected, they don't feel safeguarded against, they don't feel safe on campus. So Prevent is completely failing that battle. Ilyas, NUS officer

Ilyas, by listening to the youth he works with, doesn't see applicability to the Prevent framework. In this conversation Ilyas further argued that support for young people, as he and his colleagues define it, includes challenging the Prevent Duty and providing support to those who were being targeted by it. In his view, the P/CVE approach in the UK has stigmatised Muslims and ethnic minorities in education settings (settings of traditional safeguarding practices):

We do, as well as supporting people that have been targeted by the Prevent Duty and institutions, [help] students that have been talking about being repeatedly harassed, who have been talking about being followed, students who have sanctions being put on their events, students that are worried about accessing confidential and safe mental health support because the counsellors are now--all counsellors have now Statutory Duty to refer to the Prevent Duty…. Ilyas, NUS.

A key contribution here by Ilyas is the suggestion that the Prevent Duty also undermined Muslim student's access to other forms of safeguarding as it disrupted trust between students and counsellors, for example.

Participants in this study believe that P/CVE efforts should go beyond preventing youth from possible radicalisation. They have highlighted that such efforts require challenging the systemic factors that contribute to the oppression and marginalisation of Muslim youth. Rizwan continued to outline how Muslim youth feel stigmatized and affected by the Statutory Duty:

Our main learning, our main focus comes from what we hear in the ground and when we talk to young people and we hear the challenges that they have. I think understanding terrorism is very important for us, as young Muslims we need to understand the policies that impact us, but also there is this whole element around counter extremism that is not working and hasn't worked since it was introduced in 2007. It is not working, it was not working then because it was focused on community, leadership and mosques and getting them to play a part. Now it has moved to becoming a strategy requirement in schools and colleges, which I think is even worse, it is not dealing with the causes. So there we are in a cycle where young

people feel, we feel marginalized and oppressed by this very toxic and inherently racist policy. Rizwan, Jawaab

Here Rizwan criticises Prevent for not focusing on the causes of violent extremism and terrorism and for its stigmatising effect on Muslims. The critical terrorism studies literature supports Rizwan's views, as research has questioned the scientific credentials of the Extremist Risk Guidance (Lloyd & Dean 2015), known as the ERG22+[33] factors, which were designed to assist front-line workers in determining who is at risk of radicalisation when carrying out Prevent's Statutory Duty. Another section of the literature discussed how the targeting of ethnic and religious minorities is justified in the securitisation of the terrorist profile through social predicting factors used to develop early intervention models (Hamid et al., 2019; Sageman, 2017; Qureshi, 2017; Abbas & Awan, 2015; Choudhury & Fenwick, 2011). Others have discussed how the referral processes of Prevent and Channel, including the Statutory Duty, has contributed to Islamophobia and social stigmatisation of religious and ethnic minorities in the UK, particularly Muslim youth (Abbas, 2018; Qureshi, 2018; Thomas, 2017; Thomas, 2016; Hickman et al,. 2012).

Conclusion

This chapter discussed how grassroots workers understand, challenge and incorporate Prevent's Statutory Duty into their pre-existing safeguarding practices. It focused mainly on the implications of the allocation of funding based on Prevent Priority Areas (PPAs), and the Statutory Duty on the everyday practices of youth workers and practitioners. This analysis contributes to the P/CVE literature by expanding the understanding of P/CVE policy outcome, as the data reveals how youth workers critically engage with the implications of the Statutory Duty and the referral process to their pre-existing practices. Instead, they advocate for the notion of holistic, context-based P/CVE approaches which incorporate the identification of wider, crossing, vulnerabilities, at grassroots. As such, this chapter highlights how grassroots workers incorporate the Prevent Statutory Duty within their efforts to tackle wider, structural social harms faced by youth in their communities on a daily basis.

Finally, this chapter discussed the implication of P/CVE safeguarding in relation to the pre-existing safeguarding culture in youth work. Youth workers and practitioners identify Prevent policy's potential of securitising the nature of their safeguarding duties, and identify how the

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[33] The risk factors were guidelines for frontline workers' PVE training, which could be used to assess and refer individuals vulnerable to VE in compliance with the statutory duty established in 2015.

Statutory Duty presents additional responsibilities as they support front-line workers--mainly in schools--in the evaluation of possible radicalisation referrals. In effect, these practices at grassroots reveal the configuration of decentred security governance within P/CVE work, exemplified by existing joined-up policy making mechanisms through local networks at grassroots, and localised agency shown by youth workers and practitioner's ability to modify and adapt P/CVE policies to fit their working cultures. In the next chapter I will focus on independent and hybrid youth work, as I draw from the data alternative holistic practices applied to P/CVE work, contributing to the literature which has mostly engaged with Prevent funded P/CVE work.

Chapter 8: Independent P/CVE youth work: safe spaces and holistic approaches to P/CVE

Introduction

This chapter draws from the qualitative data collected to discuss how grassroots youth work relies on holistic approaches, such as the creation of 'safe places/spaces' and youth empowerment as frameworks to integrate P/CVE work into their pre-existing practices, traditions and knowledge. Participants in this study delivering P/CVE programmes often referred to the importance of creating 'safe spaces' as environments enabling trust building with youth. The use of the terms 'safe places/spaces' (research participants use these terms interchangeably, I will refer to 'safe spaces' in this chapters), firstly, is an umbrella term used at the grassroots level to integrate P/CVE safeguarding duties within pre-existing practices. Secondly, this concept is also used in P/CVE efforts at the grassroots level to pivot around the framework of vulnerability/risk defined by Home Office, mostly used at grassroots to gain access to funding. This chapter argues that the idea of safe spaces enables youth workers to integrate P/CVE safeguarding to their practices while: a) maintaining their values and traditions as youth workers, b) developing trust locally, and c) and adapting P/CVE programmes to meet local needs (including countering the effects of social stigmatisation). This chapter expands the existing literature's analysis of front-line and grassroots practices under Prevent policy which unpacks the nuances of policy outcome – compliance, enactment, contestation, adaptation – (Busher et al., 2019; Pilkington & Acik, 2019; Thomas, 2017; O'Toole et al., 2016), through a detailed look at independent/hybrid P/CVE youth work practices.

A common theme discussed in semi-structured interviews for this study was how the conceptual framework of the Prevent Duty that is focused on safeguarding, risk and vulnerability is incorporated into P/CVE grassroots work through a shared understanding of 'safe places/spaces'. One of the aims of the data collection was to explore front-line understanding of these concepts, and to contrast and compare their views with the framework of the Prevent policy. Although there is extensive work on the analysis of the framework behind Prevent policy (Thornton & Bouhana, 2019; Nadgee et al., 2017, Staines, 2016; OSJI, 2016; Elshimi, 2015; Heath-Kelly, 2013; Birt, 2009), there is a gap in the literature in analysing how independent youth work engages with the government frames of P/CVE work. With that aim in mind, this chapter engages critically with the question: Do youth workers/practitioners shape P/CVE policies to localised needs? If so, how? Under the frame of decentred security governance this analysis focuses on youth work practices, providing empirical evidence on the heterogenous, multi-layered front-line practices which shape P/CVE policy outcome.

Answering this question helps draw a practice-based picture of grassroots P/CVE efforts, highlighting similarities and differences between independent, hybrid and Prevent guided work. As discussed in the Chapter five, "The P/CVE grassroots context", youth workers and practitioners are influenced by funding pathways and local networks in the delivery of P/CVE work. Chapter six, "The dynamics of P/CVE efforts at the grassroots level", discussed in detail differences in the management of funding and local networks between Prevent, hybrid and independent funded work. Furthermore, Chapter seven, "Governing through youth work", discussed how youth workers and government practitioners incorporate the P/CVE framework, particularly safeguarding, into pre-existing youth work culture. This final empirical chapter expands on these discussions by presenting qualitative data to demonstrate how grassroots workers adapt and expand the understandings of safeguarding, risk and vulnerability under Prevent's framework into decentred P/CVE security practices (Bevir, 2016) which are holistic, context-based approaches that include targeting social stigmatisation and empowering youth. Suggesting there is a youth model, which at grassroots level is a more dominant practice, adapting and integrating P/CVE safeguarding issues.

Firstly, this chapter looks at the pathways of individuals into youth work. The background and motivations of youth workers who participated in this research provides context to their daily practices and their understanding of how their lived experiences, which include stigmatisation, help shape their critical understandings of the Prevent Strategy. Contributing to existing literature on youth work practices in the UK (Alldred et al., 2018; de St Croix, 2016), and works focused on Prevent funded youth work (Dresser, 2019; Alexander, 2019; Thomas, 2018; McDonald, 2011; Kundnani, 2009), with the perspectives of independent and hybrid funded youth work in P/CVE (Cifuentes et al., 2013). Next, this chapter looks at how P/CVE efforts rely on 'safe spaces' as a framework to reinterpret and adapt Prevent policy's conceptual framework, which includes (but is not limited to) the understanding of violent extremism vulnerability. Finally, this chapter describes the holistic approaches of youth workers in their efforts to tackle radicalisation to violent extremism while also empowering youth, providing them with the tools to identify the social structures they will face on a daily basis and to develop a sense of belonging.

8.1 The origins of P/CVE youth work

Their positive emotions are demonstrative of a principled and value-based commitment to young people that goes beyond straightforward job satisfaction, and can perhaps be seen as a 'political ethic of care' (Taggart, 2011, p 86). de St Croix (2016: 62)

This section highlights how pathways into youth work help to shape daily P/CVE practices. Key findings in the qualitative data suggest that youth workers not only privilege their 'value-based commitment to young people' over P/CVE practices in situations where they judge might stigmatise youth, but also due to their first-hand experiences with social stigmatisation due to Prevent policy practices. Conversations with youth workers and practitioners show the complexity in their P/CVE practices guided by local needs and their work culture, beyond a narrow binary understanding of a P/CVE field divided between Prevent funded work and its critics.

8.1.1 Pathways to P/CVE youth work

As discussed throughout this thesis, Prevent strategy has been a highly contested policy in the public sphere since its implementation in 2007. This section now looks at how personal experiences with social stigmatisation was found to be a factor in the shaping of pathways to youth work. This data intersects with existing findings by Pilkington and Acik (2019) in their research with youth and social activism. Similar to those findings, some of the participants interviewed in this research, mostly involved in independent P/CVE efforts, stated that their involvement in youth work was triggered partially through social activism as a response to the effects of the Prevent policy in their communities or schools, but also as a response to the wider stigmatisation of Muslims as a consequence of the 9/11 and 7/7 terrorist attacks and subsequent CT and P/CVE policies.

The thematic analysis of the qualitative data disclosed 3 main factors as having helped shape youth worker pathways into grassroots work: a) having had first-hand experiences with social stigmatisation and sometimes Islamophobia, including witnessing racism and physical and verbal abuse in their daily lives; b) carrying out voluntary work at early stages of their lives; c) having previously benefited from the support of the third sector in overcoming other social harms. It is important to note that in most cases there is a correlation between first-hand experiences of social stigmatisation and critical positions towards Prevent. This correlation points to complex relationships between perceptions of Prevent policy and practical experiences in the field.

Participants such as Ilyas (NUS Black Students), Sahar (MEND), Javayria (Jawaab), Hasaan (Mothers Against Violence), Shahab (MEND) and Rizwan (Jawaab), both identified jihadist inspired terrorist activity and counter-radicalisation policies as instrumental in shaping negative perceptions towards Muslims and ethnic minorities in the UK. Ilyas, NUS Black Students Officer, described his experience as follows:

> *I was 7 when 9/11 happened, I was in my teens when 7/7 happened… all of these incidents which have completely transformed the situation for minorities in this country and specifically in relation to counter extremisms, if we are looking at the primary targets of those initiatives by the government, especially for Muslim communities.* Ilyas, NUS Black Students.

