

Do the actions of extremist groups segregate communities and promote hate crime: Do the English defence league (EDL) and the Muslims against crusades group (MAC) constitute a social problem?

“Two sides of the same coin of hate”?

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Abstract

Through the use of primary and secondary analysis this dissertation aimed to explore the actions of the English defence league and the Muslims against crusades, and how they are perceived by the government, the media and the public. In chapter 1, Existing literature on hate crime, extremism and terrorism were reviewed to establish a contextual framework. Through the analysis of government documents, it was established that the government perceive the EDL as a hate

group, and the MAC as extremist and their ideology to be potentially terrorist. The second chapter aimed to apply the literature on hate crime, extremism and terrorism onto the beliefs and actions of the groups. This was established by analysing the material from both of the organisations websites. It was found that the EDLS Islamophobic views and the MACs homophobic views have led to hate acts being committed by members. The third chapter exposed the methods which used critical review analysis on home office documents, content analysis on the material of the groups, a media content analysis on media articles, and questionnaires on the public, this was all necessary to establish the different viewpoints and compare them. The fourth chapter examined, media perception of both groups, it was established that whilst both groups were negatively portrayed the MAC were perceived more negatively. Questionnaires were devised finding the group's actions at times did portray hate, but revealed that the government's perception of the EDL and MAC were supported by the public. Finally chapter 5, compares the actions of the MAC and the EDL, and concludes that they both portray hate, and the government should also consider threats from right wing extremist groups such as the EDL, along with threats from Islamic extremists.

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Introduction

To date, literature on extremism has solely focused on right wing extremism or on radical Islamist extremism as separate “social problems” in the UK. This dissertation argues that both opposing ideologies rely on each other for their existence. Eatwell [2006] describes this as cumulative extremism “whereby one form of extremism almost feeds off and magnifies other forms” *pg 206+. The actions of the English defence league and the Muslims against crusades will be looked at to see how there cumulative extremism affects communities in the U K.

This dissertation investigates whether the opposing groups that both have or still operate in Waltham forest divide communities and promote hate crime. The aims are:

1. To explore the notions of extremism and hate crime and assess government legislation, on hate crime and terrorism.
2. To examine government treatment of these groups, identifying if different laws have been used to construct them as a problem.
3. To examine if the two groups can be labelled as extremist groups and as promoting hate crime.
4. To identify how the Media and public perceive the EDL and MAC

A documentary was aired on both groups by channel 4 titled proud and prejudice [Woolwich ,2012].Although it revealed information

on the ideologies of the groups, it portrayed the areas they operated in to be full of hate, residents either Islamists or right wing extremists, but is this really the case?

Studies like Mughal [2011] looked at the EDL's impact on faith groups, but none have comparatively looked at two opposing groups. Specifically, the MACs impact on society has not been explored; therefore by using different research methods this dissertation aims to enhance literature on the EDL, adding literature on the MAC, showing how the groups are viewed through different discourses.

In chapter 1 academic literature on the concepts of hate crime, extremism and terrorism will be addressed; these concepts will underpin the analysis of the two groups in chapter 2. The government treatment of both groups shall be established, by analysing Home Office documents, in particular the MAC's ban will be looked at; the governments perceptions of the threat of both groups will be explored.

In the second chapter, to establish if the actions of the organisations promote hate, material will be taken from their websites, and analysed using the concepts identified in the previous chapter. Furthermore, a content analysis on their documents provides a detailed understanding as to whether they advocate hate. The third chapter explores the different research methods employed.

In chapter 4, the link between media portrayal and public perceptions of the groups will be explored. Both groups have been labelled extremist by the media but Islamist groups have been known to be demonised more [Akbarzada and smith, 2005] therefore similarities

and differences in the way media articles portray both groups shall be investigated. The findings from the media analysis will be transferred, into a questionnaire to determine public perceptions of both groups and to determine if biased terminology affected their responses. Then a conclusion shall bring together all the areas discussed answering the initial questions.

Chapter 1

The definitions of hate crime need addressing alongside a historical outline. This chapter explores how the government proposes to deal with groups who commit hate acts. Extremism and terrorism will be defined, the labelling of the groups will be analysed and future improvements will be highlighted.

Hate crime definitions

Hate crime can mean different things to different people. Wolfe and Copeland give a standard definition “violence directed towards a group of people, who suffer discrimination in other arenas, and who do not have full access to remedy social and political and economic justice” [Wolfe and Copeland as cited in Hall 2005, page 2]. This definition can be criticised for not considering violence conducted on individuals, as not all hate crime is based on violence; it can be any form of insults directed to an individual. Thus Perry {*2001+ defines hate crime as involving “acts of violence and intimidation, usually directed towards already stigmatised and marginalised groups” *Perry 2001 in Hall, 2005, page2+. The Home Office describes Hate crime as “any criminal offence committed against a person or property that is motivated by hostility towards someone based on their disability, race, religion, genderidentity or sexual orientation, whether perceived to be so by the victim or any other person”*Gov.uk, 2012 A].

Freedom of speech is governed by article 10 of the human rights convention. It is breeched, when speech goes from expressions to

intimidation, based on grounds of race, gender, religion or sexual orientation, that's when it becomes a hate crime *Gov.UK, 2013.] It is important to recognise that violent acts and intimidation are different from an expression.

Research on Policing of hate crime shows the troubled relationship between police and ethnic communities effecting police responses [Gertensfeld, 2004.] The Macpherson report in 1999 was one of the first to highlight problems in policing of hate crimes, revealing biased views embedded in police culture. Post Macpherson, there have been strategic advancements, one being community safety units employed in every borough in London. Arguably most important is a set of guidelines issued to assist police in correctly identifying hate crimes, produced by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO). ACPO guidance on how to interpret hate incidents helps clarify any ambiguity in the definition; "prejudice against any identifiable group of people" *Chakroborti, 2009 page: 109]. The murder of Anthony Walker in 2005 raised the profile of racially motivated hate crime. Homophobic crimes have also been recognised, most recently with the murder of Jody Dubrowski on Clapham Common, such serious offences occur often, but represent only "the tip of an iceberg" *Buckley ,2005].

Groups and Hate crime

Research on groups and hate crime shows the importance of investigating the effects groups have on communities. Perry states, "While responsible for a relatively small proportion of hate-motivated

violence, hate groups undoubtedly play a role in conditioning an environment in which bias-motivated incidents can occur”*2003,p. 297+. Although hate groups have different motives and targets they generally oppose a certain group, due to personal characteristics [Gerstenfeld, 2004, p. 106]. This turns into a form of “Othering” as described by [Chakraborti, 2009]. Allegations have been made against the EDL as to its Islamophobic nature; Islamophobia may be the factor that fuels their hate. The Runnymede report in 1997 defined Islamophobia, as “a way of referring to dread and hatred of Islam, and therefore to fear or dislike most or all Muslims” [Runnymede report cited in Allen 2010 pg 15]. Islamophobia can be distinguished from hate crime as it is a view, only with actions is it a crime. Said’s 1978 theory of Orientalism explains how historically the west have constructed Islam as “alien” and barbaric compared to its Christian counterpart, and these views could be embedded in western society, in the form of Islamophobia [Poole,2002].

Anti-Semitism and Homophobia are areas of hate- crime that have been associated with the MAC formally known as Al-Mahajiroun. Raymond [2010] conducted interviews with members of the group and found some policies they believed in had elements of homophobia. Homophobia could then under pin the MAC’s views influencing their actions.

Both groups use the internet to glorify their hatred and to recruit members [Akedniz, 2001]. Hawdon [2012] used the differential association theory to examine if online hate groups could “teach” people

to hate others; he concluded that they did, by using techniques of hate, like games in which they have to shoot the disliked group.

Policies tackling hate crimes

According to Perry [2003] there is a lack of intensive training on hate crime and inefficient law enforcement policies. Law [2007] states that since the 1980s punishment and criminological policy have turned to retribution in many countries including Great Britain, as punitive measures are taken social hate reduction plans have not been given importance. In contrast, the government in England and Wales have attempted to address this; the latest proposals give evidence. *Challenge it, Report it, Stop it'* is the government's action plan to tackle hate crime, which works with local agencies, and voluntary organisations.

Objectives include:

- “challenging behaviours that foster hatred, encouraging early intervention to reduce risk of incidents escalating
- Increasing reporting of hate crimes by building victims'..., and working with partners at national and local levels ensuring the right support is available when they do” [Home office,2012a:5].

For the first time in 2011/12 hate statistics were published. 43,748 hate crimes were recorded of which 82 per cent were race hate crimes. This illustrates to the public the extent of the problem and could be a tactic to raise awareness [Home office, 2012b].

Prevent strategies located in Challenge It and Report It (local and national)

Prevent strategies aim to make people understand the extent of hate crimes by publishing statistics; Working alongside the Annefrank trust UK to challenge stereotyping and prevent anti-Semitism. In addition the prevent strategy aims to target attitudes by supporting “show racism the red card” and by conducting educational workshops that teach children about dangers of associating with the EDL, and educating them to challenge Anti-Muslim hate crimes. This shows that the EDL are perceived by the government as a hate group.

Another aim is to support the Search Light Trust who interestingly counters EDLs “narratives”. Statement 1.2 of the Prevent Review[2012] summarises what needs to be addressed and the importance of doing so “ the violence and intimidation directed towards faith communities by extremist groups seen at demonstrations and the brutal killing of Ian Baynham show tragic consequences when hatred is allowed to progress” *pg 6-7]. However, this approach appears limited as only the EDL are mentioned implying they may be a hate group, but no other groups are mentioned.

Under the **Criminal Justice Act 2003**, if an act can be associated with hate elements punishment increases, showing the importance of hatecrimes. The Ian Baynham case put this into practice, as one of the killers received an extra year for using homophobic terms.

Criminal legislations on hate crime, violent extremism and terrorist groups

The main legislations used to tackle hate crimes and violent extremism will be looked at. Interestingly the CPS categorise religiously motivated offences under “racially aggravated offences” *CPS, 2012 B]. Racially aggravated offences cover criminal damage, harassment and public order and were introduced under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The police inform the cps, the cps decides if it is racially or religiously motivated. The Terrorism act 2006 increased the maximum penalty for possessing material for terrorist purposes from 10 years’ imprisonment to 15 and it also makes violent acts and encouraging terrorism an offence. These acts will be used to analyse actions of both groups in chapter 2.

Extremism

Terrorism is defined as “the use or threat of action designed to influence the government or an international governmental organisation or to intimidate the public or a section of the public, the use or threat is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause, involving serious violence” *Home office, 2012 B+. The Crown Prosecution Service defines violent extremism as “the demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which: foment, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs; and seek to provoke others to terrorist acts” *CPS 2012]. The definitions of violent extremism and terrorism seem to overlap [Perry, 2003]. The CPS definitions are influential as they are the body that decides if an act is a terror act.

Extremists are associated with violence, fascism, and fundamentalism. The extremist label is applied to those who oppose cultural norms and morals of a particular Society [Sheffield, 2011].

Extremists like the KluKlax Klan in America use violence, but not all groups advocate violence [Hainsworth, 2000.]