This is an example of how terror events have had a large impact on the way ethnic minorities they are perceived in the UK and beyond. Furthermore, these negative perceptions of Muslims increase, Ilyas argues, as they feel they are being targeted by "initiatives by the government" through its counter-terrorism strategy. This reflects the feelings of several participants in this study. For example, a practitioner in the third sector with MEND, Sahar, shared her personal experiences with Islamophobia:

> *It's been very, very challenging for me because I myself have been a victim of Islamophobia because of my being a veiled Muslim woman of colour, so I face triple discrimination against my gender, my colour, my faith and so on. I've been abused countless times even inside the hospital by patients where I work with and interact with. Despite being a victim I don't have the victim mentality. I thought to myself, I really want to talk, challenge that myself and lead the challenge, I'm not gonna just submit and cry, and [I'm not going to say] 'I don't know what to do with my life'.* Sahar, MEND regional manager.

Here, Sahar describes how these devastating experiences of social stigmatisation and racism helped shape her interest in social and political activism in the UK.

Sahar's experiences correlate with academic and independent reports drawing from evidence-based research which have concluded that the Prevent strategy, has helped establish Muslim and ethnic minorities as suspect communities in the UK (Abbas, 2018; Qureshi, 2017 & 2016; Thomas, 2017: 121-126; Silverman, 2017; Hickman et al., 2012; Coppock and McGovern, 2014; Kundnani, 2009). The data collected in this study supports this existing literature in its claims that such experiences have not been mitigated by new iterations of Prevent strategy, as criticism on the stigmatising effects of Prevent practices have endured throughout all three phases of Prevent (2007-2011, 2011-2015; 2015-Present), which seems to the case even though in practice many public service professionals have shown to alter such policy outcomes by contesting, adapting or enacting Prevent policy (Pilkington & Acik, 2019; Busher et al., 2019; Thomas, 2017; O'Toole et al., 2016). In sum, scholarly work shows cases where stigmatisation has occurred due to Prevent policy, but also situations where stigmatisation has been avoided due to front-line agency.

Participants in this research also shared how personal experiences with Islamophobia and social stigmatisation were, at times, rooted in the implementation of the Prevent strategy and wider counter-terrorism policies in CONTEST. These experiences helped shape their involvement in social activism and youth work, some explicitly targeting Prevent policy, while others focused on supporting Muslims in navigating social stigmatisation. This is why, in part, achieving the acceptance of Prevent at the grassroots level is often hard to accomplish. The experiences of these interviewees have not been atoned by the amendments made in the design of Prevent strategy, precisely because they (and others in their communities) were on the receiving end of social stigmatisation due to its implementation.

For example, Ilyas' experiences with Prevent's Statutory Duty helped shape his role in the 'Students not Suspects' campaign and 'Preventing Prevent Handbook' (Nagdee et al., 2017) through NUS Black Students. As he argued, their efforts aimed at "working across the different sectors within which Prevent is applied" and where the Prevent Duty is "also statutory" with the aim of "strategizing and advocating for its scrapping and repeal" (Ilyas, 2018). Throughout our interview, Ilyas supported his critical position towards Prevent due to its stigmatizing effects on Muslim communities, and showed this as a motivating factor for his social/political activism.

The 'Preventing Prevent' was supported by youth worker Hasaan from Mothers Against Violence, whose personal experiences of stigmatisation due to the Prevent Duty were also discussed in the previous chapter. In the following excerpt, Hasaan further shows how his negative experience with Prevent helped shape his social activism:

> *That's why we are so cautious and ultra-aware of it [the Statutory Duty] and in that sense that Prevent is a manifestation of securitization essentially, and monitoring on school grounds. It makes it quite difficult for us to learn in a free way, but as we discussed in the Promise Conference, social exclusion also drives people, and in some cases it has therefore driven people like me and others to get out there and have these dialogues and trash Prevent by any means possible because of what it is, an inherently racist programme.* Hasaan, Mothers Against Violence.

Hasaan is referring to the Promise 2020 conference hosted by the University of Manchester in 2019, where academics and youth organisations from the UK and Europe presented their findings on youth activism. These experiences by Hassan in higher education have shaped his view of Prevent as a problematic and 'racist' programme, as well as his activist position against Prevent policy. This particular case is similar to findings by Pilkington and Acik (2019) presented at the Promise

Conference, which documented youth-led responses to Prevent and social stigmatisation through social activism. The following excerpt from Ilyas (NUS) illustrates how social activism against the Prevent Duty also intersects with broader issues in British politics around social justice and equality for Muslim and Ethnic minorities in the UK:

> *Also getting young people's voice out there [is important] to explain why so many young people can become easily marginalized and stigmatised within that community, and that's partly as a result of a complete lack of funding, [funding] being removed from their communities. The lack of infrastructure in the form of youth clubs and social clubs and things which they can participate in. The implication of austerity, over-policing, institutionalized racism in housing and in employment. Everything from how the council cares about rubbish removal all the way to the way local people are policed and the way that has an impact on them growing up in those communities.* Ilyas, NUS.

In this account, Ilyas provides a complete picture of how social stigmatisation due to CT and P/CVE policies aggravate wider socio-economic issues faced by ethnic minorities in the UK. Most of the youth workers and practitioners cited so far – Jawaab, Mothers Against Violence, MEND and NUS Black Students – belong to independent organisations whose aims are defined by the empowerment of Muslims in their communities and providing them the tools to navigate social stigmatisation. These voices show an intersection between P/CVE work from a critical position as they work to develop wider understandings of vulnerability and building resilience to violent extremism and social stigmatisation. Sahar, Mend's regional manager, explains such work here:

> *A lot of young people who we have been working with, they really, really suffer from alienation, they don't feel like they belong here, they don't feel like they're being accepted, they feel they cannot challenge, they cannot speak their mind, and if they speak their mind they might be referred to Prevent or Channel. This is where MEND work fits really well in engaging with young people, to counter the so-called extremism… So what we are saying in MEND, what we're trying to do is to improve the political literacy of the young Muslims, saying to them that if you, let's say, you are not happy about the war in Iraq or the war in Afghanistan, you can engage with your MP, you can write a letter, you can do this petition instead of, 'oh you know what I'm going to join ISIS and fight them there.'* Sahar, MEND regional manager.

Through the work of MEND, Sahar works to empower youth and build resilience to violent extremism through inclusion and political literacy. This is different from the work carried out by

Prevent funded work, which almost exclusively seek to tackle individual risks/vulnerabilities to radicalisation. The overarching aim of MEND's work with young people is providing them with the tools to identify structures that can alienate youth, such as Prevent, but also to build leadership and agency within their communities. They adhere to the argument that this line of work does help build individuals who are less likely to be swayed into supporting senseless violence.

A complementary view, provided RP 3 (Hybrid Organisation), describes first-hand experiences of racist narratives in white-working class communities targeting migrants and ethnic minorities in the UK. Like other participants, they described how their experiences growing up helped shape his current role in P/CVE and wider safeguarding work:

> *I grew up in a small town… Everyone in the town had a specific sort of mentality, a viewpoint, felt closed off from the rest of the country I suppose. Everyone I ever knew, met, spoke to, saw, was white, from a small town. So there's a lot of similar views, quite racist views. Somehow I grew up, my family were very sort of empathetic and open, while I felt lots of people around me were fixed indeed, talking about foreigners coming in in a negative tone as if there's this 'other', this other group of people that are threatening or dangerous. I did not understand why, as a small child, why should I dislike someone if I don't know them?* RP 3, Hybrid Organisation

A wider interest to counter narratives of divide, such as racism, motivated people like RP 3 to integrate P/CVE efforts to their youth work. The narratives this youth worker described were rooted in anti-refugee/immigrant views often seen in far-right radicalisation: "That separated me from the rest of my friends, which were and still are very racist. Many of them have quite sort of right wing to far-right views" (RP 3, 2018). This youth worker, like Sahar and Ilyas, was concerned to see the discrimination of ethnic minorities and racist narratives in his community. Unlike them, though, they come from a white working-class background. However, their work with Hybrid Organisation enabled them to work with these issues at the grassroots level, originally engaging with them through their personal exposure to violence:

> *I've got into youth work probably because of that empathy. I struggled a bit as a teenager, was getting involved in criminal activity and stuff, I felt a little bit lost. I wanted to be youth worker because I felt like, I felt that feeling that lots young people have, that disconnection of not knowing where your life is headed.* RP 3, Hybrid Organisation.

More examples in the data echo RP 3's experience, showing that youth workers develop their interest in this line of work through empathy after being exposed to contexts of violence or were

themselves supported by local social services in their communities. Help that encouraged them to 'pay it back' through their own involvement in youth work. Another example is Mohammed, who shared how his involvement in P/CVE was triggered by the need to support others who, like himself, needed support with substance abuse:

> So I have personal experience with [substance abuse] and because I sorted my life out and it took me a long time to get sorted, I felt like, where are other people going? There are less fortunate people out there who probably won't get help, I was lucky to find help and got myself sorted…. so I set up this project to address the gaps, particularly for young people to try and get help and supported to get out of gangs and drugs. Mohammed, KIKIT director.

Here, Mohammed's experiences played a role in motivating his present work, which started supporting people dealing with substance abuse and now has incorporated P/CVE work.

Overall, the qualitative data shows a range of personal motives – exposure to social stigmatisation and racism, early voluntary work and experiences with social services – for doing youth work, which shape the type of P/CVE work they develop. While youth workers affiliated to independently funded organisations share a more critical view of Prevent, rooted in personal experiences of stigmatisation attributed to Prevent implementation, they incorporate P/CVE work within a wider, holistic, understanding of youth work. In other words, countering the stigmatising effects of Prevent policy has been incorporated into grassroots youth work, even in P/CVE work and in youth work with wider aims such as the empowerment Muslim communities. As such, there is evidence of a youth work model with alternative approaches to P/CVE work.

Personal experiences related to stigmatisation and an exposure to environments that encourage violence created pathways into P/CVE youth work for respondents in my study. In the cases of Gareth, Mohammed and RP3, they developed empathy towards community members exposed to wider social harms (including gang and violent extremism grooming, substance abuse, and domestic violence) and a debt towards social services. In the cases such as Sahar, Hasaan and Ilyas, where a personal experience of social stigmatisation triggered by Prevent or CONTEST strategies motivated participants to join youth work and social activism, there is still an acknowledgement of a need to tackle issues related to the prevention of violent extremism as well. Though the routes to achieving this goal may vary, most of the youth workers and organisations interviewed showed a similar focus on the creation of safe spaces where youth can develop critical thinking around topics like religion, politics, race and extremism, leading to their holistic style of safeguarding, as will be discussed in the next section.

The qualitative data shows that the conceptual framework used by youth workers and practitioners speaks of a shared understanding of 'safe spaces/places'. According to the collected data, the concept of 'space spaces' is commonly understood by youth workers as environments that promote critical discussions around P/CVE issues and beyond. Safe space settings aim to build trust with youth and allow participants to share their views and questions around topics like religion, violence, violent extremism, radicalisation, gang violence and grooming without the fear of a backlash for sharing their ideas; for example, the fear of being referred is minimized through trusted local networks. The qualitative data suggests that safe spaces are often prioritised over safeguarding exclusively against violent extremism, particularly so within independent P/CVE efforts. This discussion contributes to the literature by providing further practice-based experiences of safeguarding at the grassroots level, while highlighting subtle but meaningful differences between the different approaches to P/CVE dictated by funding and networking possibilities.