Right wing extremists believe in a political ideology which undermines values of the democratic state [Goodwin, 2010]. Similarly, Mude [2007] argues there are three pillars that help identify if an organisation is right wing extremist and those are: authoritarianism, ethnic nationalism and xenophobia [cited in Eatwell et al 2010 page 148]. These concepts will be applied to the EDL and MAC.

Another branch of extremism that is prominent in Britain is Islamic extremism. This movement wants to bring about religious reforms using interpretations of the Quran sometimes violently [Goodwin et al, 2010]. It is extreme because it can result in violence which is terrorism. The events of 9/11 and 7/7, caused great concern as it showed the dangers from “Islamists” and the type of hate crime (terrorism) that could result from having a certain ideology. The fear and risk perceived by these acts could be the reason “Islamist” behaviour is treated differently compared to its right wing counter-part. Contrary to misconceptions, having an Islamic political view does not always equate to violence, Hizb-ut-tahrir are an example [Johnson, 2009].

A House of Commons Home Affairs Committee released an article titled *Roots of Radicalisation 2010-2012*. The report showed a decrease in sympathy for Islamic extremism rather than an increase. This can be

seen in the reduction of people being convicted for acting upon extreme beliefs; four people were convicted of terrorist related offences compared with 19 the previous year [House of commons 2011-2012]. This raises a discussion, what were the groups or members labelled 'extremist' for? Is it due to the kind of society they advocate, being different to the one currently in operation, or because they are willing to use extreme measures to attain these ends.

The report highlighted while Islamic extremism was on the decrease, right wing extremism was increasing. This dissertation questions why right wing extremism is not considered a threat to security; could it possibly be due to Islamist ideology being viewed as an alien influence? Whereas right wing extremism can be understood more easily as some elements of their ideology reflect mythical British values, such as Orientalism.

The Prevent: CONTEST

In 2007 the government introduced schemes and applied funds to the community to prevent violent extremism, through the prevent strategy. *Prevent* is part of the governments counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. It aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Early intervention is key along with reducing tensions in communities before they turn into violence.

Although the majority, of CONTEST focuses on threats from ALQaeda, statement 5.10, shows the seriousness of right-wing terrorism, whilst offences are reported the government dismisses them as not posing a serious threat to society, due to right wing extremists not being

“as organised or having the same training as Al-QAEDA”. This is worrying as the government are overlooking, right wing threats.

There have been numerous criticisms of Prevent and has since been revised. The Prevent Strategy 2011 contrary to its review, states that threats from “violent Islamic extremism continue to diversify” [Prevent strategy Home office 2011 pg: 14]. However, the *Roots of Radicalisation* review argued the opposite.

Samad {[2010] argues the prevent strategies focus narrowly on Muslim communities; stigmatising them, and needs to be broadened to wider threats. There’s been a lot of emphasis on integration, and how isolation, can lead to violent extremism. This misconception was voiced in earlier versions of the Prevent, however recent research has found that well integrated members also commit violent acts “.....evidence indicates very clearly that apparently well-integrated people have committed terrorist attacks” *Prevent strategy 2011:15+. Other research on integration has found similar results [Sobolewska, 2010] (see appendices A for table of findings).

Respondents made suggestions including clearer definitions of violent extremism and extremism. After AL-Qaeda in the Prevent review, participants identified right wing groups to be a threat, over 80% stated prevent should tackle right-wing extremism supported by Glasman [2011]. Some saw them as distinct from terrorists but others saw no barriers to dealing with them using counter terrorism strategies.

Similarly, Goodwin *2012+ in a newspaper titled “The threat of far-right extremism warrants more than lip service” deliberated some far right

groups foster a culture of violence, and the prevent strategy should outline more clearly the actions needed to tackle far right extremism alongside Islamic extremism.

It is apparent, the EDL might be confronted around hate crime and the MAC might be confronted via terrorism charges. “I am satisfied that the Muslim against crusades group, is simply another name for an already proscribed group under a number of names including AlGhuraba, Al-Mahajiroun and Islam4uk.” [Theresa May, Gov.uk, 2012 B]. Initially the organisation under Al-Ghuraba was banned due to “glorifying terrorism”.

The IRA are the largest banned UK organisation, when, membership became an offence they found alternative ways, it was obvious that such a large organisation was unlikely to break up. Postbanning when the IRA arranged funerals for their members, they would still have a procession but not where any clothing explicitly related to their slogans. Thus, the government should have learnt that banning a group does not prevent its activities. The MAC found it harder to operate openly, but now operate under a different name “Izhaar-ud-Deen” [Cascani, 2010]. Removing a group’s website raises questions about the government’s intentions, and raises concerns about freedom of speech laws; on what basis did the government remove the MACs website was it due to promoting violence? Was there even a potential misuse? Are the EDL more acceptable because their extremist views reflect some mythical British past, whereas MAC are about a society that is totally different?

A recent ban prevented the EDL from entering the borough of Waltham forest on the 27th of October 2012, to protect residents and prevent disorder [Home office 2011b]. The ban was enforced under section 13 of The Public Order Act 1986, and was temporary lasting 30 days. Limited powers exist in banning a march; due to conflicts with freedom of speech, therefore the EDL were viewed as a threat, otherwise the ban would not have been enforced. Lowell's of Search Light [2011] researched 30 protests of the EDL and reported two different policing methods. In a rally in Bradford and Leicester police forcefully reacted to the EDL using shields to prevent violence. In Preston and Nuneaton they reacted more peacefully and were in dialogue with members. This neutral reaction of the police is encouraged [Home office, 2011]. Lowell's suggests as the EDL are not considered as right wing extremists, they are not viewed as a threat to community cohesion. This is supported by a statement by DC Chris Wyeth in which he expressed the police are more concerned with criminal elements of the EDL as a football risk group [Townsend, 2012].

To summarise, an argument has developed suggesting the government have used different strategies to deal with two different groups. One group seems to be in line with British values and the other seems foreign this could be the reasons for the different perceptions, thus effecting

their treatment. The definitions of hate crime, extremism and terrorism have set the foundations of this dissertation and will aid in analysing if groups promote any of these acts.

Chapter 2

This chapter explores if the EDL and the MAC promote hate crime, are extremist or terrorist organisations. The EDL and MAC will be analysed, their objectives will be examined for references to homophobia and Islamophobic behaviour which can result in hate. Actions of both groups will be analysed. Table 1 presents the terminology from chapter 1 that shall be used to assess if the EDL and MAC can be defined as hate, extremist or terrorist groups.

Table 1. Conceptual framework

Hate crime characteristics	Right wing extremist characteristics	Terrorist group characteristics
Prejudice	Ethnic nationalism	violence attacking a state
Discrimination	Pride in own origin at expense of others	extreme ideology
insulting behaviour	Xenophobia	Influenced by terrorist organisations
Intimidation towards a stigmatised group	Discriminative policies	a violent ideological cause

Crime based on hostility	Undermine values of a democratic state	
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The English defence league

The EDLs formation in 2009 was reactionary; to the MAC'S actions highlighting the need for action against Islamists [EDL, 2012]. The EDL has 90,000 Facebook members and 28,326 active members. Tommy Robinson is the leader. Although they have been labelled extremists by media discourses, [Sheffield, 2011] identified them as a populist organisation. The EDL maintain they oppose "militant Islam" *EDL, 2012aboutus]. However, their actions at times single out all/most Muslims.

The EDLs aims [EDL, Mission statements] are:

- (1) Protecting and Promoting Human Rights.**
- (2) Promoting Democracy by Opposing Sharia.**
- (3) Ensuring the public get a Balanced Picture of Islam.**

The EDL 's first objective is to promote freedom of speech, against Islamic orthodoxy, but claim Islamic leaders who oppose them should be dealt with by the government; thus freedom of speech does not apply to those who disagree with its views [EDL, mission statements].

The second objective opposes Shariah law expressing its incompatibility with democracy. Arguing it makes distinctions between Non-Muslims and Muslims. This is rather ironic as the statements from their website, make distinctions between British Muslims and rest of British citizens. Although the EDL believe Shariah is incompatible, to the MAC it fits into their perception of democracy.

Thirdly, the EDL believe the government negatively presents Islam, thus they should be able to educate without being labelled racist. However, their website does not give a balanced view; only emphasising on negative aspects; leading to further stereotyping Muslims and portraying them as inferior [Richards 2011]. The way they seek to educate the public distorts Islam. For example their literature states Islamic leaders were “Paedophilic” *The EDL, 2012A.+ While the public has very limited knowledge of Islam the way in which the EDL raises awareness promotes discrimination and hate crime. The EDL could have developed a negative view from witnessing actions of minority groups, and from fearing some aspects of Islam, such as extreme Shariah laws like stoning adulterers.

In a recent campaign “The EDL supporting the Sikh community” the EDL create tensions between Sikh and Muslim communities, by depicting child grooming as an Islamic problem [EDL, 2013 A.] Then they revealed misinformation regarding a rape incident, resulting in the Sikh community attacking Muslims. Police officers confirmed, the attack was due to misinformation, and urged people to ignore the EDL [Edlnews.co.uk]. However, such incidents do bring communities together, members of the “Sikhs against EDL” condemned the attack

stating conflicts play into their hands, as they want to “divide and rule” [Edlnews.co.uk.]. Here their actions support them being a hate group. The statements and campaigns’ single out Muslims as problems, the EDL appear to be using the concept of selective “Othering” *Chakoraborti, 2009+. The analysis suggests that “Othering” underpins their hate crime; although, the EDL do not advocate violence directly, they incite hatred between communities through giving misinformation, depicting them as a hate group.

The EDL stress the importance of “peacefully protesting” *EDL 2013+, however many demonstrations have led to violence (see table 2.0 appendices H). Interestingly, protests not involving opposition groups did not impact the community as much, but when the United Against Fascism or MAC opposed the EDL, tensions rose and violence occurred. The EDLs strong views combined with opposing strong views create a hostile environment, in which violence becomes a key source to project their hatred. This violent element suggests they are a hate group. Furthermore, when the MAC was banned the EDL were frustrated for no longer having a “stand off”. Thus showing “extremist” groups use each other to promote their causes, Feldman [2012.]

Actions of members

The EDL fight the decision of the government to prosecute Kevin Carroll (key member) with inciting religious hatred for a statement on Facebook [Hits 2013]. The statement was intimidating thus came under hate crime legislations (see table 1). Simon Parks another EDL member was convicted of a racially aggravated offence. His actions caused

distress to Muslim communities [Mail online, 2012]. It can also be considered extremist as the community opposed the acts. EDL members were appalled Parks received a Jail sentence, whereas the MACs actions led to a fine; however one attacked a religion, being prosecuted under hate crime legislations whilst the other was a public order offence. Many actions of EDL members appear to be hate crimes; key members' being prosecuted sets a tone for the whole organisation.

Symbolism

The EDL promote Britain being a Christian country, [EDL, Missionstatements, 2012.] However, a survey revealed, while 45% of EDL members stated they were Christian, only 7% saw religion as important [Bartlett, 2010], nationalism was most important, suggesting they are right-wing [Goodwin, 2010].

Associations

While the EDL do not advocate white supremacy overtly, they share anti-Muslim agendas with the BNP, and other fascist groups [Feldman, 2012.]

A recent counter-Jihadist conference by Pamela Gellar leader of the stop Islamisation of America (recognised as a hate group) attended by EDL members, shows their links [The ADL, 2013].