A safe space is an environment created by youth workers/practitioners which promotes critical thinking, political/social literacy, recreational activities and networks of peer support in communities. Establishing safe spaces is a recurring aim in the practice of P/CVE grassroots efforts. The shared understanding of safe spaces is indicative of a dominant youth model which goes beyond P/CVE safeguarding practices outlined by the Prevent Duty because it requires providing support not only to individualized risks of radicalisation, but also to those at risk of grooming from wider social harms (gang violence, knife crime, child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, etc). The interviews included in this study with youth workers/practitioners reveal, safe spaces are key in maintaining trustworthy relationships with youth and supporting individuals exposed to consequences of social stigmatisation.

Azim, from the Resilience Project (EYST), in the following discussion provides an understanding of safe spaces as 'healthy environments' for youth:

> *We want them to have a good social environment, so sometimes it's taking them down to boxing clubs, or football clubs, or youth centres where they can spend time in a safe, supportive, nurturing environment. Sometimes it might also be immediate social groups in the sense of who are their friends, and so if they have a bad crowd they hang around with, it's trying to support them in finding a healthier friendship group to be part of and sometimes as well as finding them a set of friendships in the first place--often they really struggle with social skills.* Azim, Resilience Project.

In safe spaces, in addition to nurturing healthy peer-to-peer environments for youth as Azim described, there is also a need to establish horizontal relationships with them. That is, working *with* individuals (as opposed to doing work *to* them) situates the youth worker in a position of trust and equality, meaning that everyone in the session adds value to the discussion because everyone brings a unique viewpoint to the table (Nasra, 2018; Azim, 2018; Javayria, 2018; Rebecca, 2018; Harriet, 2018). For example, Narsa, a youth worker from Integrate UK (hybrid model), further defines 'safe spaces' as a context where young people can speak their minds without fear of being judged:

> *What I also found is that again when I was in schools...I don't make them feel dumb about what they say, I don't make them feel stupid about what they have to say. Don't be like 'that's wrong, no don't do that'. Empower them: 'ok, what do you mean by that'? You know, try to engage with them like that, kids will listen to that rather than you being like 'that's wrong, anyone else'?...then they will be too scared to talk to you. I think that all of those things put together will make a safe space. To have conversations about anything and everything.* Nasra, Integrate UK trustee.

A 'safe space', then, promotes open conversations that allow participants to express themselves freely. Such conversations may make participants feel uncomfortable but not because of disciplinary or correctional potential in the room, but rather because they involve discussing topics and concepts – grooming, violent extremism, radicalisation, racism – that people are uncertain of and want to learn more about with the guidance of the youth worker and their peers. Such topics are often present in the daily lives of youth, including through social and mass media, though they often lack the opportunities to critically engage with them. For example, Rebecca from Odd Arts, a hybrid organisation, described how critical discussions require visiting awkward, uncomfortable topics:

> *What we're trying to do is to stimulate a space where people experience something that compels them to act differently or challenge themselves. So we really like to set up a scenario and make people feel uncomfortable and then give them a chance to explore that… that's our theory of how we think people best change and learn.* Rebecca, Odd Arts director.

Rebecca's description is evidence of how dialogue can be established based on a two-way, horizontal environment confined within trust. In contexts like those described by Rebecca, Nasra and Azim, the referral and intervention model predicated in Prevent is secondary to establishing these conversations within a safe environment.

Such conversations require understanding the background of the individuals in the room. For RP3, a youth worker who collaborated with Hybrid Organisation, knowing the background can

help built rapport and identify common themes in the lives of participants, such as behaviour issues, the type of school they attend, or the community they live in. RP3 provided the example of working with Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), which usually include individuals who have been moved across foster homes and schools, and therefore develop a need to regain agency over their own lives. This youth worker has learned that youth from PRUs tend to be disruptive in the classroom because it is the only context where they can assert control. Therefore, they use creative measures to gain their attention:

> *I would give them the control of saying, 'you over there with your phone out, put on a 10, 20 minute timer on your phone, and if you still want to listen to me when that 10 minutes is gone, then I will stay'. Therefore, I'm giving them the control to decide, and it has not backfired on me, when the 10 minutes is up, they still want to listen.* RP 3, Hybrid Organisation.

This is an example of P/CVE work that establishes horizontal relationships with youth to build trust. Khalil from the Bristol Horn Youth Concern, an independent organisation, has years of experience working with Somali youth in Bristol. Complementary to RP3's account, Khalil knows the importance of understanding the context to build trust and before any P/CVE work can start. In the following excerpt he gives the example of the social adjustment Somali youth go through when engaging with both British and Somali cultures:

> *So an important thing to know is that when you go to Somalia at age 15 you're an adult, they are not treating you as a child, and at the age of 10 or 11 you're a strong young person, by the age of 15 you're responsible, you're mature enough you can decide what you want, you can go wherever you want, you can travel. So that young people that lived here, when they are back [in Somalia] they see that they are mature, they are triumphant, they're doing anything they want, some of them have children, some of them [are] working...when those children come—it takes some time but they jump very quickly...so when they come back again [to the UK] they're coming back to be treated as a child. So it's very confusing sometimes, because they are [in] two completely different states.* Khalil, BYHC director.

Similar to youth who have gone through Pupil Referral Units in their early lives and as a result seek to control some of the social settings they are in, Khalil describes how these Somali youth are faced with contrasting social and cultural settings between the UK and Somalia which can affect their behaviour. These context-specific factors are the root of behaviours that are often understood as problematic (violent, challenging, disrespectful, etc.) in social settings such as schools. Knowing this

information is key when working with and evaluating the behaviour and ideas of youth that stand out from their peers and could otherwise be mistaken, at times, as vulnerabilities to radicalisation under the frame of Prevent (Coppock & McGovern 2014). A learned outcome from these first-hand accounts of youth workers is that P/CVE grassroots youth work often shifts its focus from identifying vulnerabilities to radicalisation and making referrals as the Prevent model pursues, to the establishment of safe spaces suitable to local and individual specific needs that help to create a wider, more holistic form of safeguarding.

8.3 Establishing trust with local stakeholders

To build grassroots networks and understand the context of specific communities requires a substantial amount of work to be done within the community. As discussed in previous chapters, grassroots organisations must be able to evidence the strength of their networks at a local level to increase the probability of obtaining funding from Home Office, private philanthropist or charities for the delivery of P/CVE programmes. To do so they need to first gain trust from local stakeholders. For Rebecca and her team at Odd Arts, a hybrid funded organisation, for example, gaining trust required working without revenue but with the aim of building a good reputation and local partnerships. She described the approach here:

> *We still work for free and make a loss because we know we have to be people's friends before they work with us and they have to trust us… it was just something we used to do out of necessity really. I suppose it is a strategy, because people won't trust you with these [P/CVE] themes unless they've seen you or their best mate has seen you.* Rebecca, Odd Arts

Here Rebecca acknowledges that profitable work networks first required building trusted relationships. Rebecca further argued that this was only possible due to support from the local council which made available funds to help grassroots social enterprise (Rebecca, Odd Arts).

Similarly, the work of the Bristol Horn Youth Concern (BHYC), an independent organisation, also provides a more detailed understanding of how grassroots work begins with daily interactions with the community, often an activity without remuneration. The following account came from Khalil, when asked how BHYC makes connections with local youth who may be exposed to grooming:

> *Because we do outreach in the city. We go out. Because we've been working for quite long we know where they've been, where they are [in the streets in Bristol]. So we go there and talk to them, instead of these [groomers] coming, we go there.* Khalil, BHYC director.

Khalil's outreach work underlines the time, patience and subtlety required when gaining the trust of youth in Bristol. It is representative of accounts from several organisations in this study which also referenced that unpaid work spent in the community translates into building trust. At first, just being visible opens doors to conversations beyond P/CVE and about localized concerns in the community. For example, Sahar from the independent organisation MEND recounted her experience, similar to Khalil's, in the following excerpt:

> So one of the practical things is to actually be at the heart of the community and listen to the community concerns when you are a part of it. The other practical thing that we do is in MEND we deliver training, political and media engagement training that are for free. We go to the mosques, we go to the centres, we go to community places and deliver this training and not only train them but actually train the trainees. So once they've done the training we tell them, 'look, I want to train you to go back to your community and disseminate the same information', and they themselves become presenters and become trainers. Sahar, MEND regional manager.

It is very common to come across youth workers who started off as participants or service users of an organisation first, as it occurs under MEND training, Sahar claimed. It is also the case in Integrate UK, a youth-led hybrid organisation which actively encourages youth participants in workshops to become volunteers and part of the team (Lisa, 2018).

The Resilience Project (EYST) in Wales (previously the Think Project), focuses on preventing individuals from being recruited by both religious and far-right violent extremists in Swansea, Cardiff and surrounding areas. EYST (established in 2005) has a longstanding trajectory in P/CVE work since 2011, revealing how stable working relationships with local communities are vital for sustaining funding and local partnerships. In the case of PPAs (as Cardiff was in 2014), it requires establishing good working relationships with local authorities and Prevent Coordinators. The Resilience Project manager and youth worker Azim stated how a good reputation will inevitably lead to being a point of reference for local schools and communities who may have VE referral concerns:

> In Swansea, EYST has been here for a long time, all the schools know EYST. They know that if they have a case, they can always just speak with EYST, if we can support them then we will do, if we can't then we will pass them on. In Cardiff, we are kind of building a relationship, so we are not as established. Azim, Resilience Project.

This account further reveals the importance of building local networks and trust from local stakeholders. It also evidences the nature of partnerships between youth work in the third sector,

front-line workers in schools and government practitioners (Prevent Coordinators), as discussed in chapter five.

After building a reputation at a local level and obtaining positive feedback from their partners, these organisations are also in a better position to bid for funding from Home Office. These partnerships with local stakeholders, as mentioned above, are taken as evidence of potential impact and access to local communities during the bidding process. The following interview excerpt from Mohammed of KIKIT, a Prevent funded organisation on a project called *KIKIT Pathways*, which illustrates the impact of local partnerships on funding pathways:

> *This project that we're doing [currently] with the Home Office which is called "Pathways: addressing issues of radicalisation", it is basically now funded nationally. Basically, people have acknowledged the impact it makes and they apply for this project, local authorities local councils will say to the Home Office 'we like this project. It's something that we need for a community, so we'd like to try it out'.* Mohammed, KIKIT.

To obtain funding and establish trust from Home Office, KIKIT must bid for resources with the support of local council, allowing them to provide a service to several local communities through the development of networks with local councils and Prevent Coordinators.

This section has presented common networking approaches at the grassroots level. Often these unpaid practices are aimed at building necessary trust with youth and local stakeholders. As a result, there were no significant differences found in how forming local networks and building trust is valued across independent, hybrid and Prevent guided models of P/CVE. For hybrid and Prevent guided models of P/CVE, once trust if built (requires engaging with Prevent Coordinators), they have better odds when bidding for Home Office funding, while for independent organisations it provides a platform that supports private donations and crowd funding opportunities.

The final section of this chapter will look in more detail at the holistic approaches developed by youth workers in the balancing act of safeguarding youth from violent extremism and other social harms while avoiding social stigmatisation and maintaining trust.

8.4 Holistic approaches to P/CVE youth work

The challenge for Muslim youth workers is not only to understand and resist state and AQ discourse on a personal level, but also to assist young people in this process. In relation to identity, the key is negotiating spaces that defy the damaging effects of each

narrative. This includes the ability to embrace Islamic identity and British belonging, to feel loyalty to the state and the ummah, and to understand jihad as a duty, but reject terrorism. (McDonald, 2011: 184).

So far, this chapter has argued that grassroots P/CVE workers have developed a shared understanding of 'safe spaces' as a setting where they achieve a balance between the statutory Duty and pre-existing safeguarding practices against wider social harms. Adapting the P/CVE framework of risk and vulnerability to 'safe spaces' also allows youth workers to maintain funding pathways, local networking and building trust in their local communities. These safe spaces are a result of negotiations by youth workers between P/CVE policies and localised needs, as the opening quote by McDonald suggest. This is how youth workers create environments where youth can share their views in a challenging yet trustworthy context, which encourages critical thinking and horizontal respectful dialogue.

This final section discusses how grassroots youth work incorporates P/CVE efforts within holistic understandings of vulnerability through context specific interventions and youth empowerment. Similar to findings by Durose on front-line work in Salford under the New Labour's 'networked community governance' (1997), which showed that front-line workers "…can respond holistically to issues allowing them to be responsive to both national policy agendas and the priorities of the communities they work within" (Durose, 2009: 45). This research finds youth workers engaging with policy agendas while prioritising their relationships with youth and local communities.

The qualitative data evidences youth workers' the practices that go beyond P/CVE aims, which seek to empower local communities and provide non-violent pathways into social change. Holistic approaches aim to build resilience to narratives of violence and develop a sense of belonging, thereby preventing youth from falling prey to grooming, including radicalisation, while also countering any possible stigmatising effects of P/CVE and CT policies.

Contributing to existing literature showing a wide range of front-line responses – enactment, compliance, adaptation – to Prevent Policy (Busher et al., 2019; Thomas, 2017; O'Toole et al., 2016), this discussion around holistic P/CVE approaches provides practice-based examples of how grassroots youth work adapts the available P/CVE funding to tackle issues beyond violent extremism. This shows a dominant youth worker model, which critically engages with Prevent, resulting in practices which *negotiate*, *contest* and *resist* policies that represent a threat to their own aims (de St Croix 2016: 176), in the context of P/CVE. The practice of adapting P/CVE funding is most common in

hybrid organisations, which achieve more flexibility in the design and delivery of their programmes as their funding revenue is diversified across government and independent sources.

8.4.1 Vulnerable contexts: narratives of violence around youth

A recurring aim for the participants in this study is to raise awareness in schools and within communities of the possible *pathways* to radicalisation and to promote a wider understanding of vulnerability. Revealing these pathways to young people often requires reviewing case studies of radicalisation/grooming and resources about 'formers'; individuals who once were radicalised into VE networks or groomed into gang violence. It also involves talking about religion, racism, violent and non-violent extremism and socio-economic contextual factors such as access to education, employment and housing. These conversations often break preconceptions around who is vulnerable to support, join and participate in terrorism or gang violence; often in these conversations young people argue that those most vulnerable to radicalisation and grooming are Muslims or people living in poverty or uneducated (Nasra, 2018; RP 3, 2018). The first task for youth workers in such conversations is often to debunk the idea that VE grooming is something that happens to other people (far away), or that it is an issue prevalent in Muslim populations. RP 2, from Hybrid Organisation, offered a practical insight into the benefit gained from reviewing hypothetical pathway scenarios with their young participants:

> *I think that our job is to show how easy it is to get sucked into something. So it's more about their protection rather than their responsibility, and I think we start with that. [Then] you can move on to…ok protect yourself, what do you do when you think a friend is at risk or radicalized, where would you go, what would you do?* RP2, Hybrid Organisation.

Efforts to keep local communities safe require raising awareness about VE and the safety measures available for youth and members of the community, as illustrated by RP2 further in our conversation. Although this organisation is located in a local authority persistently labelled a PPA throughout the existence of Prevent, their work is not primarily funded by Prevent. They are a hybrid model of P/CVE and most of their revenue comes from the work they deliver, as argued by a colleague from Hybrid Organisation: "The reason we are an independent organisation is because we wanted to keep independent offer" (RP 1, 2018). They therefore have the flexibility to work with the partners they want to engage with which they find key to breaking myths about radicalisation and creating wider understandings of vulnerability.

Odd Arts is another hybrid organisation which aims to dispel misconceptions around radicalisation and violent extremism through critical debates. They implement critical thinking as a tool to tackle VE, as Rebecca described:

> *The bit I'm interested in is giving people an increased sense of belonging, increasing critical thinking, increasing empathy and holding challenging conversations around difference and allowing people to see that we can disagree, we can be different, we can discuss it and not hate. What is interesting to me is what people understand about radicalisation. It's actually the understanding of what I am interested in [that] the workshop explores: where do our values come from, where does hate come from, and are you ok with the values and views you hold? Have you ever considered where they come from and have you considered the impact of that?* Rebecca, Odd Arts

Odd Arts practitioners aim to establish safe spaces in their workshops where people can disagree and discuss without feeling there is a right or wrong answer. Rebecca provides a clear insight into how Odd Arts seeks to develop critical thinking and contributed to P/CVE work by challenging belief systems often charged with strong emotive pre-dispositions. In her experience, it is more likely that participants will walk away with a broader understanding about a topic through a critical discussion. As debate pushes participants to engage with opposing viewpoints which helps to create empathy towards different views.

Similarly, independent P/CVE grassroots efforts documented in this research aim to disclose the emergence of possible pathways to VE grooming through open dialogue with youth. For example, Khalil's work as the director of the Bristol Horn Youth Concern (BHYC) has increased his networks with local stakeholders in Bristol, such as police, city council, Somali community members and other grassroots organisations, because of his rapport with Somali youth and how he has used this trust to safeguard them from grooming. He provided an anecdote on how some of his interactions with local youth are used to expand safeguarding practices against vulnerability to radicalisation:

> *We talked about the groups like the one in London, like the al Muhajiroun. We talk about these groups. We talked about [how] these groups exist in Bristol, and someone says 'oh, I've seen someone like that who was here'. So when we talk about that, we talk about the group that is existent and everybody knows it, it's in the public eyes so nothing to worry about, but do you know anyone who has seen it? And then they sometimes say: 'somebody was last week here talking about them, and we just walked away, we don't want to relate to them'.*

And then that person who said that, I tell them, 'can we have a private meeting and have a coffee?'…They sometimes ask the reason why I ask, and I say that I don't want [the person they saw] to harm anyone. Khalil, BYHC director.

Khalil, like other youth workers in this study, provides evidence here about the benefits of nurturing strong bonds at a grassroots level to safeguard the community from VE and wider social harms. Furthermore, it evidences the valuable work of independent organisations countering radicalisation in non-PPAs, such as Bristol.

However, safeguarding practices are not just limited to raising awareness of VE grooming. There is important work being done at the grassroots level around vulnerability towards violence beyond P/CVE work as well. The work of Jawaab, an independent organisation focused on Muslim empowerment based in London, illustrates this well. Rizwan, the director of Jawaab, discussed their focus on raising awareness of structures that reproduce cycles of violence, particularly those that target ethnic and religious minorities in the UK:

ISIS and the propaganda around airstrikes is creating a sense of stereotype and dehumanisation of Muslims in those countries and how those have impacts on young Muslims all together. Here, the interviews we do with young people and the research that we have done shows a constant focus on violence, whether it is on TV or in state counterterrorism policies, young people are just completely exposed to violence; whether it's the English Defence League or hearing about hate crimes, it is not creating a healthy environment for young Muslims to really become part of society. This builds a sense of powerlessness, and that is why we exist, building the power of Muslims. It is to impact and help dismantle that powerlessness that has been created by society. Rizwan, Jawaab

Jawaab raises the awareness about the structures of racism and Islamophobia Muslim youth are exposed to on a daily basis, that affect their sense of belonging. In the previous chapter, Azim (The Resilience Project) also pointed to the concern about the overexposure of youth to violence in general, which can lead to VE as much as it can lead to other social harms:

In the majority of cases we've had young people being referred to us for that [watching ISIS propaganda], by schools in most cases, 90% of the time, so I'm talking about 14 or 15 cases we've had… in the majority of those cases it wasn't that much a person attracted to ISIS, it was a young person attracted to violence. So alongside the videos they are watching by ISIS, where people are getting killed and murdered, they are also watching snuff videos, which are online material videos where people are getting killed and murdered. So along with the

videos which include ISIS killing people, there's also videos by Mexican cartels of an assassination being recorded, there's also videos of street fights in central Asia. The kind of materials online which are graphic and violent and that's what they are attracted to. That person still needs help because again, a person with the level of infatuation with violence needs support because if they are interested in violence on that level, then maybe they need to be intervened. But you wouldn't necessarily consider them potentially attracted to extremism as a form of violence. Azim, Resilience Project.

Azim argues that an exclusive focus on violent extremism would not necessarily tackle wider narratives of violence within communities. Therefore, tackling only violent *extremism* would not necessarily result in safeguarding an individual from other types of grooming (such as gang violence). Knowing the context of violence, Shahab agrees, is key in the design of a programme that tackles violence holistically in local communities:

> *The public policymakers need to be fully aware of all the variables, all of the other factors that might be contributing to someone doing crazy things, whether it's committing an act of violence, whether it's committing burglary, or any other crime, or committing VE, and so forth. So this would be a holistic approach, you get much more buy-in from all of their communities, even Muslim communities, if it's coming across as well-researched, well-understood and it's a general problem. Honestly, I have not come across one individual since 9/11, I have not come across any individual I thought, 'hey I'm a bit worried about you.'* Shahab, MEND *regional manager*

Shahab, expressed in the interview concerns over an overemphasis on P/CVE efforts, which undermines youth support in other areas. Furthermore, saying that he has never encountered someone who seemed vulnerable to violent extremism in his experience is relevant, as he is located in a locality in the North of England consistently labelled as a PPA since 2007. Similarly, RP 3's work goes beyond P/CVE work with Hybrid Organisation as he notes that daily violence can easily be transferred to youth:

> *Alongside [Hybrid Organisation], my full-time role is working within a serious youth violence and exploitation team within a hospital. So, I suppose that the violence thing stems throughout all of the stuff I do, whether it's countering violent extremisms, or whether its gangs and youth violence. Violence goes from people to young people.* RP 3, Hybrid Organisation.

Although P/CVE programmes in the third sector do target awareness-raising around vulnerability to violent extremism and grooming, a wider approach to tackle 'violence' and other social harms often frames their interventions. In the search to understand the underlying issues or structures that contribute to youth grooming, these grassroots organisations often shift their focus solely from radicalisation to include wider pathways into grooming processes.

8.4.2 Youth empowerment: sense of belonging and social stigmatisation

For Muslim youth work, not only is faith – in the broadest sense – acknowledged, but it is viewed as being as central as each young person declares it to be, from active interest in theological issues to identity-led expressions of Islam, in which religious practice plays little part, but identification as Muslims and with Muslims is paramount. Young people are not viewed as homogenous, and religion is not 'preached': the case of each young person is approached individually. Innovative and religiously or culturally appropriate projects are developed, according to the needs of young clients… McDonald 2011: 179.