The EDLS links, to Andres Breivik, who committed the Oslo massacre in Norway, have been questioned. Members of the EDL and BNP voiced their support for Breivik describing him as a role model; voicing “the Norwegian deserved a medal for his ground breaking performance” [Edlfacebook ,2010.] Although people are allowed to have opinions condemning acts of mass murder, questions their capabilities, suggesting they could be a hate group.

Another technique for identifying if the EDL incite hatred was an analysis of other documents/videos from their website in terms of hate characteristics noted in Table 1. Thus 12 documents/videos were analysed.

Table 3.0 Analysing the EDL

	Violence/intimidation, towards minority groups	References to dreading Islam disliking or most Muslims	Pride in own origin and nationalism	Resentment of the British government	Undermining values of the state
Video1	1	6			1
Video 2	20	19			
Video 3	1		6	3	
Video 4		6	3		
Video 5		5	8		1
Article 1		4	4		1
Article 2	6	4			

Article 3		6			2
Article 4		2			
Article 5	6				
Article 6	6				
Article 7		4		3	3

9 documents referred to the dread of Islam, but did not promote violence, suggesting the EDL are Islamophobic.

Politicians were referred to as “Them” and were blamed for giving England away [video,3]. Their hate motivation could be due to scarcity of resources, the work of Durkheim [1933] introduced this discourse as an explanation to hate acts, lack of socio-economic factors, could make groups oppose others. The emphasis of jobs being taken, Muslims living off state benefits and burdening society supports this [EDL, 2013].

In regards to Mude’s *2000+ pillars, authoritarianism is certainly present, wanting to maintain British society proves this “*We are not afraid or reluctant to confront Shariah-driven.....*” [EDL, 2011c]. The pride felt towards their country can be viewed as ethnic nationalism; defending British culture supports the presence of the second pillar.

Xenophobia can be attributed to the EDL; derogative terminology towards Muslims and, members being prosecuted for hate acts gives evidence. Xenophobia was also found by Goodwin [2013:14] EDL members are more likely “to expect conflict between different racial groups, and are more likely to view violence as a justifiable response”.

However, the EDL’s mission statement is contradictory, as it claims to

support diversity. Based on previous opinion EDL’s links to other

communities appear to be a propaganda tool [Mughal, 2011]. Thus, suggesting the EDL are indeed right wing extremists, and at times their Islamophobia results in hate crimes.

The Muslims against crusades

The MAC is a banned “Islamist” organisation, founded in 2010 by Anjem Choudhary; it is the successor group of Al-Mahajiroun, and Islam4UK. Choudhary revealed “it’s all us” *Raymond 2011:12+. As a banned group they cannot publicise their views, but now operate under a different website [<http://www.izharudeen.com/>].

Islam4UK in 2010 marched through Wootton-Bassett, expressing their views through offensive language. However, this was in line with freedom of speech [Sheffield, 2011]. They became proscribed under the terrorism act after this incident, for “glorifying terrorism”. A year later, after similar demonstrations the MAC, were also banned [Daily mail, 2011]. Although the government, dismissed connections of the ban to the procession critics such as Bunglawala [2010], have voiced concerns.

Objectives

The MAC formed in protest to “The occupation of British soldiers on

Muslim land” their protests between 2009-2010 supports this, [Izharudeen, 2013b].

The MAC has wider motives:

1. “Reviving the call for Shariah”
2. “Re-establishing God’s law, making it dominant”

The first objective, wants to “call Shariah” to Muslims, *Izharudeen, 2013b.] However, the MAC has attempted to “Islamize” western society, this could be attributed as a right-wing characteristic as they advocate Islamic ideology at the expense of other religious viewpoints.

The second objective aims to restore the Kaliphate (Islamic state), by overthrowing the government, without using violence [Izharudeen, 2013b].

Muslims are urged “call for your deen”, implying Muslims that are not fighting for Sharia implementation are not doing their duty [Choudhary, 2010]. This could be a tactic to separate their members from society by making distinctions between true Muslims and not real Muslims thus the MAC segregate communities. Johnson {[2009] states this is a similar tactic used by AL-QAEADA.

The MAC has similarities to Al-QAIEDA, but differences exist including; not being supported by British Muslims. They claim a social contract prevents violence [Choudhary, 2010]. This could be a tactic, distancing themselves from violent organisations. The MAC claim if the UK was an Islamic state “Divine justice” would bring prosperity

[Izharudeen, 2013c]. However, no negative aspects like positions of non-Muslims are voiced, England {[2008] demonstrated under an Islamic society non-Muslims would be secondary citizens. Maybe groups like the EDL fear this.

Actions of Leaders

In 2003 Choudhary along with Bakri (co leader) became well known for calling the 9/11 bombers “The Magnificent 19”. Contradicting the idea of a social contract [Raymond 2011:7]. Leaders condoning acts of terrorism, suggests the MAC may have extreme and potentially terrorist views.

Protests

In regards to the poppy burning incident, Julie Saddique a member of the Islamic society stated “The MACS choice of venue is designed to cause offence” *Islamawakening.com+. However, burning poppies maybe symbolic to rebellion against wars, thus not a hate crime. The incident, (Appendices J) resulted in the culprit being fined under section 5 of the public order act. A £50 fine was the punishment, outraging the public suggesting they perceived this act as extreme.

A patriotic EDL member saw this as an attack on his nation, and committed a hate act. In Between 2009-2010 many acts took place that were cumulative, for example heated fights between members. This suggests both groups are extremists, but the MAC could be responsible for fuelling the EDLs hate.

Homophobia is present on the MACs website, an article titled “Gay marriages made in hell”, informs society that homosexuality “is a sin” and Jews and Christians should condemn it. Further suggesting punishment under Sharia would be severe [Izhaar-ud-Deen 2013 b]. Moreover; they encourage society to be intolerant of homosexuals, inciting hatred, towards an already stigmatised group. In a protest members called for homosexuals to be put to death [Hopenothate.org 2013]. These actions threaten violence, therefore can be classified as hate crimes.

Their attempt to impose Shariah Zones in Waltham Forest, illustrates extremist views (see appendices J). Their website says “forbidding and ridding evil” is a duty [Izhaar-ud-Deen 2013b]. This could mean getting rid of evil individuals therefore infer violence, but most likely refers to getting rid of “evil” behaviour. Posters warned: “You are entering a Sharia-controlled zone –Islamic rules enforced” *Search light, 2012]. This illustrates disregard for individuals as coercing people to adopt “their ways” is threatening; portraying the group as extremist and promoting hate.

The MACs actions were ironic; they promoted their freedom to speak out against the government, but wanted to impose “Shariah” at the expense of others. Until being banned they were deliberating the right they wanted to “get rid of”. The MACS motives come under question if democracy and British freedoms are in conflict, then why want Sharia in the UK? Their website suggests Sharia would strengthen Muslim

communities [Izharudeen, 2013D]; so far their actions have caused distress even to Muslim communities.

Academics like Orr [2010] may not believe “glorifying terrorism” was the sole reason for their proscription, especially since the timing of the ban came after the “extreme” poppy burning.

Proscription criterion is rather broad, under The terrorism act 2006, a group can be banned for committing terrorist acts, preparing or promoting terrorist activities [Gov.uk 2012b]. The government should be clearer as to why MAC were banned; clearer distinctions would assure freedom of speech is not hindered [Banglawala, 2010]. Better measures are needed, as banning has made the group operate underground, not knowing what the MAC are doing at present is rather disturbing, especially after identifying their homophobic hate crime and prejudice policies.

Symbolism

The MAC, use interpretations of the Quran to support policies; “That he may cause it to prevail over all systems” *The Quran: 9:33], Supporting Shariah establishment. The MAC’S religious ties, cause inter-religious tensions, as the society they advocate does not consider other faiths. They portray Muslims as victims, and West as oppressors. This ideology could isolate Muslims leading them to oppose others. Although, the MAC does not use interpretations of the Quran violently, they do use it to enforce views, suggesting they are extreme but not terrorists.

To establish if the MAC, are extremist, hate, or terrorist organisations, 12 documents/videos were analysed.

Table 4.0 Analysing the MAC

	Violence/intimidation, towards minority groups	homophobia /enticing hatred	Pride in own origin and nationalism	Violence/ threat of violence to attack a state	Influence by recognised terrorist organisations
Article1	6	2			1
Articl2			3		
Article3			3		
Article4		3			
Article5			1		
Article6			5		
Video7			2		
Video 8		3	1		
Video 9		3			
Video10		3	1		
Video11		3	1		
Video12		3			

The majority of the articles are about the west against Muslims, for example “war on terror” [Izharudeen.com 2013C]. This could promote hate as it leads to perceptions that the west and Islam are civilizations who are “doomed” to be in conflict.

Homophobia is present, videos suggested homosexuals are “evil” and should not be tolerated [video, 12], promoting homophobic behaviour is present therefore the MAC can be classified as a hate group.

Elements of inciting hatred between the Islamic world and rest of the world were present, “Hold on to the flag of Islam not onto the Olympic torch” *Article 4+. In regards to supporting terrorism, the MAC’s website does no such thing; it may have similar views to terrorist organisations but does not mention conducting terrorist acts.

The first of Mude’s *2000+ Pillars is authoritarianism, this is present in the ideology of the MAC as they emphasise the need to maintain law, defend traditions; seeking of the Kaliphate and overthrowing the government is a good example. Secondly, ethnic nationalism can be applied, as like its predecessors the MAC shares a common faith and place importance on their religion. Thirdly, xenophobia can be attributed to the MAC; “creating and conquering countries” disregards certain groups in society such as non-believers. Thus, the MAC can be considered a right-wing extremist organisation.

To summarise, The EDL appears to be an extremist, right wing organisation, who are Islamophobic, sometimes leading to members committing hate crimes. The MAC, appear to be right wing extremist Islamists, whose ideology contradicts the government, the extent to which terrorism can be attributed is unclear. Their actions have been fuelled by prejudice views against homosexuals leading to hate crimes.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

This research investigated if the EDL and MAC could be considered extremist, terrorist or hate groups. Primary and secondary research was conducted. To investigate government perceptions, Home Office documents were analysed. A content analysis was employed investigating the groups. Media analyses explored media portrayals of

the groups. Questionnaires determined public perceptions. Johnson et al {[2004] suggested this triangulation technique improves reliability, allowing perceptions of the different agencies involved to be compared.

Critical review analysis

Government definitions of hate crime, extremism, and terrorism were analysed, by comparing different perspectives and laws that construct them, creating a contextual framework. A Critical review on Home Office documents was conducted from January 2010-December 2012. The main objectives were reviewed, then achievements evaluated. This allowed me to understand the government's intentions regarding hate and extremist groups as well as strengths and weaknesses of approaches.

-Content analysis

A summative content analysis on the MAC and EDL's literature was conducted. Kondradick and Wellman {[2002] identified it as the best technique in analysing presence of words, therefore appropriate to determine the extent of hate words. Hsien and Shannon's ,*2005+ procedure was followed, after identifying the research question (Do documents contain hate words?) sample size was established: 12 recent articles and videos were used, thus reducing bias. Key definitions from the conceptual framework were made into categories for example "intimidating words". Then I noted how many words were present. To ensure accuracy I trained myself using this technique on other sources and repeated the process. This technique was flexible, extending knowledge on both groups in a structured format, that could be used in

future research, where I suggest ~~maybe~~ a larger sample size is used producing more significant results.