The thematic analysis of the qualitative data shows that grassroots youth workers share a wider aim, that goes beyond Prevent's aims, of building resilience through youth empowerment. Which is indicative of a youth work model focused on a wider range of vulnerabilities. Accounts of youth workers and practitioners highlight the importance of tackling the disenfranchisement of youth caused by social stigmatisation and austerity due spending cuts in local authorities. As McDonald argues in the quote above, youth work values individuality, identity, cultural and religious diversity in youth. Therefore they seek to develop the tools in youth for social and community engagement and provide platforms where they can practice their agency. For example, according to Ilyas from NUS Black Students, without local resources, youth often lack a sense of belonging to their communities:

We are in a situation now where you have a generation of young people and especially the ones who are going to be vulnerable to radical ideologies from the left or the right, it's going to be those who don't feel attached to the country, and attachment to society starts with attachment to community. The fact that there's nothing, there's so little for young people to feel attachment to community on a local level means that there are young people [who] don't care about their communities in any instance. Ilyas, NUS.

Grassroots workers such as Ilyas have first-hand knowledge about the impact of austerity measures on communities, particularly with the closure of youth clubs or groups at local levels (Ilyas, 2018; Gareth, 2018; Shahab, 2018; RP2, 2018; Adam, 2018). They share concerns around a decrease in safe

spaces where youth can spend time in healthy environments. One of the consequences, as Ilyas
noted, is that if young people cannot spend time in their communities, they fail to develop a sense of
belonging. The following excerpt Khalil, Bristol Horn Youth Concern (BHYC) Director, reveals a similar
concern on creating a sense of belonging:

> So it is very important that young people don't feel isolated, [don't feel] that they are not
> part of the society. That's why we are doing this, to give opportunity and the young people to
> show them that they are part of society. We work with them and say 'you know that the
> Bristol City Council and the police and other organisations contribute to our activities, like
> football, they cover the costs. So we need to also contribute to society'. So we do litter
> picking and the young people come and they pick up the litter and they work and some of
> them who won an award for that. We are making young people be a part of the society.
> Khalil, BHYC director.

Youth workers and independent organisations in the third sector, such as BHYC in Bristol, have
actively tried to counter the effects of local spending cuts by adapting the resources available. At
times it means adapting available funding for P/CVE, to empower and help youth develop bonds
with their local communities; the BHYC has received funding from the local city council through the
Building a Stronger Together fund, which tackles extremism in communities. Similarly, Harriet from
the Peace Foundation, a hybrid organisation, has the experience of delivering programmes to youth
and maintaining positive working relationships with youth workers, Prevent practitioners, front-line
workers and local authorities. According to Harriet, a central consideration when targeting structural
narratives of violence at grassroots level is avoiding the stigmatizing and labelling of young people:

> The point is that it's about 'and', it's not 'either-or', it's 'and'. It's, you can be British **and** you
> can be Muslim **and** you can be Pakistani, there's such a range, and limiting yourself to only
> one role will prevent that rich experience... I also think being vulnerable is in a way is taking
> power from the young people, in the sense that you have skills to communicate and to share
> your perspective but if people label you as vulnerable then perhaps you're excluded from
> some of the opportunities that would allow you to constructively share them. So you're not
> just vulnerable, you are also a potential great leader, you are a brilliant sportsperson, a
> brilliant reader, that sort of stuff. It's the 'and', it's the multiplicity of things. Harriet, Peace
> Foundation.

Throughout Harriet's interview it became evident that she consistently tried to avoid using language
which can reinforce negative labels on youth. This quote also captures a holistic understanding of

vulnerability, beyond the frame of P/CVE, as it is incorporated into models of youth empowerment. Concepts such as 'vulnerable' or 'at risk', in her view, limit the potential of the support her group can provide to youth. However, she also made it clear that this view is not rooted in a position critical of the Prevent Strategy, as these same concepts are central to its framework of intervention. Youth workers in this research shared Harriet's focus on youth empowerment and building a sense of belonging to local communities, as a wider understanding of safeguarding from violent extremism. Javayria from the independent organisation Jawaab similarly focused on the negative implications of designing policies that focus on youth who are 'vulnerable' or 'hard to reach', and instead seeks to empower them:

> *They would say they are at risk and vulnerable. But my thing was always like, they are not hard to reach young people, you just find them hard to reach. Maybe they think you are hard to reach, you know what I mean? Like, from who? What are you even saying? The problem is that there is no language around this. The language I would like to see is—and this is what I like about Jawaab—is that Riz [Rizwan, Jawaab director] says that he wants to engage with young people to empower them to fight against Islamophobia and do more anti-racist work, right? Which is really different, it shifts the entire dynamic. But what I would really like people to say, is not that these young people are hard to reach, but I like people to say these young people are affected by the violence of capitalism, of white supremacy, of etc., etc.*
> Javayria, Jawaab.

The shift from labelling youth to empowering them, Javayria argues, requires identifying the wider root causes behind the so-called individual "vulnerability" or "risk", such as socio-economic inequality or structural racism. Context is key in understanding vulnerability beyond P/CVE. In their independent work, Jawaab seeks to reveal these structures to Muslim youth, providing them with the tools to navigate them, as Javayria further details:

> *So I know that Jawaab is not saying we are going to change structures but they are saying we know things are shitty but let's help you navigate it, help you resist it. Which is something really different because I think that many of these youth programmes like NCS [National Citizen Service], what they do is decontextualize, they say 'oh this person is poor or at risk.' They talk about someone being poor but they don't talk about the causes of poverty. They talk about someone being at risk and at the fringe of society but they never talk about what causes them to be at the fringes of society. So they decontextualize everything. I said this to them, I was like, you think people exist in the poor vacuum? Something made it happen.*
> Javayria, Jawaab.

As discussed in previous chapters, this quote supports the claim that grassroots efforts go beyond treating the symptoms of violent extremism, often described by interviewees as Prevent's focus. Instead, Javayria, among others, focus on the contextual issues that affect the daily lives of youth in the communities they live in. One way of engaging with these contextual issues is by upskilling and empowering youth, as Rizwan, director of Jawaab, discussed:

> *Changing that system and that structure is completely different from giving them the tools for understanding that. So, we are educating them to understand that, we might give them tools and build their skills in how they can campaign, and we can work with them in participation. But that is different than dismantling systems, which is not what we are doing. We basically want to make them feel like they do have power. That is just one element. We are also looking at fostering positive Muslim identity.* Rizwan, Jawaab.

Helping youth to become aware of the social challenges they might face is a step in their empowerment. This work by Jawaab is an example of how independent youth work contributes to P/CVE efforts, indirectly, through youth empowerment programmes. In the case of hybrid organisations, youth workers also incorporate youth empowerment into their P/CVE work, through available funding in PPAs.

One example of how a hybrid organisation aligns P/CVE work with youth empowerment is the Future Proof programme. It seeks to enrol youth into certification programmes (part of the UK Youth network) to provide them with qualifications and tools transferable to education and labour sectors. Adam, an experienced youth worker showed how his local networks are useful in linking the Future Proof programme to provide youth from his community a wide range of training programmes and activities that he thinks might be useful for their future aspirations:

> *So for them [training is] very important, 'cause for them academia and education is very bewildering, as in "where will it take me?" But at least they have something vocational. A lot of young people actually want to train as electricians or plumbers or gas workers on the side so they could have an NVQ [National Vocational Qualification], if the degree which is more than an experience, if they come out and they don't find work they get something they can fall back on it. That's the way that the young people around me are perceiving the future.* Adam, youth worker.

Here Adam echoes the importance of working locally and adapting resources to fit the needs of youth beyond P/CVE efforts. Adam, involved in the delivery, and Ruhena, involved in the design of Future Proof, both seek the upskilling of youth reached by their programme (Ruhena, 2018). Sahar

from MEND also argues that upskilling is part of a long-term strategy that provides tools for individuals to use in various contexts:

> *We have a long-term development strategy for every person who joins MEND on training. So we do public speaking, debating skills, so if you went on a TV channel and you want to fight for your right to be or your right to express your faith, you know how to debate, and this is very, very empowering.* Sahar, MEND regional manager.

According to Sahar, public speaking training upskills and empowers individuals. MEND, similar to Jawaab, both independent organisations, both of which do not actively self-define as doing P/CVE work. However, the data shows that they share with P/CVE organisations a holistic approach to tackling wider social harms in local youth, which overlaps with building resilience to radicalisation. For instance, Khalil in Bristol recounted how parents acknowledge that his independent work with youth has contributed to building new experiences and aspirations for their children:

> *We spend a lot of time [5 years since he first met some of the youth] and they become successful. So when they are in the university and some of them have families, because they respect what we've done for them, sometimes they come to the session because of the parents, because they know that we've done something good for them, for the children. Last week we took some children to the game, Bristol City, and the mother came to me and said 'I cannot thank you enough because that's giving aspiration to our children because they have never been there.* Khalil, BYHC director.

Khalil emphasizes here the importance of building trust with youth and local stakeholders. His work in Bristol, a non-PPA, has contributed to P/CVE efforts locally while forming bonds with and empowering youth. However, securing funding has always been a challenge for his organisation, even when he has proven to safeguard youth from radicalisation and wider social harms (Khalil 2018). On the other hand, grassroots P/CVE organisations located in PPAs navigate the existing resources made available by Home Office through Prevent to accomplish such work. If they secure funding, their work can go beyond safeguarding from radicalisation to also empower youth. The following quote by RP 2 from Hybrid Organisation summarises and further expands the purpose of P/CVE grassroots work:

> *Through citizenship education--understanding how to create social change without violence-- so you are looking at extremism movements that say 'the only way is violence', and you are trying to say 'no, there are other ways'. [Instead], how can we enable young people to mount a campaign, to lobby government to crowdfund, how can you give young people the skills for*

advocacy? So if they want to create change they don't have to go through violent protests,
and hate and attacking people, and so I was looking at all the different rationales for what
schools design to do. RP 2, Hybrid Organisation

RP2 argues here that academic settings are the central role of education in countering violent
extremism. They echo previous accounts by Rizwan, Javayria and Harriet that P/CVE efforts should
follow the path of empowerment through civic participation, political activism and nurturing a sense
belonging. Furthermore, RP 2 advocates for education settings as safe spaces where young people
can voice their opinions and create change, such as youth clubs and other practice settings of
workers and practitioners in this study. Overall, success in promoting these qualities in youth is a
part of building resilience to violent extremism because they help populate the void used by
radicalisation networks to groom people into senseless violence; a void often regarded more simply
as the 'vulnerability' of hard-to-reach youth. Instead, the youth worker/practitioners in this thesis
believe they can empower youth to challenge violent extremist networks on their own terms.

Conclusion

Looking at the pathways into P/CVE youth work reveals that critical views of the Prevent
strategy at grassroots are rooted in personal experiences with social stigmatisation. Examples of
stigmatisation of ethnic and religious minorities in the UK documented in the existing literature
(OSJI, 2016; Elshimi, 2015; Copppock & McGovern, 2014; Heath-Kelly, 2013 ;McDonald, 2011; Birt,
2009; Kundnani, 2009) are echoed by the experiences of youth workers in this study. However, a
main contribution to the field is the qualitative data showing the mechanism through which youth
workers and practitioners adapt and integrate P/CVE to a dominant youth work model, described
here as holistic approaches with wider interpretations of vulnerability, risk and safeguarding.

This chapter includes examples from the data of first-hand accounts of social stigmatisation
endured by research participants which has motivated social activism and critical views of state-led
P/CVE work, particularly of the Prevent Strategy. Further independent work described by Javayria
and Sahar, who have both been subject to several accounts of Islamophobia motivated them to
participate in work countering social stigmatisation. Such findings contribute to empirical research
which highlights the complexities behind the delivery of Prevent, beyond policy compliance, at
grassroots and in the public sector (Busher et al., 2019; Thomas, 2017; O'Toole et al., 2016).
Expanding to this body work, this chapter shows how youth workers and practitioners identify ways

in which P/CVE policies are incompatible and threaten their work cultures, and how they therefore adapt them to fit their holistic approaches to youth work.