Content analysis enabled the material to be analysed without media bias, subjectivity was over-come using coding based on Mude's [2000] work.

Critical media analysis

Critical discourse analysis is an effective way to analyse text and social problems, therefore was chosen [Van Dijk, 1995]. To establish how the media portray actions of the MAC and the EDL, 2 broad sheets, and 2 tabloids were analysed to get balanced views [Van Dijk 1991, Sian and Syyed, 2012.] 9 newspaper articles were analysed from *THE GUARDIAN*, 9 from *THE TELEGRAPH*, 9 from *THE DAILY MAIL*, and 9 from *THE SUN* between January 2010-November 2011, which is when both the MAC and EDL were operating.

Articles on the MAC were researched online, and then relevant EDL stories were identified, to observe the effects of "cumulative extremism".

Quantitative analysis was conducted, by noting the number of articles that mentioned three categories: hooligan/terrorist; international links; and violence this gave an objective measure in which comparisons could be made.

Qualitative analysis was conducted identifying differences in portrayals of the groups, providing richer detail. Language and references to stereotypes surrounding the groups were noted, I then conducted research on the differences between negative reporting and negative stories, and this was applied to the articles. To establish differences between Islamist group portrayal and right wing “British” groups, the language was compared (See Table 1 in appendices L).

Standardised questionnaires

To identify public perceptions, standardised questionnaires were used, [Babie, 2012]. The media analysis resulted in two types of questionnaires being devised. One set biased, one set neutral, to see if the public could be influenced by negative terminology. In the neutral questionnaire the scenario was presented using words like “political group”. The biased questionnaire used words like “Pro-white”/“Islamist” to describe the groups. Pilot questionnaires revealed it was vital that the groups were kept anonymous, as the MAC is not well known.

My sample was N=60, 30 participants answered the biased questionnaire and 30 answered the unbiased. The Questionnaires were distributed on the streets in Waltham Forest as both groups have demonstrated there. Some participants required more time to answer, so some were administered via email. Providing me with higher response rates, 60% is good for analysis; my response rate was above 70% [Babie, 2012]. Most people did not want to stop therefore to get 60 replies more time was

devoted. 80 questionnaires were administered to gain 60 responses, this was essential to gain a representative sample.

Varieties of people were approached in different parts of Waltham Forest, enabling a cross-section of society. The questionnaire was devised using a scenario format, representing an article. This helped determine the extent of participant's view of the groups [Babie, 2012]. Using scenarios along with open ended and closed ended questions, kept the attention of the respondents. Two scenarios illustrated events of the MAC, two depicting events of the EDL. Two were protest events and two were more serious, the scenarios were followed by closed ended and open ended questions. [See Appendices for questionnaires].

Hunter et al [2012] recommends the likert scale measurement for investigating attitudes, therefore a 4point scale was used. Open-ended questions followed, providing in depth answers. To ensure all possible answers were covered, an "other" category was presented; participants were asked to specify why they chose "other".

In the briefing participants were told to choose the best answer to prevent ambiguity. The participant's age, occupation, employment, highest education, ethnicity, Gender and religion were noted to see if these affected responses. Along with being cost-effective, they provided standardised answers that could be analysed for correlations [Wincup and King, 2000]. The main disadvantages of questionnaires are difficulties in explaining parts that participants misinterpret; during the pilot this was raised so I decided that briefing the participants would solve this (see appendices B).

Analyses

The closed ended questions were coded, and imputed into SSPSS.18 software. To determine associations between social factors and responses; the T-test was employed. This was ideal as it is used to establish differences in responses due to variables such as gender/ethnicity. The hypothesis was that the terminology in the biased questionnaire would influence participant's answers; this was tested by analysing the responses to identify common as well as unusual views.

Ethical issues

The main ethics that were considered were consent, and insuring confidentiality and anonymity [Bell, 2006]. This was important as the participants may not have felt comfortable sharing personal details like their name and could have affected their responses. Korb {[2011] found that when participants' were required to write their name their responses became less accurate. Consent was implied; the participants who wanted to participate filled in the questionnaires, but were told that they were not obliged to continue.

CHAPTER 4

This chapter will determine media portrayal of the groups; the terminology media uses will be identified. Then public perceptions

surrounding the groups will be uncovered, as well as perceptions on hate crimes.

Media portrayal

Literature suggests the media have mixed attitudes towards extremist groups. Sheffield [2011] found in regards to the EDL, newspaper articles showed negative impacts focusing on violence and racism. This could lead to negative public perceptions. Inversely, the Daily Star have been sympathetic towards the EDL, showing their organisation in a positive light, saying 98% of their readers supported them [Greenslade,2011]. The MAC received increasingly patriotic press coverage of their events resulting in gaining them no sympathies [Connor, 2005].

Although the media paints a negative image of all extremist groups, research has found Islamist groups are demonised more [Akbarzadeh and Smith 2005.] Therefore, this analysis seeks to investigate differences and similarities between the portrayals of the EDL and MAC.

Media analysis

Media increases public fear by extensively giving extremist groups a voice, and covering their protests in detail, they tend to pick and choose the more confrontational events; these become embedded in the readers' minds *Richard, 2010+. The table below shows an analysis, of newspaper articles supporting this view. During the analysis, it became apparent the media does portray the groups in a negative light, often describing the EDL as "violent hooligans", similarly, the MAC were

referred to as “Muslim extremist groups,”. Many of the articles continuously used the phrases “Muslim” “terrorist” and Islam in one paragraph alongside “fundamentalists”.The poppy burning incident was the most publicised, even though it was not legally a hate act, the articles depicted it as one. Moreover, whilst the MAC staged some peaceful protests in that time frame newspapers did not focus on them.

Table 4.0 Analysis of media terminology

Amount of articles that:	<i>The Daily Mail</i>	<i>The Guardian</i>	<i>The Telegraph</i>	<i>The Sun</i>
used the terms extremist/terrorist/hooligan	9	9	6	9
Expressed links to terrorist/fascist groups?	8	8	8	8
Focused on violence	6	7	7	9
Total articles	9	9	9	9

The Sun depicted the MAC in a more negative light compared to the EDL, by describing the members as “Vile protesters”, “sick and shameful extremists”, **THE SUN* articles 4,5,] compared to the actions of the EDL that were reported as “normal facts” **THE SUN* article 1].Newspaper headlines showed differences in treatment of the groups, “Bin laden

mob clash with the EDL” *Article 9+, here the MAC are linked to Osama Bin Laden, sending negative messages.

As the EDL have conducted many demonstrations their actions maybe more normalised compared to the MACs. While the MAC are not as violent their actions attacked aspects of British values i.e. “The poppy is a symbol of national respect”, so maybe that is why the MAC received more negative press. 17 of the 19 articles relating to the MAC on *THE SUNs* website were on the poppy burning incident, thus reinforcing the idea of selective reporting.

60% of the articles reported cumulative acts being in response to each other. Moreover, 70% of the articles made direct links to AL-Qaeda when referring to the MAC, whereas 50% of the articles on the EDL made links to fascist groups. Interestingly, 70% of the articles portrayed the EDL as hooligans, and the MAC as extremists.

The EDL know of Islam mainly through the media, therefore negative media press could add tensions between the groups. The reoccurring language starts to depict all Muslims as fanatics; this could help fuel the EDL. Also from previous analysis it appears the media often show gendered concepts of Islamic extremists, the MAC members who are men as “Jihadists” and their wives as oppressed and forced to cover. These stereotypes can all be seen present on the EDL website [EDL, 2013].

The analysis revealed that the media do negatively report, but it could be due to the negative story itself thus they cannot entirely be blamed for public perceptions [Baker, 2013] (see Appendices, I). The

public have other sources of social influence for example, religion, and own experiences.

Public perceptions surrounding the EDL and MAC

A Yougov poll has previously investigated public attitudes towards the EDL, but public perceptions surrounding the MAC have not been researched. Therefore 60 questionnaires were completed, based around scenarios relating to the actions of the groups, to determine if the public perceive their actions as hate crimes. From the media analysis, it appears that the media uses negative terminology to describe the groups; therefore 30 questionnaires used unbiased terminology, 30 used biased terminology, to determine if Media portrayal could affect public perceptions.

Question 1 . Does scenario A (The EDL attacking a family in thier home) portray a hate crime?

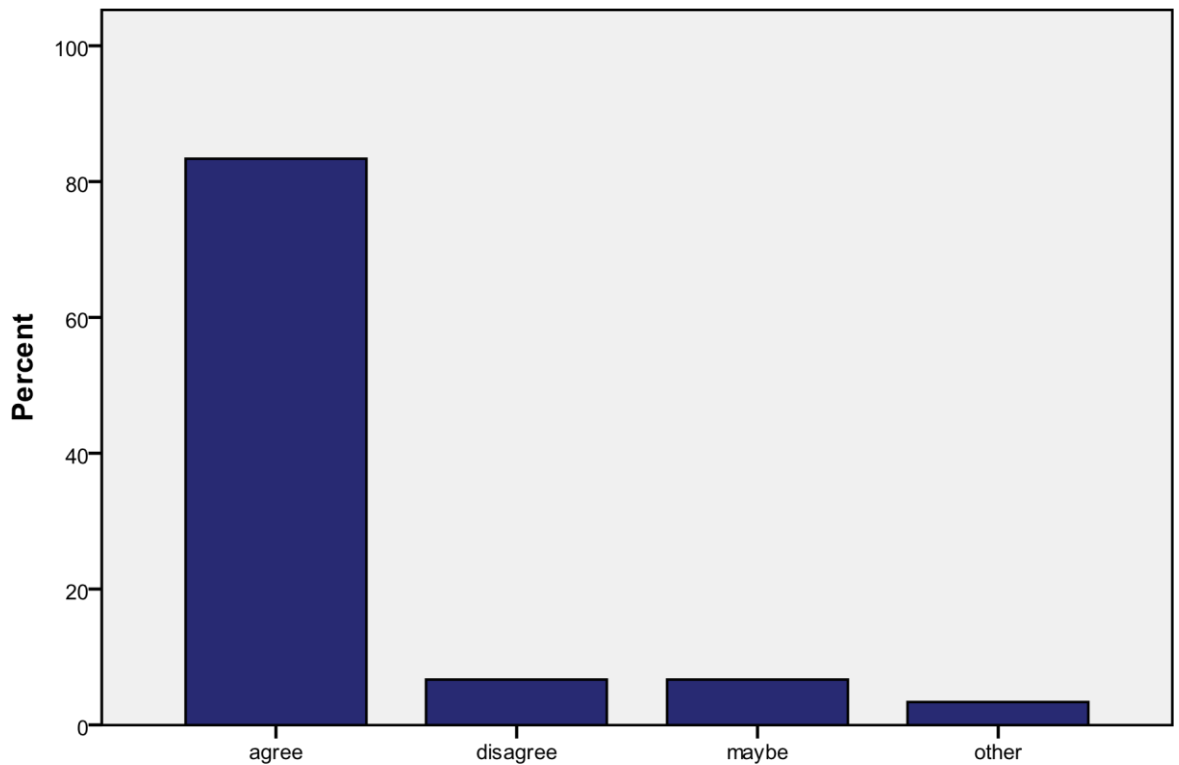


Table 1. The Biased terminology Questionnaire

84% believed this portrayed a hate crime, which was also the case for the same scenario not including negative terminology. Qualitative responses showed biased terminology affected responses. Responses show the extent of the influence: “The scenario describes the group as a pro-white group, which suggests to me that they are racist”

*Respondent,A+. The majority of respondents used the “negative” terminology, suggesting that media articles can influence the public. Similarly, others responded: “A personal attack on a family denotes to a hate crime, they used intimidating means to do so, a pro-white group reinforces the concept of hate crime” *Respondent,B].However, some commented on the terminology, suggesting education can affect

responses. “This article used words “pro-white” without sounding convincing not denoting fact, [Respondent,C+”.