Furthermore, this chapter has shown discrepancies between Prevent strategy and grassroots P/CVE work, particularly in the case of independent and hybrid models where understandings of holistic safeguarding practices and vulnerability go beyond Prevent's focus on individualised risk and vulnerability. Instead, youth workers develop an understanding that safe spaces, necessary to build trust and critically engage with youth around issues that permeate their daily lives, including violence, grooming, racism, religion and extremism, among others. Independent and hybrid grassroots organisations and youth workers make similar adjustments in their practices to meet local needs. A final contribution to the study of P/CVE work, which has mostly focused on Prevent led work, is the data on independent and hybrid P/CVE efforts, used in this thesis to provide a new layer of analysis of the tension between P/CVE policy design and outcome, from the lenses of youth work.

Conclusions

This thesis has set out to explore the role of P/CVE grassroots efforts through studying the practices, traditions and knowledge of youth workers/practitioners in the UK. The assumption explored in this thesis, based on the existing literature, is that front-line practices engage with P/CVE policies in complex, heterogeneous, multi-faceted ways that move within a spectrum between policy compliance and contestation. To achieve my aim, I designed a two-part research question: What are the challenges faced by youth workers and practitioners when implementing P/CVE policies in the UK? What is their role in adapting, challenging or implementing state-led P/CVE policies, particularly those relying on front-line implementation, such as the Prevent Duty? The goal in exploring these questions was to expand our understanding of front-line practices beyond the frame of the Prevent Strategy (which most related research in the literature speaks to) and to explore whether there are heterogenous practices in the front line which generate a multi-faceted, multi-layered picture of the P/CVE field. This research therefore fills a gap in the literature by providing primary qualitative data on not only Prevent-funded work, but also independent and hybrid (meaning both independently and Home Office funded) P/CVE work, and its relationship with P/CVE policies in the UK, primarily the Prevent Strategy. The study of P/CVE work in the UK, no matter how it is funded, cannot be fully depicted without engaging with Prevent, the UK's P/CVE strategy which has relied on multi-agency collaboration between the private, public and voluntary sectors of the population in its early intervention in potential pathways to radicalisation in communities.

Understanding front-line practices through youth work

Paying detailed attention to the work of front-line professionals and grassroots workers is central for the understanding of policy outcome in the P/CVE field. In chapters 1 & 2, I have argued that understanding the complexities behind front-line practices is of particular importance due to a persistent focus of counter-terrorism (CT) and P/CVE strategies on whole of society networks, through state and non-state collective efforts to mitigate the threat of terrorism and radicalisation, respectively. In the case of the UK, I outlined how Prevent Strategy, in its three phases (2007-2011; 2011-2015; 2015-Present), has persistently targeted Muslim youth, characterising this sector of the population as *vulnerable* and *at risk*. Furthermore, I reviewed the existing literature that has provided primary data to evidence the social stigmatisation of religious and ethnic minorities in the UK due to the framework and implementation of the Prevent policy. This is particularly related to the Prevent Statutory Duty (2015), which expanded the responsibility of safeguarding and referring

anyone identified as vulnerable to radicalisation to public sector workers, particularly in the health and education sectors.

As a result, the second chapter reviews how Prevent has operated with a top-down type of implementation since 2007, due to its centrally controlled funding by Home Office. Furthermore, the Prevent Strategy most recently has relied on civic society to provide the infrastructure for surveillance and reporting due to the Prevent Duty. This is why the academic literature has predominantly characterised Prevent as a policy that cascades down into the front-line: where public sector professionals are given the *signs* (risk and vulnerability factors) of radicalisation, and legally-required to process local referrals through the Statutory Duty; becoming the eyes and ears of Prevent. Hence, the structural framework of Prevent does not promote the creativity and expertise-based input from actors in the front-line, as it does not ask them to co-produce the ideas and practices that help implement the policy.

Two main outcomes were offered as a result of this literature reviewed in chapters one and two. Firstly, there is an overemphasis on the study of P/CVE work under the frame of the Prevent policy, leaving a gap in our understanding of independent P/CVE work. Secondly, there are two main P/CVE research approaches reflected in the literature. One is in a predominant body of research which has characterised the Prevent policy within the frame of binary struggles between top-down versus bottom-up P/CVE approaches, including between policy design and front-line agency. It hence suggests that front-line practices are inadvertently complicit in the stigmatisation of ethnic and religious minorities in the UK due to their compliance with the delivery of Prevent policy. The other highlights the importance of an expanding body of literature which has unpacked the complexities behind P/CVE implementation, demonstrating examples of compliance, enactment, adaptation and even contestation of Prevent policy in the front-line (notwithstanding its framework of implementation). Within this nuanced understanding of policy outcome, and on P/CVE work designed and delivered beyond the guidance and funding of Prevent policy, is where my research makes its contributions.

Understanding P/CVE youth work through decentred security governance

Another main contribution of this thesis is the operationalisation of a decentred security governance framework to the study of P/CVE youth work practices in the UK. The aim of viewing the topic through this lens is to expand our understanding of the constant negotiations between P/CVE policy design and front-line practices. The discussion in chapter three outlined the existing need to

update our understanding of P/CVE youth work due to the rollout of the Prevent Statutory Duty in 2015, and to do this beyond the characterisation of a binary analysis between policy design versus front-line agency, as only some research has explored this so far (Busher et al., 2019; Thomas, 2017; O'Toole et al., 2016). As I showed in the second chapter, there is also a gap in the literature in the study of youth P/CVE work beyond the scope of the Prevent Strategy. These two realities about the existing literature shaped the theoretical assumptions in this study about youth work and how it operates as a combination of decentred heterogenous practices that contribute to the shaping of P/CVE work in the front-line. The primary qualitative data in this study was therefore collected to unpack the complexities behind P/CVE work as understood by youth workers who have delivered Prevent, hybrid, and independently funded P/CVE work.

In chapter three I argued that the governance literature firstly focused on the scope of agency, autonomy or relative autonomy of street-level bureaucrats. The outcome of this approach, however, was the depiction that street level bureaucrats are making marginal adjustments to policy agendas. This theoretical approach suggests that front-line workers, or street-level bureaucrats, do not alter the terms in which they operate. That is, they might secure funding to do something instead of Prevent, such as anti-racist work, but that does not fundamentally alter the structural aspects of policy itself. Within the framework of security governance, there is a focus on a binary power struggle between policy design and front-line agency, which fails to recognize where workers in the front-line make autonomous adjustments despite policy agenda.

That approach is different from the decentred security governance approach proposed by Bevir (2016), who has a different take on power. Instead of government policy either cascading down or being challenged in the front-line, Bevir believes that policy outcomes actually rely on co-production, meaning that there are co-dependencies between multi-layered sectors of society and government in order to solve complex policy problems, such as 'wicked problems'. These are problems that are not amenable from bureaucratic expertise alone, where there is a need to partner with public sector professionals, local stakeholder and service users to try to figure out the nature of the problems and to harness their expertise to deliver solutions. As argued in chapter 3, this is different than street level bureaucrats simply going off script; rather, there is a need to create solutions via partnerships with a constellation of different kinds of actors and their heterogenous practices. Where the governance literature provides an analysis of agency led entirely in the tensions that arise between street level bureaucrats and policymakers, that is not the complete story. There is actually a co-dependent relationship between citizens and policy makers in regard to policy implementation. My research therefore pays attention to the complex array of different kinds of

practices and actors who become involved in co-producing knowledge about the problem being addressed, such as radicalisation, and what the solutions to those problems are as imagined by youth workers in relation to policy.

The importance of engaging with independent P/CVE work

Diversifying research interests to include independent and partially state-funded (hybrid) P/CVE work means we can learn alternative, and at times complementary, ways of doing P/CVE work beyond the framework of the Prevent Strategy. My research shows that there is a general landscape of collaboration at the grassroots level, as shown in chapters five and six which discuss how youth workers and practitioners collaborate, adapt to funding pathways and network locally to ensure their supporting role remains available for youth in their communities. As a result, youth workers/practitioners develop nuanced understandings of the politicised P/CVE context in which they work, which helps them navigate polarised understandings of the Prevent policy which can affect their funding pathways and local networks. Research participants from all funding streams discussed in this study show that they, at times, compromise their own polarised views of the Prevent policy to collaborate in working with youth, including safeguarding youth from violent extremism. Such is the example of the Future Proof programme that is partially funded by Prevent and involved collaborations with Prevent Coordinators for the recruitment of youth workers. However, the programme design also encouraged youth workers' (affiliated with a wide range of organisations including MEND, described in the field at times as an 'anti-Prevent' organisation) agency in determining the themes the programme delivered to youth, and had the overarching aim, which reached beyond P/CVE work, of upskilling youth.

In chapters five and six I argued that youth workers/practitioners collaborate at the grassroots level to co-design strategies to adapt to challenges brought on by Prevent funding, Priority areas (PPAs) and the statutory duty in order to maintain their work. That is, youth workers/practitioners engage with several stakeholders to increase their funding opportunities and the opportunities they can offer their local youth. The data depicts that at the grassroots level, decentred networks are key in establishing trust and working relationships with local stakeholders including schools, local councils, police, community leaders and other youth workers. However, these networks are dependent on P/CVE policies (for example, funding opportunities and safeguarding regulations such as the Statutory Duty), local authority budgets (spending cuts) and consistent changes in government personnel. Grassroots networks of collaboration better position youth workers/practitioners in this study to navigate this volatile context which affects their funding

opportunities and local partnerships. They are also a tool to tackle the complexity of P/CVE work and its intersection with other social issues through multi-layered practices.

Further contributions to the field are problematized in chapters five and six, which showed how networks developed at the grassroots level improve the delivery of P/CVE programmes, are used to navigate the polarising divides around Prevent, and can create pathways to funding and local working partnerships. One recurring theme in the data which evidences these networks of decentred collaboration is the topic of building trust with local stakeholders and communities. All research participants discussed extensive efforts to build and (re)build trust to counter the scepticism in communities around Prevent funded work, a perception at times extended to all P/CVE work. For youth workers/practitioners delivering Prevent funded work, such as the Kikit organisation with their community referral panels, this meant showing transparency to their community about their funding streams but also at times highlighting how their approaches differ from previous work funded by Prevent. For independent organisations, such as in Jawaab and MEND, this building trust with communities required distancing themselves from Prevent and Home Office funding. For hybrid organisations, such as Odd Arts and the Bristol Horn Youth Concern (BHYC), trust is established by spending extensive hours in communities, growing familiarity with local needs and at times working without revenue.

Countering social stigmatisation and holistic approaches

The discussion of heterogeneous approaches to P/CVE work in chapters seven and eight offers interesting lessons about how safeguarding is understood broadly (beyond safeguarding for violent extremism) and risk/vulnerabilities are understood holistically and contextually. A key distinction from Prevent funded work, as shown in these chapters, is that youth workers and practitioners who are less dependent on Home Office funding and its networks are more likely to incorporate P/CVE work into their wider youth work, including youth empowerment, upskilling, and countering social stigmatisation, racism and Islamophobia. Research participants often argued that the framework of risk and vulnerability can have the unintended effect of stigmatizing youth. In the case of hybrid P/CVE work such as Integrate UK, Odd Arts, and the Peace Foundation there are explicit attempts to avoid social stigmatisation by expanding their understanding of safeguarding, risk and vulnerability towards developing critical thinking, raising awareness about grooming beyond radicalisation.