80% of Christian and 90 % of Muslims believed this was a hate crime, Muslims commented on personal feelings about this incident: “Far-right groups often have racist intentions, and that family could have come worse off, I didn’t like the intimidation in their own home, it just proves that having “anti-Islamic agendas can lead to threatening behaviour, this is worrying” *Respondent,D] [see table 2 in appendices C].This is interesting, as Muslims are often the intended victims of the EDL.

The majority of unbiased responses although believed this incident to be a hate act did not describe the groups using negative terminology, suggesting media terminology effects public opinions.

60% of participants from the unbiased condition agreed compared to
Question 2: Does scenario B (The MAC POPPY burning incident) portray hate crime?

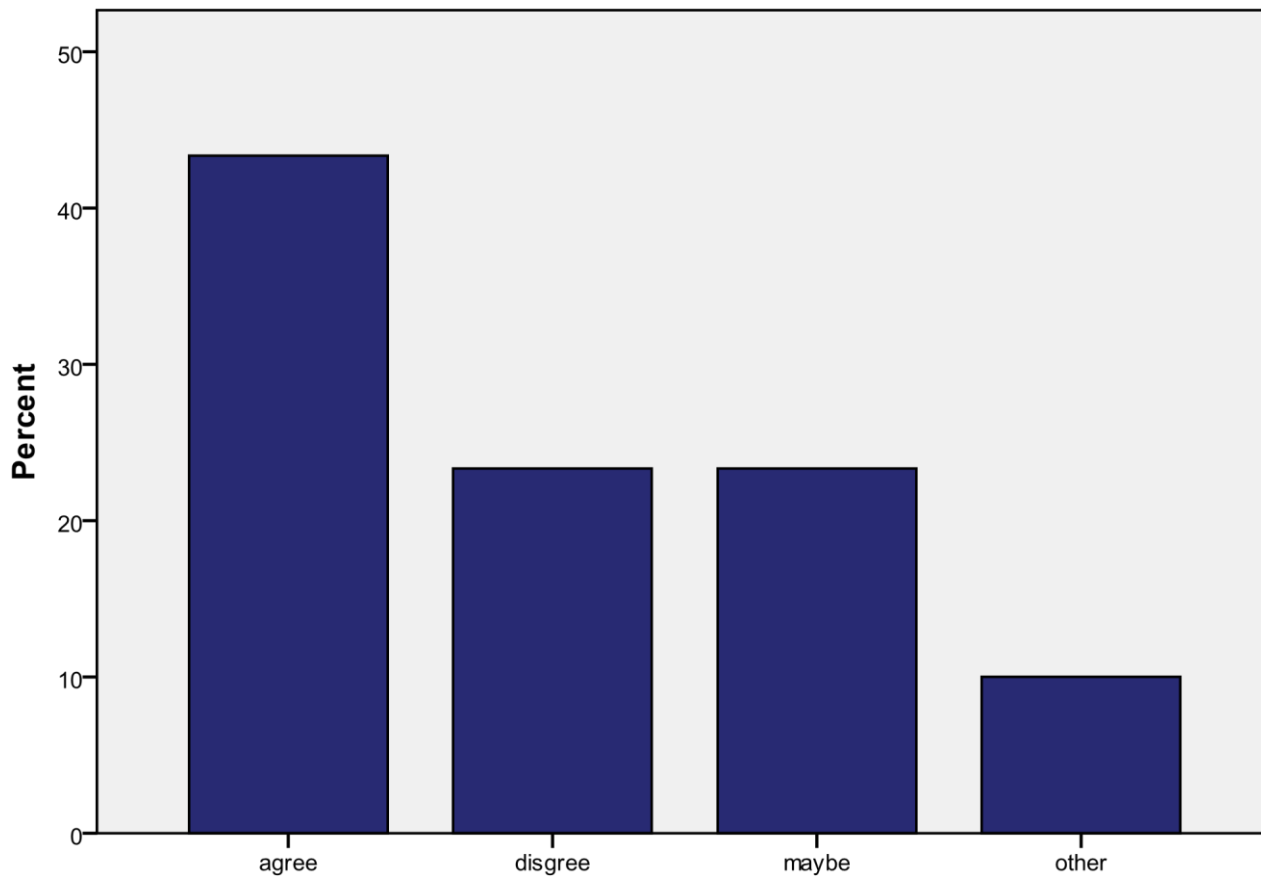


Table 3. Biased terminology questionnaire

45% from the biased, in the biased questionnaire some believed that it was a protest and freedom of speech allows such behaviour, on the other hand some participants saw it attacking the state and responded: "Burning of the poppy, a symbol of respect to the war dead, so it's 'shameful" *Respondent, F].

53% of Christian and 75% of the white population believed it was a hate act. The reasons that were provided suggested that it was due to an "extreme" ideology, against British values *See tables 4&5]. "This Islamist group, are extreme in their actions, burnt a poppy which is a symbol of respect and pride and is important to us British people, it is

showing great disregard for the families of those that lost loved ones”
[Respondent,G]. Interestingly 84% of Asian and British Pakistani
populations classified this scenario as ‘maybe’ or ‘other’, and justified
their answers by saying: “They are an extremist group not hate”
[Respondent, I].

The qualitative answers confirmed that the biased terminology
questionnaire effected people’s responses as in the unbiased
questionnaire participants did not refer to the groups as “extremist” or
“pro-white”. Participants mixed responses can be viewed in
(Appendices,O).

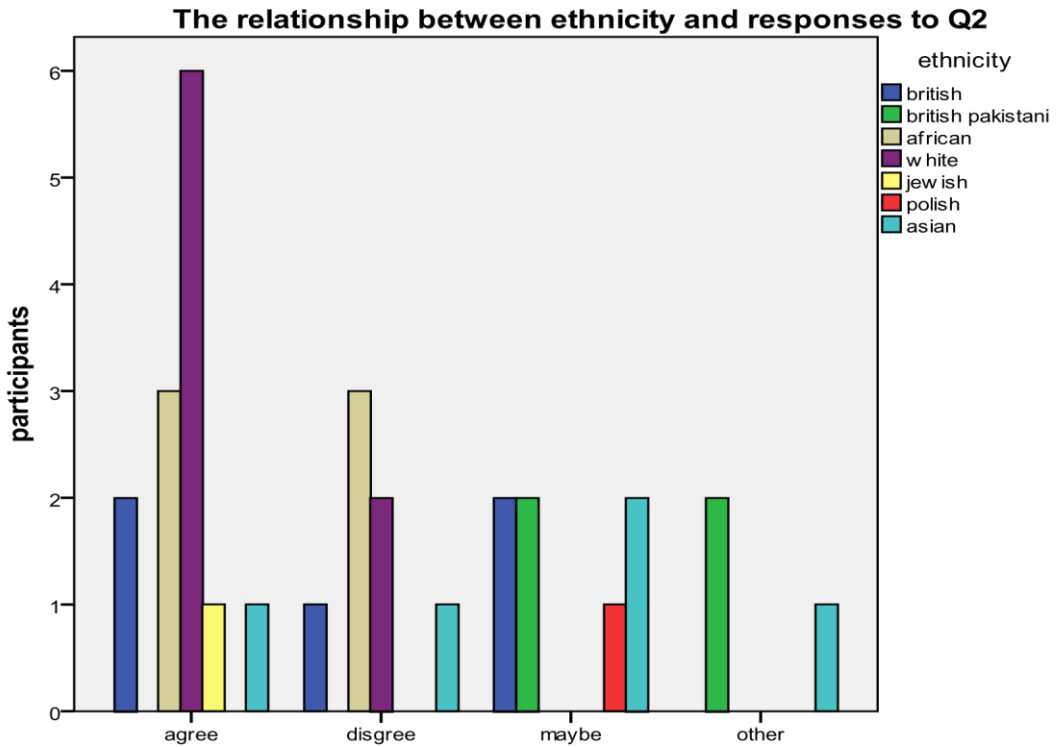


Table 5 The biased terminology

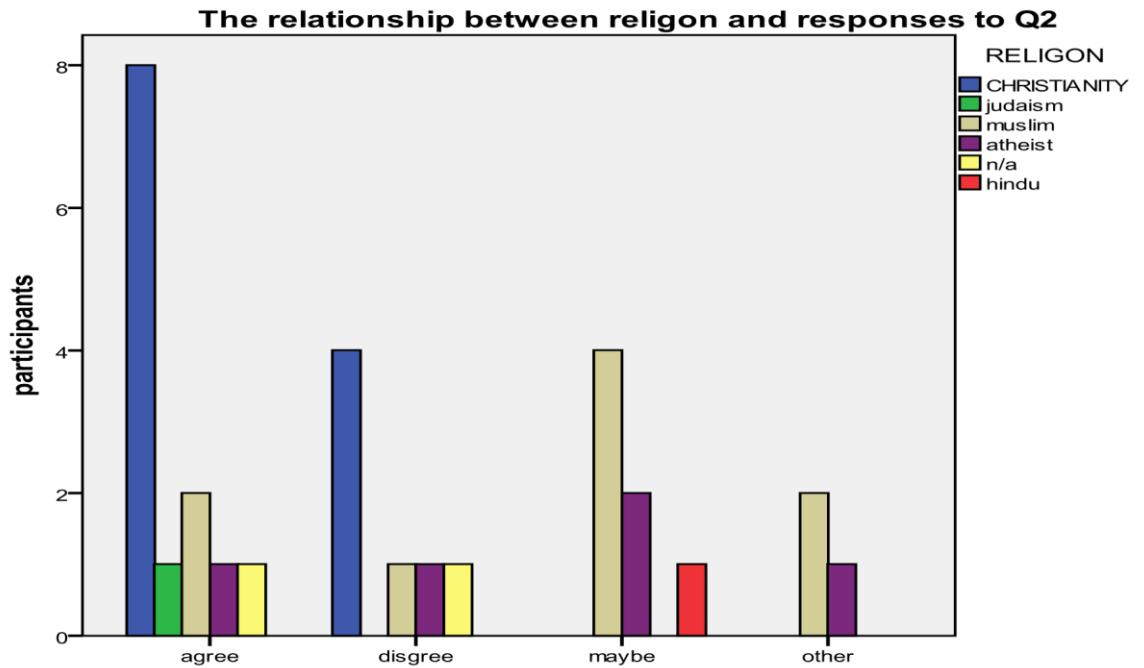


Table 5- the Biased terminology questionnaire

Question 3. Does scenario C (The EDL protest clashing with the police) portray hate crime?