The work of independent and hybrid organisations aims to develop critical thinking around politicised topics such as radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism. Additionally, these discussions are integrated in wider frames of work which are aimed at upskilling youth, youth empowerment through political and social agency and vocational training. Although the evaluation tools used by the organisations included in the sample are mostly based on evaluation forms (filled out before and after the sessions) since they often lack the resources to measure longitudinal attitudinal changes in their participants, research participants argued that they measure success in their approaches based on the level of engagement in their delivery sessions, the positive word of mouth about their organisation and their work. This positive reputation with local stakeholders expands their partnership prospects, and the possibility of being called upon by schools and local partners to return and deliver more workshops.

Chapter eight details how youth work practices, traditions and knowledge shape P/CVE practices and not necessarily only the other way around. Accounts by research participants affiliated with independent groups such as Jawaab, the BYHC, MEND, NUS Black Students Network and the Resilience Project show that at the grassroots level P/CVE work intersects with work focused on countering social stigmatisation resulting from the framework of the Prevent policy, as documented by academia, members of their communities and even their personal experiences. One argument put forward by research participants is that wider issues at the core of some of their work, such as countering Islamophobia, have been exacerbated due to jihadist terrorist attacks in the UK and worldwide as well as due to the unfounded focus of CT and P/CVE policies like Prevent on Muslim communities.

Chapter 8 presents several examples where the pathways into youth work and social activism for some research participants was in part precipitated by their personal experiences of stigmatisation by the Prevent policy or being targets of Islamophobia due to the wider context resulting from the 'war on terror'. Another argument presented by research participants is that their work empowering Muslim youth by upskilling them and providing the tools for them to engage critically with P/CVE and CT policies also has the effect of building resilience against violent extremism. This claim is important and worth exploring further, as the suggestion from the data is that the delivery of empowering youth work detached from the frame of P/CVE can provide similar results as P/CVE work framed under the contested security framework of pre-crime detection. This means that alternative work focused on building resilience to P/CVE through empowerment could be a valuable avenue that draws upon pre-existing structures of support at the grassroots level,

which would require more funding opportunities and which do not have the unintended effects of stigmatising its targeted populations.

Overall, the data discussed in these results chapters evidence how youth workers/practitioners play an important role in reshaping P/CVE understandings in order to generate localised solutions to complex social issues, or 'wicked problems', such as radicalisation. More importantly, they identify how one complex social issue such as radicalisation intersects with pre-existing complex social issues such as gang violence, racism (including Islamophobia), domestic abuse and FGM, for example. With that in mind, they aim to design alternative interventions to tackle any of these 'wicked problems' without exacerbating issues with intersecting root causes. These complex intersections between social issues are evident to youth workers/practitioners due to their contextualised practices, traditions and knowledge, however they often escape the policy design targeting an isolated issue such as radicalisation. There is therefore a need to acknowledge the complexities of P/CVE work, not from the widely researched focus on identifying the drivers of radicalisation and profiles of terrorists which are useful in counter-terrorism strategies, but rather from considering how P/CVE work aligns with other complex, often pre-existing, social issues. Such work would consider the impact of P/CVE and CT strategies on its targeted populations and its potential effects on other pre-existing social issues through the experiences of front-line workers, such as youth workers.

Further Research

My research has pointed to the central role of Home Office in the management of P/CVE funding through Prevent Priority Areas (PPAs), and its impact on local networks and funding availability at the grassroots levels. A persistent speculation in this research is that such mapping out of funding based on PPAs has increased the interest of grassroots work in general, and youth work specifically, within the P/CVE remit. This is because there is consistent speculation from research participants regarding how organisations have shifted their work to incorporate P/CVE work. In some instances, research participants perceived an increase in competition in PPAs for resources as a result of local budget cuts and increased funding opportunities under P/CVE themed work.

Some participants argued that this is a recurring theme in youth work, where they are constantly having to adapt to policy priorities and budget cuts in order to maintain their pre-existing and localised work and incorporate new social issues determined by funding pathways, and meaning that this context is exacerbated by the Prevent Strategy. Other participants, however, such as

Javayria, argued that the mainstreaming of P/CVE work triggers some organisations to adapt "buzz words" that align with P/CVE work, such as targeting "hard to reach youth", "targeting vulnerable or at risk factors" or "doing anti-extremism work". She presents this decision as an ethical dilemma, where youth workers/practitioners are forced to decide if they should incorporate the language of P/CVE policies into their pre-existing body of work in order to increase funding opportunities, or if they should maintain their pre-existing frames of work at the risk of reducing their funding pathways. The unintended effect of adopting the framework of P/CVE policies such as Prevent is the cost of potentially increasing the frames of intervention which favour social stigmatisation. There is an opportunity here to evaluate the potential benefits of encouraging a shift at the grassroots level to focus on P/CVE work, against the potential cost of decreasing funding opportunities for other social issues in those localities. As stated above, this is of particular interest for further research if holistic approaches that target the intersection of social issues such as racism, Islamophobia, gang violence and domestic abuse are equally efficient in building reliance to grooming for violent extremism in local communities while also avoiding social stigmatisation.

Furthermore, this thesis points to the need for further research on determining what the metrics used by Home Office are to determine PPAs; asking, for example, why have these PPAs targeted the same local authorities throughout the three different phases of Prevent? Does the number of Channel referrals alter the allocation of PPAs? Or does the increase in funding and infrastructure for referrals in a PPA affect the number of Channel referrals? If so, does this increase in referrals then justify and reinforce the need to allocate funding to these local authorities labelled as PPAs? Engaging with these questions would require looking in detail at the funding distribution in PPAs throughout the different phases of Prevent, particularly in the period after 2011 when the number of PPAs was reduced from 75 to 25, though these number consistently shifted afterwards to 44 in 2014, back to 25 in 2015 and to 50 in 2019 (see Appendix 4). Although the robust discussions around the determination of PPAs is cited by a Prevent Coordinator in this research, the changes (or lack thereof) in the number of PPAs and in the labelling of local authorities as PPAs are not explained in the government policy documents. There is an opportunity here to evaluate how such PPA changes translate to actual budget changes in each locality, and if there is any correlation between the number of Channel referrals in each locally and the potential shift in funding availability to these localities. Furthermore, such research could incorporate more detailed analysis of how such changes impacted the number of organisations engaging with P/CVE work in each locality and nationally. As this research has shown, there are valuable contributions to P/CVE work being made by independent grassroots organisations in non-PPAs, and mapping out these efforts and their funding opportunities

in relation to organisations located in PPAs may or may not put into question the validity of using PPAs to determine funding streams for P/CVE work.

This research has also provided a nuanced perspective to the polarising understandings of Prevent policy at the grassroots level which go beyond simplistic binary divisions between those supporting Prevent and its critics, prompting the questions: What should the role of Home Office be in addressing issues around social stigmatisation within the framework of P/CVE efforts? How can the current and future Prevent programmes address the personal grievances of those who were stigmatized during the early stages of Prevent? There are key themes which should be considered in the P/CVE field moving forward, particularly for the consideration of the current 'independent' review of Prevent, in order to critically engage with these questions. One suggestion is that critical views of Prevent in the front-line are rooted in experiences of direct social stigmatisation, such as Islamophobia, that occurred due to the framework of Prevent focusing disproportionally on Muslim communities. Though there has been a shift in recent years to include the increasing threat of far-right violent extremism in P/CVE work, these accounts persist in the front-line. This is due to the intersection of Islamophobia and security framed interventions in Muslim communities, but also due to the notorious absence in the Prevent Strategy of any objectives to reconcile and (re)build relationships with Muslim communities, starting perhaps with the need to recognise its role in contributing to the wider social stigmatisation suffered by these communities since its origin. This type of work requires shifting the reframing of intervention from a security focus aimed at predicting risk and vulnerability factors into holistic frames of intervention used in independent and hybrid P/CVE work, shown in this study to be valuable.

Final reflection

In sum, this research has shown that understanding the complexities of the tensions that arise between P/CVE policies and front-line implementation is key in the improvement of P/CVE work. This is particularly the case in the analysis of policies, such as Prevent, which seek the participation of all levels of civic society in its management of security issues such as radicalisation. Whole of society responses to complex social issues cannot ignore the nuances of policy implementation through the practices, traditions and knowledge of front-line workers. Otherwise, there is a greater risk of aggravating pre-existing complex social issues and disregarding what happens between policy design and outcome. It is in the process between policy design and outcome that valuable, alternative knowledge and expertise of youth workers and front-line professionals can be lost. Front-line workers/practitioners are the people really embedded in

communities who have an understanding not only of their communities and what might push people to radicalise or into other violent grooming, but they are also better positioned to understand the unintended consequences of policies like Prevent, which in trying to deal with radicalisation is also inadvertently radicalising and stigmatising its targeted populations. Policymakers in Home Office are not necessarily well placed to identify such contextualised complex issues. However a productive focus for the current 'independent' Prevent review is to engage with front-line workers, as they have the potential to mitigate some of the unintended consequences of P/CVE efforts by carefully incorporating their P/CVE work into pre-existing, localised work on social issues through holistic practices.

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Appendix 1: Consent form

Consent Form for Research Participants

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University of
BRISTOL

Consent Form for Research project: *Seeking Voices: The Role of Grassroots Youth Organisations in Countering/Preventing Violent Extremism in the UK*

Please tick all of the appropriate boxes:

I am 18 years of age or older...

I have read and understood the project information sheet dated 26th June ....   ☐

I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.........................   ☐

I agree to take part in the project: this will include being interviewed and audio recorded.................   ☐

I understand that my taking part is voluntary: I can withdraw from the study at any time and I will not   ☐

be asked any questions about why I no longer want to take part......................................   ☐

I understand that my personal contact details such phone number and address will not be revealed to   ☐

people outside the project...   ☐

I understand that the University of Bristol will use the data I provide for no purpose other than

research...

Select only one of the next four options:

I agree to the interview being video- and audio-recorded and written/typed notes to be made...   ☐

I agree to the interview being audio-recorded and written/typed notes to be made....................   ☐

I agree to written/typed notes being made of the interview...   ☐

I do not want the interview to be recorded or written/typed notes to be made of it......................   ☐

If you have ticked the 4th box, you do not need to choose between the next two options: the researcher will use the interview only as background information to assist their understanding

Select only one of the next two options:

I agree that the recording, transcript and/or written/typed notes made of this interview can be made

public in full or in edited form with my name, role and general location........................   ☐

I agree that the transcript and/or written/typed notes of this interview can be made public only in

part and without using my name to ensure that I cannot be identified personally..................   ☐

If you have ticked the 2nd option, please indicate below the form of words you would like to be used to refer to you when the interview is quoted or referred to:

....

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Name of Researcher	Signature	Date

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Appendix 2: Project Information Sheet

University of BRISTOL

Sociology, Politics and International Studies

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Seeking Voices: The Role of Grassroots Youth Organisations in Countering/Preventing Violent Extremism in the UK

About the research

This research project explores the role of grassroots youth organisations in P/CVE efforts to highlight the voices of youth workers and shed light on their 'best practice' tools in supporting young people. Their first–hand experiences in local communities can be used to inform and help design future C/PVE strategies, providing an updated, in-depth, account of grassroots youth organisation voices.

The Principal Investigator of this research is Fernan Osorno, a PhD researcher based at the University of Bristol. This research is based on qualitative interviews with youth workers and youth about efforts targeting C/PVE in the UK, but also with wider youth support aims such as training, employment, political activism, empowerment, and social stigmatisation.

Funding and Ethical Approval

This PhD is funded by the Science and Technology National Council (CONACYT), supported by the Mexican government.