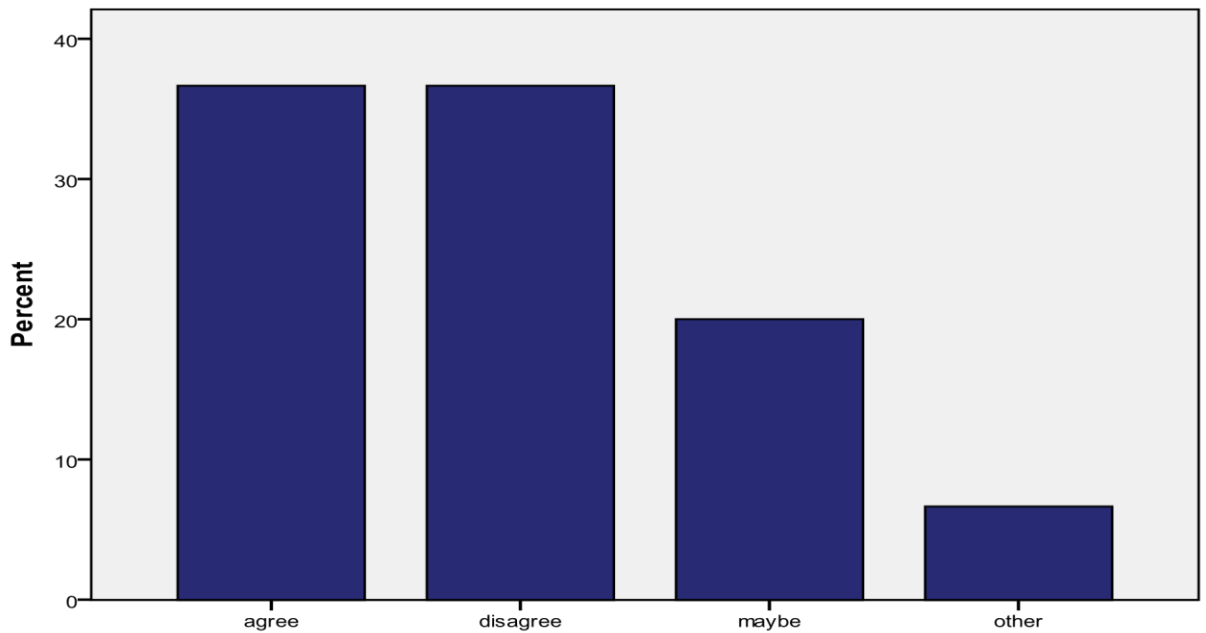


Table 6 –Biased terminology Questionnaire

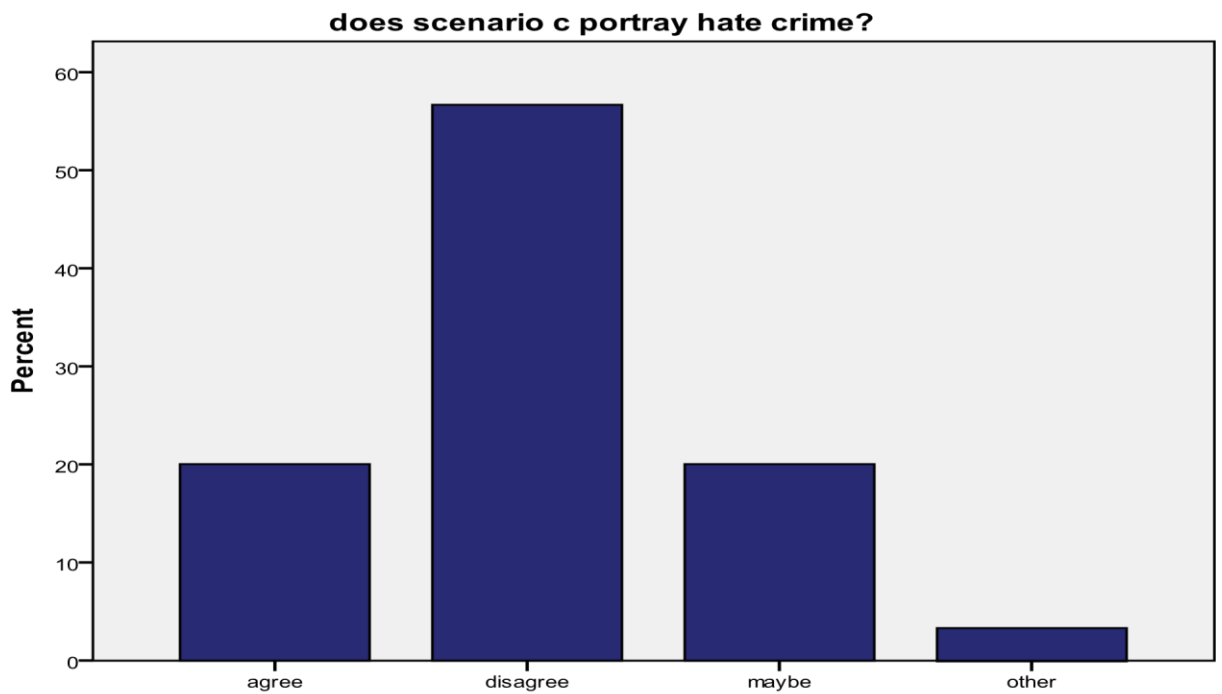


Table 10- unbiased terminology questionnaire

The participants in the biased questionnaire, were in disagreement 35% believed it was a hate act and 35% disagreed, the unbiased terminology questionnaire had more participants disagreeing this could be attributed to biased terminology.

The participants who agreed in the biased questionnaire shared similar concerns: "This far right group sounds like the EDL, they have often "protested" in my area, and trust me its not about them attacking the police, numerous times have I felt intimidated by their actions"*Responant J]. This shows that for some participants thier expereinces made them belive it was a hate act. Other participants recognised: "Not a hate act but more like a protest that has got out of hand, if this group are the EDL, then they probably were promoting hate"*Respondant, L+. Similarly, "They were just protesting and voicing thier opinions, in line with freedom of speech"*Respondant, M].

Overall, participant's responses in the biased questionnaire were influenced by terminology; the disagreement could suggest participants were aware of the legal definitions of hate crime. Even though there were more Muslim participants in this sample (unbiased), there was more focus on it being a protest.

Question 4: Did Scenario D (the MACs protest on americas foreign policy) promote hate?

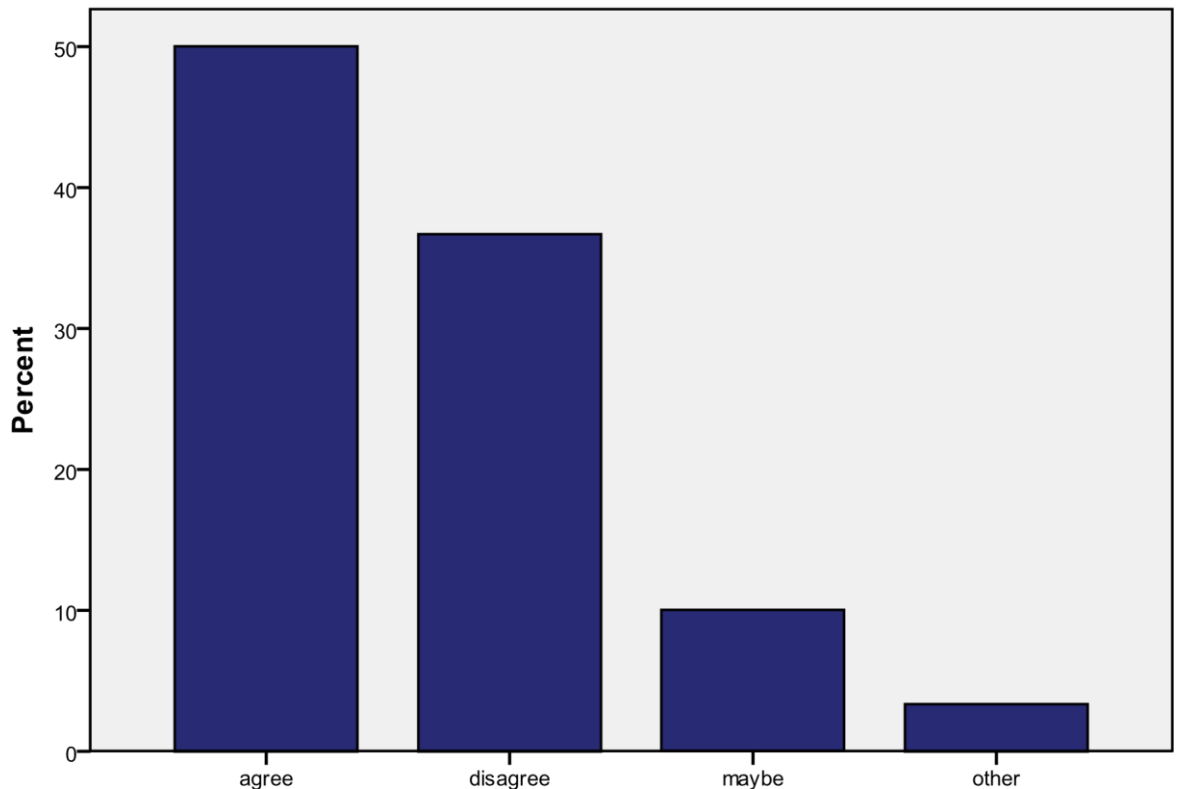


Table 7. Biased questionnaire

50% of participants agreed to the protest portraying hate, 35% also disagreed, showing disagreement. Again it was apparent that people's responses reflected the terminology presented.

What acts in this scenario, drive your answer?

"Extremist act as they were radical Muslims, and often oppose the USA, burning of the flag" [respondent,N]. Those that disagreed stated "Muslim radicals are associated with extremism, but they did not commit any crimes" [respondent,O]. Similarly others stated, "Extremist acts of burning a flag, but okay due to freedom of speech" *respondent,P].

The unbiased questionnaire elicited mixed results, whilst 40% agreed 30% disagreed. Interesting discussions were elicited on the use of freedom of speech, the participants that disagreed argued “they were demonstrating Free-speech and individuals are not targeted” [respondent,Q]. However, others believed the scenario contained: “Shouting and intimidating behaviour, and burning of a flag symbol of hate” [respondent,R]. So overall there was a mixture of results.

The Questionnaires combined

Statistical analyses were conducted (see appendices F). The t-tests reported differences in responses to age, gender, and occupation. The differences in religion, and ethnicity were more profound. In all of the results $p=.001$, this meant that there were differences in the means of the social factors, eliciting different responses. Although the majority believed EDL attacking a family was a hate crime, there were small differences between religious groups and responses, more Muslim participants agreed than any other group [see tables 12, 18, 19 in appendices C.] This could be due to the EDLs Anti-Islamic nature. ($M=7.58, SD=1.4, t=42, p=.001$) .This shows a relationship between religion and responses.

In the poppy burning scenario, [see table 20 in appendices C] the white population and the Christian populations were more likely to perceive the actions of the MAC as hate, whereas the Muslim and British Pakistani population were more likely to disagree and categorise it as other [See tables 21 and 22]. The t-tests revealed that religion and

ethnicity had a significant effect on responses to scenario B. Religion was significant as: (M=7.6,SD=1.4,t=42,p=.001). Ethnicity was significant as: (M=4,SD=2.6,t=11.7,p=.001).

Table 21- The responses to question 2 combined questionnaire

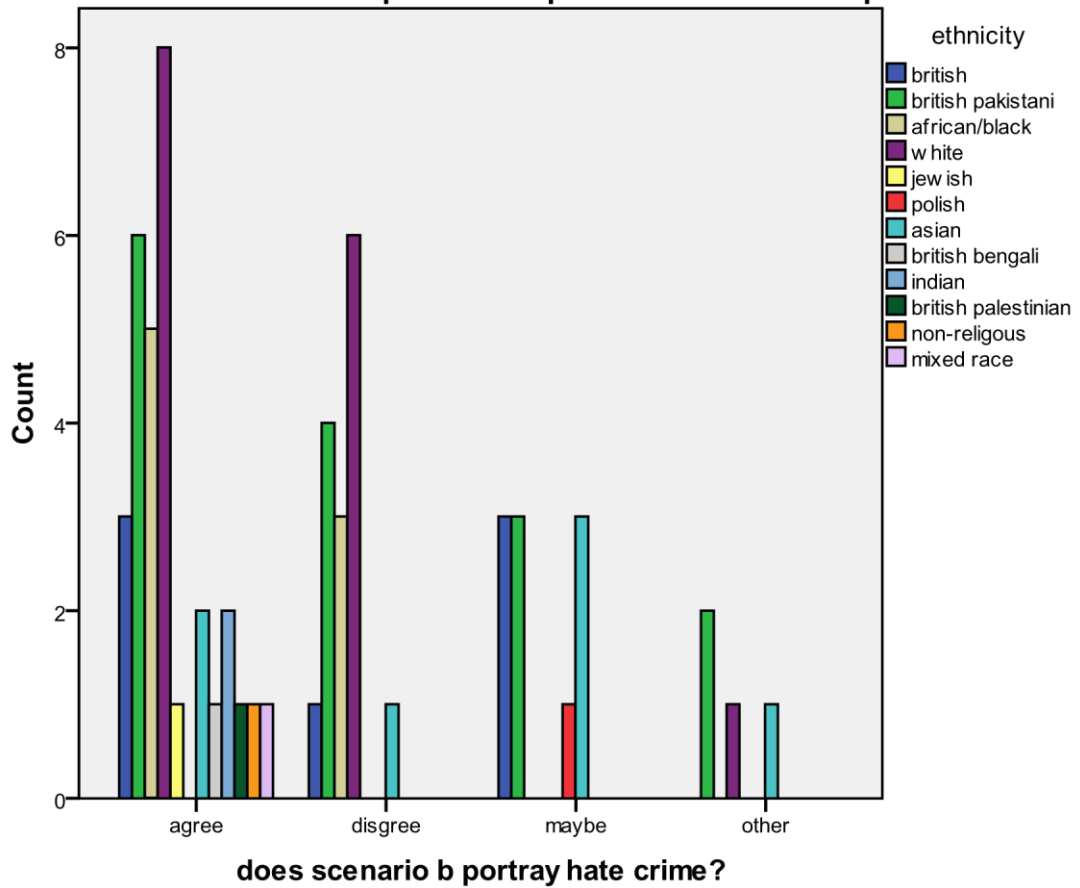
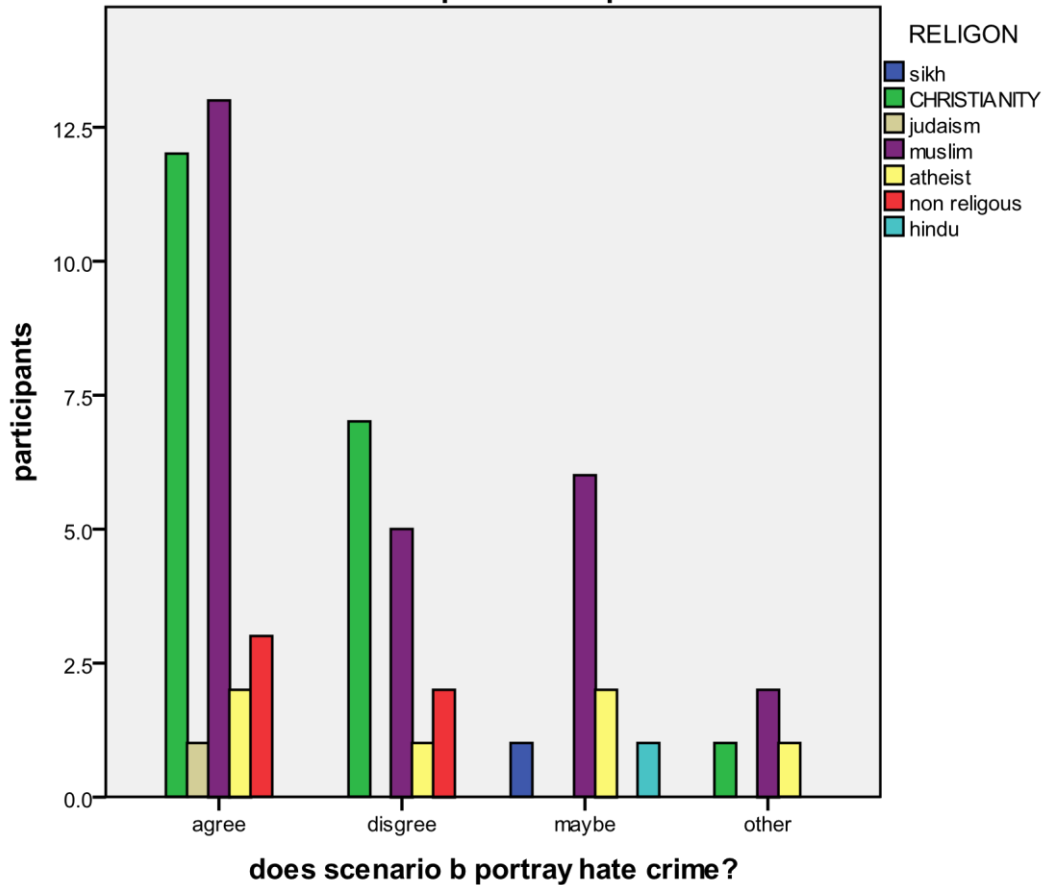


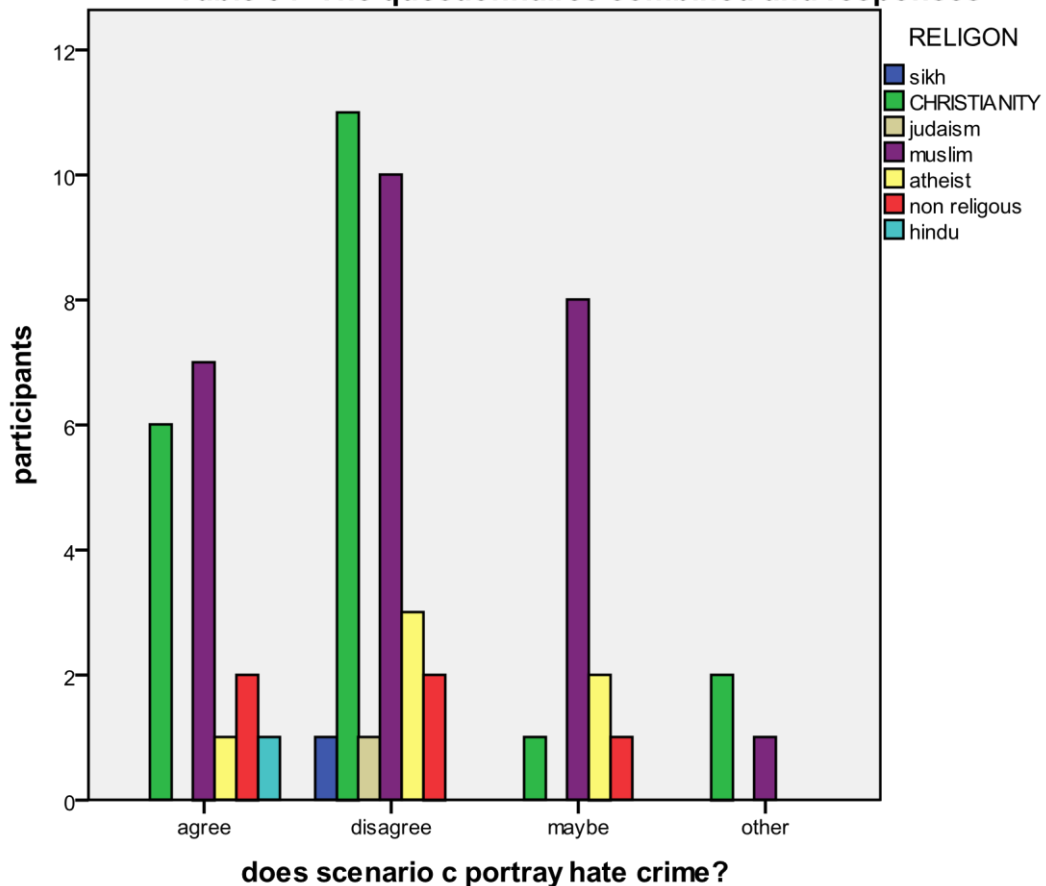
Table 22- The responses to questionnaires combined



The EDL protest in scenario C revealed Muslim participants were more likely to say maybe and other, this is supported as the t-test revealed a significant relationship between religion and responses:

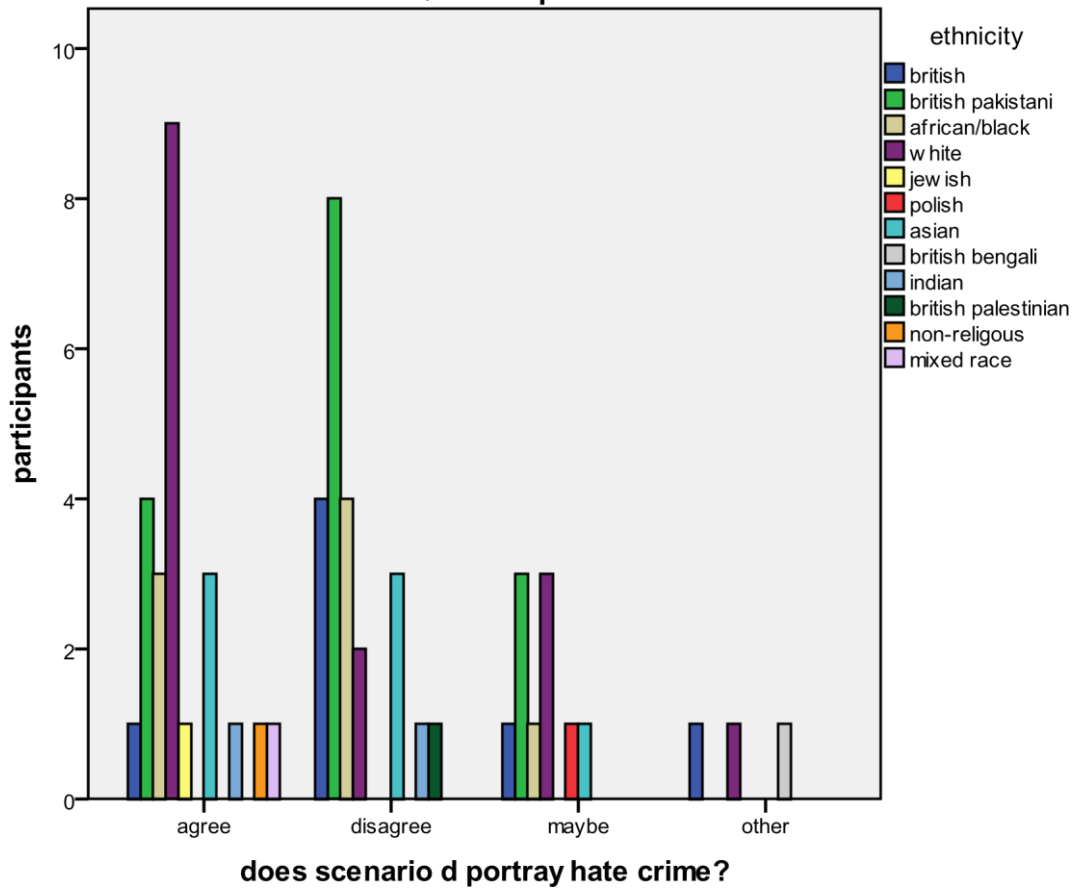
($M=7.58, SD=1.4, t=42, p=.001$) [see tables 32 and 34 in appendices C].