Ethical approval for this research has been granted by the Research Ethics Committee of the School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies (SPAIS) at the University of Bristol.

Semi-structured Interviews

Interviews will normally take an hour. With the consent of the participants, interviews are recorded to allow for greater accuracy and quality of analysis. Recordings will be anonymised and transcribed, which will then be securely digitally stored. No one other

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than the Principal Investigator will have access to the materials. Transcripts or recordings are never given to journalists or to anyone else. Participants have the right to withdraw at any stage of the research process.

Compensation

Participants and their youth organisations can require a brief, practical report or a presentation of my research findings for the personnel upon the conclusion of the research.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

There is no explicit need for the participants or their organisations to be identified in the research. However, it is important for them to be aware that the name of the organisation they participate in will be disclosed (if agreed) and therefore their identity will be partly compromised by this. In addition, part of the aims of this research is to obtain best practice experiences in relation to C/PVE, therefore it is important to disclose what tools each organisation have found useful in supporting youth and to what extent these can be implemented elsewhere, for this reason, we would like to be able to identify the youth workers and their organisations. If the interviewed (and the organisation they work in) do not want to disclose their identity or role they work in, this information can be used only for background purposes.

Data usage and storage

Research data will not be shared with people or organisations outside the university. Personal data held for research will not be used for any other purpose. Encrypted storage media or hard drive will be used for storing any sensitive or personal data. All sensitive and personal data stored or processed off campus will be encrypted. Security arrangements are put in place to prevent theft of data. Specifically, access to electronic and physical data will be restricted and password protection procedures will be used to protect electronic data. Paper files containing personal data will be stored securely, for example in locked filing cabinets or in rooms that are locked when unoccupied. The data will be deleted once it is no longer required for the use for which it was gathered.

Outputs and dissemination

Findings and dissemination are intended to be useful to policymakers, academics and the general public. The dissemination activities will include: conference presentations, workshops, blog posts and articles.

If you have any queries about any aspect of the research, please do not hesitate to contact Fernan Osorno at fo16437@bristol.ac.uk.

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Sociology, Politics and International Studies

__Seeking Voices: The Role of Grassroots Youth Work in Countering/Preventing Violent Extremism in the UK__

1. Questions for key members of youth organisations:

Structure and youth engagement

- Can you tell me the general **background** of your (youth) work? How you got stated in this leading up to your current position.
- What is the **general structure** of the organization you work in?
- What is the main **targeted youth population** of the organisation?
    - Has this been the target population since the origin of the organisation or has it changed as a result of other factors?
- How is the organization **funded**? (Prevent, Counter Extremism)
- Who is involved in the design of the youth programmes? What do these programmes consist of? What is the organisation's strategy for youth engagement?

Violent extremism and counter-radicalisation policies

- **What types of violent extremism** (if any) does this organisation prioritize?
    - Has this priority changed throughout the years? How?
    - How does this organisation **define violent extremism**?
        - What are the distinctions between "**disadvantaged backgrounds**" and "**vulnerable to violent extremism**"?
- Based on your experiences from your work in this organisation, what are the most common ways in **which youth are exposed to violent extremism in their daily lives**?
    - **Who do you think should be involved in countering violent extremism**?

- In what ways do Prevent and Counter Extremism policies influence the work being done in this organisation?
  - What aspects of these policies are implemented here? Which ones are not? Why?
  - Are there any limitations to the implementation of these policies found in everyday practice?

Youth support

- How does your **legal responsibilities (Statutory Duty**) balance versus your **professional ethics**?
  - How can reporting on young people **affect trust** and how is this different from **safeguarding** from mental and physical abuse?
- What are the most **common tools** used in this organisation **to support young people**?
  - How would you **evaluate the success** or effectiveness of these tools?
  - Are there any measures that are often talked about in the organisation that would be more beneficial to implement in countering violent extremism?
- Based on your experiences from your work in this organisation, what are the most **common issues young people need support** with?
  - Do you think these issues relate in any way with vulnerability/risk to violent extremism?
    - How does safeguarding link to Violent extremism? To who are these campaigns directed?
- What does the training you provide to youth workers consist of? How was this designed?

Closing questions

- Is there anything else you want to tell me about yourself or this organisation?
- Is there anyone in particular that you can think of that I should contact for this project?
- Would you be happy for me to contact you again for further questions or to share with you the conclusions of this research?

Appendix 4: Changes to Prevent Priority Areas (PPAs)

Year	Region/local authorities	Total priority areas
2007	**London**: ==Barking and Dagenham==, Barnet, ==Brent==, ==Camden==, Croydon, ==Ealing==, ==Enfield==, ==Greenwich==, ==Hackney==, ==Hammersmith and Fulham==, ==Haringey==, Harrow, Hillingdon, ==Hounslow==, ==Islington==, ==Kensington and Chelsea==, ==Lambeth==, ==Lewisham==, Merton, ==Newham==, ==Redbridge==, ==Southwark==, ==Tower Hamlets==, ==Waltham Forest==, ==Wandsworth==, ==Westminster== **South East**: Wycombe District, Oxford, Reading, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Slough Borough, Crawley Borough, Woking Borough **South West**: Bristol City **East of England**: Bedford Borough, Luton Borough, Peterborough, Watford Borough **West Midlands**: ==Birmingham==, ==Dudley==, Metropolitan Borough Council, ==Sandwell==, ==Stoke-on-Trent==, ==Walsall== **North West**: Bolton, Bury Metropolitan Borough, ==Manchester==, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford City, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Wigan, Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn Borough, Pendle, Preston City, Ribble Valley, Rossendale **Yorkshire and the Humber**: ==Bradford==, ==Calderdale==, ==Kirklees==, ==Leeds==, Wakefield **East Midlands**: ==Derby==, ==Leicester==, Nottingham **North East**: Middlesbrough, Newcastle	70
2011	**London**: ==Barking and Dagenham==, ==Brent==, ==Camden==, ==Ealing==, ==Hackney==, ==Hammersmith and Fulham==, ==Haringey==, ==Kensington and Chelsea==, ==Lambeth==, ==Lewisham==, ==Luton==, ==Newham==, ==Redbridge==, ==Tower Hamlets==, ==Waltham Forest==, ==Wandsworth==, ==Westminster== **West Midlands**: ==Birmingham==, ==Stoke-on-Trent== **North West**: ==Blackburn with Darwen==, ==Manchester==, **Yorkshire and the Humber**: ==Bradford==, ==Leeds== **East Midlands**: ==Derby==, ==Leicester==	25
2014-2015	**London**: ==Barking and Dagenham==, ==Brent==, ==Camden==, ==Ealing==, ==Enfield==, ==Greenwich==, ==Hackney==, ==Hammersmith and Fulham==, ==Haringey==, ==Hounslow==, ==Islington==, ==Kensington and Chelsea==, ==Lambeth==, ==Lewisham==, ==Luton==, ==Newham==,	30 (plus 14 'supported')

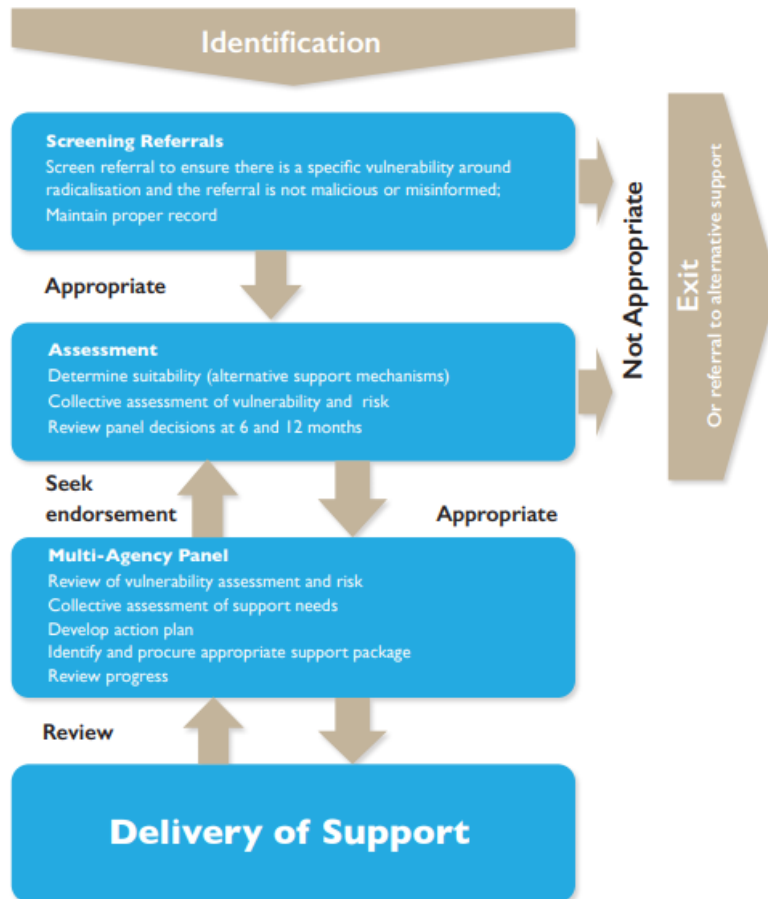|		
	<mark>Redbridge</mark>, Slough, <mark>Southwark</mark>, <mark>Tower Hamlets</mark>, <mark>Waltham Forest</mark>, <mark>Wandsworth</mark>, and <mark>Westminster</mark> **South East**: Brighton and Hove; High Wycombe **South West**: Portsmouth **West Midlands**: <mark>Birmingham</mark>; Coventry; <mark>Dudley</mark>; <mark>Sandwell</mark>; <mark>Stoke-on-Trent</mark>; <mark>Walsall</mark> **North West**: <mark>Blackburn with Darwen</mark>; Burnley; Liverpool; <mark>Manchester</mark> **Yorkshire and the Humber**: <mark>Bradford</mark>; Calderdale; Kirklees; <mark>Leeds</mark> **East Midlands**: <mark>Derby</mark>, <mark>Leicester</mark> **Wales**: Cardiff **South West**: Portsmouth **West Sussex**: Crawley	
2016	**London**: <mark>Barking and Dagenham</mark>; <mark>Brent</mark>; <mark>Camden</mark>; <mark>Ealing</mark>; <mark>Hackney</mark>; <mark>Hammersmith and Fulham</mark>; <mark>Haringey</mark>; <mark>Kensington and Chelsea</mark>; <mark>Lambeth</mark>; <mark>Lewisham</mark>; <mark>Luton</mark>; <mark>Newham</mark>; <mark>Redbridge</mark>; <mark>Tower Hamlets</mark>; <mark>Waltham Forest</mark>; <mark>Wandsworth</mark>; <mark>Westminster</mark>. **West Midlands**: <mark>Birmingham</mark>; <mark>Stoke-on-Trent</mark> **North West**: <mark>Blackburn with Darwen</mark>; <mark>Manchester</mark> **Yorkshire and the Humber**: <mark>Bradford</mark>; <mark>Leeds</mark> **East Midlands**: <mark>Derby</mark>; <mark>Leicester</mark>	25
2019	No data available	50

<mark>Green</mark>: Indicates the local authorities that have been considered a PPA throughout the three phases of Prevent.

<mark>Yellow</mark>: indicates the local authorities that have been considered a PPA during at least two phases of Prevent.

Sources: Prevent Revised guidance 2019; Heath-Kelly 2017: 319; Mastroe 2016: 53; Prevent Strategy 2011: 98.

Appendix 5: Channel Referral Diagram

Source: Home Office, 2015: 6