Table 34- The questionnaires combined and responses



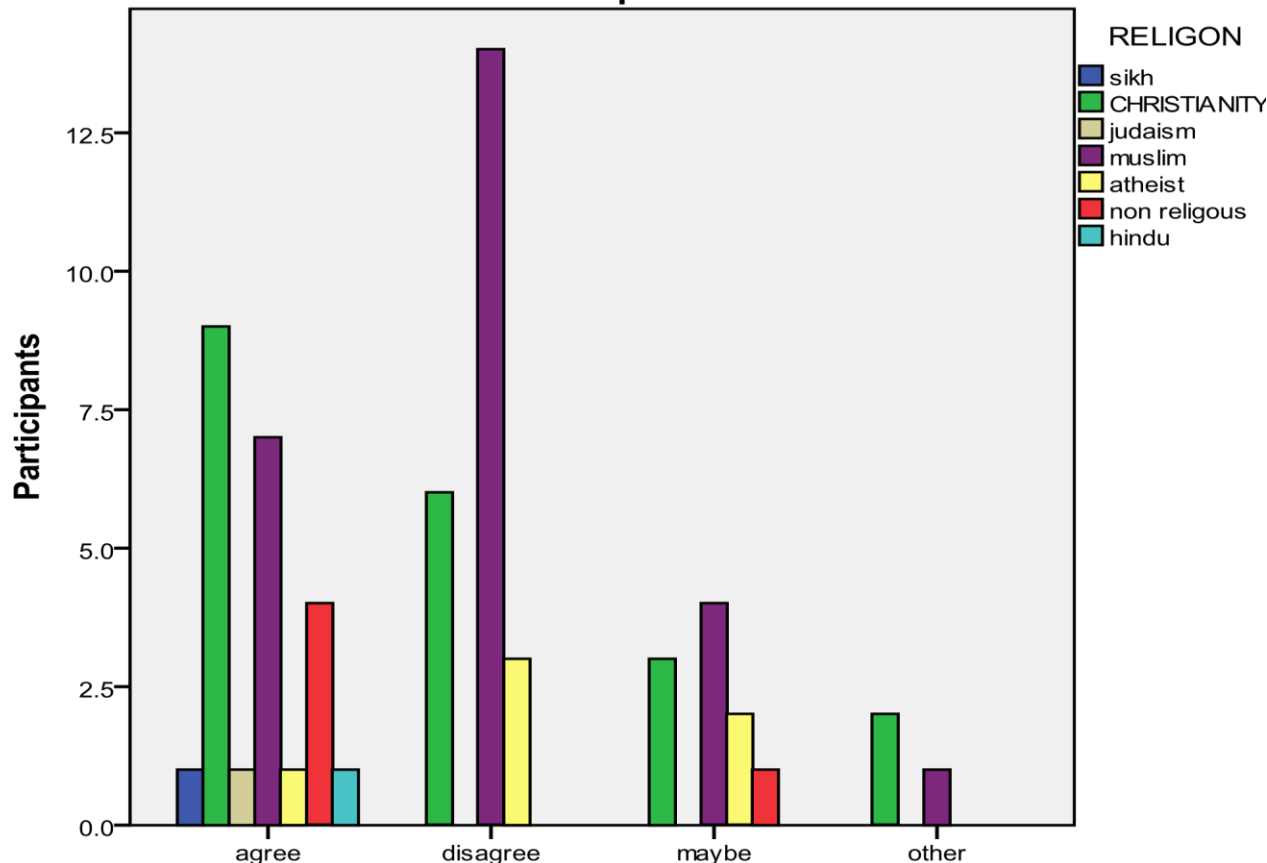
Scenario D depicted the MAC protest against America, 40% agreed 38% disagreed [see table 26 in appendices c]. 60% of the white population and Christian populations agreed to the actions promoting hate whereas Muslims, British Pakistanis and Asians were more likely to disagree [table 27 and 28]. The t-test revealed a significant relationship between religion and responses, this can be seen as Muslim participants disagreed more compared to other populations ($M=7.6, SD=1.4, t=42, P=.001$). Thus showing the differences in responses. Similarly, the white population was more likely to agree, the t-test also revealed that ethnicity had an effect, ($M=1.9, SD=.872, t=42, p=.001$)

Table 27- Q4 -The questionnaires combined



To summarise, The EDL were perceived as a hate group in question one regardless of the questionnaire type, qualitative responses revealed participants were influenced by the negative terminology and negative experiences.

Table 28- The questionnaires combined



does scenario d portray hate crime?

More Participants believed the MACs poppy burning incident was a hate crime but this was not significant, respondent’s perceived the act as more extreme than hate filled.

EDLS protest scenario C, gained mixed results but people overall disagreed. The MACS protest against America revealed different opinions, showing ethnicity and religion affect responses, Muslims were more likely to disagree and White participants agree.

Question 5: What do you think a hate crime is?

Participants were also asked what do you think a hate crime is? 35 responded, (a sample of these can be seen in appendices M), along with a comparison of the legal and social definitions.

The majority were informed about legal and social definitions, resembling more to legal definitions. For example: “Hate crime is involved with religion, race and ethnic background, bringing barriers between groups of people” *Respondent F+. The definitions lead to question; the wide scope for hate crimes and conflicts between freedoms of speech. The government should clarify the differences between free-speech and hate, more clearly.

To summarise, tabloids depict the MAC more negatively than the EDL. Terminology presented to the public in a scenario format, could influence people’s perceptions in line with previous research. The EDL and MACS actions were perceived to reflect hatred, but the MAC were constructed more as extremists than hate groups, social factors like ethnicity and religion had more of an impact on the responses compared to age, gender, and occupation.

Chapter 5

To summarise, this dissertation wanted to determine if the actions of the MAC and the EDL portrayed hate and segregated communities, by exploring how their “cumulative extremism” is viewed by the different agencies that label them.

After analysing documents from their websites it was concluded that both the EDL and the MAC are right wing extremist hate groups, their actions segregate communities, but at times bring communities together as community's condemned their actions. The EDL fuel tensions between communities particularly between the Sikh and the Muslim community leading to disastrous consequences, their Islamophobic views have led to hate crimes being committed and their links to hate groups confirmed the results of the analysis, in line with [Goodwin, 2013] but in opposition to [Sheffield ,2011], this could be attributed to the differences in methodology, Sheffield's work used secondary data, whereas the current research applied both primary and secondary analysis.

The MAC claim to oppose western regimes, they put emphasis on carrying the flag of "Islam high" and in doing so alienate other groups in society; most disturbing was their homophobic views which have led to hate crimes, their actions have fuelled the EDL into "reacting" and sometimes leading to further hate acts being committed, supporting cumulative extremism. Although the MACS views are extreme and oppose British values they do not make them a terrorist organisation, however actions of leaders bring to question, their links to Al-Qaeda.

This paper agrees with Banglawala's {[2010] interpretation of the ban, instead of banning a whole organisation, the government should have prosecuted key members that were believed to be glorifying hatred, thus not contradicting freedom of speech laws, and directly dealing with the problem. The fact that the leaders have not been prosecuted for any actions, questions the governments real motives for banning the group.

Similarities of these two groups to more dangerous groups cannot be overlooked. Breivik and Al-Qaida leaders see themselves at war, both have resulted to violence on behalf of the European community (Breivik) and the Ummah (Al-Qaeda), it cannot be ignored that both saw their “struggle” as a means for survival, defending their culture Both showed resentment towards the government [Ruthven,2012]. One cannot fail to see, similarities between these groups and the EDL and MAC in the UK. The only thing that separates these groups is that they have not used violence, members may have but the organisation as a whole has not. This is a worrying finding, as although the EDL and MAC have not conducted violent acts, could they eventually commit violent acts? Regardless of the effectiveness of the ban, the MAC have been dealt with by the government for their perceived connections to Al-Qaeda, but maybe the EDL should also be recognised as a cause for concern and their European links further investigated, especially since the Prevent review [2011] recognised them as a hate group.

Furthermore, from the analysis of government document CONTEST, it has been established that the government do not perceive the threats from right-wing extremists as seriously as they perceive Islamic extremists, this could be the reason why, when EDL members condoned Breivik’s actions, they were not perceived to be glorifying terrorism.

Media perceptions of extremist groups are negative; however the press favour the EDLS rhetoric over the MACs portraying the MAC as an “evil” foreign ideology more extreme, then the EDL who have sometimes gained sympathies with the press. It was also found that biased media

terminology can affect public perceptions of these groups, leading to more negative responses, However even in the neutral questionnaire, participants believed that the actions of the EDL and MAC promoted hate crime, peoples experiences of the EDL also influenced their results, the MAC however were portrayed as extremists, and the EDL considered as prejudice. Interestingly more Muslim participants had strong opinions about how the actions of the EDL affected them and believed the EDL promoted hate and the Christian and white populations, believed that the MACs actions attacked the state. It was also established that although respondents were aware of the legal definitions, clearer definitions are needed distinguishing between freedom of speech and hate crimes.

This research has provided a deeper understanding of the EDL adding to literature, also introducing how the public and media discourses perceive the MAC, it was interesting that the media and public perceptions of the groups were interlinked as one effected the other, but also in line with the governments perception, as the MAC have been constructed as foreign and extreme and the EDL as a hate group. By combining both primary and secondary data richer detail has been produced, fulfilling the aims however further research could solely focus on the MAC and investigate their terrorist links, looking further into the organisation to establish how “extremist groups” view themselves and the government. The questionnaire that was devised by the current research could also have investigated public perceptions surrounding extremism, further research could address this.

This dissertation concludes that the government have dealt with the MAC differently, due to their foreign ideology and perceived associations to AL-QAEDA. The EDL should also be further investigated as their actions effect the public and from this research have been identified as a hate group, thus this dissertation concludes that although the EDL and MAC have differences they are the two sides of the same coin of hate, as their actions do promote hate crime and at times segregate communities.

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